Two Notes on Herodotos

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I

Aeimnestos the Plataian

Before the Spartans took Plataiai in the Archidamian war two men were chosen by the Plataians to speak on behalf of their city: Astymachos son of Asopolaos and Lakon son of Aeimnestos. Thucydides (3.52.5) remarks that Lakon was a proxenos of the Lakedaimonians; as proxenos he was well fitted to plead for his city, and his name Lakon shows that his father Aeimnestos had also been friendly with the Spartans. In calling his son Lakon Aeimnestos resembled Kimon, a friend of Sparta, who had a son Lakedaimonios. Upon these Plataians A. W. Gomme, remarked that they are "names that are only names to us, but notables of Plata." This paper will suggest that the father of Lakon, Aeimnestos, is more than a name to us.

One of the arguments used by Astymachos and Lakon is this: the Plataians deserve gratitude from the Lakedaimonians, for when a great panic had overtaken Sparta after the earthquake, and the helots had made off to Ithome in revolt, Plataia had sent one-third of her army to the aid of Sparta (Thucydides 3.54.5). The claim to have helped Sparta agrees with the statement of Thucydides (1.102.1) that others besides the Athenians had come to her assistance in the great helot revolt: Aigina (Thucydides 2.27.2 and 4.56.2) and Mantinea (Xenophon, Hellenika 5.2.3) also sent troops.

Now Herodotos remarks that a certain Aeimnestos, a man renowned at Sparta, had killed Mardonios at Plataiai (9.64.2); and he adds that Aeimnestos had been killed, and three hundred with him, in Stenyklaros in a Messenian war. Hude in his edition printed 'Αρμυνήστου here, but the manuscript tradition is very strongly in

1 A. W. Gomme, A Historical Commentary on Thucydides 2 (Oxford 1956) 337.
favor of 'Αείμνηστος ('Αιμνήστων ΑΒ, 'Αείμνηστων CP), and we should certainly read 'Αείμνηστος. The reading 'Αείμνηστος is also found in the military writer Aristodemos, who had read Herodotos. An Aeimnestos, then, was said to have killed Mardonios and was killed by the Messenians.

Herodotos is careful not to call Aeimnestos a Lakedaimonian: he was, Herodotos wrote, a man renowned at Sparta, and he was killed in the great helot revolt. Since the son of an Aeimnestos of Plataiai was called Lakon, and since he reminded the Spartans of the Plataians' help in the great helot revolt, we can identify the Aeimnestos killed at Stenyklaros with the father of Lakon. The plea of Lakon the proxenos, then, was deeply felt: his own father and many of his fellow citizens had died in the cause of Sparta, but now Sparta was about to ruin Plataiai.

Plutarch in the Aristides (19) stated that a Spartiate killed Mardonios. The manuscripts give his name as διάμνηστος, δείπνηστος, or ἀρίμνηστος. Lindskog and Ziegler print Αείμνηστος, and that is doubtless what Plutarch wrote; but Plutarch's remark that the killer of Mardonios was a Spartiate cannot be accepted, for it is a mistaken inference by him or by his source from the words of Herodotos (9.64.2) ἄνδρος ἐν Σπάρτῃ λογίμῳ. The same mistaken inference was made by Aristodemos.

Herodotos (9.72) mentions a man of Plataiai to whom the Spartan Kallikrates spoke just before the battle of Plataiai in 479 B.C. Most manuscripts give his name as 'Αρίμνηστον but Hude's S has 'Αείμνηστον. The authority of S (Sancroftianus [Cantabr. Emm. 30]) is not great: it is much interpolated, and its unsupported testimony must be used with caution, as Hude remarked. Yet we may certainly read 'Αείμνηστον in Herodotos 9.72. Here is the father of Lakon speaking with his Spartan friends before the battle of Plataiai. The Arimnestos whom Plutarch named in Aristides (11.5) as a Plataian general is plainly the same man, even if the manuscripts do not permit the reading 'Αείμνηστον.

Pausanias (9.4.1 [Vol. 3.1, p. 313 Η.-Β.]) mentioned a statue of Arimnestos who fought in the battle against Mardonios and earlier led the Plataians at Marathon. Even if Pausanias called him Arimnestos, we cannot be sure that he read the name beneath the statue.

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The Arimnestos of Pausanias is plainly the notable Plataian Aeimnestos of Herodotos (9.64.2 and 9.72).

We conclude that Aeimnestos the Plataian led the troops of his city at Marathon. At the battle of Plataiai he killed Mardonios. In the great helot revolt of the 460s he led a Plataian force, and if the three hundred killed with him were Plataians, then at that time Plataiai had an army of nine hundred men, for Thucydides makes Lakon and Astymachos state that Plataiai sent one-third of her army to help Sparta. Lakon the son of Aeimnestos was a proxenos of the Lakedaimonians in Plataiai; his tragic duty was to plead for his city in the Archidamian war. Thucydides with his usual regard for relevance failed to remark that Lakon’s father had died in the service of Sparta.3

II

ΒΕΚΟΣ and ΒΕΚΚΟΣ

THE DELIGHTFUL and deservedly famous story of Psammetichos, the babies, and the shepherd in Herodotus (2.2) shows that βεκός was a Phrygian word meaning “bread.” The manuscripts have both βεκός and βέκκος. Hude prints βεκός.

Strabo (8.340) quotes a line from Hipponax

Κυπρίων βέκος φαγοῦσι κάμαθουσίων πυρόν.

(F 81 Knox. F 75 Diehl8). A. D. Knox proposed to read Λέκος instead of βέκος here; he doubted the existence of βέκος, because Aristophanes (Nubes 398) has the word βεκκεσέληνε, formed from βέκκος, and because the manuscripts of Herodotos give both βέκκος and βέκος. But his rejection of βέκος from the fragment of Hipponax was altogether too violent. βεκκεσέληνος shows that βέκκος was a genuine form, but it does not show that βέκος is a false form. In fact a genitive of βέκος in -οῦς is attested by Aelius Aristides,1 where the manuscripts

3 I thank Sterling Dow and W. G. Forrest for helpful conversations. For a similar problem of names in Herodotos see 6.105–106 where some manuscripts have Φειδηπίδης, others together with Plutarch, Mor. 862A have Φιλιππίδης.

1 (Ed.) Samuel Jebb. vol. 2, p. 3.
have βαίκους. More importantly, Phrygian inscriptions give βέκος and confirm that it is a genuine form of the word.\(^8\)

Hipponax knew something about Phrygia. He mentions Phrygian slaves sold to work in the mills at Miletos (F 19 Knox) and he names Kybebe, the mother of the gods, a Phrygian divinity. Is he using βέκος knowing it to be a Phrygian word, or does he imply that it was Cyprian also?

There are words common to Cyprus and to Phrygia. Phrygian ῥιδος corresponds to Laconian ῥιβά (\(<\ast\omega\rho\alpha\) and recurs in Cyprian.\(^3\) Phrygian Ἀναξ corresponds to Homeric (F)άναξ, and the word ἀναξ continued in use in historical times in Cyprus. Thus there is nothing improbable in the use of the same word both in Cyprian and in Phrygian to mean “bread.” βέκος, like Ἀναξ, may have been a Mycenaean Greek word, but there is no sign of it in the documents from Pylos and Knossos. The pe-ko in a cattle text from Pylos\(^4\) can hardly be bread.

We conclude that βέκος and βέκκος are both correct forms, and that βέκος may have been a Cyprian\(^5\) word for “bread,” the meaning it had in Phrygia.\(^6\)

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\(^4\) Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, Documents in Mycenaean Greek (Cambridge 1956) No. 77.

\(^5\) Pliny NH 18.67 states that Cyprian wheat is dark and makes the bread black: consequently the white Alexandrian is mixed with it. L. A. Moritz, Grain Mills and Flour in Classical Antiquity (Oxford 1958) 202, discusses this passage of Pliny and has doubts about the text.

\(^6\) The Phrygian formula in Calder, MAMA 7, No. 313 is: (4) ιος νι οικμανει κακους αδηκετ γεγεμεναν ε ι (5) γεδου Τιον ουταν ακκει βεκος ακκας τι δρεγουρ ειτου | (6) αυτος κε ουτε κε ροκα γεγαρτμεγος ασβαταν πεντους. The formula in the first six words means: “Whosoever does harm to this tomb…” Line (6) perhaps means “may he and his village and his family(?) be expelled from his people.” Compare W. M. Ramsay, Jahreshefte 8 (1905) Beibl. 95-98. With τευτόνος cf. Indo-European teutā (J. Pokorny, Indo-germanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch 12 [Bern 1958] 1084).