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## EUNUS: THE COWARDLY KING

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## EUNUS: THE COWARDLY KING\*

In 135 B.C., unable to endure the treatment of their master Damophilus, a group of slaves, urged on by the wonder-worker Eunus, captured the city of Enna in Eastern Sicily in a night-time raid. The subsequent war, according to our sources the largest of its kind in antiquity, raged for three years, destroying the armies of Roman praetors, and engaging three consecutive consuls in its eventual suppression. The success of the rebels in holding out for years against a progression of Roman armies indicates the importance of the event, and the capabilities of their leaders. One expects the man capable of leading such a revolt to have been exceptional, and in this respect the ancient accounts do not disappoint: in a narrative replete with larger-than-life characters, ranging from the depraved slave-owner Damophilus (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.10, 35–8) to the restrained Roman consul Calpurnius Piso (Val. Max. 4.3.10), one figure stands out in Diodorus Siculus<sup>1</sup> depiction: the leader of the slaves. This man, Eunus, whom Diodorus describes as the leader of the event he calls the (first) Sicilian Slave War,<sup>2</sup> has been variously interpreted in modern scholarship. Analyses have fallen into two (not mutually exclusive) categories. On the one hand, the hostile and outlandish account of Diodorus is accepted uncritically, with the details of Eunus' character understood as faithful, historical representations.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the negative facets of Eunus'

\* I would like to thank John Marincola, John Richardson, Ulrike Roth, Keith Rutter and the anonymous reviewer at *Classical Quarterly*, as well as the editor Bruce Gibson, for their insightful comments throughout the writing of this piece. The mistakes remain my own. The text of Diodorus is that of the Loeb Classical Library, edited and translated by F.R. Walton, *Diodorus of Sicily*, vol. 12 (Cambridge, 1967); the translations are mine.

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this article I will use the name of Diodorus Siculus to refer to the text of Diodorus and the historical tradition that it represents. I will not be engaging with the *Quellenforschung* surrounding the so-called First Sicilian Slave War narrative other than where it is essential. For notable contributions on the textual issues see e.g. K. Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (Princeton, 1990); T. Matsubara, 'Diodorus Siculus on the Late Roman Republic' (Diss., University of Edinburgh, 1998); P. Green, *Diodorus Siculus: Books 11–12.37.1* (Austin, 2006); L. Hau, 'Diodorus of Sicily (32.2 and 4) and Polybius', *C&M* 57 (2006), 67–102; L. Hau, 'The burden of good fortune in Diodorus of Sicily: a case for originality?', *Historia* 58 (2009), 171–97.

<sup>2</sup> It is unimportant to my argument that I do not regard the historical context of this narrative as a slave rebellion, but as an insurrection against Roman power in the form of a Hellenistic monarchy.

<sup>3</sup> This is most common for Eunus' rise to kingship, which is typically accepted in the manner described by Diodorus: see e.g. P. Green, 'The First Sicilian Slave War', *P&P* 20 (1961), 10–29, at 14; J. Vogt, *Sklaverei und Humanität: Studien zur antiken Sklaverei und ihrer Erforschung* (Wiesbaden, 1965), 29–30; G. Manganaro, 'Über die zwei Sklavenaufstände in Sizilien', *Helikon* 7 (1967), 205–22; id., 'La provincia romana', in E. Gabba and G. Vallet (edd.), *La Sicilia antica*, 2.2 (Naples, 1980), 411–61; id., 'Monete e ghiande inscritte degli schiavi ribelli in Sicilia', *Chiron* 12 (1982), 237–44; id., 'Ancora sulle rivolte "servili" in Sicilia', *Chiron* 13 (1983), 405–9; id., 'Un Philippeion di oro di Euno-Antiocho in Sicilia?', *MH* 47 (1990), 181–3; B. Forte, *Rome and the Romans as the Greeks saw them* (Rome, 1972), 100–1; K.R. Bradley, *Slavery and Rebellion in the Roman World, 140 B.C. – 70 B.C.* (Bloomington, 1989), 58–9, 116–20; A.D. Callahan and R.A. Horsley, 'Slave resistance in classical antiquity', *Semeia* 83/4 (1998), 133–52, at 146–7; G. Wirth,

character are reinterpreted in a positive historical context, thereby outlining his suitability and capability to lead such a large and successful insurgency against Rome.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Urbainczyk<sup>5</sup> recently argued that despite the difficulties in saying anything definite about the leaders of the so-called Sicilian Slave Wars '[Diodorus] attributed to [Eunus] all the powers, abilities, wisdom, and cunning that challenges to the status quo had to have in order to succeed'.

To argue that Diodorus' openly hostile account could conceal the positive traits necessary for a leader of an insurrection is appealing. Yet any attempt to unveil a positive portrayal of Eunus from the hostile narrative rests on the assumption that it is possible to extract historically reliable material from a hostile tradition. Nor do we have to accept without question, as many have done, the portrayal of Eunus given in Diodorus as historically accurate. Before we can begin to approach a historical understanding of Eunus, therefore, we have to understand the literary aims and methods of the text in which he is portrayed. Both of the approaches above have not understood a number of key moments in the *narrative* of Eunus' career during the conflict. In what follows, I revisit Diodorus' characterization of Eunus. I argue that we must take full account of the *literary* context of the narrative. Once we analyse the depiction of Eunus in this manner, we will see that it served the purpose of ensuring his condemnation in the minds of Diodorus' readers: it was not, strictly, a historically accurate presentation.

## KING OF THE 'SLAVES'

### 1. *The coronation*

Eunus is introduced into Diodorus' narrative as (34/5.2.5) τις οικέτης Ἀντιγένους Ἐνναίου, Σύρος τὸ γένος ἐκ τῆς Ἀπαμείας,<sup>6</sup> ἄνθρωπος μάγος καὶ τερατουργὸς τὸν τρόπον ('a certain household slave of Antigeneus of Enna, a Syrian from Apamea, a magician and wonder-worker in manner'). His reputation in Sicily as a prophet led to Damophilus' slaves turning to him to receive consent from the gods for their rebellion (34/5.2.10–1, 24b). At his exhortation they then seized Enna, and in the aftermath proclaimed him king. Modern scholars have seen Eunus' coronation as a high point in Diodorus' characterization of Eunus; and it is in many ways the pivotal moment of

'Skaven und Helden: zur Darstellung der sizilischen Aufstände bei Diodor', in H. Heftner and K. Tomaschitz (edd.), *Ad Fontes!* (Vienna, 2004), 281–5, at 284; G. Wirth, *Katastrophe und Zukunftshoffnung* (Vienna, 2006), 336; T. Urbainczyk, *Slave Revolts in Antiquity* (Stocksfield, 2008), 55–6.

<sup>4</sup> Bradley (n. 3), 113 stressed that 'sustained rebellion' required 'personalities vigorous, and ... gifted enough' to 'direct the energies of the disaffected ... slaves'. B.D. Shaw, *Spartacus and the Slave Wars: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston, 2001), 12 called Eunus a 'powerful religious leader'. All of the following went to great lengths to confirm the validity and potency of Eunus' supposed magical abilities: A.J. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy: Volume 2* (London, 1965), 405; M.I. Finley, *Ancient Sicily to the Arab Conquest* (London, 1968), 140; Vogt (n. 3), 40–3; Z. Yavetz, *Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 1988), 8; Bradley (n. 3), 55–7, 113–14; Shaw (n. 4), 12; Wirth (n. 3 [2004]), 282 and (n. 3 [2006]), 126; Urbainczyk (n. 3), 52; B. Strauss, 'Slave wars of Greece and Rome', in V.D. Hanson (ed.), *Makers of Ancient Strategy* (Oxford, 2010), 185–205, at 194.

<sup>5</sup> Urbainczyk (n. 3), 74.

<sup>6</sup> The formulation of the phrase Σύρος τὸ γένος ἐκ τῆς Ἀπαμείας is similar to those found on manumission inscriptions for slaves at Hellenistic Delphi: see D. Lewis, 'Near Eastern slaves in Classical Attica and the slave trade with Persian territories', *CQ* 61 (2011), 91–113, at 93–8.

Eunus' career in Diodorus' narrative of the First Sicilian Slave War. Yet the passage actually defines Eunus' character negatively and describes the unlikelihood of his continuing success; it is the lynchpin of his whole relationship to his subjects. After the sack of Enna and the execution of various notable slave-owners, Diodorus continues (34/5.2.14):

Then Eunus was chosen king, and not because of his courage, nor his generalship (οὔτε δι' ἀνδρείαν οὔτε διὰ στρατηγίαν), but only because of his knowledge of wonders and his setting of the revolt in motion, but also at the same time because his name seemed to hold some favourable omen with regard to the goodwill of his subjects.

In the first case, we should note the negative assessment this passage suggests of Eunus' suitability for kingship. The passage implies that he has neither ἀνδρεία ('courage') nor στρατηγία ('generalship'). It seems that Diodorus did not value Eunus' worth, and it appears that he also judged the critical faculties of the men selecting Eunus to be very poor: he was elected for superficial reasons based on his name,<sup>7</sup> his wonders and the fact that he had incited the revolt. We should start by looking closely at the qualities not considered for Eunus' acclamation, to assess in greater detail not only what Diodorus says, but how he is saying it.

It is important to note first that the phrasing of this passage is typical for Diodorus, although in this case with an interesting twist: in his history he consistently uses expressions based on the phrase ἀνδρεία τε καὶ στρατηγία to denote the qualities of generals and kings whom he considered to be exceptional leaders. In some variations of the expression ἀνδρεία is replaced with ἀρετή ('valour') or στρατηγία is replaced with στρατηγικός ('general-like'). However, the meaning remains essentially the same: 'brave and a good general'. This expression, in all combinations of ἀνδρεία and ἀρετή with στρατηγία or στρατηγικός, features 28 times throughout the *Bibliothékê*, and is reserved for such notable men as Heracles (4.53.7), Epaminondas (15.39.2, 88.3), King Philip II of Macedon (16.1.6) and Fabius Cunctator (26.3.3) among others.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the chronological spread of the instances in the *Bibliothékê* suggests that this was an expression unique to Diodorus. Yet, the use of this expression for Eunus is the only occasion, out of a total of 28, in which it is expressed in the negative. It appears, Diodorus' fragmentary survival aside, that Eunus is rhetorically set up as the antithesis of the previous leaders described with this phrase. Therefore, we should look more closely at why these two attributes were associated with 'good' leaders in order to understand the choice of an implied negative for Eunus.

We must first consider Hellenistic ideals of kingship, and in particular why bravery and generalship could be picked out by Diodorus as emblematic of a 'good' leader. In surviving works on Hellenistic kingship, courage and generalship are often noted as important. While there were acknowledged limits to this aspect – preferably a king was πολεμικός, yet if he was φιλοπόλεμος this trait was not desirable (see

<sup>7</sup> It is possible that Eunus' name was one of the few features over which he had no control: perhaps the name came from his master.

<sup>8</sup> Descendants of Scythes (2.43.4); the Dioscuri (6.6.1); Leonidas (11.4.2); the citizens of Athens (11.62.2, 85.2); Gelon (11.67.2); Pericles (12.39.3); King Agesilaus (15.31.3); Timotheus (15.36.6); Chabrias (15.69.4); Pelopidas (15.80.1); Dion (16.6.3); Nypsius (16.18.1); Diophantes and Lamius (16.48.2); Timoleon (16.65.2); Memnon of Rhodes (17.7.2); Charidemus (17.30.2); Antiphilus (18.13.6); Scipio Africanus (29.20.1); Viriathus (33.21a.1); Cleptius (36.8.1); Sulla (37.25.1).

Philodemus, *On the Good King according to Homer* col. 9.13–15)<sup>9</sup> – it was none the less an important aspect of a king's role and character.<sup>10</sup> The election or acclamation of a king in the Hellenistic period, as with the Eunus episode above, was directly linked to the ideology of kingly behaviour. From authors as early as Xenophon it is possible to trace the development of this ideology and its component parts.

For Xenophon a good leader was one who achieved excellence through unremitting effort (*Mem.* 2.1.212–34),<sup>11</sup> and in his *Cyropaedia* he contrasted this quality in Cyrus with the attitude of Cyaxares, who often counselled the less brave or adventurous tactic (see *Cyr.* 1.3.20–3; 2.1.1–9, 4.13; 3.3.13–20, 46–7). Xenophon thought that men desert pathetic figures when presented with a better alternative: for example when Cyaxares' men joined Cyrus (5.1.24–6). Other authors express the same idea, notably Polybius (5.40.1–2) and Diodorus (33.22.1). Austin<sup>12</sup> showed that kings were often proclaimed after military victories: see, for example, Alexander the Great (Plut. *Alex.* 34), Demetrius Poliorcetes (Plut. *Demetr.* 18; cf. Diod. Sic. 20.53.1–4) and Attalus I (Polyb. 18.41), to name a few.<sup>13</sup> Since the aura of success was directly tied to kings, the link was maintained because an unsuccessful king could quickly become an object of contempt, and therefore vulnerable.<sup>14</sup> It was also important to the soldiers that they profited from their king's success: without that, they could be quick to turn on their king, as was the case with Demetrius (Plut. *Demetr.* 42.1–6; 44.8).<sup>15</sup> Indeed, failure as a military leader was enough to damn a king as unmanly and feminine, such as the denigration of King Prusias in Polybius for behaving γυναικοθύμως ('in a womanish manner', 32.15.9; see also 28.21.3). The military sphere was distinctly masculine in antiquity, while failure was a sign of effeminacy.<sup>16</sup> A corollary to this idea was the wider notion that leaders should focus on administrative and military matters over all other concerns. We may note Polybius' account of Philopoemen censuring the Achaean *strategoï* for failing to focus on their arms and armour (11.8–9),<sup>17</sup> Plutarch's comment on Pyrrhus' concentration on skilful generalship at the expense of caring about music (*Pyrrh.* 8.3), and Aristeas' statement that kings should focus on forethought for their subjects (245) and study records of their kingdom (283).<sup>18</sup> Diodorus' account of Viriathus also reflects these concerns, especially Viriathus' preference for eminence won through ἀνδρεία ('bravery', 33.7.1–4).

<sup>9</sup> O. Murray, 'Philodemus and the good king according to Homer', *JRS* 55 (1965), 161–82, at 169.

<sup>10</sup> The king's ability to gain 'spear-won territory' could often be considered his strongest right to rule: see e.g. Antiochus III (Polyb. 11.34.15–6); Ptolemy II Philadelphus (Theoc. *Id.* 17.90–4, 98–103). For further discussion of this see e.g. W. Schubart, 'Das hellenistische Königsideal nach Inschriften und Papyri', *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 12 (1937), 1–26, at 5; F.W. Walbank, 'Monarchies and monarchic ideas', *CAH* VII<sup>2</sup>.1 (1984), 62–100, at 66, 82–3. For further bibliography see also F. Cairns, *Virgil's Augustan Epic* (Cambridge, 1989), 19–20.

<sup>11</sup> P. Beston, 'Hellenistic military leadership', in H. van Wees (ed.), *War and Violence in Ancient Greece* (London, 2000), 315–35, at 317.

<sup>12</sup> M. Austin, 'Hellenistic kings, war and the economy', *CQ* 36 (1986), 450–66, at 457.

<sup>13</sup> Bradley (n. 3), 117 noted that the acclamation of Eunus was typically Hellenistic; see also Vogt (n. 3), 29–30.

<sup>14</sup> Austin (n. 12), 458–9. This ideology is most famously presented in the *Suda* lexicon, which outlined the basis of monarchical power as the ability to command an army, and to handle affairs sensibly; see s.v. βασιλεία (2).

<sup>15</sup> See also A.B. Bosworth, *The Legacy of Alexander* (Oxford, 2002), 258.

<sup>16</sup> Beston (n. 11), 316–17.

<sup>17</sup> See C.B. Champion, *Cultural Politics in Polybius's Histories* (London, 2004), 150.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of this text see O. Murray, 'Aristeas and Ptolemaic kingship', *JThS* 18 (1967), 337–71, and for these passages see especially 357. See also Cairns (n. 10), 15 and 20.

Diodorus' use of the phrase ἀνδρεία τε καὶ στρατηγία as a 'catch-all' definition of a good leader accords with the surviving evidence for Hellenistic attitudes towards kingship: for Diodorus the best leaders were brave in battle and had a knowledge of strategy; it hardly needs mentioning that a brave leader was not effeminate or luxurious.

We should now return to Eunus, the 'slave king'. I noted above that Diodorus' choice of vocabulary when describing Eunus' acclamation – which followed a very minor success at Enna – suggested that he was setting Eunus up in opposition to 'good' leaders. The outline of Hellenistic literature on kingship has clarified the contrast: Diodorus clearly describes Eunus' acclamation as taking place for the wrong reasons, and implies that Eunus was the inverse of what a Hellenistic king should be.<sup>19</sup> We should now pursue this new recognition through the rest of Diodorus' narrative, after a final comment. In terms of the narrative, and especially in terms of Eunus' own career, his acclamation was the apex of everything that had gone before. During Diodorus' introduction of his character, we learn that Eunus predicted his own rise to kingship (34/5.2.7–9; although not, as will become clear, through true prophetic ability), and Diodorus, by describing Eunus' crowning achievement as he does, directly downplays Eunus' success: the description of Eunus' acclamation appears to have been composed with the literary objective of characterizing Eunus negatively.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Diodorus achieved this denigration through appeal to Hellenistic ideals of kingship, and so connected Eunus to a wider contemporary ideology. In spite of Eunus' very real success as king for a number of years,<sup>21</sup> Diodorus continues to undercut Eunus' actions throughout his narrative, thereby negating his success, and turning his readers against him. It is to these various negations of Eunus' achievements we now turn, in order to assess by what literary means they were achieved, as well as the effect they have on the reader.

## 2.1 *An ignoble end*

From his apex, we turn first to Eunus' downfall. The narrative of it is compressed (34/5.2.20–3; the climax of the war, and the subsequent capture and death of Eunus, is

<sup>19</sup> For J.C. Dumont, *Servus. Rome et l'esclavage sous la République* (Rome, 1987), 207 Eunus was 'la parodie d'un vrai roi'.

<sup>20</sup> The description of Eunus' acclamation as king in Diodorus has not been commented on in the past: Green (n. 3), 14 does not discuss *how* Diodorus describes Eunus' acclamation; Vogt (n. 3), 29–30 discusses the institutions built up around Eunus after his election, but not why he was chosen, beyond Eunus' name; Manganaro (n. 3 [all articles cited]), Forte (n. 3), 100–1, Bradley (n. 3), 58–9, 116–20, and Callahan and Horsley (n. 3), 146 do not mention the reasons for Eunus' election; Wirth (n. 3 [2004]), 284 and (n. 3 [2006]), 125–6 does not go beyond a straight interpretation of Diodorus' text; Kunz (n. 3), 336 ignores the negatives in Eunus' acclamation; finally Urbainczyk (n. 3), 55–6 does acknowledge Diodorus' attack on Eunus' credentials, but fails to follow up on the terms in which the attack was mounted.

<sup>21</sup> Eunus' forces seized Enna, Morgantina, Agrigentum, Tauromenium and Catania (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.20–2, 43; Strabo 6.2.6; Oros. 5.9.5); they defeated the Roman praetor Lucius Hypsaeus who led a force of 8,000 Sicilians (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.18); finally the rebels held out in Enna and Tauromenium for at least two years, enduring a long and difficult siege (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.20–1). For the dating of the war see Green (n. 3), 10–29; W.G. Forrest and T.W.C. Stinton, 'The First Sicilian Slave War', *P&P* 22 (1962), 87–92, at 22; A.E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford, 1967), 133 n. 5; G.P. Verbrugge, 'The *Elogium* from Polla and the First Slave War', *CPh* 68 (1973), 25–35, at 27–9; Manganaro (n. 3 [1980]), 435–40; Bradley (n. 3), 152–7 and 170–83; and especially T.C. Brennan, 'The commanders in the First Sicilian Slave War', *RFIC* 121 (1993), 153–84, who offers the fullest discussion and has, I think, conclusively shown that the first major encounters between Rome's praetors and the forces of King Antiochus took place in 135 B.C. A. Keaveney, 'Three Roman chronological problems (141–132 B.C.)', *Klio* 80 (1998), 66–90, at 73–82 added further reasons for dating the start of the conflict to 135 B.C.



preserved only in Photius), but it is clear that Eunus' demise came at the very end of the revolt, and completed Diodorus' narrative of the war. After the town of Enna was retaken by the Romans, Diodorus gives an account of Eunus' flight and capture with a company of a thousand bodyguards (34/5.2.22–3). We are told that the bodyguards killed themselves to avoid capture, thereby taking the initiative, in a sense, from the Romans. Eunus himself fled to a cave, and was captured there with four companions (34/5.2.22). After his capture Eunus died while in the jail of Morgantina from a disease in which his flesh dissolved into lice. There are several aspects of this account that warrant attention.

## 2.2 Cowardice

Diodorus describes Eunus' flight using the word ἀνάνδρως ('in an unmanly fashion'), as he fled to the caves διὰ δειλίαν ('through cowardice'). This is in keeping with the way Diodorus portrays Eunus' acclamation as king.<sup>22</sup> Unlike in his acclamation, in which he was contrasted implicitly with 'good' leaders for his lack of bravery and generalship, Eunus' behaviour is explicitly contrasted with that of his followers (34/5.2.22). Therefore, while *he* fled through cowardice, *they* bravely took their own lives. This is a damning indictment of Eunus: not only did he take the coward's way, but his men refused to fight for him. Their actions mirror those of other soldiers of Hellenistic monarchs, who abandoned their leader because of flaws in their leader's character: faced with a choice between dying fighting for their king and death by their own hands, they chose the latter.

The portrayal of a leader as a coward was exploited for propagandistic purposes by other ancient authors as well. Plutarch (*Aem.* 19.3–10) contrasted the two differing accounts of King Perseus' withdrawal from the battle of Pydna, one from Polybius (29.18) and the other from Posidonius: the former argued that Perseus withdrew through cowardice at the start of the battle, while the latter argued that it was through injury late in the battle. Both Chaniotis and Walbank<sup>23</sup> thought that Polybius described this episode as he did to strengthen his pro-Roman bias. For present purposes it is notable that Polybius' version used cowardice as a method of denigrating Perseus.

Furthermore, for a king the manner of death was significant. Diodorus characterizes Eunus' death as οἰκείως τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν ῥαδιουργίας ('worthy of his knavery', 34/5.2.23).<sup>24</sup> He died, it has been argued, from scabies,<sup>25</sup> and the manner of his death is an interesting feature of this passage. Urbainczyk<sup>26</sup> noted that Antiochus IV Epiphanes died in a similar fashion according to 2 Maccabees 9:5, 8–10. In that

<sup>22</sup> Noted by Urbainczyk (n. 3), 55, with no further comment. Oddly, Wirth (n. 3 [2004]), 282–3 and (n. 3 [2006]), 126–7 consistently argued for a positive interpretation of Eunus' demise, arguing that Eunus was spared (n. 3 [2006]), 127, 'ein grausamer Tod', and furthermore (n. 3 [2004]), 283 that his death by psoriasis could be seen as a form of martyrdom. This is entirely at odds with how Diodorus himself views Eunus' end, and in this case we must privilege the ancient context over any modern reinterpretation of psoriasis or a cowardly end.

<sup>23</sup> A. Chaniotis, *War in the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 2005), 219–20; F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius, Volume III. Commentary on Books XLIX–XL* (Oxford, 1979), 390.

<sup>24</sup> Not the death at the head of any army, as was preferable for a Hellenistic monarch: see e.g. Polyb. 18.41; Chaniotis (n. 23), 60–1; F. Landucci Gattinoni, 'La morte di Antigono e di Lisimaco', in M. Sordi (ed.), *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, *La morte in combattimento nell'antichità* (Milan, 1990), 111–26. Dumont (n. 19), 206 described Eunus' death as 'la mort ignominieuse'.

<sup>25</sup> A. Keaveney and J.A. Madden, 'Phthiriasis and its victims', *SO* 57 (1982), 87–99.

<sup>26</sup> Urbainczyk (n. 3), 55 n. 20.



narrative, Antiochus IV is a monstrous enemy of the Jews, and his death is described as a divine punishment. Similarly Plutarch (*Sull.* 36) linked Sulla's death from a disease like that of Eunus to his excessive lifestyle after he retired from public life; also Pheretima in Herodotus (4.205), who is described as dying from a festering body as divine punishment for her way of life. Finally, Herod Antipater is described as dying eaten up by worms (Acts 12:23). This particular form of death was attributed to people who were the object of hostile narrative treatment.

### 2.3 *The companions*

There is more to Eunus' negative characterization in this passage than cowardice: Eunus' companions on his capture also deserve attention. We learn (34/5.2.22) that he had only four attendants left when he was dragged out of his cave: a cook (μάγειρος), a baker (άρτοποιός), a masseuse (τρίβων) and a drinking-party entertainer (τετάρτου τοῦ παρὰ τοὺς πότους εἰωθότος ψυχαγωγεῖν αὐτόν). Eunus was thus depicted as a degenerate monarch,<sup>27</sup> and his cowardly flight is therefore contrasted directly with his former guards: no military figure was left with him, only creators of luxury and food.<sup>28</sup> Again, this contrasts with the prevalent model in Greek thought that a 'good' leader refused luxuries and excesses, as I argued above. Indeed, some Hellenistic authors singled out leisure and the dining companions of a king as an important subject.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, Xenophon noted in his *Oeconomicus* the necessity to exercise control over oneself before one can rule others (12.9–14).<sup>30</sup> The focus on luxury in the roles of the attendants is also reminiscent of Theopompus of Chios' criticisms of Philip's court, which he accused of engaging in excessive drinking and extravagance (Ath. 166f–167c and 260d–261a).<sup>31</sup> The focus on luxury in his demise is clearly designed to complement Eunus' characterization as a coward and unworthy Hellenistic king. Moreover, as we shall see in what follows, the language of the passage concerning the fourth attendant, the entertainer, is related directly to the introduction of Eunus himself in the narrative in a manner that suggests that the construction of the narrative of Eunus' death was serving a very specific purpose in the overall story of the revolt.

### 2.4 *From beguiler to beguiled*

The fourth attendant is described as τετάρτου τοῦ παρὰ τοὺς πότους εἰωθότος ψυχαγωγεῖν αὐτόν ('a fourth, who had been accustomed, throughout the drinking bouts, to beguiling [Eunus]', 34/5.2.22). Specifically the verb ψυχαγωγέω, meaning 'to beguile' in this context, echoes Eunus' own introduction into the narrative, where

<sup>27</sup> T. Grünewald (tr. J. Drinkwater), *Bandits in the Roman Empire: Myth and Reality* (London, 2004), 61; originally published in German as *Räuber, Rebellen, Rivalen, Rächer* (Stuttgart, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> Bradley (n. 3), 117, suggests that the hostility of the narrative towards the slaves at this point hides a typical institution of Hellenistic monarchs, the *philoi*, and that the four attendants were perhaps relabelled by Diodorus to denigrate them, following typical 'Greek contempt' for *philoi* (quotation from Bradley [n. 3], 117; see also G. Herman, 'The "friends" of the early Hellenistic monarchs: servants or officials?', *Talanta* 12/13 [1980–1], 103–49, at 117–24).

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Aristeas' advice that a king ought to attend only restrained theatrical shows (*ad Phil.* 284), and receive only learned men in his symposia (*ad Phil.* 286). For modern discussions of this subject see Schubart (n. 10), 6; Murray (n. 18), 356; Cairns (n. 10), 19–20.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.5.1–5; Pl. *Grg.* 527d; Isoc. *To Nicocles* 29 and *Nicocles* 39.

<sup>31</sup> See also M.A. Flower, *Theopompus of Chios* (Oxford, 1994), 104–11.

Diodorus gave a lengthy aside on Eunus' history prior to his involvement in the rebellion (34/5.2.5–9). The passage contains important facets of his character which further demonstrate his unsuitability for kingship, but we will focus on another aspect of it, where Diodorus describes Eunus' relationship with his master (34/5.2.7–8). The passage tells us that Eunus' master, Antigenes, was rather taken with his slave's outspoken claims, and made him into a dinner entertainer; he was so successful that he was able to extract extra food from his master's guests.<sup>32</sup> However, the verb describing Antigenes' relationship to Eunus (ψυχαγωγέω) is used in exactly the same way as in the passage seen earlier detailing Eunus' fourth attendant: Antigenes was beguiled by Eunus.<sup>33</sup> Interestingly, this verb is the same as that used by Polybius in his discussion of 'tragic historians' at 2.56.10 to describe the aim of the 'tragic historian'.<sup>34</sup> Diodorus used the verb ψυχαγωγέω, along with the noun ψυχαγωγία in a variety of ways. The basic use of the words as 'to please' and 'pleasure' in a neutral sense are found seven times (1.91.7; 2.8.7, 10.5, 53.6; 3.50.1; 4.4.3; 16.52.4) and are typically placed in the 'mythological' sections of his work. The negative use of the verb to mean 'to beguile' or 'to seduce' is found six times (1.76.2; 20.77.2; 26.17.1; 30.6.1; 31.14.1; 32.9b.1; this list is *not* inclusive of the two uses described in the main text concerning Eunus) and is generally used of leaders or peoples that are negatively described in the narrative: e.g. the Campanians are described as ψυχαγωγούμενοι ('deluding themselves') about their relationship with Hannibal; hence they sided with him against Rome (see 26.17.1).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Eunus' unusual relationship with his master, in regard to his position as an entertainer and his acquisition of additional food, is regularly commented on, although the language used has not been: see Green (n. 3), 11–12; Vogt (n. 3), 25–6; Dumont (n. 19), 224; Bradley (n. 3), 114; Urbainczyk (n. 3), 55.

<sup>33</sup> The verb ψυχαγωγέω is used by Diodorus in the context of dinner parties three times in his history. Two occasions involve Eunus, and the final occasion involves the Ichthyophagi (3.17.1) whom Diodorus describes as ψυχαγοιοῦντες ('entertaining') one another. In this context the verb is clearly being used neutrally, whereas I would argue that this is not the case with Eunus. Therefore, the use of this verb depends upon the context of the passage in which it is used.

<sup>34</sup> The bibliography on 'tragic historians' is too great to give here, as is the debate concerning how best to understand 'tragic history', but for a seminal work on the origins of 'tragic history' see F.W. Walbank, 'History and tragedy', *Historia* 9 (1960), 216–34. Also see N. Zeger, *Wesen und Ursprung der tragischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Diss., Hamburg, 1959); K. Meister, *Historische Kritik bei Polybios* (Wiesbaden, 1975), 109–11; K. Sacks, *Polybius on the Writing of History* (Berkeley, 1977), 144–6; J. Seibert, *Das Zeitalter der Diadochen* (Darmstadt, 1983), 15–17; H.-D. Richter, *Untersuchungen zur hellenistischen Historiographie: Die Vorlagen des Pompeius Trogus für die Darstellungen zur nachalexandrinischen hellenistischen Geschichte (Iust. 13–40)* (Frankfurt, 1987), 38–41; G. Marasco, 'Ctesia, Dinone, Eraclide di Cuma e le origini della storiografia tragica', *SIFC* 81 (1988), 48–67; S. Rebenich, 'Historical prose', in S.E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 BC–AD 400* (Leiden, 1997), 265–337, at 267–9; and J. Marincola, 'Aristotle's *Poetics* and "Tragic History"', in S. Tsitsiridis (ed.), *Parachoregema: Studies on Ancient Theatre in Honour of Professor Gregory M. Sifakis* (Heraklion, 2010), 445–60.

<sup>35</sup> Twice the verb is used in its original meaning, or in a neutral sense (4.7.4 – Melpomene 'charmed the souls of her listeners'; 4.25.4 – Orpheus 'entranced' Persephone). On three occasions the use of the verb and noun exactly mirrors the usage of Polybius in his attack on Phylarchus (Polyb. 2.56.3–13): on these occasions Diodorus described either why he had included material in his history (32.12.1: he explains that he includes stories about shifts of sex οὐ ψυχαγωγίας ἀλλ' ὄφελείας ... τῶν ἀναγινωσκόντων, 'not for the entertainment but the improvement ... of our readers') or used the noun to criticize other authors for using invention of fact for the ψυχαγωγίας ('pleasure') of their readers, a technique he claimed he would not follow (1.69.7: 3.11.1). The context determined the intended meaning. See also R. Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories in Greek Scholia* (Groningen, 1987), 5–12, for a discussion of the changing meaning of ψυχαγωγέω in Greek literature.

The relationship between the passages describing Eunus' beguilement of his master and his own death is clear, and suggests an effort at ring composition in the construction of Eunus' character. For example, Eunus' beguilement of his own master took place at dinner parties, while Eunus' attendant<sup>36</sup> (34/5.2.22) *παρὰ τοὺς πότους* εἰωθότος ψυχαγωγεῖν αὐτόν ('had been accustomed, *throughout the drinking bouts*, to beguiling [Eunus]', my emphasis).<sup>37</sup> While the context is not identical, the implication of luxury is there in both passages, and this link must be intentional. The inference from this internal allusion is that Diodorus links Eunus to his own master and creates a circle in Eunus' personal narrative: he has gone from the beguiler of a foolish master to being the beguiled himself (and by logical association, foolish as well). It also suggests that Diodorus' intention was to portray Eunus, in spite of his status as the leader of a revolt *against* the actions and mistreatments of harsh masters, as no better than the same men he had risen up against: in a sense, Eunus became his master – who, we must not forget, Eunus had put to death during the uprising (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.15). Owing to the state of Diodorus' narrative we can only hint at the full interrelationship between Eunus and Antigeneis, but I suggest that this allusion demonstrates the effort expended to create a convincing literary account of Eunus' character, which, through certain careful applications of vocabulary, had a clear purpose in mind: to create a circular narrative for him, but also to turn the reader against him, through a narrative that is clearly a piece of literary stylization (as opposed to historical reality).

We have seen that the character of Eunus in the narrative of Diodorus, specifically relating to his role as king, is made up of cowardice, military inexperience and luxurious tendencies, described in terms that were consistent with Diodorus' own conception of (bad) Hellenistic leadership as well as wider ideas about Hellenistic kingship. Furthermore, Diodorus makes explicit links between Eunus and his master Antigeneis, creating a comparison between the two and thus completing for Eunus a character arc that ended with his own assumption of the role that his master had filled in the narrative. It is also important to note that this portrayal of Eunus – in spite of the fragmentary and compressed nature of the source that does not give the full picture of his development – is consistent throughout his rise to power and his subsequent demise. There is only one other aspect directly related to Eunus' character to consider, and that is Diodorus' insistent references to wonder-working both when introducing Eunus and subsequently on his rise to kingship.

### 3.1 *Τερατεία and τερατευόμενος*

As already seen, Diodorus' introduction of Eunus includes a lengthy aside on his actions prior to the start of the revolt. This episode, discussed in part above, contains an important aspect of Diodorus' representation of Eunus: his pretensions to wonder-working. Before relating Eunus' relationship with his master, Diodorus provides a lengthy introduction to Eunus that provides a context for the reader's interpretation of his actions throughout the narrative (Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.5–8). This description outlined how Eunus

<sup>36</sup> A slave? The matter is not specified by Diodorus but it is interesting to note that Eunus was still served by his compatriots.

<sup>37</sup> This reference to *πότοι* ('drinking bouts') also echoes the criticisms of Philip voiced by Theopompus regarding his habit of engaging in drinking bouts (Ath. 10.435b–c), which was a sign of his intemperance and an aspect of his inability to manage his kingdom's finances carefully: see also Flower (n. 31), 104–8.

gained fame for his apparent abilities at prophecy through his special relationship with Atargatis,<sup>38</sup> and his consequent position as Antigenes' dinner entertainer. In this capacity, Eunus had close access to Antigenes' dinner guests, who engaged with his alleged prophecy. This passage is very important for the construction of Eunus' character in the narrative.

He is characterized throughout the passage in a clearly consistent way. He is first introduced as a (34/5.2.5) μάγος καὶ τερατουργός ('magician and wonder-worker'). However, Diodorus does not allow Eunus' status as a μάγος καὶ τερατουργός to appear legitimate. Immediately afterwards, Diodorus clarifies the situation: Eunus προσποιεῖτο ... προλέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα ('claimed ... to foretell the future'),<sup>39</sup> yet no real prophecy is taking place. We soon learn that Eunus went on to pretend (ὑποκρίνετο)<sup>40</sup> that he saw gods. The language chosen here is specific. In spite of his claims to the contrary, Eunus' actions are always described strictly in terms of creative impulse, not divine inspiration.<sup>41</sup> However, these claims, despite their fraudulent nature (as highlighted by Diodorus), gained Eunus considerable fame (34/5.2.6). This led to his position as entertainer at his master's dinner parties (34/5.2.8) and ultimately to his election as king. When Eunus was elected king, Diodorus remarked that it was principally because of his wonder-working (τερατεία). Throughout the passage above (34/5.2.5–8) Diodorus consistently uses words related to the concept of 'wonders' (τέρατα: for example see 34/5.2.5 for τερατουργός and 34/5.2.8 for τερατεία and τερατεύομαι). In keeping with Diodorus' description of Eunus' character in other respects, the description of Eunus' reputation as a wonder-worker remains uniform. However, it is important to enquire whether, as with his portrayal of Eunus as possessing neither ἀνδρεία nor στρατηγία, Diodorus is again linking his portrayal of Eunus to general stereotypes, either within his work or from the wider Hellenistic world, and whether this portrayal has an even deeper pejorative sense than that suggested by its surface appearance.

### 3.2 The connotations of τερατεία and τερατευόμενος

The negative connotations of the words τερατεία and τερατευόμενος can be found earlier than Diodorus in Polybius and his descriptions of other authors' techniques.<sup>42</sup> The

<sup>38</sup> It is possible that the details regarding Eunus' relationship with Atargatis reflect a form of perverted hero tradition, such as those attributed to Scipio Africanus and others. In this case, Diodorus' narrative leaves little room for doubting the falsity of this tradition for Eunus: on this form of tradition and that of Scipio Africanus specifically see F.W. Walbank, 'The Scipionic legend', *PCPhS* 13 (1967), 54–69.

<sup>39</sup> Similar vocabulary is used to describe Athenion in the (second) Sicilian Slave War (36.5.3), when Athenion προσποιεῖτο ('pretended') that the gods foretold the future to him.

<sup>40</sup> The choice of ὑποκρίνετο to describe Eunus' actions is important. The verb's strong connections to acting on stage and exaggeration stress that Eunus' pretence was intentional, further damning his duplicity.

<sup>41</sup> The sole Latin text to record anything significant about Eunus repeats this tradition. Florus (2.7.4) describes him as a *Syrus quidam nomine Eunus – magnitudo cladium facit, ut meminerimus – fanatico furore simulato, dum Syriae deae comas iactat ...* ('a certain Syrian named Eunus – the seriousness of our defeats causes his name to be remembered – counterfeiting an inspired frenzy and waving his dishevelled hair in honour of the Syrian goddess ...'). As with Diodorus, Florus is explicit that Eunus' frenzy is counterfeited.

<sup>42</sup> The *Suda* lexicon provides two separate explanations of τερατεία and τερατευόμενος s.vv. Τερατευόμενος and Τερατεία, two words used to describe Eunus and his actions which emphasize the deceptive nature of τερατευόμενοι through the description of them as ψευδόμενοι ('those who

word is consistently used to describe a style of history that focussed more on sensationalism than historical ‘fact’: at 2.56.10 Polybius describes how ‘tragic’ historians like Phylarchus would describe their history *τερατευόμενον* (‘sensationally’); at 2.58.12, once again attacking Phylarchus, Polybius stated that Phylarchus included excessive detail and invented outrages that took place at the sack of Mantinea purely for the sake of *τερατείας* (‘sensationalism’); finally, at 7.7.1, Polybius asserted that other historians (not named), when describing the fall of Hieronymus of Syracuse, introduced *πολλήν ... τερατείαν* (‘much sensationalism’). In Polybius, in the historiographical context, *τερατεία* and *τερατευόμενος* were both linked to *ψεῦδος* (‘falsehood’) in history (e.g. 2.58.12)<sup>43</sup> and, as argued above, Diodorus makes it quite clear that Eunus’ *τερατεία* were false; although he does not use the word *ψεῦδος* he does seem to be working from the same concept of *τερατεία* as Polybius in this passage.<sup>44</sup> Returning to Diodorus’ *Bibliothékê* in general, twice (3.36.2; 6.1.3) he uses the adjective *τερατώδης* (‘monstrous’) to describe stories told about gods that he felt were invented. Indeed in the second case he states explicitly that the writers of myth *πεπλάκασιν* (‘invented’) the monstrous tales. He also uses the verb *τερατολογέω* (‘to tell of marvels’) twice (1.63.8; 4.53.7) to criticize the Egyptians for creating sensational tales of the pyramids, and in the latter passage the poets’ tales about Heracles, which he felt were inaccurate. None the less, these are the only surviving passages of Diodorus’ *Bibliothékê* to use the vocabulary in this manner.<sup>45</sup> I do not want to speculate on the origin of the terminology used to describe Eunus in this passage – and in any case the answer may be unattainable; but it is enough to note that Polybius, just like the *Suda*,<sup>46</sup> provides a persuasive framework for the proposed interpretation of Diodorus: Eunus’ description is linked to a mode of behaviour stereotyped as deceptive and false. At this point it is worth investigating Greek ideas about ‘magic’ and ‘magic-workers’ to see how the connotations in these concepts inform our interpretation of Eunus’ character.

### 3.3 *Μάγος, γόης and φαρμακεύς*

As we have seen, Diodorus labours to characterize Eunus’ actions as illegitimate and fraudulent. Additionally, he describes Eunus as a *μάγος* (‘magician’). There were several terms in antiquity that carried the meaning of ‘magician’ – *μάγος* (‘magician’), *γόης* (‘sorcerer’) and *φαρμακεύς* (‘poisoner/sorcerer’) – which, in spite of their varied

deceive’) and the *ψευδολογία* (‘falsehood’) of *τερατεία*. Moreover, *τερατεία* is considered in relation to sorcerers (*γόητες*). These connotations tally well with the impression given in Diodorus of an implicit distrust in Eunus’ ‘wonder working’; in the narrative of Diodorus Eunus is linked to another related descriptive term in his introduction: magician (*μάγος*).

<sup>43</sup> S. Mohm, *Untersuchungen zu den historiographischen Anschauungen des Polybios* (Diss., Saarbrücken, 1977), 108–16, argued that *τέρατα* are without value because they contained falsehood.

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of the meaning of *τερατεία* in Polybius in relation to sensationalism and critique of other historians, see J. Marincola, *Greek Historians* (Oxford, 2001), 135, and id. (n. 34), 453–4. Regarding Polybius’ critique of other historians, see also F.W. Walbank, *Polybius* (London, 1972), 34–40; Rebenich (n. 34), 265–6, 281 and 285.

<sup>45</sup> Vocabulary linked to *τέρατα* features sporadically throughout the *Bibliothékê*. The noun *τέρατα* appears five times (2.29.3; 4.6.5; 4.77.4; 32.12.1; 32.12.3) and consistently refers to either portents or monsters of some kind. *Τερατώδης* (‘prodigious’ or ‘monstrous’) appears one further time (4.47.3) to describe a monstrous tale, but with no clear pejorative meaning. The adverbial form is used once (1.26.6), and the noun *τερατεία* is found, outside the narrative of Eunus, only two more times (4.51.3; 4.56.1), although in the latter case it does appear to be used in a manner similar to that of Polybius in his criticisms of Phylarchus.

<sup>46</sup> See n. 42 above.

origins,<sup>47</sup> became synonymous as ‘magic-worker’, although typically in a disparaging sense.<sup>48</sup> In particular the terms μάγος and γόης were almost entirely interchangeable, with no distinction as to what type of magic was practised, resulting in a generic meaning. These terms carried expectations of trickery, linked as they were by the *Suda* to τερατεία, which, as mentioned, the *Suda* considered to be based on falsehoods.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, in the Roman mind, foreign peoples and their religions were often associated with witchcraft, and different regions held different expectations of their specific craft.<sup>50</sup> Holy men and ‘magicians’ from the east of the Mediterranean were typically understood, in both the Greek and the Roman worlds, to be skilled in prophecy, provided their prophetic abilities were not used to enhance their own authority: in this case they were considered a lowly magician.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, the Romans believed, at least in the first century B.C., that the religious observances of the μάγοι in Persia were suspect (Catull. 90);<sup>52</sup> in Roman literature there were also clear distinctions between Roman ‘state’ religious practices, which were acceptable, and magical rites of a foreign and dangerous nature.<sup>53</sup> In Greek and Roman literate society of the mid first century B.C. there was a clear opinion that the dubious magical practices of other religions and those of ‘magicians’ were intended to alter the course of nature and were implicitly wrong.<sup>54</sup> This led to the use of the terms μάγος and γόης for

<sup>47</sup> The term μάγος originally meant a Median priest (A.D. Nock, ‘Paul the Magus’, in Z. Stewart [ed.], *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World I* [Oxford, 1972], 308–30, at 309), but during the Archaic period it came to mean a fraudulent magician: Nock (this note), 323–4; R. Gordon, ‘Imagining Greek and Roman magic’, in B. Ankarloo and S. Clark (edd.), *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe II: Ancient Greece and Rome* (London, 1999), 159–275, at 99, 104; M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Graeco-Roman World* (London, 2001), 14–15. According to the *Suda* s.v. Γοητεία, a γόης designated a magician who summoned up corpses. Modern scholars trace the term γόης to one who used lamentations in summoning the dead: see S. I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece* (London, 1999), 103. P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque I* (Paris, 1968), s.v. γοῶω defines γόης by their use of cries and incantations; see also Dickie (this note), 14. φαρμακεύς is related to the use of drugs or poisons, although it quickly lost this association; Dickie (this note), 14.

<sup>48</sup> See Nock (n. 47), 323–4 and Dickie (n. 47), 13–16. In the case of Eunus, the focus in the modern literature has, without exception, been on his status as a μάγος in order to understand how Diodorus was characterizing him, with no attention given to the other vocabulary highlighted here: see Toynbee (n. 4), 405; Finley (n. 4), 140; Vogt (n. 3), 40–3; Yavetz (n. 4), 8; Bradley (n. 3), 55–7, 113–14; Callahan and Horsley (n. 3), 147; Shaw (n. 4), 12; Wirth (n. 3 [2004]), 282, and (n. 3 [2006]), 126; Urbainczyk (n. 3), 52; Strauss (n. 4), 194. Kunz (n. 3), 338–41 argued that Diodorus denounced only the magic and prophetic powers of Eunus, but not his choice of religious calling. All take great pains to demonstrate the validity of Diodorus’ characterization, but do not consider connections to already existing stereotypes.

<sup>49</sup> Dickie (n. 47), 75–6 noted that Herodotus called the Neuri γόητες for their claims to change into wolves, because he thought their claims to be false, and not because he believed they did magic; see also Eur. *Bacch.* 283, where Pentheus describes Dionysus as a γόης, clearly implying fraudulent behaviour.

<sup>50</sup> The Marsi were characterized in various literary sources from as early as the second century B.C. through to the first century A.D. as having the ability to charm snakes; see E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman and Modern Perceptions of People from the Central Apennines* (Oxford, 1995), 159–66. These powers were also associated with certain parts of North Africa; see B. Gibson, *Statius Silvae 5* (Oxford, 2006), 221.

<sup>51</sup> Dickie (n. 47), 112. It is not surprising that the word chosen for Eunus was μάγος given his supposed Syrian origins; see Diod. Sic. 34/5.2.5.

<sup>52</sup> See also F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte: Religionsgeschichtliche und epigraphische Untersuchungen zu den Kulturen von Chios, Erythrai, Klazomenai und Phokaia* (Rome, 1996), 37–8.

<sup>53</sup> Dench (n. 50), 167.

<sup>54</sup> Dickie (n. 47), 137–41.



stigmatizing ‘socially deviant, and therefore undesirable, views and behaviour’.<sup>55</sup> However, in spite of clear prejudices against these magical practitioners, some were very successful: for example, Simon Magus from the *Acts of Peter*, or Alexander the False Prophet from Lucian’s *Alexander*. When looked at from this perspective, even Jesus could be viewed as one of the most successful charlatan magicians.<sup>56</sup> However, my main point is not that these men could be successful, but that the purpose of the terminology used to describe them was consistently negative.

Furthermore, the centrality of this ‘wonder-working’ to Eunus’ character returns, as we have seen, in his election to the kingship: the apex of his success. After commenting on the qualities for which Eunus was *not* elected, ἀνδρεία τε καὶ στρατηγία, Diodorus informs us of the reasons for his election (34/5.2.14): διὰ δὲ μόνην τερατείαν καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ἄρξαι (‘but only because of his knowledge of wonders and his setting of the revolt in motion’). We can now understand Diodorus’ tone in this exclamation, given his clear prejudices against the use of τερατεία. For example, it is hardly positive that the slaves were duped by Eunus, and his charlatan ability could not be considered flattering, if we keep in mind the negative view driving the use of the relevant terms. It is apparent that this characteristic of Eunus infects his crowning achievement, further undermining his success, on top of the fact that Diodorus considered Eunus a coward and an inept leader. Furthermore, there is an additional element of Diodorus’ scorn for Eunus at his crowning moment that we have not yet examined.

#### 4. τὸ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ἄρξαι

We have seen above that Diodorus gave us yet another reason for Eunus’ election (34/5.2.14): τὸ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ἄρξαι (‘his setting of the revolt in motion’). To understand the event to which Diodorus refers, we have to turn to two separate, parallel passages from earlier in the narrative. After describing the treatment of Damophilus’ slaves, Diodorus relates (in two parallel versions, 34/5.2.10 and 24b, preserved by Photius and the Constantinian excerpts respectively) that they went to Eunus to ascertain if they had the approval of the gods for their rebellion. Subsequently, Eunus put on a display of wonder-working before pronouncing in their favour and encouraging them to act quickly. Both passages are consistent in their use of language to describe Eunus’

<sup>55</sup> J.P. Flintermann, *Power, Paideia and Pythagoreanism* (Princeton, 1995), 67. This is not to deny that Roman religion was in regular interaction with ‘foreign’ cults or practices, many of which became incorporated into Roman religious practice: see e.g. J.A. North, ‘Conservatism and change in Roman religion’, *PBSR* 30 (1976), 1–12, at 8–11; M. Beard, ‘Writing and ritual: a study of diversity and expansion in the Arval Acta’, *PBSR* 53 (1985), 114–62; J.A. North, *Roman Religion* (Cambridge, 2000), 54–7. Roman religion was not, of course, completely open, and in many respects after the third century B.C. became much more closed to outside influences (North, this note [1976], 8); in some cases it could be vehemently opposed to certain cultic practices, most notably the Bacchanalia in 186 B.C., the Chaldaeans in 139 B.C. (Val. Max. 1.3.2) and others: see C. Gallini, *Protesta e integrazione nella Roma antica* (Bari, 1970); J.A. North, ‘Religious toleration in Republican Rome’, *PCPhS* 205 (1979), 85–103; J.-M. Pailler, *Bacchanalia* (Paris, 1988); J.A. North, ‘The development of religious pluralism’, in J. Lieu, J.A. North and T. Rajak (edd.), *The Jews among Pagans and Christians* (London, 1992), 174–93, at 181; North (this note [2000]), 63–8.

<sup>56</sup> In Mark 3:22, Luke 11:15–20, and Matthew 10:24–5, 12:27–8, the scribes and Pharisees called Jesus a magician, who cast out demons in the name of Beelzeboul. M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (London, 1978), 32 and 174, notes that this demon is (32) ‘unmistakably Palestinian’. Moreover, Jesus was called (John 8:48) a Samaritan, a connection to Simon Magus, the Samaritan magician. Justin, *Dial.* 69.7, 108.2, preserves evidence of Jewish claims that Jesus was a magician (69.7: μάγος) and Origen, *C. Cels.* 1.68, notes that Jesus was compared to a γόης.



actions, especially concerning τέρατα and its derivations (τερατεία in 34/5.2.10 and τερατευόμενος in 34/5.2.24b). The two passages are similar, although the first, from Photius, is simpler and less detailed than the latter from the Constantinian excerpts. In the Photian version, for example, the slaves ask Eunus for advice, and immediately on working his wonders (μετὰ τερατείας) Eunus is presented as assenting: Eunus acts without knowing what the slaves' resolve was. In the Constantinian excerpt, there is a delay in his assent: Eunus, who still began working wonders (ὁ δὲ τερατευόμενος), waited until περὶ τίνων ἤκουσι ἀκούσας ('he heard why they had come') to grant them permission. The slaves only asked initially if their decision was approved (εἰ συγχωρεῖται παρὰ τῶν θεῶν αὐτοῖς τὸ βεβουλευμένον), but had provided no details, and it appears from the narrative that Eunus delayed his prophecy *in order* to hear the full details.<sup>57</sup> Eunus, furthermore, does not provide a true prophecy, for Diodorus has already made it clear by now that Eunus was a charlatan: he was not divinely inspired and so preferred, as this passage implies, to know as much as possible before 'divining'. We should also consider how the characterization of Eunus discussed above affects our reading of this passage.

Throughout the narrative, Eunus is described in terms very different from those used of the rebels whom he then led. Concerning the slaves, we should note first how Diodorus describes their treatment with regard to their lack of food and clothing and their alienation from their masters. This is consistent throughout the general descriptions of slave mistreatment in the narrative, as well as the specific case of the slave owner Damophilus, whose actions caused the initial outbreak of war. Thus we learn from Diodorus that Sicilian slave owners were abusing their slaves through a combination of depriving them of adequate clothing, malnutrition and continuing estrangement that provoked their banditry (34/5.2.2 and 26). When describing Damophilus' treatment of slaves, Diodorus specifically notes his lack of provisioning for his herdsmen (34/5.2.36) and his poor relationship towards suppliant slaves (34/5.2.38). When compared with Eunus, the contrast is apparent. A lack of provision, even if it had occurred in Eunus' case (and for this we have no evidence), was offset by Eunus' close access to his master at dinner parties with the added bonus that (34/5.2.8) τινες αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης ἀξιολόγους μερίδας αἴροντες ἐδωροῦντο ('some of [the dinner guests], lifting substantial portions from the table gave them to him as gifts'). Furthermore, Eunus' position as the dinner entertainer gave him a close and, to judge by the narrative in Diodorus, good-natured relationship with his master;<sup>58</sup> it is clear from these aspects of the narrative that he was a favoured slave. Up to the moment when the estranged and mistreated slaves come to Eunus, his lifestyle had been completely separate from theirs, as he had neither experienced nor shared in their collective plight. Ancient readers might accordingly have seen his subsequent leadership as flawed: Eunus was

<sup>57</sup> Only Green (n. 3), 12 and Urbainczyk (n. 3), 55 note this distinction. For Green it is evidence of differing biases in the narrative of Diodorus, one pro-Roman, and the other not (with no indication which bias the latter tradition held): it is more accurate to consider the difference in details to be caused by the compositional styles of the two excerpters (Photius tends to compress his account, whereas the Constantinian excerpts are often verbatim), rather than reflecting two differing accounts within the same text of Diodorus. Urbainczyk, on the other hand, notes that there is varying treatment of Eunus across the two different excerpts, but pursues the point no further.

<sup>58</sup> This understanding of Diodorus does not accord with that generally put forward on the subject. Typically the relationship is viewed as Antigenes and his dinner guests patronizing Eunus (see Green [n. 3], 12; Urbainczyk [n. 3], 55), or a dangerous mocking of a 'holy idiot' (see Vogt [n. 3], 25–6), or just exploitation of Eunus' reputation (Dumont [n. 19], 224; Bradley [n. 3], 114).

actually benefiting from his position as a favoured slave and his opportunistic pretence of prophecy. This suggests in turn that his leadership of the revolt was a mark of further opportunism: it was not based on a shared experience of bad treatment, creating a separation between Eunus and his subjects in the mind of the reader.

By singling out Eunus in this way, Diodorus set up the platform for his subsequent negative portrayal of Eunus, the cowardly king. As is now clear, Diodorus was not crediting Eunus with any positive characteristics. The connotations inherent in the language associated with him, shown above, and the clear indications given by Diodorus that Eunus was not actually a divinely inspired seer serve to denigrate his character in preparation for his subsequent important role. Indeed, the strength of this characterization led one scholar – interested in magic and magicians, not slavery – to comment that the ‘... account we have of Eunus’ career will be in some measure an imaginative recreation ... based on patterns of behaviour with which [the author] was familiar’.<sup>59</sup> This view of Diodorus’ text is unusual in that it allows for a certain level of creativity on the part of the author, creativity which we have seen in Diodorus’ choices of language when describing Eunus. And this description leaves little doubt about the author’s opinion of the man.

### 5. *Toward a reading of Hellenistic slavery?*

The depiction of Eunus in Diodorus is unremittently hostile. At no point in the narrative is Eunus praised unless the praise is tempered with a corresponding caveat or explanatory denigration of either him or his followers. The associations crafted throughout Diodorus’ narrative with Hellenistic concepts of kingship and wonder-working are consistent from Eunus’ introduction down to his pathetic death in a Morgantina jail. It is striking that the strongest scorn is reserved for the most significant moment of Eunus’ career, his acclamation as king. At this moment Diodorus tied together all the threads of abuse employed throughout the narrative against Eunus, negating the importance of Eunus’ achievements and destroying any credibility that Eunus, once king, sought to achieve. Furthermore, his depiction in Diodorus is composed in such a way as to create certain literary effects. The symbolic connection between Eunus and his master, Antigenes, indicates that, because of literary finesse that had Eunus assume the place of his own degenerate master by the end of his life, we cannot trust the impression given by the text for historical purposes. Awash with stereotypes and literary plays, Eunus’ character is a caricature designed to turn the reader against him.

This conclusion foregrounds a larger problem. If Diodorus was able to play so freely with his depiction of Eunus, we cannot assume that he did not do so elsewhere in his narrative of the conflict. Thus, it is well known that he introduced the narrative with an anachronistic explanation of the banditry on the island, yet this problem has been largely ignored (34/5.2.3 and 31).<sup>60</sup> A reassessment of that episode is beyond the remit of this paper, but it is clear that this section of Diodorus’ *Bibliothékê* is problematic in

<sup>59</sup> Dickie (n. 47), 113.

<sup>60</sup> Green (n. 3), 13–14; Vogt (n. 3), 25–6; Manganaro (n. 3 [1967]), 211; Forte (n. 3), 98–9; Manganaro (n. 3 [1980]), 438; Dumont (n. 19), 214–15; Bradley (n. 3), 54; Sacks (n. 1), 146–50; Shaw (n. 4), 13; Urbainczyk (n. 3), 11. See also G.P. Verbrugge, ‘Narrative patterns in Posidonius’ *History*, *Historia* 24 (1975), 189–204, at 197–204.

historical terms beyond its fragmentary and epitomized nature. We must be very careful, when using this narrative to write the history of slavery in the Hellenistic world, not to assume that stories told by ancient narrators necessarily contain a hardcore of historical data.

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