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HERODOTUS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE ARCHIDAMIAN WAR

In an interesting and learned paper published in this journal and devoted to the question of the date of Herodotus' publication, JUSTUS COBET raised a number of objections to my view that Herodotus' literary activity extended throughout the Archidamian War¹. Arguing that neither 9, 73, 3 nor 6, 98, 2 nor 7, 235 provides a secure *terminus post quem* (as I had held), he also maintained that Aristophanes' *Acharnians* 523 ff. guarantees the publication of Herodotus' *Histories* by 425 because these verses are demonstrably a 'parody' of his *prooemium*. The importance of the subject – for it bears significantly on our interpretation of Herodotus' literary technique and historical perspective – makes it mandatory for me to return to the question however much I regret the necessity of engaging in a polemic with a scholar whose work I respect and to whose kindness, moreover, I am indebted for an offprint of his paper.

I

The three passages in the *Histories* listed above seem in my opinion to require that Herodotus was writing in the period 431–421. Let us consider them in turn.

(a) 9, 73, 3: τοῖσι δὲ Δεκελεῦσι ἐν Σπάρτῃ ἀπὸ τούτου τοῦ ἔργου ἀτελείη τε καὶ προεδρὶν διατελεῖ ἐς τόδε αἶε ἐτι ἐοῦσα, οὕτω ὥστε καὶ ἐς τὸν πόλεμον τὸν ὕστερον πολλοῖσι ἔτεσι τούτων γενόμενον Ἀθηναίοισι τε καὶ Πελοποννησίοισι, σινομένων τὴν ἄλλην Ἀττικὴν Λακεδαιμονίων, Δεκελῆς ἀπέχεσθαι. Though I held that the aorist participle indicated that Herodotus viewed the war as having been concluded (p. 34), COBET affirmed (p. 4) that, like γενομένης λέσχης in 9, 71, 3, the participle actually marks »die Aktionsart, u. z. hier offenbar den Aspekt einer ingressiven Handlung: 'in dem Krieg, der zwischen Athenern und Peloponnesiern ausgebrochen war'«. But COBET has interpreted the participle as if it stood alone; the syntactical structure of the sentence forbids COBET's translation. ἀπέχεσθαι ἐς τὸν πόλεμον τὸν ὕστερον γενόμενον (not ἐν τῷ πόλ. τ. ὕ. γ.) can only mean that the Spartans »refrained (from devastating the land of the Deceleans) throughout the entire war that took place later«. Herodotus' expression is in effect a date the precise meaning of which is determined by his use of ἐς. Now ἐς in the sense »until the war broke out« is obviously excluded by the substance of the sentence, for the rest of Attica was not ravaged until after the war began. Furthermore, ἐς with the aorist participle in apposition

¹ COBET, »Wann wurde Herodots Darstellung der Perserkriege publiziert?« *Hermes* 105 (1977), 2–27, FORNARA, »Evidence for the Date of Herodotus' Publication,« *JHS* 91 (1971), 25–34.

with the accusative it governs is a formula Herodotus uses to define precisely a *terminus ante quem* with reference to a completed action. One may compare 2, 43, 4, ἔτεά ἐστι ἑπτακισχίλια καὶ μύρια ἐς Ἄμασιν βασιλεύσαντα, ἔπειτα κτλ, and 2, 142, 1, ἀποδεικνύντες ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου βασιλέος ἐς τοῦ Ἡφαίστου τὸν ἱρέα τοῦτον τὸν τελευταῖον βασιλεύσαντα μίαν τε καὶ τεσσεράκοντα καὶ τρηκοσίας ἀνθρώπων γενεάς γενομένας κτλ. In both cases, needless to say, Herodotus has reckoned the continuum of time to the end of the reigns of the persons mentioned. Ambiguity is avoided by the use of the aorist participle. So must it be here. And so K. MÜLLER long ago recognized in his unprejudiced translation: »in eo bello, quod multis post hoc bellum annis inter Peloponnesios et Athenienses gestum est, quum reliquam Atticam Lacedaemonii vastarent, Decelea abstinerint.«

COBET's objections are therefore invalid; Herodotus regarded the war as over. And since everyone but Thucydides believed that the war had ended in 421, we therefore impute nothing of our own perspective (COBET, p. 5) to Herodotus by making his opinion coincide with our own.

(b) In 6, 98, 1–3 Herodotus stated that Delos was shaken by an earthquake in 490 B. C. (cf. Thuc. 2, 8, 3): καὶ τοῦτο μὲν κου τέρας ἀνθρώποισι τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι κακῶν ἔφηνε ὁ θεός. (2) ἐπὶ γὰρ Δαρείου τοῦ Ὑστάσπεος καὶ Ξέρξω τοῦ Δαρείου καὶ Ἄρτοξέρξω τοῦ Ξέρξω, τριῶν τουτέων ἐπεξῆς γενεῶν, ἐγένετο πλέω κακὰ τῇ Ἑλλάδι ἢ ἐπὶ εἴκοσι ἄλλας γενεάς τὰς πρὸ Δαρείου γενομένας, τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν Περσέων αὐτῇ γενόμενα, τὰ δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν κορυφαίων περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς πολεμούντων. (3) οὕτως οὐδὲν ἦν ἀεικὲς κινηθῆναι Δῆλον τὸ πρὶν ἐοῦσαν ἀκίνητον. Because I urged (p. 33) that the 'retrospective tone' of this passage implies the end of the Archidamian War, COBET accused me of retrojecting »unsere rückblickende Perspektive . . ., ohne die Herodot sehr wohl schon 430 den Krieg unter den von ihm angesprochenen Gesichtspunkten auffassen konnte« (p. 5). Let us, however, attempt to be precise. Herodotus has provided us with the explanation (γάρ) of the fulfillment of a τέρας sent by ὁ θεός. Since the explanation falls under two heads, the evils that arose from the Persian Wars and the evils that arose from the war of the κορυφαῖοι περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς, Herodotus must be allowed to have observed the unfolding of the κακὰ just as he must have written differently if the uncertain future lay before him (e. g., in 430).

What, moreover, is the necessary implication of Herodotus' reference to the reigns of three successive monarchs and his insistence that the period under review was one of three continuous generations (pp. 32f.)? COBET's reply is a fair measure of his difficulty: »Schon 430 aber regierte er (sc. Artaxerxes) ca. 34 Jahre, genug, um daran eine Generation zu veranschaulichen« (p. 5). Surely the point, however, is that ἐπὶ Δαρείου καὶ Ξέρξω καὶ Ἄρτοξέρξω is standard Greek for an inclusive regnal count in past time (cf.

1, 186, 1; 2, 141, 1; 3, 81, 3 and especially 5, 68, 2). COBET seems to forget that Herodotus is not dating an event within a period (e. g. 2, 108, 2) but is using the ἐπί formula as the definition of a continuous epoch begun by the rule of one king and, as the reader would conclude automatically, terminated by the end of the reign of another. Nor has COBET adequately appreciated the implication of Herodotus' synchronism of the reigns of the three kings with 'three generations one upon another'. Unless the statement is tautologous, and this we have no right to assume², Herodotus has calibrated the reigns of the Persian monarchs with the period of Hellas' time of woe by adding the information that it lasted for a century (2, 142, 1). Herodotus' double equation therefore indicates that he wrote these words after the death of Artaxerxes and a century after Darius' seizure of the throne (521). On my view, Herodotus' twofold chronological statement is literally true; on COBET's view both statements are false. In a word, 6, 98 yields the date 424 – 421 backwards and forwards and up and down.

(c) In 7, 235 Demaratus urges Xerxes to occupy the island of Cythera by quoting with approval the wise man Chilon's remark that it were better for the Spartans that Cythera be sunk into the sea. Unless one supposes that Herodotus possessed transcripts of the conversations of the royal Persian monarch, this is a *vaticinium ex eventu* presupposing the fateful occupation of Cythera by the Athenians in 424. COBET's *réchauffé* (p. 7) – the discussion about Cythera 'seems old', Tolmides occupied the island in 456, Cythera's occupation was a strategic possibility discussed in Athens in 431 – is irrelevant to the incontrovertible fact that nothing happened to Cythera before 424 to justify the true prophecy (for that is entailed by its attribution to Chilon) that the island's existence would bring tremendous woe to the Spartans. COBET's explanation will serve only if we suppose that Chilon's remark was not a prophecy. But then we must conclude that Herodotus gratuitously (it is a 'non-event') complicated his narrative by inserting a pretentious strategic observation leading nowhere (*ex hypothesi*) into his *Histories* in an unparalleled manner. That notion refutes itself.

II

The positive indications of date provided by 9, 73, 3; 6, 98, 2 and 7, 235 would be enough, I think, if the author in question were anyone but Herodotus. The problem basically stems from our general conception of this

² As W. DEN BOER, »Herodot und die Systeme der Chronologie,« *Mnemosyne* S. IV 20 (1967), 43, rightly insisted, »man darf die Regierungsjahre nie und nimmer mit den γενεαί verwechseln.« DEN BOER was speaking in general, not about our passage. Here the *datum* of the 'three generations' gives further precision to the *datum* conveyed in the reference to the collective reign of Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes.

writer. It is virtually impossible to believe that Herodotus would have remained silent about events occurring during the Archidamian War if in fact he were still engaged in the process of composition at that time. Thus, for example, the absence of any mention by Herodotus of the capture of Cythera in 424 is sufficient for COBET to conclude (p. 7) that Herodotus had already stopped writing. In effect, we are the victims of our observation of the tenacity with which Herodotus hunts out a story. Not only does he follow a thread of related events with diligence; he clearly considers it his function to make relevant connections wherever and whenever possible. From this it follows (or seems to follow) that if Herodotus knew of something integrally important to the subjects and themes treated in the *Histories* it would have been virtually automatic for him to have related it.

What COBET and others persist in overlooking is that Herodotus was as reticent about events occurring after the Persian Wars as he was a mine of information about events before it. There seem to be no more than seventeen scattered references to later events in the entire history³, and of these *eleven* refer to events in the fifties or earlier. Of the pitiful few that remain as the barely perceptible index of his own times, three (6, 91; 7, 137, 1; 233, 2) refer to the opening years of the War just as the other three, already discussed, allude to the twenties. Is not the methodological impropriety of concluding *anything* from Herodotus' silence apparent from these figures? Nothing except the assumption that he slept for fifty years can alter the conclusion that he decided *on principle* to refrain from explicit discussion of Greek history after 479. The principle must be deduced from the *Histories* because on any view of the date of his activity, whether 440 or 430 or 420, it is otherwise inconceivable that he would have held his tongue (in complete contrast to his 'normal' historical method) about the multitude of important and relevant events that filled the intervening space of time. Sparta was almost destroyed in the Third Messenian War; Athens made peace with Persia. The relations of Argos and Sparta, the First Peloponnesian War, the Egyptian Expedition, Cimon's death in Cyprus, the reduction of Chalcis and Eretria in 446/5, the rebellion and conquest of Samos (a *polis* he knew intimately and which evidently interested him greatly), Corcyra's alliance with Athens, the Megarian Decree – the list of major events that could have elicited explicit discussion⁴ is endless. But let us not forget that we know very little about the Pentacontaetia. Herodotus, had he been so minded, could have edified us with an almost infinite number of other allusions. The conclusion must be

³ They are collected by SCHMIDT-STÄHLIN, *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur* I. 2 p. 590 n. 9, Add. 6, 118.

⁴ I. e., as against such casual allusions as 9, 64 (the Third Messenian War) or 3, 12, 15 (Inaros' rebellion).

that Herodotus consciously exercised the very greatest self-discipline by refusing to make explicit obvious and significant connections.

As one case in point, and as an example of Herodotus' method⁵, consider his discussion of the Athenian subjugation of Chalcis in 506. The account is full and circumstantial. Herodotus tells us that he saw the chains hanging in the Acropolis that were used to shackle the Chalcidian captives (5, 77, 3) and he even reproduced the inscription on the monument dedicated in thanksgiving for the victory (77, 4). He is also well-informed about the cleruchy dispatched by the Athenians to Chalcis. Not a word is said about the virtual duplication of this event in 446/5. The same logic, therefore, that COBET would apply to 6, 91 (p. 7) as well as to Cythera will prove to us that Herodotus was ignorant of the second subjugation of Chalcis.

Enough has been said to demonstrate that Herodotus' silence was the silence of principle and intention. Consequently, the absence of references 'where we might expect them' is utterly valueless as a criterion of date. Our only reliable evidence, therefore, is the passages in Herodotus already discussed. Not only should they be regarded without prejudice; it would also be salutary to keep in mind the fact that their number is *equal* to that of the other passages testifying to Herodotus' knowledge of the period 450 – 430.

III

Having now established the proper context in which to continue our investigation, it is time to consider the negative indirect evidence of *Acharnians* 523 ff. A parody of Herodotus' *prooemium*, if it can be proved, would certainly indicate that Herodotus' history was published by 425 and (therefore) that a real dilemma exists.

COBET has urged (pp. 10 – 12) that Aristophanes' lines explaining the origin of the Peloponnesian War by way of the theft of Aspasia's harlots in retaliation for the kidnap of Simaetha from Megara – 'three worthless whores' – is a direct parody presupposing far more than mere general knowledge of the Trojan Cycle as I had earlier maintained (p. 28). »Hiergegen genügt ein Hinweis auf die besondere Konstellation des gegenseitigen Raubens, die speziell Herodots Mythenklitterung mit Aristophanes verbindet (though E. MAAS and W. NESTLE take another view). Beide verfehlen Aristophanes' Pointe, die gerade in der komischen Aufwertung des Frauenraubmotivs besteht. Umgekehrt dazu verhält sich die komische Umsetzung der mythischen Heldinnen in Dirnen, des Raubes in Diebstahl, der verletzten Ehre der beraubten Helden in den materiellen Verlust der um ihre Dirnen gebrachten Aspasia. Die Parodie besteht in der Umkehrung der Größenverhältnisse und Bewertungen.« This reduces itself on analysis to the assertion that

⁵ See in general my Herodotus, chapter IV, »Herodotus' Perspective.«

Aristophanes' parody consists in the inversion of the Frauenraubmotiv which figures in Herodotus' *prooemium*. Now whatever else may be unclear about the *prooemium*, his own explicit testimony (*passim*) assures us that he was not the creator but the critic of the Motiv so that the Herodotus-Aristophanes connection is something gratuitous.

But that it is more than gratuitous will appear from a closer examination of COBET's treatment of the question. COBET asserts that Aristophanes has parodied Herodotus by converting mythical heroines into whores, the rape of Helen into Diebstahl and Menelaus' lost honor into Aspasia's material loss. Apart from the fact that Herodotus has already accomplished the first of these inversions, the conception is rather more vertiginous than amusing. Menelaus' lost honor = Aspasia's material loss? Aspasia's πόρνα δύο plus Simaetha (?) = Io, Europa, Medea, Helen? Helen's rape = (again) Aspasia's two whores? Parody needs to be logical or paralogical so that the audience can relish the systematic inversion; this is a fudge, a most confusing parody of *Herodotus* which it were perhaps indelicate to impute to Aristophanes. In actual fact, it is not a parody at all; it is a comic allusion along lines parallel to that of Herodotus the whole point of which is that it must not be closely pressed. Furthermore, and this is the crucial point, though the picture evoked indeed brings us back to epic saga, the reference of the comic analogy is different from what COBET supposed. Aspasia has simply been equated here as elsewhere (cf. Plut. *Per.* 24, 9) with Hera. Pericles οὐλύμπιος (530) is the key: he thundered and lightened and threw Hellas into war because his Hera was vexed at the fate of some sluts. The comic inversion of Helen et al. is, in other words, taken completely for granted; what is funny is the comparison of Pericles, Aspasia and the Peloponnesian War with Zeus, Hera and the Trojan War. It is even tempting, though perhaps unjustified, to allow the reference to τριῶν λαικαστριῶν to conjure up the memory of Alexandros' three lovely suppliants.

In any case, since Herodotus' *prooemium* and Aristophanes' humorous remarks each possess a different orientation and are similar only in what is for Aristophanes a secondary attribute of Aspasia⁶, a parody of Herodotus by Aristophanes may be regarded as rather too remote to compel us to reverse our views of 9, 73, 3, 6, 98 and 7, 235. On the other hand, whether the contrary should be argued, viz. that Herodotus availed himself of Aristophanes' witticism, is something that might usefully be considered. But the result

⁶ In other words, such women were by definition Aspasia's clients. The modern Hera was the butt of jokes not only about her own sexuality but also about her alleged profession as a madam. (Plutarch, *Pericles* 24, 5 can only be explained as the misinterpretation by Plutarch or his source of comic allusions to this imputed role.) Here the maltreatment of prostitutes was the natural comic motivation of Aspasia's pique.

reached here is sufficient for present purposes. Aristophanes' lines fail to prove the publication of Herodotus' history by 425.

IV

The fact that Herodotus was busy with his history during the Archidamian War and therefore knew of events 'which he should have mentioned' raises the question of the *purpose* of his silence. The answer does not seem very difficult. Since Herodotus must obviously have expected that his readers would be at least as well-informed as we about events impacting on his own account, he expected that they would make the appropriate connection. His technique, as I have maintained in my *Herodotus*, was dramatic; the involvement of his readers was a precondition of his text, just as the 'truth' of his account was guaranteed by its still echoing consequences. To put it bluntly, Herodotus allowed himself to shape his discussion of past history so that it would correlate with, explain and suggest some of the momentous occurrences of his own time. Hence his inclusion of the reduction of Chalcis in 506 or the advice of Demaratus in 490.

To illustrate the point, let us consider Herodotus' very curious account of Datis' dream in 6, 118. Here we are told that Datis, on his way back to Asia, dreamed a dream at Mykonos that led him to the discovery that an image of Apollo had been wrongfully purloined. Datis *turned back* to Delos and informed the Delians that it was the property of Theban Delion. But the Delians were forgetful and did not return it. *Twenty years later* Delphic Apollo caused the Thebans to retrieve this object.

Of all the traditions that Herodotus must have heard, this is surely one of the most curious, and it is legitimate to ask why he has included it in his history. To illustrate the piety of Datis? Because, quite simply, it was a 'tradition'? But Herodotus does not usually set the divine machinery in motion without an ulterior purpose; we are sufficiently familiar with Herodotus' method of 'staging' events to expect a *dénouement* of some kind, for the gods evidently considered the disposition of the *agalma* a matter of considerable importance. If we wonder why, the explanation may be found in a later event.

In 424 the Athenians seized the sanctuary of Apollo at Delion in a campaign that resulted in their overwhelming defeat in that locality (Thuc. 4, 76; 4, 89ff.). Thucydides describes Hippocrates' impious fortification of the shrine in detail (90, 2) and underlines the religious issue by having the Boeotian leader, in his speech before the battle, invoke the protection of the god, οὐ τὸ ἱερόν ἀνόμως τειχίσαντες (οἱ Ἀθηναῖαι) νέμονται (92, 7). Athenian impiety (as it was viewed by the Thebans), after the battle of Delion, dictates the Boeotian refusal to return the Athenian dead (100). Diodorus

completes the picture (12, 70, 5) by adding that the Thebans used the booty to adorn their city and instituted as well a festival of the victory⁷.

That the Thebans regarded the Apollo of Delion as a full participant of the great victory they achieved can be taken as certain. Not only does Thucydides concentrate on the issue of sacrilege, whatever his opinion of the merits of the issue, but the establishment of a victory-festival emphasizes the religious dimension of the Theban success. Since we can be certain that Herodotus published after the event, the reason for his allusion to Datis' dream and the further intervention of Delphi becomes apparent and significant: Herodotus' *agalma* was the literal incorporation of the Apollo who vindicated Theban control of Delion; its presence at Delion was something that the gods themselves needed to safeguard against human accident, for the battle was 'fated' – as Herodotus would say, ἔδεε δὲ γενέσθαι. Thus we begin to understand more completely one of the principles guiding Herodotus in the collection of his material – its present relevance.

To conclude⁸, the evidence that Herodotus continued to write during the Archidamian War is sound. A counter-indication like *Acharnians* 523 ff. is anything but the proof it has been claimed to be of Herodotus' publication by 425. The fact that Herodotus resisted comment about events prior to 431 is a sufficient commentary on his silence about events thereafter. Recognizing, then, that such a narrative technique as I have elucidated is intentional and was calculated for effect, we may therefore seek for other examples (e. g. 5, 23. 93; 6, 91. 108) illustrative of his method – even if that exposes us to the danger of overestimating the extent of this tacit dialogue.

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⁷ This notorious incident also provoked an allusion from Euripides (naturally taking the other side) in *Suppliants* 494 ff. Cf. SCHMIDT-STÄHLIN, *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur* I. 3 p. 455 n. 2.

⁸ It seems pointless to analyze and criticize the rest of COBET's discussion, pp. 12 ff., since it is based on an invalid assumption; naturally I am in complete agreement with *some* of his concluding remarks (p. 27).

TEXT UND BÜHNENSPIEL IN DER ANAGNORISISSZENE DER ALKESTIS

Das paradoxe Wiedersehen in der *Alkestis* wird in einem Dialog (1008 ff.) des Herakles mit Admet angebahnt, der 1077 in Stichomythie übergeht. Die formale Verdichtung des Gesprächs hängt damit zusammen, daß sich die Handlung dramatisch zuspitzt und nurmehr in kleinsten Schritten unter stets