

# The Apollodoran *Akmai* of Hellanicus and Herodotus

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OUR CHIEF EVIDENCE for the ancient chronographic tradition on Hellanicus, Herodotus and Thucydides is that famous passage where Gellius (15.23), citing Pamphila, groups the three historians together and assigns them an age at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War of sixty-five, fifty-three and forty years, respectively.<sup>1</sup> Pamphila's authority has long been recognized as Apollodorus. The computation derives from his 'akme-method'.<sup>2</sup>

In the absence of fixed chronological data, Apollodorus computed a birth date for a person by assigning him an age of forty at the time of some event which might reasonably be considered to mark the *ἀκμή* of his career. Thales reached his *akme* at the time of the famous solar eclipse (F 28), Periander when he became tyrant at Corinth (F 332), Pythagoras when he migrated from Samos to Italy (F 339).

In the case of Thucydides, the ground of Apollodorus' reckoning is transparent. According to Pamphila, Thucydides was forty years old at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. That is, Apollodorus set Thucydides' *akme* in the first year of the war which he witnessed and recorded.

Forty years old when the war broke out in 431 B.C., Thucydides was born in 471. It is not so immediately self-evident why Apollodorus dated the birth of Herodotus to 484 or that of Hellanicus to 496. According to the prevailing hypotheses, Hellanicus' *akme* was set in 456, approximately the midpoint of the Pentekontaëtea, because of

<sup>1</sup> *Hellanicus, Herodotus, Thucydides, historiae scriptores, in isdem temporibus fere laude ingenti floruerunt et non nimis longe distantibus fuerunt aetatibus. Nam Hellanicus initio belli Peloponnesiaci fuisse quinque et sexaginta annos natus uidetur, Herodotus tres et quinquaginta, Thucydides quadraginta. Scriptum hoc est in libro undecimo Pamphilae (FHG 3.521 fr.7, Müller).*

<sup>2</sup> Hermann Diels, "Chronologische Untersuchungen über Apollodors Chronika," *RhM* 31 (1876) 47ff. The fullest treatment of Apollodorus is that of Felix Jacoby, *Apollodors Chronik (Philologische Untersuchungen 16, Berlin 1902)*; on Apollodorus' method, see especially pp.39–59. The main points are summarized in the commentary to *FGrHist* 244. Apollodorus is cited in the present study by reference to Jacoby's numbering of the fragments in *FGrHist* 244. The earlier work is cited as *Chronik*.

Thucydides' criticism (1.97.2) of Hellanicus' treatment of that period. Herodotus flourished at the age of forty in 444 because Apollodorus supposed that he had participated in the colonization of Thurii in that year.<sup>3</sup>

These suggestions are not entirely satisfactory. The settlement of Thurii is not in itself an appropriate reference point for the *akme* of Herodotus. Herodotus' fame rested on his achievement as a writer, not a politician or constitutional innovator. Hellanicus wrote of events occurring as late as 406 (*FGrHist* 4 F 171). Apollodorus was clearly wrong in considering him older than Herodotus. The fact that he did so is likely to be of greater significance for the precise computation than is the near coincidence of the Apollodoran *akme* with the midpoint of the Pentekontaëtea. Finally, the prevailing hypotheses are based on exclusive reckoning. While it is possible that Pamphila used this method of counting, it is certain that Apollodorus did not. It is the purpose of the present study to argue for inclusive reckoning of the intervals and to account for the *akmai* and birth dates which result.

As Jacoby had demonstrated, Apollodorus used the Attic year as his chronological standard. He accordingly reckoned with both *termini* included, as is natural for one who counts by archon years.<sup>4</sup> An Apollodoran *akme* thus represents a person's fortieth year—the proverbial age of thirty-nine in our reckoning.

Hellanicus was sixty-five years old at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, Herodotus was fifty-three and Thucydides had reached his *akme* at the age of forty. The beginning of the Peloponnesian War was one of the epochs of Eratosthenes (*FGrHist* 241 F 1) and Apollodorus (F 61). Thucydides himself (2.2.1) dated the beginning of the war to the archonship of Pythodorus, and Apollodorus cannot have done otherwise.

The archonship of Pythodorus corresponds to the year 432/1 in our reckoning. If Hellanicus was sixty-five in 432/1, he was born in 496/5 and reached his *akme* at the age of forty in 457/6, the intervals reckoned

<sup>3</sup> Diels, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 47–53. Jacoby, *Chronik* 278–79, *FGrHist* 244 F 7 Comm., cf. *RE* suppl. II (1913) 224–30 s.v. HERODOT and the commentary to *FGrHist* 4 (Hellanicus).

<sup>4</sup> Diels had used years B.C. and reckoned exclusively. Jacoby is careful to date by Attic years and count with both *termini* included. That Apollodorus did the same can be seen most clearly in his computations for Socrates. By our reckoning of Apollodorus' dates, Socrates lived for 68 years and 10 months. Yet Apollodorus states that he died at the age of 70. See Jacoby, *Chronik* 285, and *FGrHist* 244 F 34 Comm.

inclusively throughout. Similarly Herodotus, who was fifty-three in 432/1, was born in 484/3 and reached his *akme* in 445/4.

Approaching the computation from Pamphila's point of view and using the intervals which she records, one reaches the same result. Hellanicus was twelve years older than Herodotus, and Herodotus was thirteen years older than Thucydides. Thucydides was forty in 432/1. Herodotus was forty thirteen years earlier in 445/4, and Hellanicus reached the age of forty twelve years before that, in 457/6.

In dealing with the Apollodoran data reported by Pamphila one must therefore account for an *akme* of Hellanicus falling in 457/6 and an *akme* of Herodotus in 445/4. In each case the prevailing hypotheses assume an *akme* in the following year.<sup>5</sup>

## Hellanicus

Hellanicus was born in 496/5 B.C., according to Apollodorus. Dietrich conjectured that Apollodorus had set his *akme*, as an historian of the Pentekontaëtea, in the middle of that period. Jacoby can find no other "plausible erklärung des historisch ganz unhaltbaren ansatzes." The midpoint of the interval 480/79–432/1 is either 457/6 or 456/5, depending on the method of counting used. Jacoby notes that 456/5 is a "bedeutendes litterarhistorisches epochenjahr" and concludes that the *akme* of Hellanicus was set in that year.<sup>6</sup> The Apollodoran *akme* of Hellanicus, precisely computed, fell in the preceding year. The fact that the year marks the midpoint of the Pentekontaëtea may be no more than coincidence. In accounting for the date we must take into consideration the more significant fact that Apollodorus wrongly made Hellanicus older than Herodotus.

Apollodorus apparently considered Hellanicus to have occupied a position in the development of historiography both logically and chronologically prior to that of Herodotus, the father of history. That is, Apollodorus deemed Hellanicus, as an author of "Peoples and Places," the successor in historiography of Hecataeus.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In commenting on F 7, Jacoby takes note of the discrepancy in his computation of the *akme* of Hellanicus. Surprisingly, he fails to mention the same discrepancy in Herodotus' case.

<sup>6</sup> R. Dietrich, *Testimonia de Herodoti vita* (Leipzig 1899) 6; Jacoby, *Chronik* 279, *FGrHist* 244 F 7.

<sup>7</sup> For amplification of this point and its effect on the chronographic tradition see Jacoby on Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 4 and 323a.

There was an important corollary to the *akme*-method, as Jacoby has shown. Apollodorus frequently set an interval of forty years, again reckoned inclusively, between the *akmai* of master and pupil or between the *akmai* of successive generations of practitioners in the same field. In other words, Apollodorus synchronized the younger man's birth with his predecessor's *akme*.<sup>8</sup> Apollodorus considered Hellanicus the successor in historiography of Hecataeus. It is therefore possible that the Apollodoran birth date for Hellanicus in 496/5 derives from combination with the *akme* of Hecataeus.

The Suda, which often preserves data of Apollodoran origin, associates Hellanicus with Hecataeus and dates the latter to a little before the Persian Wars: 'Ελλάνικος . . . καὶ 'Εκαταίω τῷ Μιλησίω ἐπέβαλε, γεγονότι κατὰ τὰ Περσικὰ καὶ μικρῶ πρός.

*Γέγονε* is an ambiguous word. As Erwin Rohde has shown, it can refer either to a person's birth or to the height of his activity, i.e., his *akme*. Jacoby emends *γεγονότι* to *γεγονώς* and understands the phrase to refer to Apollodorus' birth date for Hellanicus in 496. As Rohde points out, however, the text makes better sense as it stands. One can hardly be born "during the Persian Wars and a little before," but such a phrase can easily refer to the height of his activity. *Γεγονότι* refers to Hecataeus' *akme*.<sup>9</sup>

Hecataeus could most easily be dated by reference to the Ionian Revolt. According to Herodotus (5.36 and 125), Hecataeus was active at the time and noted for his good advice unheeded. Apollodorus most probably dated his *akme* to some time during that six-year revolt. Herodotus mentions only one precisely datable event in connection with Hecataeus and the Ionian Revolt—Aristagoras' unsuccessful attempt to found a colony among the Edonians (5.124–26).

According to Thucydides (4.102), the Athenian debacle at Drabescus took place in the 32nd year after Aristagoras' defeat by the Edonians and in the 29th year before Hagnon's successful foundation at Amphipolis. Amphipolis was founded in 437/6 (schol. Aeschines 2.31). Starting with the traditional date for the foundation of Amphipolis and reckoning the intervals of Thucydides inclusively, Apollodorus inferred a date of 465/4 for the Athenian defeat at Drabescus and 496/5

<sup>8</sup> See especially Jacoby's comments on the pairs Thales Anaximenes (F 28, 66), Xenophanes Heraclitus (F 68, 340), Anaxagoras Democritus (F 31, 36).

<sup>9</sup> E. Rohde, "Γέγονε in den Biographica des Suidas," *Kleine Schriften I* (Leipzig 1901) 114ff; Jacoby, *FGHist* 4 T 1–6.

for the death of Aristagoras among the Edonians. Hecataeus had advised Aristagoras against undertaking the expedition (Herodotus 5.125). Apollodorus accordingly set Hecataeus' *akme* in the year of Aristagoras' defeat, 496/5.<sup>10</sup>

Hellanicus could not be dated directly, either by reference to autobiographical statements in his works or through testimonia (apart from such vague references as that of Thucydides 1.97.2) in other authors. Nevertheless, Apollodorus assigned him a place in historiography intermediate between Hecataeus and Herodotus. He therefore adopted his usual method of combination in such cases and set Hellanicus' birth in the year of his predecessor's *akme*, 496/5.

There remains the evidence of the *Suda* s.v. 'Εκαταῖος, which records a date for Hecataeus in the 65th Olympiad, 520–17 B.C.: γέγονε κατὰ τοὺς Δαρείου χρόνους . . . ὅτε καὶ Διονύσιος ἦν ὁ Μιλήσιος, ἐπὶ τῆς ξέ' ὀλυμπιάδος (Ολ. 65, 520–17) . . . καὶ ἦν ἀκουστῆς Πρωταγόρου ὁ 'Εκαταῖος. πρῶτος δὲ ἱστορίαν πεζῶς ἐξήνεγκε.

The notice lacks internal consistency. It dates Hecataeus to 520, but makes him a student of Protagoras. Protagoras did not flourish until 444 (Apollodorus F 70–71). Olympiad 65, 520–17, is a possible date for the *akme* of Hecataeus, although it would put him in his sixties at the time of the Ionian Revolt, and the *Suda* elsewhere dates the *akme* of Hecataeus to a little before the Persian Wars. More plausible is a date in Olympiad 65 for the birth of the Milesian historian Dionysius, whom the *Suda* synchronizes with Hecataeus in that Olympiad. The *akme* of Dionysius would then fall in Olympiad 75 (480–77) at the time of the Persian Wars he is said (the *Suda* s.v. Δ) to have recorded. Furthermore Hecataeus must be dated earlier than Dionysius, for it was Hecataeus, according to the *Suda*, who first wrote historical prose. A date of Olympiad 61.2, 535/4, for the birth of Hecataeus (so Apollodorus according to the argument adduced) and of Olympiad 65.2, 519/18, for the birth of Dionysius establish the correct relationships. Hecataeus flourished at the time of the Ionian Revolt κατὰ τοὺς Δαρείου χρόνους, while Dionysius flourished during the Persian Wars. The two were approximately contemporaneous, and both wrote history. The not infrequent ambiguity in such terms as γέγονε and ἦν accounts for the *Suda*'s error in synchronizing the two in the Olympiad of Dionysius' birth.

<sup>10</sup> The date of Amphipolis presumably reached both the schol. Aeschines and Apollodorus through the Atthidographic tradition. Diodorus (12.32.3) also records the date.

## Herodotus

Herodotus was fifty-three years old at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. Diels suggested that the computation derives from setting the *akme* of Herodotus at the age of forty in the year 444, synchronous with the foundation of Thurii *διὰ τὸ κοινωνῆσαι τῆς εἰς Θουρίους ἀποικίας* (Strabo 14.2.16). Adopting this hypothesis Jacoby argues that Herodotus had in fact referred to himself in the proemium as 'the Thurian'. It was therefore natural enough that the biographers, including Apollodorus, should have assumed that Herodotus participated in the colonization in 444 and, for want of better evidence, dated the historian accordingly.<sup>11</sup>

It was during the archonship of Praxiteles, 444/3, that Lampon went to the site of Sybaris to be the *οἰκιστὴς Θουρίων*. The Apollodoran *akme* of Herodotus, however, was in 445/4 according to the intervals of Pamphila. One must therefore account not only for the fact that Apollodorus used the foundation of Thurii as a reference point for the dating of Herodotus, but also for the fact that he set the historian's *akme* in the preceding year.<sup>12</sup>

The Apollodoran date for Herodotus appears in two other places, apart from Gellius' citation of Pamphila. Pliny (12.18) dates Herodotus to the year *ab Vrbe condita* 310 (444 B.C.) and the *Chronicle* of Eusebius has an entry for Herodotus dated to Olympiad 83.4, 445/4.<sup>13</sup>

Pliny says of Herodotus: *tanta ebori auctoritas erat urbis nostrae CCCX anno. tunc enim auctor ille historiarum condidit Thuriis in Italia.*

<sup>11</sup> Diels, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 49; Jacoby, *RE* suppl. II (1913) 206ff, 224ff. For a counter-argument to Jacoby's belief that Herodotus called himself a Thurian see H. Erbse, *RhM* 98 (1955) 103ff. The argument centers on Arist. *Rhet.* 1409a29, where the proemium is cited as reading *Θουρίου* instead of *Ἀλικαρνησέος*.

<sup>12</sup> Plut. \*835D dates the foundation of Thurii to 444/3 (Praxiteles), Diodorus (12.10.3) to 446/5 (Callimachus). Ehrenberg, *AJP* 69 (1948) 149ff, suggests that both dates are reliable and both were included in the Attidographic tradition on Sybaris and Thurii.

<sup>13</sup> So all the mss of Hieronymus. The Armenian mss enter the notice at the year of Abraham 1570 or 1571 (447/6). The fact that the entry appears at 445/4 in Hieronymus cannot be used as independent testimony that Apollodorus dated the *akme* of Herodotus to that year. Thanks to the accidents of transmission, Eusebius' notices often appear in the mss two or three years distant from the traditional dates. Nevertheless, the fact that the notice appears at least near the Apollodoran *datum* suggests that the tradition preserved in the entry is of Apollodoran origin. As usual, the precise date must be inferred from other sources. On Apollodoran remnants in Eusebius, see the commentary to *FGrHist* 244 F 1-87, 331-51 *passim*. On Apollodorus as a source of Pliny through the *Chronicle* of Nepos, see *FGrHist* 244 T 7, 19-20.

Unfortunately, the passage does not quite make sense. It is not clear whether Pliny means to date the foundation of Thurii to *a.V.c.* 310 or the composition of the histories, or both. The passage should be left as it stands, however, and the ambiguity preserved.<sup>14</sup> Pliny has perhaps combined two data into one through hasty compression of his source material. He dates Herodotus to *a.V.c.* 310, connects him with Thurii, and refers to his *auctoritas* as a writer of histories. The year *a.V.c.* 310 in the Varronian system corresponds to 444 B.C. Whether the date corresponds to the archonship of Praxiteles (444/3) in the system of Apollodorus or to the archonship of Lysimachides (445/4) is not immediately clear. Fortunately we know from another instance exactly how Pliny correlated the dates of Apollodorus with Olympiad years and years reckoned *ab Vrbe condita*.

The Apollodoran *akme* of Thales was 585/4 (F 28). Pliny (2.53) dates Thales to Olympiad 48.4, *a.V.c.* 170. In this system Pliny's date for Herodotus in *a.V.c.* 310 corresponds to Olympiad 83.4, 445/4. Pliny thus confirms the conclusion from Gellius 15.23 that Apollodorus dated the *akme* of Herodotus to 445/4, rather than to the epoch of Thurii in 444/3. Still, it remains clear from Pliny that Apollodorus did in fact associate Herodotus with the foundation of Thurii.

The *Chronicle* of Eusebius dates the conferral of a public honor upon Herodotus at Athens to Olympiad 83.4, 445/4: *Herodotus cum Athenis libros suos in concilio legisset honoratus est*. This entry has long been associated with the notice of Diyllus (FGrHist 73 F 3 = Plutarch 862B) *ὅτι μέντοι δέκα τάλαντα δωρεὰν ἔλαβεν ἐξ Ἀθηναίων Ἀνύτου τὸ ψήφισμα γράψαντος, ἀνὴρ Ἀθηναῖος οὐ τῶν παρημελημένων ἐν ἱστορίᾳ Δίλλος εἶρηκεν*.

The fact that Diyllus refers to a psephism and mentions the name of its sponsor has suggested that he possessed dated, documentary evidence for his statement.<sup>15</sup> Eusebius' entry appears at (or near) the Apollodoran *akme* of Herodotus. If it were true that Diyllus had dated, documentary evidence and passed it on to Apollodorus, it would be immediately clear why Apollodorus chose to date the *akme* of Herodotus to 445/4. Whether or not Diyllus had a documentary source, he either did not know or did not record a date for the alleged decree. If he had, Plutarch would surely have availed himself of the

<sup>14</sup> Jacoby (*Chronik* 278) emends to *auctor ille historiam eam condidit Thuriis in Italia*. E Dittrich (*NJbb* 147 [1893] 559) suggests *auctor ille historiarum condidit Thuriis in Italia*.

<sup>15</sup> A. Kirchhoff, *Über die Entstehungszeit des herodotischen Geschichtswerkes*<sup>2</sup> (Berlin 1878) 10, as cited by Jacoby, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.11) 227.

opportunity to lend further weight to his accusations by including the name of the archon in the citation.

Jacoby rightly argues, therefore, that Eusebius' date for the public honor accorded Herodotus in Athens derives from combination with the Apollodoran *akme*. Jacoby believes that Apollodorus dated the publication of the histories to the year of the author's *akme*, which in turn he had synchronized with the foundation of Thurii in 444/3. He suggests that "Dieses Datum . . . hat die Festlegung der Vorlesung auf das voraufgehende J. 445/4 (Euseb.) nach sich gezogen."<sup>16</sup> The argument is basically sound. It is imprecise, however, in that it assumes an Apollodoran *akme* of 444/3 and suggests that Diyllus' notice was only incidentally attracted to that date.

The Anytus decree was by no means incidental to Apollodorus' computations. On the contrary, the undated but seemingly documentary notice of Diyllus accounts both for Apollodorus' having chosen the colonization of Thurii as an appropriate reference point for the historian's *akme* and for the fact that he set the *akme* in the preceding year.

The *Histories* offered little clue as to the time of their author's birth, except to suggest that he belonged to the generation next after the Persian Wars. Apollodorus had therefore to rely on the *akme*-method, in conjunction with probable combinations, to infer a birth date for Herodotus. He accepted as authentic the statement of Diyllus that Herodotus had been honored by a public decree in Athens, presumably in recognition of his achievements as a writer.<sup>17</sup> He also assumed, perhaps because of the manuscript variant in the proemium, that Herodotus had participated in the Athenian colonization of Thurii.

The Anytus decree was not dated. The foundation of Thurii, however, was traditionally dated to the archonship of Praxiteles, 444/3. Apollodorus accordingly dated Herodotus' emigration to Thurii in that year. Herodotus had been honored in Athens, not in Thurii. Apollodorus assumed that if ever Herodotus was in Athens he must have been there when preparations for the expedition were being

<sup>16</sup> Jacoby, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.11) 229–30.

<sup>17</sup> If the decree is not authentic, Herodotus' famous eulogy of Athens (7.129) easily accounts for the existence of the tradition. Such a decree is not implausible in itself. We are told (Isoc. *De Antid.* 166) that Pindar received an honorarium of 1000 drachmae ( $\frac{1}{2}$  talent) from Athens. The impossible sum of ten talents in Herodotus' case can perhaps be ascribed to sensationalism on the part of Plutarch's immediate sources rather than to Diyllus himself.



made and the colonizing party was being formed. He therefore dated the Athenian decree honoring Herodotus to the year before the colonizers left Athens, 445/4.

Such a decree of public acclaim implies that the writer's work had been published. Apollodorus accordingly dated the publication of the *Histories* and the *akme* of their author to the year in which he presumed the decree must have been passed, 445/4.

Neither the authenticity of the Anytus decree nor the historicity of the tradition that Herodotus participated in the colonization of Thurii is at issue here. The ancient biographers, including Apollodorus, evidently believed in both. Pliny attests (through Nepos) to Apollodorus' acceptance of the Thurii tradition. The fact that Eusebius dates the honorarium to the Apollodoran *akme* indicates that Apollodorus also accepted the tradition represented by Diyllus' notice.

Apollodorus' computations for Herodotus were based on a complicated combination of both traditions. The epoch of Thurii was only a starting point, and we must correct the traditional date for the *akme* of Herodotus to 445/4.

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*September, 1972*