

Reading Herodotus *Histories* 7.185

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IN CHAPTER 7.185 of his *Histories*, Herodotus catalogues the Greek and non-Greek *ethne* included in the recruitment of the Persian army.¹ The text, according to Nigel Wilson's new edition:²

[1] τὸ δὲ δὴ ἐκ τῆς Εὐρώπης ἀγόμενον στράτευμα ἔτι προσλογιστέα τούτῳ παντὶ τῷ ἐξηριθμημένῳ· δόκησιν δὲ δὴ λέγειν. νέας μὲν <οἱ> ἀπὸ Θρηίκης Ἑλληνας καὶ ἐκ τῶν νήσων τῶν ἐπικειμένων τῇ Θρηίκῃ παρείχοντο εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατόν. ἐκ μὲν νυν τούτων τῶν νεῶν ἄνδρες τετρακισχίλιοι καὶ δισμύριοι γίνονται. [2] πεζοῦ δὲ τὸν Θρηίκες παρείχοντο καὶ Παίονες καὶ Ἑορδοὶ καὶ Βοττιαῖοι καὶ τὸ Χαλκιδικὸν γένος καὶ Βρύγοι καὶ Πίερες καὶ Μακεδόνες καὶ Περραιβοὶ καὶ Ἐνιῆνες καὶ Δόλοπες καὶ Μάγνητες καὶ Ἀχαιοὶ καὶ ὅσοι τῆς †Θρηίκης† τὴν παραλίην νέμονται, τούτων τῶν ἐθνέων τριήκοντα μυριάδας δοκέω γενέσθαι. [3] αὐταὶ ὧν αἱ μυριάδες ἐκείνησι προστεθεῖσαι τῆσι ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας γίνονται αἱ πᾶσαι ἀνδρῶν αἱ μάχιμοι μυριάδες

¹ See especially: for geographical description, E. N. Borza, *In the Shadows of Olympus. The Emergence of Macedon* (Princeton 1990) 30–50; N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia I* (Oxford 1972) 3–211. For ethnographic and historical discussion, Borza 84–89; Hammond 430–441; N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia II* (Oxford 1979) 55–69; D. Graninger, “Macedonia and Thessaly,” in J. Roisman and I. Worthington (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia* (Malden/Oxford 2010) 306–325; M. B. Hatzopoulos, “Macedonia and Macedonians” and “Macedonians and Other Greeks,” in R. J. Lane Fox (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedonia* (Leiden 2011) 43–49 and 51–78; M. Mari, “Archaic and Early Classical Macedonia,” in *Brill's Companion* 79–92.

² N. G. Wilson, *Herodoti Historiae II* (Oxford 2015); transl. R. Waterfield, *Herodotus. The Histories* (Oxford 1998), adapted where necessary. On this passage see Hammond and Griffith, *History of Macedonia II* 100–101.

διηκόσια καὶ ἑξήκοντα καὶ τέσσερες, ἔπεισι δὲ ταύτησι ἑκατοντάδες ἑκκαίδεκα καὶ δεκάς.

[2] “Οἰταίης Legrand, sed Thessalorum etiam mentio desideratur”

[1] Then there was the army brought from Europe: its number must still be added to this total, but only an estimate is possible. The Greeks from Thrace and the islands off Thrace provided a hundred and twenty ships, with 24,000 men on board. [2] Then 300,000 would be my guess as to the number of men whom Thracians, Paeonians, Eordi, Bottiaeans, the people of Chalcidice, Bryges, Pierians, Macedonians, Perrhaebi, Enienes, Dolopians, Magnesians, Achaeans, and the communities inhabiting the †Thracian† coast recruited into the land army. [3] When all these tens of thousands are added to the figures from Asia, the total number of fighting men comes to 2,641,610.

Wilson’s *crucis* at 7.185.2 are at present necessary, since further reference to Thracians is undoubtedly redundant (given 7.185.2 πεζοῦ δὲ τὸν Θρήικες παρείχοντο); his note *in apparatu* “Thessalorum etiam mentio desideratur” is explained:³

There are two serious difficulties here. The first was pointed out by Pingel (1874), 25. The contribution of the Thessalians to the Persian war effort must have been one of the most important. Can H. have really forgotten it or has it fallen out of the text? Secondly, the repetition of Thrace at the end of the list is unwanted. Legrand thought of reading instead Οἰταίης, a region which included Herakleia in Trachis and Anticyra.

The “Thessalorum mentio” would be justified on the grounds of 7.130.3, ταῦτα δὲ ἔχοντα ἔλεγε ἐς τοὺς Ἀλεύεω παῖδας, ὅτι πρῶτοι Ἑλλήνων ἐόντες Θεσσαλοὶ ἔδοσαν ἐωυτοὺς βασιλεί, δοκέων ὁ Ξέρξης ἀπὸ παντός σφραγ τοῦ ἔθνεος ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι φιλίην (“He was referring to the fact that the

³ N. G. Wilson, *Herodotea. Studies on the Text of Herodotus* (Oxford 2015) 147, with references to J. V. Pingel, “Kritische Anmaerkninger til Herodots 7de, 8de og 9de Bog,” *Metropolitanskolens Program for 1874* (Copenhagen 1874), and Ph.-E. Legrand, *Herodote. Histoires. Livre VII* (Paris 1951). In addition, it ought to be noted that R. W. Macan, *Herodotus. The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Books I* (New York 1973 [1908]) 274, questioned the expression: “this title comes in rather curiously at the end of the list which started with Θρήικες ... To follow the ‘Achaians’ here the Malians (c. 132) are wanted.”

Aleuadae of Thessaly had been the first Greeks to surrender to him, a move which Xerxes took to be an offer of friendship from the whole country”) and 132.1 τῶν δὲ δόντων ταῦτα ἐγένοντο οἶδε, Θεσσαλοὶ κτλ. (“The following Greek peoples gave the king these things: the Thessalians etc.”). The mention seems, though, even more fitting after the events of 7.172–174: (172.1) Θεσσαλοὶ δὲ ὑπὸ ἀναγκαίης τὸ πρῶτον ἐμήδισαν, ὡς διέδεξαν ὅτι οὐ σφι ἦνδανε τὰ οἱ Ἀλευάδαι ἐμηχανῶντο (“The Thessalians originally collaborated with the Persians only because they had no choice in the matter. They made it plain that they did not like what the Aleuadae were up to”), but, having asked the Greeks gathered at the Isthmus for help, (174) ἐρημωθέντες συμμάχων οὕτω δὴ ἐμήδισαν προθύμως οὐδ’ ἔτι ἐνδοιαστῶς, ὥστε ἐν τοῖσι πρήγμασι ἐφαίνοντο βασιλεῖ ἄνδρες ἐόντες χρησιμώτατοι (“Abandoned by their allies, the Thessalians did collaborate with the Persians—so wholeheartedly in fact, and with so little trace of their former hesitancy, that they turned out to be more useful to Xerxes in the war than anyone else”).

For these reasons, the “Thessalorum mentio” is welcome indeed; nevertheless, one wonders why should Herodotus use an expression like ὅσοι τῆς Θρηίκης τὴν παραλίην νέμονται, since Thessaly does not contain a παραλίη at all, as its description at 7.129.1 shows:

τὰ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῆς πρὸς τὴν ἠῶ ἔχοντα τό τε Πήλιον ὄρος καὶ ἡ Ὅσσα ἀποκλιθεὶς συμμίσγοντα τὰς ὑπωρείας ἀλλήλοισι, τὰ δὲ πρὸς βορέω ἀνέμου Ὀλυμπος, τὰ δὲ πρὸς ἐσπέριν Πίνδος, τὰ δὲ πρὸς μεσαμβρίην τε καὶ ἀνεμον νότον ἡ Ὀθρυς· τὸ μέσον δὲ τούτων τῶν λεχθέντων ὁρέων ἡ Θεσσαλίη ἐστὶ ἐοῦσα κοίλη.

To the east Mount Pelium and Mount Ossa form a barrier because their foothills merge; the barrier to the north is Olympus, to the west Pindus, and to the south Othrys. Thessaly consists of a basin in the middle of these mountains.

See also 7.130.1, ὅρεσι γὰρ περιεστεφάνωνται πᾶσα Θεσσαλίη (“Thessaly is entirely surrounded by mountains”). Even though we could explain the phrase through an inclusive meaning of “Thessaly proper + the *perioikoi* dwelling in the neighbouring

areas,” one would still be surprised by the difficult circumlocution. Also relevant here is 9.31.5, where Herodotus relates Mardonius’ plans for the battle of Plataea:

ἔταξε ἀντία Ἀθηναίων τε καὶ Πλαταιέων καὶ Μεγαρέων Βοιωτοῦς τε καὶ Λοκροῦς καὶ Μηλιέας τε καὶ Θεσσαλοῦς καὶ Φωκέων τοὺς χιλίους ... ἔταξε δὲ καὶ Μακεδόνας τε καὶ τοὺς περὶ Θεσσαλίην οἰκημένους κατὰ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους.

and facing the Athenians, Plataeans, and Megarians, he posted the Boeotians, Locrians, Malians, Thessalians, and Phocians ... Mardonius also positioned opposite to the Athenians the Macedonians and those who lived around Thessaly.

In his military line-up, the Persian general deploys both Θεσσαλοί (become Persian allies after the facts of Tempe: see 7.172–174) and their neighbouring peoples (τοὺς περὶ Θεσσαλίην οἰκημένους). The reader already knows who these are from 7.132.1: τῶν δὲ δόντων ταῦτα ἐγένοντο οἶδε, Θεσσαλοὶ Δόλοπες Ἐνιήνες Περραιβοὶ Λοκροὶ Μάγνητες Μηλιέες Ἀχαιοὶ οἱ Φθιώται καὶ Θηβαῖοι καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι Βοιωτοὶ πλὴν Θεσπιέων τε καὶ Πλαταιέων (“The following Greek peoples gave the king these things: the Thessalians, Dolopians, Enienians, Perrhaebians, Locrians, Magnesians, Malians, Achaeans from Phthiotis, and, led by the Thebans, the rest of the Boeotians except the Thespians and Plataeans”);⁴ hence, a mention of Thessalians in 7.185 should not—I believe—include the *perioikoi*.

Given these considerations, I suppose that, if one wishes to include a “Thessalorum mentionem” in 7.185, one must posit a wider lacuna or emend the sentence more broadly. The notion of Thessaly’s παραλίη is unpersuasive since the relevant coastal area, Magnesia, has already been catalogued among the Persian allies. I shall return to this ‘Thessalian question’ in conclusion, after examining the following data.

If παραλίη is genuine, how should it be interpreted? To which παραλίη did Herodotus refer? Pieria, between the rivers

⁴ See Hdt. 7.222 for the Thebans’ and Thespians’ different behavior at Thermopylae.

Haliacmon and Peneus, is the first area to come to mind. This region—the coastal strip running along the Thermaic Gulf (an important landing place for Xerxes’ fleet: see Hdt. 7.121–124) including Mount Olympus and the cities of Dion, Methone, and Pydna⁵—was under king Alexander the Philhellene’s control (see Thuc. 2.99.3) and doubtless philopersian, as is clear from 7.131.1:

ὁ μὲν δὴ περὶ Πιερίην διέτριβε ἡμέρας συχνάς· τὸ γὰρ δὴ ὄρος τὸ Μακεδονικὸν ἔκειρε τῆς στρατιῆς τριτημορίς, ἵνα ταύτη διεξίη ἅπασα ἡ στρατιὴ ἐς Περραιβούς.

He [Xerxes] stayed in Pieria for quite a few days, because a third of his men were engaged in cutting through the Macedonian mountains to enable the whole army to pass through them and reach Perrhaebia.

Reading ὅσοι τῆς Πιερίας τὴν παραλίην νέμονται, “the communities inhabiting the coastal strip of Pieria,” is probably an overly hasty solution, since the phrase would introduce a difficult juxtaposition between Macedonia and Pieria, which was inhabited by Macedonians (see Thuc. 2.99.3 and 101.5 and Hdt. 7.112). It is thus better to exclude Pieria from Herodotus’ catalogue.

By combining 7.132 and 185, the Greek allies of the Persians result as: Thracians, Paeonians, Eordi, Bottiaeans, Chalcidians, Bryges, Pierians, Macedonians, [Thessalians], Perrhaebi, Enienes, Dolopes, Magnesians, Achaeans [of Phthiotis, Thebans, and Boeotians except Thespieans and Plataeans, Locrians, and Malians] + the inhabitants of an undetermined coastal area.

Clearly, ὅσοι ... νέμονται must imply the entire coast occupied by Achaea Phthiotis, Malis, Opuntian and Epicnemidian Locris, and Boeotia. Phthiotic Achaea was, alongside Perrhaebia and Magnesia, one of the Thessalian *perioikoi*: the expression ὅσοι ... νέμονται is appropriately suited to include also the minor neighbouring areas of Malis, Locris, and

⁵ See Hammond, *History of Macedonia* I 123–139.

Boeotia.⁶

Thus, the Herodotean passage—which recalls the more restricted version of τὸς περὶ Θεσσαλίην οἰκημένους in 9.31.5—ought to be read as follows:

καὶ ὅσοι {τῆς Θρηίκης} τὴν παραλίην νέμονται.
and all the peoples inhabiting the coast.

Perhaps a scholarly gloss erroneously commenting on the vague and unintelligible expression has intruded into the text. The removal of τῆς Θρηίκης is probably preferable to any form of emendation: it remains unclear whether it is appropriate to insert the Thessalians in 7.185 (for example, <καὶ Θεσσαλοὶ> ... καὶ ὅσοι τὴν παραλίην νέμονται?) or whether the absence of Thessaly in the *ethnon katalogos* is simply a genuine Herodotean omission. Whatever the case, I suggest that the ὅσοι-sentence should remain unaltered, apart from the deletion, in so far as it describes a specific geographical area.

In 7.185 Herodotus explains the results of Xerxes' expedition in Greece (see 7.121–131), summarizing the peoples who eventually joined the Persian army. The ὅσοι-sentence comes at the end of a geographically disordered list of *ethne* encompassing—aside from the inner regions north of Macedonia—the entire shoreline from Thrace to Thessaly (see Hdt. 7.128, 173, for the city of Gonnoi) and its *perioikoi*, moving through the *Pierikos kolpos* (Thuc. 2.99.3), Chalcidice, Bottice, Mygdonia (including Therma where Xerxes quartered his army: Hdt. 7.127), Macedonia with Pieria (see Hdt. 7.131), and finally the southern regions on the coast of the Malian and Euboic Gulf.

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⁶ See Graninger, in *A Companion* 308–309.