

The Past and Present of Naupactus in Ephorus' *Histories*

Scholarly consensus has long coalesced around the conclusion that the historian Ephorus (*FGrHist* 70) wrote the bulk of his *Histories* in the 350's and 340's. Key to this dating is a *terminus ante quem* in Ephorus' treatment of Naupactus (F 121), which was subsequently cited by Strabo (9.4.7). The town was transferred to Aetolian control by Philip of Macedonia in 338 BCE (Rzepka 2004), but the fragment, as presented by Jacoby, shows no awareness of that fact. Strabo does not specify where in the *Histories* he found the information he cites from Ephorus, but an early book is the most likely – perhaps Book 1 on the Return of the Heraclids via Naupactus or Book 4 on the geography of Europe generally. This early part of the work must then have been written before 338, or so the argument goes (Jacoby 1926: 24, Barber 1935: 12, Parker 2011 [on F121], and Parmeggiani 2011: 226 n.362 and 720 n.29). This straightforward case is, however, much complicated by the fact that Strabo immediately goes on to note that “at any rate, the Aetolians now (vñv) hold the city since Philip adjudged it theirs” (trans. Parker). Commentators have unanimously concluded that this is an authorial insertion by Strabo himself. In this paper, I argue that it is Ephorus, not Strabo, who notes the transfer of Naupactus to Aetolia. Such a conclusion would convert F 121 from a *terminus ante quem* into a *terminus post quem*, which would in turn suggest a later date of composition for the *Histories*.

At the core of the traditional reading of this fragment is the assumption that Strabo has corrected his source (Ephorus) with up-to-date information for the benefit of his contemporary readers. The problem here is that Naupactus was not associated with Aetolia when Strabo was writing. The geographer's own date of composition is debatable, but recent scholarship points decisively to a date in the early years of Tiberius' reign, likely from 18-24 CE (Dueck 1999 and

Pothecary 2002). By this point, it had been almost 50 years since Naupactus (along with much of the surrounding area) had been transferred to Achaean Patrae soon after the establishment of a Roman colony there in the wake of Actium in 31 BCE (Paus. 10.38.9 with Rizakis 1996: 279-85). Strabo was not ignorant of the change. He not only mentions the Roman colony of Patrae (8.7.5), but also its control of territory on the northern shore of the Gulf of Corinth (10.2.21). Strabo's comment about Naupactus could not have been motivated by a desire to provide up-to-date information because the information he provides is not up-to-date. He has erred, and the most likely cause of his error would have been the source he was following at the time, Ephorus. It is not at all improbable that Ephorus, who was fond of proleptic insertions, broke from his treatment of ancient Naupactus to note that it had recently been transferred to Aetolian control. This conclusion gains additional support from the *Periodos* of Pseudo-Skymnus, who follows Ephorus closely in his description of mainland Greece (Parmeggiani 2011: 169 n.44) and similarly identifies Naupactus as Aetolian (473-82).

As a *terminus post quem*, F 121 has some important implications for our understanding of Ephorus. If the early portions of the *Histories* were written, not in the 350's, but 20 years later, we should interpret Ephorus' work, not in light of the same post-Mantinean uncertainty that drove Xenophon in the middle decades of the fourth century, but rather in light of the new realities of Macedonian hegemony under Philip and Alexander the Great.

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