The Queen's Speech: Callimachus's Pieria, Aphrodite, and the Political Power of Hellenistic Queens

Sources for Pieria's unification of Miletus and Myus:

-Callimachus, fr. 80-83 Harder (III B.C.E.):

-Aristaenetus, Epistulae 1.15 (VI C.E.):

Summary of Aristaenetus:

Miletus and Myus long hostile (lit. "unmixed") except for brief truces. Aphrodite takes pity; she and Graces adorn the already-beautiful Pieria of Myus. Pieria attends Artemis festival in Miletus; Phrygius, the king of Miletus sees her, desires her, takes her to bed. After making love Phrygius asks her to tell him what she wishes from him in return. Aristaenetus, like Callimachus, now addresses Pieria directly: Pieria rejects thought of jewelry, clothes, slaves – gifts women want. Pieria blushes purple with shame, looks at ground. Pieria asks to be able to return with her kinsmen without fear. Phrygius understands her intention to ask for peace. The peace they make is stronger than one sworn with sacrifices; Pieria offers proof that Aphrodite makes orators who are more powerful than Nestor. Story is *aetion* for popular saying of Milesian women: "I wish that my husband would honor me, his wife, as much as Phrygius honored beautiful Pieria."

- -Plutarch, *Mulierum Virtutes* 16 = *Mor*. 253f-254b (I/II C.E.)
- -Polyaenus *Strategems* 8.35 (II C.E.)

(both Plutarch and Polyaenus add noble parentage for Pieria, omit sex)

1. Callimachus fr. 80 Harder (= 80+82 Pf.) "Phrygius and Pieria" ἂν νέφος αν[...cloud...For whether.....to say this... εἴτε γὰρ οὐκατ[...from me..." τοῦτ' εἰπεῖν[] [(5) So he spoke. But neither a pyleon έ]ξ ἐμέθεν τε[]ντα.' (headband) nor kalykes (earrings?), nor 5 η ρα σὲ δ' οὐ πυλιεών ού κά]λυκες, Lydian cloth...[nor] Carian slave-Λ]ύδιον οὐ κα[ίρωμα]ι Κάειρ[α]ι women...—the things in which you λάτριες, οὐκαγ[..].ικο[]ς, women especially delight—these did not τ]οῖς ἔπι θηλύτ[ερ]αι.[] ἰαίνεσθε cast you from your clever plan. ἔξαιτον, πυκι[νοῦ γ]νώματος ἐξ[έ]βαλ[ο]ν-(10) But having blushed in the cheeks with shame—as if with purple dye—you 10 αίδοῖ δ' ὡς φοί[νικι] τεὰς ἐρύθουσα παρειάς spoke, with eyes turned away..."I would ἔνν]επες ὀφ[θαλμο]ῖς ἔμπαλι . [. . .]ομέν[.]ι[long to return...[with] more...". ...]. .[]ε χρήζοιμι [νέ]εσθαι He perceived your intention...]. .[. μετὰ πλ]εόνων.' (15)...desiring [peace?] for your].ε, νόον δ' ἐφ[ρ]άσσατο σεῖο fatherland...Myus and those living in 15]πατρίδι μαιομένης Miletus...to [go] to the [temple] only of]Μυ[όε]ντα καὶ οἱ Μίλητον ἔναι[ον]η· μούν[ης νηὸν ἐς] Ἀρτέμιδος (translations mine)

π]ωλε[ῖσθαι Νη]ληΐδο[ς, ἀλ]λὰ σὺ τῆμος βουκτ]ασ[ι]ῷν ἀρ[τὺν πιστο]τέρην ἔταμες,
20 ἔνδει]ξας καὶ Κύπ[ρι]ν ὅτι ῥη[τ]ῆρας ἐκείνου τ]εύχει τοῦ Πυλί[ου κρ]έσσονας οὐκ ὀλίγον. ἐ]ξεσίαι πολέε[ς γὰρ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέροιο μο]λοῦσαι ἄστ]εος ἀπρήκτ[ους οἴκαδ' ἀνῆλθον ὁδούς.].σθ[.]θε.[

Neleid Artemis..., but at that time you made a peace treaty more trustworthy than sacrifices of oxen,

(20) having shown that even Cypris

(20) having shown that even Cypris makes speakers far more powerful than the famous Pylian (i.e. Nestor). For many embassies went from each town [and returned] without accomplishment. ...

2. *Iliad* 14.214-221 (Aphrodite's famous *kestos himas*)

ἦ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα ποικίλον, ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο: ἔνθ' ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ' ἵμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστὺς πάρφασις, ἤ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων. τόν ῥά οἱ ἔμβαλε χερσὶν ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε: τῆ νῦν τοῦτον ἱμάντα τεῷ ἐγκάτθεο κόλπῳ ποικίλον, ῷ ἔνι πάντα τετεύχαται: οὐδέ σέ φημι ἄπρηκτόν γε νέεσθαι, ὅ τι φρεσὶ σῆσι μενοινᾶς.

So she (Aphrodite) spoke, and she loosed her embroidered, dappled girdle, and there all her charms were fashioned: in it was love, desire, sweet talk, persuasion which cheats the mind even of clever men. She put it in her (Hera's) hands, and spoke and addressed her: 'Place this dappled girdle on your breast, in which everything is fashioned; and I declare that you will not go without accomplishment, in whatever you desire in your mind.

3. Polybius 22.20 (Apollonis, wife of Attalus I)

ὅτι Ἀπολλωνίς, ἡ Ἀττάλου τοῦ πατρὸς Εὐμένους τοῦ βασιλέως γαμετή, Κυζικηνὴ ἦν, γυνὴ διὰ πλείους αἰτίας ἀξία μνήμης καὶ παρασημασίας. [2] καὶ γὰρ ὅτι δημότις ὑπάρχουσα βασίλισσα ἐγεγόνει καὶ ταύτην διεφύλαξε τὴν ὑπεροχὴν μέχρι τῆς τελευταίας, οὐχ ἐταιρικὴν προσφερομένη πιθανότητα, σωφρονικὴν δὲ καὶ πολιτικὴν σεμνότητα καὶ καλοκαγαθίαν, δικαία τυγχάνειν τῆς ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ μνήμης ἐστίν, [3] καὶ καθότι τέτταρας υἰοὺς γεννήσασα πρὸς πάντας τούτους ἀνυπέρβλητον διεφύλαξε τὴν εὔνοιαν καὶ φιλοστοργίαν μέχρι τῆς τοῦ βίου καταστροφῆς, καίτοι χρόνον οὐκ ὀλίγον ὑπερβιώσασα τἀνδρός.

That Apollonis, the wife of Attalus, the father of Eumenes the king, was a Cyzican, and a woman worthy of memory and commendation for many reasons. For since she had become a *basilissa* although she was a commoner, and she preserved this supremacy until her death, **not exhibiting a courtesan's persuasiveness, but a prudent and ordinary dignity and goodness**, it is right that she obtain a favorable memory, and because after she had given birth to four sons she preserved her goodwill and affection towards them all until the end of her life, although she outlived her husband by far.

4. Theocritus *Idyll* 17.34–52 (Berenice I, wife of Ptolemy I)

οἵα δ' ἐν πινυταῖσι περικλειτὰ Βερενίκα ἔπρεπε θηλυτέραις, ὄφελος μέγα γειναμένοισι. 35 τῷ μὲν Κύπρον ἔχοισα Διώνας πότνια κούρα κόλπον ἐς εὐώδη ῥαδινὰς ἐσεμάξατο χεῖρας. τῷ οὕπω τινὰ φαντὶ ἀδεῖν τόσον ἀνδρὶ γυναικῶν, ὅσσόν περ Πτολεμαῖος ἐὴν ἐφίλησεν ἄκοιτιν. ἡ μὰν ἀντεφιλεῖτο πολὺ πλέον: ὧδέ κε παισὶ 40

And such a great woman, the well-renowned Berenice, was superior among prudent women and was a great boon to the children she bore. The divine queen who holds Cyprus, daughter of Dione, impressed her slender hands upon Berenice's perfumed breast. For this reason they say that no woman ever pleased a man so much as Ptolemy took pleasure in his

Power, Royal Agency, and Elite Women 26 November 2021

θαρσήσας σφετέροισιν ἐπιτρέποι οἶκον ἄπαντα, όππότε κεν φιλέων βαίνη λέχος ἐς φιλεούσης. ἀστόργου δὲ γυναικὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίω νόος αἰεί, ἡηίδιοι δὲ γοναί, τέκνα δ' οὐ ποτεοικότα πατρί. κάλλει ἀριστεύουσα θεάων πότν' 'Αφροδίτα, 45 σοὶ τήνα μεμέλητο: σέθεν δ' ἔνεκεν Βερενίκα εὐειδὴς 'Αχέροντα πολύστονον οὐκ ἐπέρασεν, ἀλλά μιν ἀρπάξασα, πάροιθ' ἐπὶ νῆα κατελθεῖν κυανέαν καὶ στυγνὸν ἀεὶ πορθμῆα καμόντων, ἐς ναὸν κατέθηκας, ἑᾶς δ' ἀπεδάσσαο τιμᾶς. 50 πᾶσιν δ' ἤπιος ἤδε βροτοῖς μαλακοὺς μὲν ἔρωτας προσπνείει, κούφας δὲ διδοῖ ποθέοντι μερίμνας.

wife. He was loved much more in return! For having rejoiced so in their children he bequeathed his house entire to them, whenever enamored he would step into the bed of a loving wife. But the mind of a heartless woman is always upon another man, childbirths come easily, and the children are not like the father. Queen Aphrodite, best among the goddesses in beauty, you cared for that woman (Berenice); it is owed to you that the beautiful Berenice did not cross the muchlamented Acheron, but you seized her before she went down to the black ship and ever hateful ferryman of the dead, and you set her up in your temple and gave her a share of your honors. She (Berenice-Aphrodite) breathes gentle loves upon all mortals, and she gives light cares to the one who is yearning.

5. *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 80-82, 108-110, 117-120 ("Like a virgin": Aphrodite's deception of Anchises)

στῆ δ' αὐτοῦ προπάροιθε Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη παρθένω ἀδμήτη μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη, μή μιν ταρβήσειεν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι νοήσας.

. . . .

Άγχίση, κύδιστε χαμαιγενέων ἀνθρώπων, οὔ τίς τοι θεός εἰμι: τί μ' ἀθανάτησιν ἐίσκεις; ἀλλὰ καταθνητή τε, γυνὴ δέ με γείνατο μήτηρ.

. . .

νῦν δέ μ' ἀνήρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης ἐκ χοροῦ Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακάτου, κελαδεινῆς. πολλαὶ δὲ νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεσίβοιαι παίζομεν, ἀμφὶ δ' ὅμιλος ἀπείριτος ἐστεφάνωτο.

6. Machon *Chreiai* 226–30 Gow = Athen. 13.579a (Demetrius Poliorcetes and Mania)

αἰτουμένην λέγουσι τὴν πυγήν ποτέ ὑπό τοῦ βασιλέως Μανίαν Δημητρίου ἀνταξιώσαι δωρεὰν καὐτόν τινα, δόντος δ' ἐπιστρέψασα μετὰ μικρὸν λέγει, " Άγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἐκεῖν ' ἔξεστί σοι."

(cf. Sophocles *Electra* 1–4) ὧ τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροία ποτὲ Άγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἐκεῖν᾽ ἔξεστί σοι παρόντι λεύσσειν, ὧν πρόθυμος ἤσθ᾽ ἀεί. τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἄργος οὑποθεὶς τόδε... And Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus, stood before him, similar in size and appearance to an unwed virgin, so that he (Anchises) would not recognize her with his eyes and grow afraid.

. . .

"Anchises, most glorious of earth-born men, I am no goddess, I tell you. Why do you liken me to the immortals? I am mortal, and a mother gave me birth.

. . .

Just now the slayer of Argus of the golden wand (Hermes) seized me up **from the chorus of loud-voiced Artemis of golden arrows**. And we many nymphs and virgins who bring in oxen were playing, and a boundless company encircled us.

They say that once, when Mania was asked for her ass by king Demetrius, she demanded from him, too, a royal estate in return; and when he gave it, she turned around right away and said, "Son of Agamemnon, now those things are possible for you".

(Mania quotes Orestes' *paidagogos*): "Son of Agamemnon, who long ago warred in Troy, now those things are possible for you to see that you are here, those which you were long eager. For you desired this ancient land of Argos..."

7. Iliad 4.141-147 (Menelaus's purple wound)

ώς δ' ὅτε τίς τ' ἐλέφαντα γυνὴ φοίνικι μιήνη Μηονὶς ἠὲ Κάειρα παρήϊον ἔμμεναι ἵππων: κεῖται δ' ἐν θαλάμω, πολέες τέ μιν ἠρήσαντο ἱππῆες φορέειν: βασιλῆϊ δὲ κεῖται ἄγαλμα, ἀμφότερον κόσμός θ' ἵππω ἐλατῆρί τε κῦδος: τοῖοί τοι Μενέλαε μιάνθην αἵματι μηροὶ εὐφυέες κνῆμαί τε ἰδὲ σφυρὰ κάλ' ὑπένερθε.

8. *Iliad* 3.216-224 (Odysseus's embassy speech before the Trojans)

ἀλλ΄ ὅτε δὴ πολύμητις ἀναΐζειεν Ὀδυσσεὺς στάσκεν, ὑπαὶ δὲ ἴδεσκε κατὰ χθονὸς ὅμματα πήξας, σκῆπτρον δ΄ οὕτ΄ ὀπίσω οὕτε προπρηνὲς ἐνώμα, ἀλλ΄ ἀστεμφὲς ἔχεσκεν ἀΐδρεϊ φωτὶ ἐοικώς: φαίης κε ζάκοτόν τέ τιν΄ ἔμμεναι ἄφρονά τ΄ αὕτως. 220 ἀλλ΄ ὅτε δὴ ὅπα τε μεγάλην ἐκ στήθεος εἵη καὶ ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίησιν, οὐκ ἂν ἔπειτ΄ Ὀδυσῆῖ γ΄ ἐρίσσειε βροτὸς ἄλλος: οὐ τότε γ΄ ὧδ΄ Ὀδυσῆος ἀγασσάμεθ΄ εἶδος ἰδόντες.

As when a Maeonian or Carian woman dyes ivory with purple to be a cheekpiece for horses, and it is laid up in the inner room, and many horsemen pray to bear it, but it is laid up as a splendid object for a king, both an adornment for the horse and glory for the rider: such, Menelaus, were your muscular thighs stained with blood, and your legs, and your fine ankles below.

But whenever cunning Odysseus rose, he would stand and look down with his eyes fixed on the ground, and would move his staff neither backwards nor forwards, but would hold it motionless, very like a fool: you would claim that he was rancorous and merely senseless. But when he would cast his great voice and words alike to wintry snow from his chest, then no other man could vie with Odysseus; not so did we marvel then, having seen Odysseus's aspect.

9. Iliad 9.437-443 (Phoenix's educational ideal)

πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ σεῖο φίλον τέκος αὖθι λιποίμην οἶος; σοὶ δέ μ' ἔπεμπε γέρων ἰππηλάτα Πηλεὺς ἤματι τῷ ὅτε σ' ἐκ Φθίης Ἀγαμέμνονι πέμπε 440νήπιον οὔ πω εἰδόθ' ὁμοιΐου πολέμοιο. 440 οὐδ' ἀγορέων, ἵνα τ' ἄνδρες ἀριπρεπέες τελέθουσι. τοὕνεκά με προέηκε διδασκέμεναι τάδε πάντα, μύθων τε ὑητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων.

10. Hesiod *Theogony* 81–90 (Muses' patronage of kings)

ὄν τινα τιμήσωσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο γεινόμενόν τε ἴδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήων, τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσση γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρσην, τοῦ δ΄ ἔπε΄ ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα: οἱ δέ τε λαοὶ πάντες ἐς αὐτὸν ὁρῶσι διακρίνοντα θέμιστας 85 ἰθείησι δίκησιν: δ δ΄ ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύων αἶψά κε καὶ μέγα νεῖκος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσεν: τοὕνεκα γὰρ βασιλῆες ἐχέφρονες, οὕνεκα λαοῖς βλαπτομένοις ἀγορῆφι μετάτροπα ἔργα τελεῦσι ἡηιδίως, μαλακοῖσι παραιφάμενοι ἐπέεσσιν. 90

How then, dear child, could I be left apart from you, alone? The old man Peleus, driver of horses, sent me to you on that day when he was sending you from Phthia to Agamemnon, a little boy ignorant of grievous war and assemblies, too, where men earn distinction. For this reason he sent me to teach you all these things, to be a speaker (rhētēr) of words and a doer of deeds.

Whomever of the Zeus-nourished kings the daughters of great Zeus (i.e. the Muses) honor and look upon as he is born, upon his tongue they pour sweet dew, and from his mouth flow gentle words; and all the peoples watch him judge lawsuits with straight verdicts. For this reason he would, by speaking unerringly, swiftly put an end to even a great feud (neikos) wisely. And that's why kings possess wisdom: because they easily put a stop to deeds that are doing people harm when they are being misled in the assembly, by persuading them with gentle words.

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