

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,¹ remarked that they are “names that are only names to us, but notables of Plataia.” 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 *Ἀριμνήστου* here, but the manuscript tradition is very strongly in

¹ A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* 2 (Oxford 1956) 337.

favor of *'Αειμνήστου* (*'Αϊμνήστου* AB, *'Αειμνήστου* CP), and we should certainly read *'Αειμνήστου*. The reading *'Αειμνήστου* is also found in the military writer Aristodemos, who had read Herodotos.² 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 *διάπνηστος*, *δείπνιστος*, 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) *ἀνδρὸς ἐν Σπάρτῃ λογίμου*. 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 *'Αείμνηστος*.

Pausanias (9.4.1 [Vol. 3.1, p. 313 H.-B.]) 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.

² F. Jacoby, *FGrHist* 104 F 1 para. 2, 5. Cf. E. Matthias, *Das Fragment des Aristodemos* (Diss. Jena [Gotha 1874]) 14.

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 Lakedaemonians 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

BEKOS and BEKKOS

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

Strabo (8.340) quotes a line from Hipponax

Κυπρίων βέκος φαγοῦσι κάμαθουσίων πυρόν.

(F 81 Knox. F 75 Diehl³). A. D. Knox proposed to read <λ>*έκος* 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 *-ους* 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 *Φειδιππίδης*, 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.²

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 *δουά* corresponds to Laconian *ὠβά* (< *ὠβά) and recurs in Cyprian.³ Phrygian *Φανακ* corresponds to Homeric (F) *ἀνάξ*, and the word *ἀνάξ* 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 *Φάναξ*, 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 Pylos⁴ can hardly be bread.

We conclude that *βέκος* and *βέκκος* are both correct forms, and that *βέκος* may have been a Cyprian⁵ word for "bread," the meaning it had in Phrygia.⁶

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² Sir William M. Ramsay, in *Jahreshefte des Öst. Arch. Inst.* 8 (1905) Beibl. 95 = W. M. Calder, "Corpus Inscriptionum Neo-Phrygiarum," *JHS* 31 (1911) 181, No. xxxiii = W. M. Calder (ed.), *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* 7 (Manchester 1956) No. 313; also Calder, *MAMA* 7, No. 454 and No. 495. cf. O. Haas, *Die Sprache* 7 (1961) 83-85.

³ *Ὀυαί φυλαί, Κύπριοι* Hesychius, ed. M. Schmidt, vol. 3-4, p. 231, 38-39.

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 σεμόν κρουμανει κακουν αδδακετ γεγειμεναν ε* || (5) *γεδου Τιος ουταν ακκειοι βεκος ακκαηος τι δρεγγρον ειτου* | (6) *αυτος κε ουα κε ροκα γεγαριτμενος ασβαταν τευτους*. 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 *τευτους* cf. Indo-European *teutā* (J. Pokorny, *Indo-germanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* 12 [Bern 1958] 1084).