INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MYTH OF ANDROMEDA AT IOPE*

Strabo, when raging in the first book of his *Geography* against those ancient scholars who 'are less deserving of credence, since in addition to the incredibility of their theories they betray a tendency to confound myth and history',[1] states that 'there are some who transfer Ethiopia also to our Phoenicia, and who say that the adventure of Andromeda took place in Iope, though the story is surely not told in ignorance of its local setting but rather in the guise of myth.'[2] The example accompanying Strabo's observation deals with an interpretation of an ancient myth, namely by assuming that there was a standard version of the myth of Andromeda which was later re-interpreted in such a way that it was re-located to Iope, modern-day Jaffa which is now a suburb of Tel Aviv.[3] This paper aims to provide an overview of the sources which link the story to the Palestinian port town, and to explore - by looking in some detail at the relevant texts - the multiple facets that affected the story's different renditions.

Let us first remind ourselves of the myth according to the 'standard version', the basic elements of which are to be found in Ovid's famous recitation of the story of Perseus,[4] and which is of course above all known from the *Library* of Greek mythology, traditionally ascribed to Apollodorus of Athens, but dating from the first or second century AD:

> 'Arriving in Ethiopia, which was ruled by Cepheus, [Perseus] found the king's daughter Andromeda exposed as prey to a sea monster; for Cassiepeia,

---

* This paper originates in a piece presented, in a totally different format, at a conference in Aarhus organised by Rubina Raja in September 2008, and also at a Work-in-Progress seminar back home in Durham. I am also grateful to Ralph Häussler for inviting me to a colloquium in Osnabrück in September 2010 and for providing the opportunity to discuss this material in the context of *Interpretatio romana/graeca/indigena*. For references and discussion on individual points, thanks are due to my Durham colleagues Paola Ceccarelli, Peter Heslin, Jennifer Ingleheart, and Mark Woolmer, to Steve Pasek (during the conference in Osnabrück), to Erich Gruen, and also to the two anonymous referees for *Syria*. It is superfluous to state that none of the above is responsible for any remaining errors or doubtful interpretations on my part. Texts and translations follow LCL unless stated otherwise.

[1] Strabo 1.2.35 [C42]: πρὸς τῷ μὴ ἀξιοπίστῳ καὶ σύγχυσίν τινα ἐμφαίνοντες τοῦ μυθικοῦ καὶ ἱστορικοῦ σχήματος.

[2] Strabo 1.2.35 [C42-3]: εἰσὶ δ' οἳ καὶ τὴν Αἰθιοπίαν εἰς τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς Φοινίκην μετάγουσι, καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν ἐν Ἰόπῃ συμβῆναί φασιν· οὐ δήπου κατ' ἄγνοιαν τοπικὴν καὶ τούτων λεγομένων, ἀλλ' ἐν μύθου μᾶλλον σχήματι.

[3] Throughout this paper, I stick to Iope, although the town's name is also written differently. Cf. SCHÜRER 1979, p. 110-1, n.132; BIFFI 2002, p. 216.

[4] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 4.604-803, at 668-71: *gentibus innumeris circumque infraque relictis Aethiopum populos Cepheaque conspicit arua. illic immeritam maternae pendere linguae Andromedan poenas iniustus iusserat Ammon* ('passing an infinite number of countries around and below him, [Perseus] finally sighted the realm of Ethiopian Cepheus, where Ammon, the god of the land, had unjustly ordered the princess Andromeda, innocent girl, to pay the price for her boastful mother [who claimed to surpass the daughters of Nereus in beauty]'). Transl. D. RAEBURN (Penguin).

> the wife of Cepheus, had claimed to rival the Nereids in beauty, boasting that she surpassed them all. The Nereids were enraged by this, and Poseidon, who shared their anger, sent a sea-flood and a monster against the land. Now Ammon had prophesied deliverance from this calamity if Cepheus' daughter Andromeda were offered as prey to the monster, and compelled by the Ethiopians, Cepheus had done so and tied his daughter to a rock. As soon as Perseus saw her, he fell in love, and promised Cepheus that he would destroy the monster if he gave him the rescued girl as a wife. When oaths had been sworn to this effect, Perseus confronted the monster and killed it, and set Andromeda free. Phineus, however, who was a brother of Cepheus and had been promised Andromeda beforehand, plotted against Perseus; but when Perseus learned of the conspiracy, he showed the Gorgon to Phineus and his fellow plotters, turning them to stone on the spot.'[5]

The location of this myth at Iope, at which Strabo hints, is in fact attested very often in ancient literary sources, and seems to have resulted over time in a different 'standard version' in its own right. It has recently been argued, in a study of Roman provincial coinage by Simon Price, that in contrast to the Roman East at large, the use of Greek mythology was not typical for the lands of the Levant: "The civic coins of Syria do include monuments of local importance, and sometimes refer to civic foundations, but seem not to draw on Greek mythological themes. If this regional difference really existed, it needs explanation. This might be in terms of the different position of Hellenic culture in Syria, where the past that was recalled most was not a Greek past."[6] But if it is undeniable that there is less evidence (numismatic, but also otherwise) from the Near East than there is from Greece and Anatolia, the myth of Andromeda at Iope cannot count as the sole exception in this context. According to the *Ethnica* of Stephanus of Byzantium, of which only a late epitome survives, the town's

[5] Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.4.3: Παραγενόμενος δὲ εἰς Αἰθιοπίαν, ἧς ἐβασίλευε Κηφεύς, εὗρε τὴν τούτου θυγατέρα Ἀνδρομέδαν παρακειμένην βορὰν θαλασσίῳ κήτει. Κασσιέπεια γὰρ ἡ Κηφέως γυνὴ Νηρηίσιν ἤρισε περὶ κάλλους, καὶ πασῶν εἶναι κρείσσων ηὔχησεν· ὅθεν αἱ Νηρηίδες ἐμήνισαν, καὶ Ποσειδῶν αὐταῖς συνοργισθεὶς πλήμμυράν τε ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν ἔπεμψε καὶ κῆτος. Ἄμμωνος δὲ χρήσαντος τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῆς συμφορᾶς, ἐὰν ἡ Κασσιεπείας θυγάτηρ Ἀνδρομέδα προτεθῇ τῷ κήτει βορά, τοῦτο ἀναγκασθεὶς ὁ Κηφεὺς ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰθιόπων ἔπραξε, καὶ προσέδησε τὴν θυγατέρα πέτρᾳ. ταύτην θεασάμενος ὁ Περσεὺς καὶ ἐρασθεὶς ἀναιρήσειν ὑπέσχετο Κηφεῖ τὸ κῆτος, εἰ μέλλει σωθεῖσαν αὐτὴν αὐτῷ δώσειν γυναῖκα. ἐπὶ τούτοις γενομένων ὅρκων, ὑποστὰς τὸ κῆτος ἔκτεινε καὶ τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν ἔλυσεν. ἐπιβουλεύοντος δὲ αὐτῷ Φινέως, ὃς ἦν ἀδελφὸς τοῦ Κηφέως ἐγγεγυημένος πρῶτος τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν, μαθὼν τὴν ἐπιβουλήν, τὴν Γοργόνα δείξας μετὰ τῶν συνεπιβουλευόντων αὐτὸν ἐλίθωσε παραχρῆμα. Transl. R. HARD (OWC).

[6] PRICE 2005, p. 120.

Greek name comes from Iope, who was the daughter of Æolus, ruler of the winds, and the wife of Cepheus, who was said to have founded the place.[7] The same tradition is recorded by the twelfth-century scholar Eustathius, in his *Commentary on Dionysius Periegetes*, who writes that the town was named either after that same Iope, or after Io.[8] Similarly, the names of Iope's neighbouring cities, Dora and Ascalon, can be linked with classical mythological figures, Poseidon's son Doros and Tantalus' brother Ascalos respectively. Iope is then simply, in the words of Maurice Sartre, one of the examples from the Near East that shows how "l'œuvre des mythographes était de première importance et contribuait efficacement à doter d'un passé mythique grec de vieilles villes indigènes, dont l'insertion dans le nouveau monde se trouvait ainsi facilitée."[9] If there was a regional difference (between Asia Minor and the Levant) with regard to the application of Greek mythological themes on coins,[10] that may have been less the case with regard to cities' claims of being named after Greek mythological figures, and even less so concerning the knowledge and application of Hellenism in the Near Eastern lands in general.[11] Focussing on the myth of Andromeda at Iope will allow us to appreciate how the snippets of mythological information given by the various authors can be viewed as reflections of a continuously developing consciousness of the mythological past, and to be aware of the dynamic means by which an apparently classical myth could undergo an assortment of particular interpretations in, or with regard to, the Roman Near East.

Strabo deals with the myth of Andromeda at Iope once more, in book XVI, covering Syria.[12] 'Then one comes to Iope, where the seaboard from Egypt, though at first stretching towards the east, makes a significant bend towards the north. Here it was, according to certain

---

[7] Steph. Byz., s.v. Ἰόπη (ed. A. MEINEKE, 1849, p. 333): Ἰόπη, πόλις Φοινίκης …, ἐκλήθη δὲ ἀπὸ Ἰόπης τῆς Αἰόλου θυγατρός, τῆς γυναικὸς Κηφέως τοῦ κτίσαντος καὶ βασιλεύσαντος, τοῦ καταστερισθέντος, οὗ ἐστι γυνὴ Κασσιέπεια.

[8] Eustath. *ad Dion. Per.* 910: ὅτι πόλις Φοινίκης Ἰόπη, κληθεῖσα οὕτως ἢ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰοῦς ἢ ἀπὸ Ἰόπης, θυγατρὸς μὲν Αἰόλου, γυναικὸς δὲ Κηφέως, αφ' οὗ καὶ Κηφῆνες οἱ Αἰθίοπες. Cf. MÜLLER 1861, p. 375.

[9] SARTRE 2001, p. 150.

[10] But note the suggestions by LICHTENBERGER 2004 and the case study by BARKAY 2003, esp. p. 111-40, who has shown how from the late second century AD onwards a new 'visual programme' was introduced on the coinage of Nysa-Scythopolis, directly linking the mythological world of Dionysus to the local foundation legends.

[11] In any case, it cannot be taken for granted that an indigenous past was summoned up instead by the local population, as claimed by PRICE 2005. Cf. MILLAR 1993), esp. p. 6, for the important argument that the Near Eastern lands were characterised by a 'historical amnesia' as far as the Ancient Near Eastern period was concerned. On the place of Greek culture in the Levantine lands in general, see the classic work of BOWERSOCK 1990 and now also SARTRE 2008.

[12] On this passage in Strabo, see BIFFI 2002, p. 217. On the way in which the catalogue of Strabo's passages on cults and myths in book XVI is in itself highly informative about the degree in which the religious life of the early Roman Near East was known and understood (and indeed bothered about), see KAIZER forthcoming.

writers of myths, that Andromeda was exposed to the sea-monster; for the place is situated at a rather high elevation - so high, it is said, that Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Judaeans, is visible from it.'[13] The geographical error (namely that the twist in the shoreline is actually further south[14]) notwithstanding, the passage is highly relevant for the explicit causal connection it makes between the geography of the site and the location of the myth at this very spot, a point reinforced by the author's chosen terminology (… ἐν ὕψει γάρ ἐστιν ἱκανῶς τὸ χωρίον …).[15] Strabo himself may have been sceptical about this particular location, but for those many authors who, as we will see, accepted the setting, the landscape could come to provide the myth with a certain substance and concreteness. And in turn, the myth was able to add a degree of organization to the place and to give sense to it.

It was not the first time this had happened at Iope (nor, indeed, would it be the last time[16]), for, as Jaffa, the town was also the place where the prophet Jonah had embarked a ship in order to avoid God's command to warn Nineveh, before he ended up being swallowed by a sea-monster (*Jonah* 1:3).[17] We will come back to this story, and to the obvious link between the two sea-monsters, later, and will look first at what must be the earliest source that sets the myth of Andromeda here, the fourth-century geographical tract known as the *Periplous* by an author known to us as Ps-Skylax, thus dating from the period before Alexander:[18] '[Ioppe, a city.] They say Androm[eda] was [stret]ched out here [for the monster].'[19] Interestingly, the very mention of the city's name is restored in this passage, no doubt precisely because of the reference to Andromeda, but the listing of Iope between its neighbours - 'Doros, a city of the Sidonians' (Δῶρος πόλις Σιδονίων) and '[Aska]lon, a

---

[13] Strabo 16.2.28 [C759]: εἶτα Ἰόπη, καθ' ἣν ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς Αἰγύπτου παραλία σημειωδῶς ἐπὶ τὴν ἄρκτον κάμπτεται, πρότερον ἐπὶ τὴν ἕω τεταμένη. ἐνταῦθα δὲ μυθεύουσί τινες τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν ἐκτεθῆναι τῷ κήτει· ἐν ὕψει γάρ ἐστιν ἱκανῶς τὸ χωρίον, ὥστ' ἀφορᾶσθαί φασιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα, τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων μητρόπολιν·

[14] On this passage cf. SAFRAI 2005, p. 254: "This is not true: the curve of the coastline is further south (in the Gaza region). But the very mention of this detail shows the use of a geographical text."

[15] Cf. RADT 2009, p. 316, who argues that the choice of γάρ "lässt sich verteidigen unter der Annahme dass nach Strabons Vorstellung die Andromeda-Sage eine hohe Steilküste verlangt, an der das Mädchen angekettet werden konnte."

[16] The very useful paper by HARVEY 1994 not only discusses the Andromeda myth at Iope in some detail, but also notes that the town became a target for Christian pilgrims as the site where Tabitha, also known as Dorcas, had been resurrected by St Peter (*Acts* 9:36-43).

[17] But see the proposed emendation of the verse by HÜSING 1907, p. 72, who ingeniously wished to get rid of Jaffa from the narrative.

[18] HARVEY 1994, p. 5 runs through the earlier sources which had not located the myth of Andromeda at Iope.

[19] *Periplous* 104, cod.93: [Ἰόππη πόλις· ἐκτε]θῆναί φασιν ἐνταῦθα τὴν Ἀνδρομ[έδαν τῷ κήτει]. For the text, which bears the name of Scylax of Caryanda, cf. MÜLLER 1855), p. 15-96, at p. 79. New edition of text and translation in progress by G. SHIPLEY, and provisional translation available at http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/archaeology/people/shipley/pseudo-skylax.

city of the Tyrians and a royal seat' (Ἀσκά]λων πόλις Τυρίων καὶ βασίλεια) - must make the restoration secure. This early attestation of the convention to locate the myth of Andromeda at Iope is important, since certain ingredients of mythological stories could become, in the words of Simon Price, "too fixed in the tradition to be readily altered."[20]

With the myth located at the Palestinian port town by the fourth century at the latest, supported no doubt by certain aspects of the site's topography, over time other elements too came to help to stake Iope's claim to the Andromeda story. Pomponius Mela, who probably wrote under Claudius,[21] states that 'Iope was founded, as they tell it, before the flood. Iope is where the locals claim that Cepheus was king, based on the proof that particular old altars - altars with the greatest taboo - continue to bear an inscription of that man and his brother Phineus. What is more they even point out the huge bones of the sea-monster as a clear reminder of the event celebrated in song and legend, and as a clear reminder of Andromeda, who was saved by Perseus.'[22] Boasting that Iope was founded 'before the flood' will have added to the cachet of antiquity already provided by the classical etymology of its name. But it was the combination of two so-called 'hard facts' (in addition to the local topography) that Iope would turn to, according to Pomponius Mela, in support of its claimed entitlement to host the myth of Andromeda: firstly ancient altars, 'with the greatest taboo', inscribed with the names of its legendary king Cepheus and his brother Phineus (the one who had been promised his niece but lost out to Perseus), and secondly the relics of the *marina belua* who had threatened Andromeda. To put these artefacts in context and to ensure that they led to the appropriate commemoration, the myth was said to have been 'celebrated in song and legend'.

The remains of Iope's sea-monster were not unique in the Roman Near East. Well to the northeast of Iope, at the Macra plain behind the Lebanon mountains, the corpse of a fallen dragon (… τὸν δράκοντα πεπτωκότα … νεκρόν …) was still to be seen. According to Posidonius, as preserved through Strabo, this 'was about a plethrum in length, and so bulky that horsemen standing by it on either side could not see one another; and its jaws were large enough to admit a man on horseback, and each flake of its horny scales exceeded an oblong

[20] PRICE 2005, p. 119.
[21] On how to read the text, see now BATTY 2000.
[22] Pomp. Mela 1.64: *est Iope ante diluvium ut ferunt condita, ubi Cephea regnasse eo signo accolae adfirmant, quod titulum eius fratrisque Phinei veteres quaedam arae cum religione plurima retinent: quin etiam rei celebratae carminibus ac fabulis, servataeque a Perseo Andromedae clarum vestigium marinae beluae ossa inmania ostentant.* Transl. ROMER 1998.

shield in lenght.'[23] This could of course be just another instance of Strabo's inclusion of *mirabilia* in his *Geography*, but Katherine Clarke has warned against rashly writing off such items as being removed from the historical domain.[24] Accordingly, the corpse of the fallen dragon may perhaps be connected with the above-quoted passage (at 16.2.28 [C759]) on Iope and jointly considered as a witness to the presence of whales on the Syrian coast.[25]

As regards the *marinae beluae ossa inmania* Pomponius Mela talks about, they should not have been there by the time he wrote. *Ca* one century earlier, they are said to have been carried, perhaps inevitably, by a notorious Roman official to the empire's capital: 'The skeleton of the monster to which Andromeda in the story was exposed was brought by Marcus Scaurus from the town of Iope in Judaea and shown at Rome among the rest of the marvels during his aedileship; it was 40 ft. long, the height of the ribs exceeding the elephants of India, and the spine being 1 ft. 6 inches thick.'[26] The 'huge bones of the sea-monster' thus found their way across the Mediterranean in order for Scaurus to celebrate in 58 BC in style his Aedilician Games, games which were long to be remembered for their extravagance.[27] So how could they still be seen at Iope under the reign of Claudius? It is perhaps most logical to assume that Mela used an older source to provide him with the information about the bones and was blissfully unaware of their removal. The alternative, that Rome cordially returned the sea-monster's frame to Iope after Scaurus' Games had taken place, is not impossible but neither is it very convincing. There is however a third, more cynical option, namely that either the civic authorities in Iope made sure they replaced the skeleton that Scaurus had taken along or that there had always been more than one skeleton at the site.

In any case, even without the skeleton Iope was not without the necessary requisites to back up its claim to Andromeda's fame. According to Josephus, 'here are still shown the

---

[23] Strabo 16.2.17 [C755]: … μῆκος σχεδόν τι καὶ πλεθριαῖον, πάχος δ', ὥσθ' ἱππέας ἑκατέρωθεν παραστάντας ἀλλήλους μὴ καθορᾶν, χάσμα δέ, ὥστ' ἔφιππον δέξασθαι, τῆς δὲ φολίδος λεπίδα ἑκάστην ὑπεραίρουσαν θυρεοῦ.

[24] CLARKE 1999, p. 178: "such creatures were not far from being treated as part of historical reality in Hellenistic accounts of the Near East. In particular, the emergence of creatures from the sea to contribute to the development of civilization was an important feature of the early history of Babylonia."

[25] Thus RADT 2009, p. 304 and p. 315.

[26] Pliny *HN* 9.4/11: *beluae cui dicebatur exposita fuisse Andromeda ossa Romae apportata ex oppido Iudaeae Ioppe ostendit inter reliqua miracula in aedilitate sua M. Scaurus longitudine pedum XL, altitudine costarum Indicos elephantos excedente, spinae crassitudine sesquipedali.*

[27] Cf. BROUGHTON 1952, p. 195 for all references. This is of course the same Scaurus who shamelessly celebrated this same aedileship with a coin (*RRC* I, p.446, n°422) that misleadingly depicted the Nabataean king Aretas (III) in an act of surrender, although the former quaestor's campaign against the Nabataeans had been quickly abandoned in 62 BC after three hundred talents had been paid to Rome, cf. Joseph. *Ant.* 14.5.1 [80-1].

impressions of Andromeda's chains, to attest the antiquity of that legend',[28] and these particulars were accurately transmitted in the early seventh century by Isidorus bishop of Sevilla, who clearly based himself on the Josephus passage.[29] In his commentary on the book of *Jonah*, to which we will come back later, St Jerome wrote that 'in this place even to this day [i.e. the late fourth /early fifth century AD] rocks can be seen on the shore on which the chained Andromeda was saved by Perseus. The learned reader will know the story. And in light of the nature of the countryside, it is said quite rightly that the prophet came from a direction that is mountainous and precipitous, and went down to Joppa in the plain.'[30] As regards the Andromeda myth, the church father cannot help to describe it as a 'poetic fable' in a letter of consolation written to Eustochium, in which he describes the journey to the Near East made by her mother Paula,[31] but whether he witnessed the site in person himself remains debatable.[32]

As if the impressions of Andromeda's chains on the cliffs at Iope were not enough, Pausanias brings yet another link between town and myth in the picture: 'Red water, in colour like blood, is found in the land of the Hebrews near the city of Iope. The water is close to the sea, and the account which the natives give of the spring is that Perseus, after destroying the sea-monster, to which the daughter of Cepheus was exposed, washed off the blood in the

---

[28] Joseph. *BJ* 3.9.3 [420]: ἔνθα καὶ τῶν Ἀνδρομέδας δεσμῶν ἔτι δεικνύμενοι τύποι πιστοῦνται τὴν ἀρχαιότητα τοῦ μύθου.

[29] Isid. *Etym.* 15.1.19: *Ioppe oppidum Palaestinae maritimum idem Palaestini aedificaverunt; ubi saxum ostenditur quod vinculorum Andromedae vestigia adhuc retinet; cuius beluae forma eminentior elephantis fuit.*

[30] Jer. *Comm. in Ionam* 1.3: *Hic locus est, in quo usque hodie saxa monstrantur in littore, in quibus Andromeda religata, Persei quondam sit liberate praesidio. Scit eruditus lector historiam; sed et juxta regionis naturam de montanis et arduis ad Joppen et campestria veniens propheta, recte dicitur descendisse …*) Ed. J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologia Latina* 25, col. 1123A. Transl. R. MACGREGOR (http://litteralchristianlibrary.wetpaint.com/page/Jonah+Commentary).

[31] Jer. *Ep.* 108.8: *Joppen quoque fugientis portum Jonae; et (ut aliquid perstringam de fabulis Poetarum) religatae ad saxum Andromedae spectatricem.* ('Iope too is hard by, the port of Jonah's flight; which also - if I may introduce a poetic fable - saw Andromeda bound to the rock'.) Ed. J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologia Latina* 22, col. 883. Transl. W.H. FREMANTLE (NPNF, 2nd ser. VI).

[32] Cf. HUNT 1984, p. 172, and esp. HARVEY 1994, p. 11-2, n.54. Note the rather confusing third mention of Iope by Jerome, seldom quoted in this context, in *Apol. adv. lib. Rufini* 3.22: *Veni Rhegium, in Scyllaeo littore paululum steti, ubi veteres didici fabulas, et praecipitem pellacis* [Al. *fallicis*] *Ulyssis cursum, et sirenarium cantica, et insatiabilem Charybdis voraginem. Cumque mihi accolae illius loci multa narrarent, darentque consilium, ut non ad Protei columnas, sed ad Jonae portum navigarem: illum enim fugientium et turbatorum, hunc securi hominis esse cursum, malui per Maleas et Cycladas Cyprum pergere.* ('I arrived at Rhegium. I stood for a while on the shore of Scylla, and heard the old stories of the rapid voyage of the versatile Ulysses, of the songs of the sirens and the insatiable whirlpool of Charybdis. The inhabitants of that spot told me many tales, and gave me the advice that I should sail not for the columns of Proteus but for the port where Jonah landed, because the former of those was the course suited for men who were hurried and flying, but the latter was best for a man who was imprisoned; but I preferred to take the course by Malea and the Cyclades to Cyprus.') Ed. J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologia Latina* 23, coll. 494C-495A. Transl. W.H. FREMANTLE (NPNF, 2nd ser. III).

spring.'[33] Interestingly, when one of the two Philostrati describes a painting of Perseus and Andromeda in the Εἰκόνες, the colouring of the water because of the sea-monster's blood is relocated again to the Ethiopian sphere and is specifically said to have given the Red Sea its name.[34] In any case, the passage from Pausanias calls to mind the way in which yet another Second Sophistic author accounts for the peculiar colour of the river Adonis, in the hinterland of the Phoenician coastal city Byblos. In *On the Syrian Goddess*, Lucian describes how 'each year the river grows bloody and, losing its normal hue, flows into the sea and incarnadines the greater part of it, signalling the rituals of mourning to the Byblians; the story is that on these days Adonis is wounded on Lebanon, and the blood that reaches the water changes the colour of the river and gives the stream its name.'[35] But contrasting "a miraculous explanation with a rational one",[36] the author then adds the alternative explanation, given by 'a certain Byblian who seemed to be telling the truth', that the phenomenon was due to the terrain: 'Strong winds which arise on those days carry the earth, which is red in the highest degree, into the river, and it is the earth that makes it bloody.'[37] I have no intention to enter here in the debate on how to read and use *On the Syrian Goddess*, and the addition of the rationalising account to the one that makes a link with the myth of Adonis may of course very well be the direct result of this text being a "deliberate linguistic parody of Herodotus".[38] But the much more detailed passage in Lucian nevertheless throws light on that in Pausanias, and one might tentatively suggest that also at Iope mythological and scientific justifications co-existed, naturally without being mutually exclusive. As we will see later, it would not have been the only rationalization in the context of the myth of Andromeda at Iope, as even the appearance of the sea-monster itself has been subject to such a process.

---

[33] Paus. 4.35.6: ξανθὸν δὲ ὕδωρ, οὐδέν τι ἀποδέον τὴν χρόαν αἵματος, Ἑβραίων ἡ γῆ παρέχεται πρὸς Ἰόππῃ πόλει· θαλάσσης μὲν ἐγγυτάτω τὸ ὕδωρ ἐστί, λόγον δὲ ἐς τὴν πηγὴν λέγουσιν οἱ ταύτῃ, Περσέα ἀνελόντα τὸ κῆτος, ᾧ τὴν παῖδα προκεῖσθαι τοῦ Κηφέως, ἐνταῦθα τὸ αἷμα ἀπονίψασθαι.

[34] Philostr. *Imag.* 1.29.2: … τετέλεσται ἤδη ὁ ἆθλος, καὶ τὸ μὲν κῆτος ἔρριπται πρὸ τῆς ἠόνος ἐμπλημμυροῦν πηγαῖς αἵματος, ὑφ' ὧν ἐρυθρὰ ἡ θάλασσα … ('the contest is already finished and the monster lies stretched out on the strand, weltering in streams of blood - the reason the sea is red').

[35] Lucian, *Syr. D.* 8: ὁ δὲ ποταμὸς ἑκάστου ἔτεος αἱμάσσεται καὶ τὴν χροιὰν ὀλέσας ἐσπίπτει ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ φοινίσσει τὸ πολλὸν τοῦ πελάγεος καὶ σημαίνει τοῖς Βυβλίοις τὰ πένθεα. μυθέονται δὲ ὅτι ταύτῃσι τῇσι ἡμέρῃσιν ὁ Ἄδωνις ἀνὰ τὸν Λίβανον τιτρώσκεται, καὶ τὸ αἷμα ἐς τὸ ὕδωρ ἐρχόμενον ἀλλάσσει τὸν ποταμὸν καὶ τῷ ῥόῳ τὴν ἐπωνυμίην διδοῖ. Transl. LIGHTFOOT 2003.

[36] LIGHTFOOT 2003, p. 327. Cf. ibid., p. 169.

[37] Lucian, *Syr. D.* 8: ἄνεμοι ὦν τρηχέες ἐκείνῃσι τῇσιν ἡμέρῃσιν ἱστάμενοι τὴν γῆν τῷ ποταμῷ ἐπιφέρουσιν ἐοῦσαν ἐς τὰ μάλιστα μιλτώδεα, ἡ δὲ γῆ μιν αἱμώδεα τίθησιν. Transl. LIGHTFOOT 2003.

[38] Thus MILLAR 1993, p. 245. Any reader of this text must now immerse fully in the commentary by LIGHTFOOT 2003, esp. p. 305-28, with p. 327-8 on the lines quoted. Cf. KAIZER 2008, p. 28-9.

The sea-monster, constantly indicated in Greek with κῆτος, makes a surprise appearance in the *Natural History*, when Pliny writes that at Iope, which he labels a Phoenician city (in which he was followed in later times by Stephanus Byzantius and accordingly by Eustathius), 'there is a cult of the legendary goddess Ceto' (*colitur illic fabulosa Ceto*). The passage furthermore touches on the issues we have already encountered in other sources: 'it is said to have existed before the flood; it is situated on a hill, and in front of it is a rock on which they point out marks made by the chains with which Andromeda was fettered.'[39] But the addition that *fabulosa Ceto* received a cult at Iope is surprisingly made without an indication of the κῆτος that had endeavoured to devour Andromeda in the Greek myth. As regards the divine name itself, Ceto, this is most likely to have been connected to that of Derceto, whom Pliny mentions elsewhere in his work as the *interpretatio Graeca* of Atargatis of Hierapolis,[40] though not with any hint of a connection with the Ceto he mentions at Iope.[41] As for Derceto, Lucian described her Phoenician image as 'an outlandish sight' (θέημα ξένον): 'half was a woman, but from her thighs to the tips of her toes extended the tail of a fish' (ἡμισέη μὲν γυνή, τὸ δὲ ὁκόσον ἐκ μηρῶν ἐς ἄκρους πόδας ἰχθύος οὐρὴ ἀποτείνεται).[42]

The κῆτος from the Greek versions of the myth of Andromeda, at Iope as elsewhere,[43] is also attested in the Biblical story.[44] The Septuagint translates the Hebrew דָּג גָּדוֹל ('great fish') of *Jonah* 2:1 as κῆτος μέγας, and similarly the prophet's sea-monster is a

[39] Pliny, *HN* 5.14/69: *Iope Phoenicum, antiquior terrarum inundatione, ut ferunt, insidet collem praeiacente saxo in quo vinculorum Andromedae vestigia ostendunt; colitur illic fabulosa Ceto.* Cf. SALLMANN 1971, p. 178, who denied the "Anachronismus" that some scholars had seen in this passage.

[40] Pliny, *HN* 5.19.81: *Bambycen quae alio nomine Hierapolis vocatur, Syris vero Mabog - ibi prodigiosa Atargatis, Graecis autem Derceto dicta, colitur* ('Bambyx, which is also named Hierapolis, but which the Syrians call Mabog - here the monstrous goddess Atargatis, the Greek name for whom is Derceto, is worshipped').

[41] In fact, Pliny uses the term *belua* both at *HN* 5.34/128 and at 9.4/11.

[42] Lucian, *Syr. D.* 14. Transl. LIGHTFOOT 2003.

[43] The term also appears in Euripides' fragmentarily preserved play *Andromeda*, in two scraps of text describing the sea-monster to which the innocent girl was exposed. Cf. fr.121 (probably spoken by Andromeda: ἐκθεῖναι κήτει φορβάν, '(to) expose (me) as fodder for the sea-monster') and fr.145 (probably spoken by the messenger: ὁρῶ δὲ πρὸς τὰ [or τῆς] παρθένου θοινάματα κῆτος θοάζον ἐξ Ἀτλαντικῆς ἁλός, 'I see the sea-monster moving swiftly from the Atlantic brine to feast on the maiden'). Ed. NAUCK 1889). Transl. J. GIBERT, in COLLARD, CROPP & GIBERT 2004. Cf. also BUBEL 1991, where the fragments are F10* (hence doubtful) and F36, respectively.

[44] For some, the link is very explicit indeed: LAWRENCE 1962, p. 295, states how "Jonah's ketos has a long history in Greek art. It is he as a rule who threatens Andromeda and Hesione." Present-day Jaffa boasts an impressive sculpture of a sea-monster in the city centre [PLATE I], but since it is clearly shaped in the form of a whale - which in later traditions came to play the fish part in the Jonah story, certainly by 1534 when William Tyndale translated κῆτος/*cetus* in *Matthew* 12:40 (on which see below) with 'whale' - it is unlikely to be a reflection of the κῆτος from the myth of Andromeda.

κῆτος when mentioned in *3 Macc.* 6:8. And although the passage in the book of *Jonah* is translated with *piscis granda* in the Vulgate,[45] the appearance of *cetus* in the gospel episode in which Jesus states that the Son of Man will be in his tomb for as long as Jonah spent inside the sea-monster,[46] makes clear that St Jerome was well aware of the possibility to render κῆτος with the Latinised version of the Greek term. To make matters even more potentially confusing, in 'standard' Greek or Graeco-Roman mythology, as transmitted by Apollodorus (*Bibl.* 1.2.6-7), Κητώ was the daughter of Pontos and Ge (the personifications of Sea and Earth) and the mother of the Phorcides and the Gorgons, while her nieces, the Nereids, also counted amongst their number a Κητὼ. Much later, Nonnus (*Dion.* 26.351-5) names Κητώ as a nymph (Νηιὰς) and a daughter of Oceanus, and has her bearing a daughter, Astris, to Helios.[47]

I have already noted that the κῆτος itself had also become subject to a rationalising procedure. For this, we must now turn to the lengthy interpretation of the myth of Andromeda at Iope as given by Conon the mythographer, who wrote under Augustus, and whose fifty mythical 'narratives' (*Diegeseis*) are preserved in the ninth-century *Library* of Photius:

> 'The 40th story tells the story of Andromeda differently than the Greek myth. For there were two brothers, Cepheus and Phineus, and the kingdom of Cepheus was then in what was later renamed Phoinike but at that time was Iopa, taking its name from the town Iope next to the sea. And the borders of the kingdom extended from the sea on our side as far as the Arabs who dwell next to the Red Sea. Cepheus also had a very beautiful daughter Andromeda, and both Phoinix and Phineus, the brother of Cepheus, courted her. After many rounds of deliberation concerning each of them, Cepheus decided to give her to Phoinix and to conceal his own acquiescence [in the matter] by means of an abduction carried out by the suitor. And Andromeda was snatched from a certain desert island to which she was accustomed to go to offer sacrifices to Aphrodite. When Phoinix abducted her in his ship (it was called *Ketos* ['Sea Monster'], either because it resembled the animal or by chance), Andromeda, thinking she was being abducted without her father's

[45] *Jonah* 2:1: *Et praeparavit Dominus piscem grandem, ut deglutiret Ionam*.
[46] *Matthew* 12:40: *Sicut enim fuit Ionas in ventre ceti tribus diebus et tribus noctibus, sic erit Filius hominis in corde terrae tribus diebus et tribus noctibus*.
[47] It may also be interesting to note that 'Cetus' joined the myth's other protagonists (Andromeda, Perseus, Cepheus, and Cassiepeia) as a constellation, and the entry on 'Andromeda' in *OCD*[3], p.88, suspects that "it is one of the very few Greek star-myths which can be traced back to an earlier date than the Alexandrian period."

> knowledge, wailed aloud and dolorously called upon people to come to her assistance. Perseus, the son of Danae, who just happened to be sailing by, put in, and overcome with pity and love for the girl at first glance, destroyed the ship Ketos and killed the sailors who had been all but petrified with terror. And this is for the Greeks the sea monster of myth [τὸ τοῦ μύθου κῆτος] and the men hardened into stones by the Gorgon's head. He then married Andromeda and she sailed away to Greece with Perseus, and under his rule Argos was settled.'[48]

The very fact that this version of the story *is* a truly alternative one is explicitly acknowledged in the opening line, although it remains ambiguous whether this observation goes back to Conon himself or whether it is owed to Photius.[49] We encounter the two brothers Cepheus and Phineus again, and - matching the tradition transmitted through Stephanus Byzantius that Cepheus had been king over Iope (in addition to being its founder) - his kingdom is said to have been in 'Iopa', named after the port town. As was the case in the 'standard version' of the myth as presented in Apollodorus' *Library*, Phineus again loses out on the girl, but this time to a suitor named Phoinix, the eponymic ruler over Phoenicia[50] (as Cepheus' realm was to be renamed). But the κῆτος in this version is simply the ship in which Phoinix abducted Andromeda, based on the apparent logic that it must have looked like a Sea-Monster (as ancient Phoenician ships indeed did![51]). A second explanation away from Greek mythology comes further on in the passage, when Perseus, coincidentally coming

---

[48] Conon, *Narr.* (40), apud Phot. *Bibl.*, Cod. 186, p.138b-139a (BEKKER) = *FGrH* I, 26, F1: Ἡ μ′ ἱστορία τὰ περὶ Ἀνδρομέδας ἱστορεῖ ἑτέρως ἢ ὡς ὁ Ἑλλήνων μῦθος· ἀδελφοὺς μὲν γὰρ δύο γενέσθαι Κηφέα καὶ Φινέα, καὶ εἶναι τὴν τοῦ Κηφέως βασιλείαν τότε ἐν τῇ μετονομασθείσῃ μὲν ὕστερον Φοινίκῃ, τηνικαῦτα δ′ Ἰόππᾳ ἀπὸ Ἰόππης τῆς ἐπιθαλασσιδίου πόλεως τοὔνομα λαβούσῃ. Καὶ ἦν τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς ὅρια ἀπὸ τῆς καθ′ ἡμᾶς θαλάσσης μέχρι Ἀράβων τῶν πρὸς τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν ᾠκημένων. Εἶναι δὲ τῷ Κηφεῖ καὶ θυγατέρα πάνυ καλὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν, καὶ αὐτὴν μνᾶσθαι Φοινικά τε καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν Κηφέως Φινέα. Κηφεὺς δὲ μετὰ πολλοὺς τοὺς ἐφ′ ἑκατέρῳ λογισμοὺς ἔγνω δοῦναι μὲν Φοίνικι, ἁρπαγῇ δὲ τοῦ μνηστῆρος τὸ αὑτοῦ ἑκούσιον ἀποκρύπτειν· καὶ ἁρπάζεται ἀπό τινος νησῖδος ἐρήμου ἡ Ἀνδρομέδα ἐν ᾧ εἰώθει ἀπιοῦσα θυσίας τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ θύειν· Φοίνικος δ′ ἁρπάσαντος νηΐ (Κῆτος δ′ αὕτη ἐκαλεῖτο ἢ μίμησιν ἔχουσα τοῦ ζῷου ἢ κατὰ τύχην), ἡ Ἀνδρομέδα, ὡς κατὰ ἄγνοιαν τοῦ πατρὸς ἁρπαζομένη ἀνωλοφύρατό τε καὶ μετ′ οἰμωγῆς τοὺς βοηθήσοντας ἀνεκαλεῖτο. Περσεὺς δ′ ὁ Δανάης κατὰ δαίμονα παραπλέων κατίσχει καὶ πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ὄψιν τῆς κόρης οἴκτῳ καὶ ἔρωτι συσχεθεὶς τό τε πλοῖον, τὸ Κῆτος, διαφθείρει καὶ τοὺς ἐμπλέοντας ὑπὸ ἐκπλήξεως μόνον οὐχὶ λιθωθέντας ἀναιρεῖ. Καὶ τοῦτο Ἕλλησι τὸ τοῦ μύθου κῆτος καὶ οἱ παγέντες εἰς λίθους ἄνθρωποι τῆς Γοργόνος τῇ κεφαλῇ. Ἄγεται δ′ οὖν γυναῖκα τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν, καὶ οἴχεται αὐτὴ συμπλέουσα εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα τῷ Περσεῖ, καὶ βασιλεύοντος τὸ Ἄργος οἰκεῖται. Transl. BROWN 2002, p. 272-8. Cf. STERN 1974, p. 352-4.

[49] BROWN 2002, p. 275.

[50] Cf. BROWN 2002, p. 277: "traditionally the king of either Sidon or Tyre".

[51] Cf. BRODY 1998, esp. p. 70-1, with e.g. figs. 22 and 65.

to the rescue, 'killed the sailors who had been all but petrified with terror.' Corresponding to similar rationalizations elsewhere in his narratives,[52] Conon states that 'this is for the Greeks the sea monster of myth and the men hardened into stones by the Gorgon's head' (which we have also encountered in Apollodorus' more conventional account).

In this version of the myth, Andromeda is also said to have been 'snatched from a certain desert island to which she was accustomed to go to offer sacrifices to Aphrodite', by Phoenix in his ship called 'Sea-Monster'. This aspect of the island is otherwise unknown in renditions of the story, but it may well be linked with an island just off the coast from Iope that is, uniquely, written about in another passage in Pliny's *Natural History* that touches upon the myth, in the context of an enumeration of the isles off the coast of Asia:[53] 'Then in the Phoenician Sea off Iope lies Paria, the whole of which is a town - it is said to have been the place where Andromeda was exposed to the monster.'[54]

As we have seen, at least by the fourth century BC the myth of Andromeda had been relocated to Iope, and this transfer must have taken place above all "through the local tradition of the *ketos*."[55] But the problem remains that Cepheus, who was an Ethiopian king, and his daughter Andromeda, who was hence an Ethiopian princess, ended up on the coast of Palestine.[56] Paul Harvey has drawn attention to how "learned Greeks and Romans exercised their ingenuity" to solve this problem by "adding Phoinix, Phoenicians, and bad etymology to the tradition,"[57] referring to the earlier mentioned passage in Conon according to which Cepheus meant to give his girl to the eponymous ruler over Phoenicia, and to the explanation, preserved by Stephanus of Byzantium, that the name of the city of Iope derived from that of

[52] BROWN 2002, p. 27-31 and p. 277, also with references to rationalizations attested in other authors.
[53] Cf. BROWN 2002, p. 277. With regard to the island in Conon being that of Aprhodite, BROWN notes that "after seeing Andromeda and resolving to rescue her, Perseus in Euripides' *Andromeda* first says a prayer to Eros", with a reference to fr.136 in NAUCK 1889.
[54] Pliny, *HN* 5.34/128: *in Phoenicio deinde mari est ante Iopen Paria, tota oppidum, in qua obiectam beluae Andromedam ferunt*.
[55] HARVEY 1994, p. 6. Cf. the suggestion noted above, by RADT 2009, that Posidonius' recording of the corpse of the fallen dragon in the Macra plain hints at the existence of whales along the coast. It should be stressed that Iope did not need to have been a Jewish city as such at this early stage for a conflation between Andromeda's monster and that of Jonah to have taken place at some level. One could bring into the discussion here also the notion of indigenous antecedents in the form of the divine hero's battle against the monster on the Mediterranean coast, as known from the Ugaritic tablets found at Ras Shamra. Cf. e.g. PARKER 1997, n°18 (on the binding of a sea monster); n°9, esp. III.38-40 (from the Baal cycle), and on the potential contribution of these texts to the field, cf. e.g. LORETZ 1990.
[56] Lucian, the famous satirist from Samosata, of course referred to the tale as an Ethiopian one (*Salt.* 44: ἡ Αἰθιοπικὴ διήγησις). Cf. *Dial. Mar.* 14 (323), where he locates the activities of Perseus at the Ethiopian shore (ἐπεὶ δὲ κατὰ τὴν παράλιον ταύτην Αἰθιοπίαν ἐγένετο …).
[57] HARVEY 1994, p. 7.

the country of Ethiopia.[58] Harvey then brought what he called the "historical revisionism"[59] of Tacitus in the picture: as part of the vile description of the Jews at the beginning of the final book of the *Histories*,[60] the Roman historian traces them to Egypt and adds that 'many assure us that the Jews are descended from those Ethiopians who were driven by fear and hatred to emigrate from their home country when Cepheus was king.'[61] According to Harvey, "this odd account is of no little historiographic significance, for Tacitus here reveals how the Jewish tradition of the Exodus was revised so as to supply a proper historical pedigree for the Andromeda myth at Joppa."[62] In addition, we could also refer to yet another passage in Pliny the Elder, who is talking about how Ethiopia had once been a powerful country when he writes that 'the stories about Andromeda show that [Ethiopia] dominated Syria and the coasts of the Mediterranean in the time of king Cepheus.'[63] However, it is clear that "from the earliest sources known to us there are indications that the story was referred to the lands about the eastern end of the Mediterranean."[64] In a fragment of the *Catalogue of Women* (attributed since Antiquity to Hesiod, but according to most scholars from a later date, though in any case well before the fifth century[65]), Cassiepeia is named as the wife of Phoinix, giving birth to Phineus, and the Near Eastern element may well have been more part and parcel of the myth than is generally assumed.[66]

There is perhaps one further element that could throw light on why the port town was such a fertile breeding ground for the myth of Andromeda. We have already seen how Stephanus Byzantius writes that the Greek name of Iope came from 'Iope, daughter of Æolus and wife of Cepheus', a tradition followed by Eustathius in his *Commentary on Dionysius Periegetes*, but the entry in the *Ethnica* goes on to say that the wife of Cepheus was Cassiepeia (as we know it of course from 'standard' mythology). The formulation in Stephanus seems to point to a fusion of his sources, but the result is that the entry seems to explicitly identify Iope with Andromeda's mother Cassiepeia. In the *Suda*, the latter is

---

[58] Steph. Byz., s.v. Ἰόπη (ed. A. MEINEKE, 1849, p.334): λέγεται καὶ Ἰοπία διὰ τοῦ ῑ, καὶ ἴσως ἐκ τοῦ Αἰθιοπία.
[59] HARVEY 1994, p. 7.
[60] Cf. now GRUEN 2010, also to be reprinted as a chapter in a forthcoming book by the same author.
[61] Tac. *Hist.* 5.2: *plerique Aethiopum prolem, quos rege Cepheo metus atque odium mutare sedes perpulerit*. Transl. K. WELLESLEY (Penguin).
[62] HARVEY 1994, p. 7, with n.26 for further references.
[63] Pliny, *HN* 6.35/182: *Syriae imperitasse eam nostroque litori aetate Regis Cephei patet Andromedae fabulis*.
[64] Thus FONTENROSE 1959, p. 276-9, at p. 277.
[65] For a full discussion on the academic disputes concerning the date, see HIRSCHBERGER 2004, p. 42-51. Cf. HUNTER 2005, p. 2-3.
[66] Schol. Apoll. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.178: ὡς δὲ Ἡσίοδός φησιν, [Φινεύς] Φοίνικος τοῦ Ἀγήνορος καὶ Κασσιεπείας. Cf..MERKELBACH & WEST 1967, n°138; and the LCL editions by H.G. EVELYN-WHITE, n°20, and by G.W. MOST, n°96.

explained as ἡ καλλονή, 'Beauty' personified.[67] And this becomes particularly pertinent when we take into account that Jaffa (יפו) seems to be related to the Hebrew word for 'beauty (יפי) [to beautify (Pi.) (יפה)] - even if Christian legends preferred to link the city's name to that of Noah's third son Japhet. In other words, the most likely meaning of the town's Hebrew name corresponds directly with the meaning of Cassiepeia, who not only is identified in some sources with the mythological figure after whom the town was named in Greek, but who also is the mother of the leading protagonist in the classical myth invariably located there.[68] In support, one should also mention a passage in the *Commentary on Jonah*, where it is said that the name of Iope means 'beautiful' (although it remains ambiguous whether St Jerome has Iope or the Hebrew name Jaffa in mind).[69]

It will not be surprising to learn that some of the central characters in the myth of Andromeda came to be depicted on Iope's civic coinage. The local issues are generally little known and not well preserved, but we have a specimen from the late Severan period with a legend showing that the city had acquired the additional name *Flavia*,[70] reflecting a re-foundation under Vespasian or his sons following its destruction [twice] in the course of the Jewish war.[71] Since there is, in general in the Roman East, much less civic coinage under the early empire than later on in the second and third centuries, it remains impossible to know whether the mythological protagonists were introduced near the beginning of the minting process at Iope or only later on. In any case, in the early third century Perseus was depicted with the head of the Gorgon in his hand [PLATE II], and also his protective goddess, Athena, appears then on the local coinage [PLATE III].[72] But most peculiar is an autonomous bronze, of which the obverse shows the bust of a traditional city goddess with *corona muralis*, but the

---

[67] *Suda*, s.v. κασσιέπεια (ed. A. ADLER: κ 453): ἡ καλλονή. καὶ ὄνομα κύριον ('Beauty; also a personal name').

[68] On this link, etymological and otherwise, between Iope and Cassiepeia, whose name also appears as Kassiopê and Kassiopeia, with all references, see FONTENROSE 1959, p. 279 n.7.

[69] Jer. *Comm. in Ionam* 1.3: *Vel certe quoniam Tharsis interpretatur contemplatio gaudii, veniens ad Joppen propheta, quae et ipsa speciosam sonat, ire festinat ad gaudium, et quietis beatitudine perfrui, totum se tradere theoriae, melius esse arbitrans pulchritudine et varietate scientiae perfrui, quam per occasionem salutis gentium caeterarum perire populum, de quo Christus in carne generandus sit.* ('Or even since Tarshish can be translated as 'contemplation of joy', the prophet, coming to Iope, whose name means 'beautiful', hastens to hurry towards the joy and to rejoice in the pleasure of rest, to give himself completely over of contemplation. For he thinks that it is better to rejoice in beauty and in the variety of knowledge than to save the other people by letting that people die, from whom Christ would have been born.'). Ed. J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologia Latina* 25, col. 1122D. Transl. R. MACGREGOR (http://litteralchristianlibrary.wetpaint.com/page/Jonah+Commentary). See now MILLAR 2010 for some reflection on the linguistic aptitude of St Jerome and his "boundless curiosity about language" (p. 76).

[70] HEAD 1911, p. 803: Athena type with legend ΦΛΑΟΥΙΟ ΙΟΠΠΗΣ. Cf. DARRICARRÈRE 1882, p. 74-5 (*non vidi*).

[71] Joseph. *BJ* 2.18.10 [507-8] and 3.9.4 [428-31].

[72] MESHORER 1985, p. 24, n^{os}35 and 38.

reverse (with accompanying legend ΙΟΠΗ) seems to have an image of Andromeda chained on her rock [PLATE IV]. Though some early scholars have preferred to see Poseidon in the image, Andromeda makes of course more sense in this particular local context.[73]

The variety of accounts of the myth of Andromeda at Iope have thus far not been associated with a series of three Near Eastern mosaics that have as subject the beauty contest between Andromeda's mother Cassiepeia and the Nereids.[74] These mosaics, however, could serve to raise important questions about the insufficient capacity of classical mythology with regard to the provision of a supra-regional framework in which to interpret the divine inhabitants of the Roman Levant. As the first of the mosaics to be discovered, in the late 1930s, in a house behind the temple of Bel, the one from Palmyra [PLATE V] was originally interpreted, quite naturally it seemed at the time, as a depiction of the familiar story that saw Cassiepeia boasting that she was more beautiful than the Nereids, with the consequence that Poseidon (who was depicted in the centre of the circular mosaic, above Cassiepeia [PLATE VI]) got very angry and sent a sea-monster in revenge, with a dire effect for Andromeda.[75] In more recent years, however, two mosaics were discovered in the region, at Nea Paphos on Cyprus [PLATE VII] and at Apamea [PLATE VIII-IX], which to everybody's surprise showed Cassiepeia as the victress in the event, being crowned by a Nikè in the presence of Poseidon who is acting as a judge in the contest. It now became clear that the Palmyra mosaic, which is damaged at crucial sections, should have been similarly interpreted as a depiction of this 'Near Eastern version' of the myth of Cassiepeia.[76] Janine Balty put forward a neo-Platonic interpretation of the mosaics, and argued that the victory of this Cassiepeia stands for the victory of the cosmic order over the chaos of the aquatic powers.[77] We have of course not forgotten that according to the *Suda* Cassiepeia is 'beauty' personified, but according to another etymology her name could be linked to the toponymic deity of Mt. Kasios, the best renowned mountain top of the Syrian lands. Still according to Balty's ingenious analysis, the deity standing in the middle circle of the mosaic from Palmyra and

[73] DE SAULCY 1874, p. 176-7; HILL 1914, xxiv-xxv; Cf. HEAD 1911, p. 803: "Poseidon seated on rock". It has been noted cleverly by HARVEY 1994, p. 9, that Andromeda is depicted according to the heroine's portrayal in a number of literary sources: "seated or standing on a rock, with outstretched hands and looking out for the beast."
[74] SARTRE 2002, p. 102, notes how the representations on these mosaics "n'ont aucune raison d'être mises en relation avec les légendes civiques des lieux de trouvaille et on leur a donné une interprétation philosophique très vraisemblable." See, in contrast, CHUVIN 1991, p. 222, who points to the fact that it is Amymone rather than Amphitrite who is seated alongside Poseidon on the mosaic from Apamea: "ce détail suffit à indiquer que l'artiste s'est inspiré d'une version locale de la légende; c'est à Beyrouth qu'Amymône est l'épouse de Poseidon."
[75] STERN 1977, p. 26-42.
[76] Cf. BALTY 1981; BOWERSOCK 1990, p. 50-1, with pl. 3-4.
[77] BALTY 1996.

seated next to Cassiepeia on the mosaic from Apamea, is accordingly not the sea god Poseidon known from classical mythology, who sent a sea-monster in revenge of Cassiepeia's slight of the Nereids. Instead, he should be viewed as more of a supreme deity, a 'Near Eastern Poseidon' so to speak. It is remarkable in this context that at Palmyra in the heart of the Syrian steppe, according to a bilingual inscription from AD 39, Poseidon is explicitly identified with a divine figure called in Aramaic 'Elqonera' (*'lqwnr'*), which means 'El the creator'.[78] It is then also completely logical that, on the mosaic from Nea Paphos, Poseidon's position has been occupied by Aion, the divine personification standing for the permanence of the cosmos. The three mosaics provide, then, a unique panorama of a mixture between on the one hand Oriental cosmological conceptions and on the other the neo-Platonic theory of the transmigration of the souls. This mixture could, according to Balty, only have come into existence in the particular circumstances of Palmyra, where the philosopher Longinus spent the last years of his life, under the aegis of the intellectual openness of queen Zenobia, and where he may have developed the idea soon after the death of Plotinus in ca 270. From Palmyra the concept would have spread to elsewhere in the wider region, resulting in the mosaics from Nea Paphos and Apamea.[79] The mosaics are all from the later part of the third century AD, and if Balty's theory is correct, there would have been no winning Cassiepeia anywhere in the Near East before 270, so no bearing on most of the literary evidence discussed in this paper. But what would the inhabitants of Iope have thought of this spin on the story? With Cassiepeia winning the beauty contest and Poseidon acting as a sophisticated judge rather than sending the sea-monster in revenge of her slight of the Nereids, there would have been no due consequences for her daughter Andromeda, and hence no basis for the myth of Andromeda at Iope. As far as we can tell from the few later sources, however, the locals happily ignored this alternative version and continued to point out to visitors where the poor girl had been tied to the rocks.[80]

The vitality of the tradition that located the myth of Andromeda at Iope may at first glance be seen as rather surprising. Situated on the Palestinian coast, the port town of Iope seems to have been to at least some degree a Jewish city, in any case following the "Judaizing" process dating from the Maccabaean period.[81] As was the case with most of the cities in this part of the world, the Jewish population at Iope lived alongside the gentile

[78] HILLERS & CUSSINI 1996, n°2779. On the Levantine Poseidon in general, cf. TEIXIDOR 1977, p. 42-6.
[79] BALTY 2005.
[80] Contra CHUVIN 1991, p. 222: "Par ailleurs, c'est certainement à Ioppè qu'on insistait sur l'épisode du triomphe de Cassiépeia, de la même manière qu'à Apamée de Phrygie on montre toujours Marsyas jouant de la double flûte et jamais le concours avec Apollon."
[81] SCHÜRER 1979, p. 112.

inhabitants, but at least for a parts of its history the populace was chiefly Jewish.[82] Nevertheless, aspects such as the town's civic coinage and the attempts by its notables to establish the local history firmly in the classical past[83] (in a process postulated for the Near East as a whole going back to the beginning of the Hellenistic period[84]), help to make it simultaneously a Greek *polis*.[85] Indeed, Iope has correctly been described as a key example of a 'bi-cultural town', continuing its "Greek ways which had been successfully grafted onto Semitic traditions".[86] The apparent development of the myth of Andromeda at Iope, according to the overview of the literary sources, and perhaps also under the influence of creative pursuits in the port town itself, should not be viewed as resulting in a 'secondary', inferior version, or versions, of the story. Simon Price has rightly drawn attention to the fact that "local mythologies are easy to misunderstand", and warned against the temptation "to look at the creation of new local mythologies and to make patronizing remarks which imply that the creators of such myths were cynical manipulators, as against the tellers of 'real' myths. In fact, of course, mythologies were perpetually being created in Greece."[87] With regard to Iope, the various interpretations of the myth of Andromeda grew through multi-layered processes that touched on multifarious elements including a 'traditional' Greek myth, an Ethiopian homeland for its protagonists, a (partly) Jewish town situated on the Palestinian coast,[88] a Phoenician world nearby (with which some of our ancient authors eagerly mixed up Judaea[89]), a Roman overlord (providing the new name of ΙΟΠΕ ΦΛΑΥΙΑ) and the spirit of a typical Graeco-Roman city undergoing some of the effects of the Second Sophistic. Only the theories of the philosopher Longinus would, in principle, have been able to fatally affect the local myth, but they apparently failed to do so.

List of illustrations

PLATE I Sculpture of sea-monster at Jaffa (1993). Photo © T. Kaizer.

[82] SCHÜRER 1979, p. 110-4, for a historical overview of the town.
[83] SARTRE 2001, p. 658.
[84] SARTRE 2002.
[85] SCHÜRER 1979, p. 114: "Despite its close association with Judaea, Joppa seems to have been a Greek city proper." Cf. MILLAR 1993, p. 343, with n.20.
[86] BELAYCHE 2001, p. 220. Cf. ibid., p. 221: "Local traditions relating to divine or mythical founders and to supernatural patrons profited by using Greek channels."
[87] PRICE 2005, p. 116.
[88] For a discussion on how to approach the question of Hellenism among the Jewish communities in Palestine, see MILLAR 2006, p. 67-90.
[89] Cf. CHUVIN 1991, p. 222.

PLATE II Coin of Iope, issued under Caracalla. Reverse showing Perseus holding Medusa's head. From MESHORER 1985, p. 24, n°35.

PLATE III Coin of Iope, issued under Alexander Severus. Reverse showing Athena. From MESHORER 1985, p. 24, n°38.

PLATE IV Drawing of autonomous coin of Iope. Reverse showing Andromeda chained on her rock. From DE SAULCY 1874, pl. IX, n°3.

PLATE V Mosaic of Cassiepeia from Palmyra: section with Cassiepeia. Photo © T. Kaizer.

PLATE VI Mosaic of Cassiepeia from Palmyra: section with Poseidon. Photo © T. Kaizer.

PLATE VII Mosaic of Cassiepeia from Nea Paphos. From BOWERSOCK 1990.

PLATE VIII Drawing of mosaic of Cassiepeia from Apamea. From BALTY 1981.

PLATE IX Mosaic of Cassiepeia from Apamea: section with Cassiepeia and Poseidon. From BALTY 1981.

Bibliography

BALTY (J.)

1996 "Composantes classiques et orientales dans les mosaïques de Palmyre", *Palmyra and the Silk Road. Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes*, 42, p. 407-16.

BALTY (J.)

[2005] "Zénobie et le néoplatonisme", in M. AL-HAYEK, M. MAQDISSI and M. ABDULKARIM, eds., *Zenobia & Palmyra. Proceedings of the International Conference (19-21 October 2002, Homs and Palmyra)*, Homs, p. 45-57.

BALTY (J.-Ch.)

1981 "Une version orientale méconnue du mythe de Cassiopée", in L. KAHIL and C. AUGÉ, eds., *Mythologie gréco-romaine, mythologies périphériques. Études d'iconographie*, Paris, p. 95-106.

BARKAY (R.)

2003 *The Coinage of Nysa-Scythopolis (Beth-Shean)*, Jerusalem.

BATTY (R.)

2000 "Mela's Phoenician Geography", *JRS*, 90, p. 70-94

BELAYCHE (N.)

2001 Iudaea-Palaestina. *The Pagan Cults in Roman Palestine (Second to Fourth Century)*, Tübingen.

BIFFI (N.)

2002 *Il Medio Oriente di Strabone. Libro XVI della Geografia. Introduzione, traduzione e commento*, Bari.

BOWERSOCK (G.W.)

1990 *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, Ann Arbor.

BRODY (A.J.)

1998 *"Each Man Cried out to his God". The Specialized Religion of Canaanite and Phoenician Seafarers* [*Harvard Semitic Museum Monographs* 58], Atlanta, GA.

BROUGHTON (T.R.S.)

1952 *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* II, New York.

BROWN (M.K.)

2002 *The* Narratives *of Konon. Text, Translation and Commentary of the* Diegeseis [*Beiträge zur Altertumskunde* 163], Munich/Leipzig.

BUBEL (F.)

1991 *Euripides, Andromeda* [*Palingenesia* 34], Stuttgart.

CHUVIN (P.)

1991 *Mythologie et géographie dionysiaques. Recherches sur l'œuvre de Nonnos de Panopolis*, Clermont-Ferrand Cedex.

CLARKE (K.)

1999 *Between Geography and History. Hellenistic Constructions of the Roman World*, Oxford.

COLLARD (C.), M.J. CROPP & J. GIBERT

2004 *Euripides, Selected Fragmentary Plays. Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentaries* II, Oxford.

DARRICARRÈRE (T.H.)

1882 "Sur une monnaie inédite de Joppé", *Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*, 43, p. 74-5.

DE SAULCY (F.)

1874 *Numismatique de la Terre-Sainte*, Paris.

FONTENROSE (J.)

1959 *Python. A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London.

GRUEN (E.S.)

2010 "Tacitus and the defamation of the Jews", in J. GEIGER, H.M. COTTON, and G.D. STIEBEL, eds., *Israel's Land. Papers Presented to Israel Shatzman on his Jubilee* [*Israel Exploration Society*], Jerusalem, p. 77-96

HARVEY JR. (P.B.)

1994 "The death of mythology: the case of Joppa", *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 2.1, p. 1-14.

HEAD (B.V.)

1911 *Historia Numorum. A Manual of Greek Numismatics*[2], Oxford.

HILL (G.F.)

1914 *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Palestine in the British Museum*, London.

HILLERS (D.R.) & E. CUSSINI

1996 *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts*, Baltimore/London.

HIRSCHBERGER (M.)

2004 Gynaikōn Katalogos *und* Megalai Ēhoiai. *Ein Kommentar zu den Fragmenten zweier hesiodeischer Epen*, Munich/Leipzig.

HUNT (E.D.)

1984 *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312-460*, Oxford.

HUNTER (R.)

2005 "Introduction", in id., ed., *The Hesiodic* Catalogue of Women*: Constructions and Reconstructions*, Cambridge, p. 1-4.

HÜSING (G.)

1907 "Taršiš und die Jona-Legende", *Memnon*, 1, p. 70-9.

KAIZER (T.)

2008 "Introduction", in id., ed., *The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* [*RGRW* 164], Leiden/Boston, p. 1-36.

KAIZER (T.)

Forthcoming "Cult centres and local mythologies in Strabo's and Pliny's Near East", in R. RAJA, ed., *Contextualising the Sacred in the Hellenistic and Roman Near East: Religious Identities in Local, Regional and Imperial Settings*, Leiden/Boston/Cologne.

LAWRENCE (M.)

1962 "Ships, monsters and Jonah", *American Journal of Archaeology*, 66, p. 289-96.

LICHTENBERGER (A.)

2004 "City foundation legends in the Decapolis", *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society*, 22, p. 23-34.

LIGHTFOOT (J.L.)

2003 *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess. Edited with Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Oxford.

LORETZ (O.)

1990 *Ugarit und die Bibel. Kanaanäische Götter und Religion im Alten Testament*, Darmstadt.

MERKELBACH (R.) & M.L. WEST

1967 *Fragmenta Hesiodea*, Oxford.

MESHORER (Y.)

1985 *City-Coins of Eretz-Israel and the Decapolis in the Roman Period*, Jerusalem.

MILLAR (F.)

1993 *The Roman Near East, 31 BC - AD 337*, Cambridge, Mass./London.

MILLAR (F.)

2006 "The background to the Maccabean revolution: reflections on Martin Hengel's "Judaism and Hellenism"", in id., *The Greek World, the Jews, & the East. Rome, the Greek World, and the East* 3, eds. H.M. COTTON and G.M. ROGERS, Chapel Hill, p. 67-90.

MILLAR (F.)

2010 "Jerome and Palestine", *Scripta Classica Israelica*, 29, p. 59-79.

MÜLLER (K.)

1855 *Geographi Græci Minores* I, Paris.

MÜLLER (K.)

1861 *Geographi Græci Minores* II, Paris.

NAUCK (A.)

1889 *Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta*^{2}, Leipzig.

PARKER (S.B.)

1997 ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry. SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series*, Atlanta, GA.

PRICE (S.)

2005 "Local mythologies in the Greek East", in C. HOWGEGO, V. HEUCHERT and A. BURNETT, eds., *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces*, Oxford, p. 115-24.

RADT (S.)

2009 *Strabons Geographika, Band 8. Buch XIV-XVII: Kommentar*, Göttingen.

ROMER (F.E.)

1998 *Pomponius Mela's Description of the World*, Ann Arbor.

SAFRAI (Z.)

2005 "Temporal layers within Strabo's description of Coele Syria, Phoenicia and Judaea", in D. DUECK, H. LINDSAY and S. POTHECARY, eds., *Strabo's Cultural Geography. The Making of a Kolossourgia*, Cambridge, p. 250-8.

SALLMANN (K.)

1971 *Die Geographie des älteren Plinius in ihrem Verhältnis zu Varro: Versuch einer Quellenanalyse*, Berlin.

SARTRE (M.)

2001 *D'Alexandre à Zénobie. Histoire du Levant antique, IV^e siècle av. J.-C. - III^e siècle ap. J.-C.*, Paris.

SARTRE (M.)

2002 "La construction de l'identité des villes de la Syrie hellénistique et impériale", in H. INGLEBERT, ed., *Idéologies et valeurs civiques dans le monde romain. Hommage à Claude Lepelley*, Paris, p. 93-105.

SARTRE (M.)

2008 "The nature of Syrian hellenism in the late Roman and early Byzantine periods", in Y.Z. ELIAV, E.A. FRIEDLAND and S. HERBERT, eds., *The Sculptural Environment of the Roman Near East. Reflections on Culture, Ideology, and Power*, Leuven/Dudley, Mass., p. 25-49.

SCHÜRER (E.)

1979 The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ II, eds. G. VERMES and F. MILLAR, Edinburgh.

STERN (H.)

1977 *Les mosaïques des maisons d'Achille et de Cassiopée à Palmyre*, Paris.

STERN (M.)

1974 *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism. Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentary* I, Jerusalem.

TEIXIDOR (J.)

1977 *The Pagan God. Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East*, Princeton, NJ.