

HERODOTUS' PORTRAIT OF HECATAEUS*

THE shadow of Hecataeus, *magni nominis umbra* if ever there was one, constantly obstructs our attempts to assess and understand Herodotus' principles, objectives and achievements. Perplexing and elusive as the details of Hecataeus' work may be, no-one disputes his importance as an intermediary between catalogue-poetry such as we associate with Hesiod, with its clear subordination of geography to genealogy,¹ and the more sophisticated method of synthesising knowledge about the *oikoumene* demonstrated by Herodotus; some have even argued that the great Milesian has a better claim than Herodotus to the title of *pater historiae*.²

The advance of scholarship since Jacoby wrote his masterly *RE*-article in 1912 has brought nothing to call in question his opening sentence: 'Hekataios ist eine der bedeutendsten Erscheinungen in der Geschichte der älteren Prosaliteratur und der Wissenschaft, der erste Vertreter ionischer *ιστορίη* auf den Gebieten, die wir jetzt Geschichte und Geographie nennen.'³ Yet if we turn from a modern general account to the surviving fragments, we are likely to feel, at least initially, some disappointment. At first reading most of them seem scarcely more inviting than the entries of a gazetteer, while the relatively scanty group exemplifying Hecataeus' treatment of Greek legend displays a depressing propensity to confuse the commonplace with the true which sacrifices the very elements that make the stories memorable. It is Herodotus who breathes life into the dry bones.

Much has been written about the relationship between the two authors, but little attention has been paid to the question, important for our view of both alike, how far literary artifice and stylization have affected Herodotus' presentation of his forerunner. This essay concentrates on his explicit references to Hecataeus; I cannot altogether avoid more sophisticated (and to my mind largely unanswerable) questions connected with unacknowledged debts, but these are peripheral to my theme.

Hecataeus' peculiar eminence among Herodotus' intellectual creditors is demonstrated by the latter's last reference to him, when he contrasts Hecataeus' account of the expulsion of the Pelasgians from Attica with the Attic version (vi 137; *FGrH* I F 127):

Πελασγοὶ ἐπέιτε ἐκ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ἐξεβλήθησαν, εἴτε ὧν δὴ δικαίως εἶτε ἀδίκως· τοῦτο γὰρ οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι, πλὴν τὰ λεγόμενα, ὅτι Ἑκαταῖος μὲν ὁ Ἥγησάνδρου ἔφησε ἐν τοῖσι λόγοισι λέγων ἀδίκως· ἐπέιτε γὰρ ἰδεῖν τοὺς Ἀθηναίους τὴν χώραν, τὴν σφι αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τὸν Ὑμησσὸν ἐοῦσαν ἔδοσαν οἰκῆσαι μισθὸν τοῦ τείχεος τοῦ περὶ τὴν ἀκρόπολιν κοτε ἐληλαμένου, ταύτην ὡς ἰδεῖν τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐξεργασμένην εὖ, τὴν πρότερον εἶναι κακὴν τε καὶ τοῦ μηδενὸς ἀξίην, λαβεῖν φθόνον τε καὶ ἡμερον τῆς γῆς, καὶ οὕτως ἐξελαύνειν αὐτοὺς οὐδεμίαν ἄλλην πρόφασιν προῖσχομένους τοὺς Ἀθηναίους. ὡς δὲ αὐτοὶ Ἀθηναῖοι λέγουσι, δικαίως ἐξελάσαι. κατοικημένους γὰρ τοὺς Πελασγοὺς ὑπὸ τῷ Ὑμησσῷ ἐνθεῦτεν ὀρωμένους ἀδικεῖν τάδε· φοιτᾶν γὰρ δὴ τὰς σφετέρας θυγατέρας ἐπ' ὕδωρ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐννεάκρουνον· οὐ γὰρ εἶναι τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον σφίσι κω οὐδὲ τοῖσι ἄλλοισι Ἑλλησι οἰκέτας· ὅκως δὲ ἔλθοιεν αὐταί, τοὺς Πελασγοὺς ὑπὸ ὕβριός τε καὶ ὀλιγωρίας βιάσθαι σφέας. καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι σφι οὐκ ἀποχρᾶν ποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ τέλος καὶ ἐπιβουλεύοντας ἐπιχειρήσειν φανῆναι ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ. ἐωυτοὺς δὲ γενέσθαι τοσοῦτω

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¹ The close association between the two is well illustrated by Ephorus' ascription of a line from the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (F 151) to τῆ καλουμένη Γῆς Περιόδῳ.

² Thus Jacoby (*RE* vii 2737) quotes with

approval Meyer's judgment that Hecataeus was 'der Begründer der Geschichtsschreibung bei den Griechen.' Cf., e.g., G. de Sanctis, *RF* N.S.xi (1933)1, G. L. Huxley, *The early Ionians* (London, 1966) 135–9. Many modern accounts strongly suggest this conclusion, without explicitly stating it.

³ Hekataios (3), *RE* vii 2667–2750; hereafter cited as Jacoby.

ἐκείνων ἄνδρας ἀμείνονας, ὅσω παρεὸν αὐτοῖσι ἀποκτεῖναι τοὺς Πελασγούς, ἐπεὶ σφεας ἔλαβον ἐπιβουλεύοντας, οὐκ ἔθελῆσαι, ἀλλὰ σφι προειπεῖν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐξιέναι. τοὺς δὲ οὕτω δὴ ἐκχωρήσαντας ἄλλα τε σχεῖν χωρία καὶ δὴ καὶ Λῆμμον. ἐκεῖνα μὲν δὴ Ἐκαταῖος ἔλεξε, ταῦτα δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι λέγουσι.

Of all his many references to earlier authors (mainly poets) none gives so clearly the impression that he has a book in mind; normally his manner suggests that he draws on his memory of well-known works which form part of the common heritage of literate and illiterate alike. Here, while he clearly does not expect Hecataeus' account to be universally familiar, the latter's status as the author of an acknowledged work of reference should not be underestimated.⁴ It is interesting that Herodotus did not think it worth recording in which of Hecataeus' works he found this story.⁵

First impressions are important, and it is significant that Herodotus introduces his great predecessor to us (somewhat abruptly) not, as we might have expected, in his native Ionia but in the remote south of Egypt, in the temple of Amun at Karnak (ii 143–144.1):

Πρότερον δὲ Ἐκαταῖω τῷ λογοποιῷ ἐν Θήβησι γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτὸν καὶ ἀναδήσαντι τὴν πατριὴν ἐς ἑκκαδέκατον θεὸν ἐποίησαν οἱ ἱεεὶς τοῦ Διὸς οἶόν τι καὶ ἐμοὶ οὐ γενεηλογήσαντι ἑμεωυτόν· ἔσαγαγόντες ἐς τὸ μέγαρον ἔσω ἐὸν μέγα ἐξηρίθμεον δεικνύντες κολοσσούς ξυλίλους τοσοῦτους ὅσους περ εἶπον· ἀρχιερεὺς γὰρ ἕκαστος αὐτόθι ἰστᾶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἑωυτοῦ ζῆς εἰκόνα ἑωυτοῦ· ἀριθμέοντες ὧν καὶ δεικνύντες οἱ ἱεεὶς ἐμοὶ ἀπεδείκνυσαν παῖδα πατρὸς ἑωυτῶν ἕκαστον ἕντα, ἐκ τοῦ ἀγχιιστα ἀποθανόντος τῆς εἰκόνης διεξιόντες διὰ πασέων, ἐς οὐ ἀπέδεξαν ἀπάσας αὐτάς. Ἐκαταῖω δὲ γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτὸν καὶ ἀναδήσαντι ἐς ἑκκαδέκατον θεὸν ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀριθμῆσι, οὐ δεκόμενοι παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ θεοῦ γενέσθαι ἄνθρωπον· ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν δὲ ὧδε, φάμενοι ἕκαστον τῶν κολοσσῶν πῖρῳμιν ἐκ πῖρῳμιοσ γεγονέναι, ἐς ὃ τοὺς πέντε καὶ τεσσεράκοντα καὶ τριηκοσίους ἀπέδεξαν κολοσσούς, καὶ οὔτε ἐς θεὸν οὔτε ἐς ἥρωα ἀνέδησαν αὐτούς. πῖρῳμιοσ δὲ ἔστι κατ' Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν καλὸς κάγαθός. ἤδη ὧν τῶν αἰ εἰκόνας ἦσαν, τοιοῦτους ἀπεδείκνυσάν σφεας πάντας ἕντας, θεῶν δὲ πολλὸν ἀπαλλαγμένους.

This is the only place in his account of Egypt where Herodotus mentions Hecataeus, despite the numerous occasions when he might have compared his own observations and experiences with the other's account.⁶ He seems to assume that Hecataeus, described merely as ὁ λογοποιός⁷ without father's name or ethnic, is a familiar figure, and that we shall feel no more surprise at finding him so far from home than would be occasioned by a story of Livingstone in Central Africa or Lawrence among the Arabs. The period is left vague (πρότερον);⁸ we are, it seems, expected to know roughly when Hecataeus was active (just as we are expected to place Croesus, the starting-point of Herodotus' story).

⁴ Cf. Jacoby 2675: 'Dass die Werke des Milesiers für Herodot eine besondere Bedeutung haben, ergibt sich widerspruchslös aus einem Faktum, dessen Bedeutung überhaupt nicht überschätzt werden kann: Herodot zitiert H. und nur H. namentlich'.

⁵ Jacoby assigned it to the *Periegesis*; but see K. von Fritz, *Die griechische Geschichtsschreibung* (Berlin 1967), Anm.-Bd. 47–8 n. 74.

⁶ For the fragments dealing with Egypt see *FGrH* I F 300–24. The new Photius has brought a valuable addition (*Photii patriarchae lexicon* ed. C. Theodoridis, i (Berlin-New York 1982), α 3352 (= Hekataios F 327 bis (H. J. Mette, *Lustrum* xxvii (1985) 34)): 'Ἀφθός· θεός παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις, ὡσπερ ἡ Ἴσις καὶ ὁ Τυφῶν. Ἐκαταῖος Περιηγήσει Αἰγύπτου. Cf. Suid. φ 477 Φθάς· ὁ Ἡφαιστός παρὰ Μεμφίταις. καὶ παροιμία· ὁ Φθάς σοὶ λελάληκεν. οἱ

δὲ Ἀφθός φασιν, ὡς σταφίς, ἀσταφίς, καὶ στάχυς, ἀσταχὺς. It is very remarkable that we do not find this name in Herodotus, though he gives several other Egyptian divine names (Osiris, Isis, Horus, Bubastis, ii 156.5 (and individually elsewhere), Amun 42.5), and the priests of Hephæstus at Memphis are cited as his main source for the history of Egypt before Psammetichus (ii 99–142.1, *passim*).

⁷ Also applied to Aesop (ii 134.3), who does not fit the translation offered in LSJ, 'prose-writer, esp. historian, chronicler'; 'author' may be the best rendering.

⁸ πρότερον in relation to Herodotus, but there is a jump forward in relation to the chronology of his Egyptian history, which has reached a point shortly before the accession of Psammetichus.

Dull would he be of soul who remained unmoved by this encounter between the representatives of two vastly different cultures as the adventurous Ionian, naively proud of a pedigree running back sixteen generations to a god,⁹ is confounded by the custodians of the ancient and unchanging¹⁰ civilization of the Nile valley, priests of an order whose antecedents could be traced back to the twelfth millennium in an unbroken succession made tangible through the statues of those who had held the hereditary high-priesthood. Faced with this evidence for a continuous cultural tradition stretching far beyond the temporal horizon of Greek saga,¹¹ Hecataeus, we are apparently to understand, found reason to question not only his own right to claim divine descent but the whole basis of Greek legend, for which the unions of gods with human partners within the past millennium was a fundamental premise.

Many eminent scholars have seen in this chapter an authentic account of a crucial episode in Hecataeus' intellectual formation,¹² though the more cautious among them have argued that this experience merely served to confirm pre-existing tendencies in his thought and did not by itself suffice to set him on the path to demythologization.¹³ Jacoby included this passage among the fragments of the *Periegesis* (F 300), where it introduces a note of human interest otherwise notably lacking (and raises questions about the degree of detail which Hecataeus might have permitted himself); this is clearly the majority view, though some have preferred the *Genealogies*.¹⁴

A few, however, have refused to accept that Herodotus here draws on Hecataeus' own writings, generally on the grounds that the latter would have been unlikely to publish a story against himself.¹⁵ This argument is not in itself conclusive; it is possible to imagine the anecdote's substance presented in a manner more favourable to Hecataeus, emphasizing, perhaps, his unprejudiced receptivity towards unfamiliar ideas.¹⁶ But comparison with Herodotus' other references to him should discourage us

⁹ γενεηλογήσαντι ἑωυτόν might be thought to have heroic overtones. The heroes on the Trojan plain (like the Japanese samurai) rehearse their lineage before joining battle: cf. *Il.* vi 145–211, xx 213–41. It has sometimes been suggested that Herodotus has failed to appreciate an element of irony or humorous self-depreciation in Hecataeus' account of his experiences at Thebes (thus W. A. Heidel, *Hecataeus and the Egyptian priests in Herodotus, book ii* (Boston 1935) 93–7, A. Momigliano, *Terzo contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome 1966) 329, O. K. Armayor, *Ancient World* xvi (1987) 11–18; but few have found convincing this picture of a whimsical, somewhat Voltairean, Hecataeus, and irony would have been a dangerous device for an early prose-writer.

¹⁰ As Herodotus thought (ii 142.4); of all his many misconceptions this seems to be the one most irritating to Egyptologists.

¹¹ The Parian Marble (*FGrH* 239) dates the reign of Cecrops to 1581/0 and Deucalion's flood to 1573/2; Philochorus dated the reign of the 'autochthon' Ogygus, the earliest name in Attic history, to 1796/5 (*FGrH* 328 F 92: see Jacoby *ad loc.*). Hecataeus is unlikely to have envisaged a longer time-scale.

¹² Thus, e.g., J. B. Bury, *The ancient Greek historians* (London 1909) 13 f., Jacoby 2740 f., A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian empire* (Chicago 1948) 213, H. Fränkel, *Dichtung u. Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*² (Munich 1962) 392 f. (= *Early Greek poetry and philosophy* (Oxford 1975) 344), A.

Momigliano, *Quarto contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome 1969) 33 f., P. Tozzi, *Athenaeum* n.s.xliv (1966) 53. (The sobriety of Greek legend compared with Egyptian renders somewhat ironic the picture of Hecataeus inspired to demythologization as he sat musing among the departed glories of Karnak.)

¹³ Even if all the premises of this demonstration are granted, it is not clear why it should be held to invalidate Greek legend; Hecataeus could have defended his claim to a divine ancestor 16 generations back by arguing that the gods must find Greek women more attractive than Egyptian. In any case, though the exhibition of statues might be regarded as evidence for the antiquity of the high priest's office, Hecataeus must simply accept his informant's assertion that none of these 345 had a divine father; we cannot be expected to believe that divine parentage would have disqualified a man for hereditary office and so caused a break in the succession.

¹⁴ Thus R. Drews, *The Greek accounts of eastern history* (Washington 1973) 13 'The story . . . would have constituted a perfect preface for a work which was intended to show the foolishness of the Greek *logoi*'.

¹⁵ See C. Sourdille, *La durée et l'étendue du voyage d'Hérodote en Égypte* (Paris 1910) 204–6, P. E. Legrand, *Hérodote, Livre ii*² (Paris 1963) 22, J. E. Powell, *CQ* xxix (1935) 78.

¹⁶ Plato's story of Solon at Sais (*Ti.* 21e ff.) may help us to envisage how it might have been done.

from taking this chapter as largely a citation:¹⁷ contrast vi 137.1, which clearly is one ('Εκαταῖος . . . ὁ Ἑγησάνδρου ἔφησε ἐν τοῖσι λόγοισι) with the references to his part in the deliberations connected with the Ionian Revolt, v 36.2 ('Εκαταῖος . . . ὁ λογοποιὸς . . . οὐκ ἔα) and 125 ('Εκαταίου μὲν νυν τοῦ Ἑγησάνδρου, ἀνδρὸς λογοποιοῦ, τουτέων ἐς οὐδετέραν στέλλειν ἔφερε ἢ γνώμη). Our passage clearly more resembles the two latter anecdotes, not usually supposed to derive from Hecataeus' own writings,¹⁸ than it does the first.

If Herodotus did not find this story in Hecataeus, where did he get it? Some have supposed that he picked it up at Thebes (which seems to me the impression suggested at first reading). But this is surely impossible. By the time Herodotus might have been moved to undertake a journey to Egypt many years must have elapsed since Hecataeus could have been there,¹⁹ and we shall hardly imagine an elderly Egyptian spontaneously recalling for the benefit of an apparently unremarkable Greek tourist a casual encounter which he happened to have observed as a boy; *a fortiori* we shall reject the notion that Hecataeus' gaffe had made such an impression on the native clergy that it was still being retailed even after those directly involved had ended their working lives. From the Egyptian point of view Hecataeus was a figure of no importance, however seminal his reaction to Egypt's wonders might have been for Greek *Geistesgeschichte*. We may toy with the idea that Herodotus got this story from the expatriate Greek community who, though barely acknowledged, must, directly or indirectly, have been the source of much of his Egyptian information;²⁰ but this hypothesis raises the question whether the anecdote is not best regarded as a Greek invention.

At all events we are left with reasonable grounds for supposing that Herodotus had no very satisfactory source for this episode. These suspicions will harden if we consider the problems raised by Herodotus' claim to have replicated Hecataeus' experience. We shall be faced with a conglomeration of difficulties from which, on the whole, scholars have politely averted their gaze.²¹ Admittedly, it is universally agreed that this passage contains much that we know to be false; but sufficient care has not been taken to distinguish what might reasonably be supposed to be local tradition from the rest. We might readily accept that Hecataeus, hampered by communicational difficulties and bemused by the overwhelming splendours of Karnak, swallowed too readily the fantasies of a dragoman with a talent for presenting sensational speculation as if it were received tradition; but some points in this account might have been expected to elude

¹⁷ Cf. D. Fehling, *Herodotus and his 'sources': citation, invention and narrative art* (Leeds 1989) 77–86 (= *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot* (Berlin-New York 1971) 59–66).

¹⁸ See further below, p. 00.

¹⁹ A decade would surely suffice to rule out spontaneous Egyptian recollection of so trivial an incident, and whatever travels Hecataeus undertook in all probability belong to the period before the Ionian Revolt.

²⁰ This evidently seems to some a rather bold assumption. But it would have been absurd for Herodotus to neglect what he could learn from fellow-countrymen whose daily business required some acquaintance with Egyptian manners and customs; he was himself ignorant of the language, and even on the most generous estimate can hardly be supposed to have spent more than a year in Egypt. *Unum pro multis*: he rightly pays tribute to

the superiority of the Egyptian calendar over the Greek (ii 4), yet his calculation of the number of days in 70 years (i 32.2–3) shows that he did not understand how the Greek calendar worked, and I do not see how he could have even begun to follow an argument demonstrating the superior merits of the Egyptian system. The commercial interests of Naucratis needed a proper grasp of the native method of reckoning the date. Of course, Herodotus could have absorbed much relevant information from old Egyptian hands in Samos or Athens.

²¹ See the very valuable discussion by W. Kaiser, 'Zu den Quellen der ägyptischen Geschichte Herodots', *Zsch. f. ägypt. Spr. u. Alt.* xciv (1967) 93–116; he well speaks (105) of 'eine fast ungläubliche Häufung eindeutig unzutreffender oder doch zumindest höchst eigenartiger Angaben'.

confirmation by a subsequent investigator. Where, precisely, does Herodotus seem to have missed opportunities to correct his predecessor's misconceptions?²²

There is no difficulty in assuming that local tradition greatly exaggerated the age of the temple of Amun, which was founded only in Dynasty 12. We may guess that it was generally taken for granted that Amun's worship on this site (and the series of his high priests) went back to the beginning of Egyptian history. This belief, simpler and more impressive than the truth, would be wholly in keeping with the doctrine that Thebes was the first city, situated at the place of creation,²³ and it is likely enough that such spurious antiquity had become part of the temple's traditional lore and was regularly communicated to visitors. So too, we may reasonably surmise, was a belief in hereditary succession to the priesthood as immemorial custom, even though we now know that the principle was established only relatively late and that father-son succession was somewhat erratic in the temple of Amun.²⁴

If this were all, we could certainly believe that not only Hecataeus and Herodotus but many other visitors over the intervening decades had been offered the same plausible misinformation. But Herodotus does not merely speak in vague terms of vast antiquity and of origins coeval with those of the Egyptian nation; he offers specific, extraordinary detail, and it is here that we face serious difficulties. There was, he says, tangible evidence for a series of 345 high priests, commemorative wooden statues, one for each officeholder, set up in the temple's *megaron*. The specification of the material seems to imply an artistic convention well established before the technique of carving in hard stone had been mastered;²⁵ a distinctive type appears to be indicated, easily identifiable among the host of worthies commemorated within the temple precincts. Herodotus gives a precise figure, clearly linked to the total of his king-list,²⁶ and speaks of opportunities for its verification, opportunities of which, as he claims, he, like Hecataeus, availed himself. Yet we know that there was no such automatic commemoration, nor any rule regarding the material to be used by those privileged to set up their statues there. While we may easily enough accept that one visitor was misled on this point by an irresponsible informant, or simply misunderstood what he was told, it is too much to believe that this improbable demonstration was offered independently half a century or more later. Those who would defend Herodotus' good faith here²⁷ must invoke a very large element of confusion, inaccurate recollection, and questions so obviously leading as to amount to a caricature of proper enquiry.²⁸ Moreover, we must feel some surprise at

²² J. Marincola's interesting essay, 'Herodotean narrative and the narrator's presence', *Arethusa* xx (1987) 121–37, well emphasizes the importance for Herodotus of surpassing previous Greek accounts of Egypt, among which that of Hecataeus might be supposed to be the best known.

²³ See J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*³ (Princeton 1969) 8.

²⁴ For details see Lloyd on 143.3 παῖδα πατρός.

²⁵ As a material for sculpture wood was more highly regarded in Egypt (where of course it was comparatively scarce) than in Greece, where it had been reduced to a very modest rôle by the end of the archaic period. See further R. Meiggs, *Trees and timber in the ancient Mediterranean world* (Oxford 1982) 300–01. To Herodotus' audience ξυλίνους will have seemed to imply a rather primitive technique.

²⁶ Cf. 142.1 ἐν ταύτησι (γενεῆσιν) ἀρχιερέας καὶ βασιλέας ἑκατέρους τοσοῦτους γενομένους. Herodotus' list of 341 rulers before the dodecarchy allegedly derives from Memphite tradition; with c. 143 we move not only south to Thebes but also

forward in time, and the total of 345 high-priests corresponds to that difference. The extremely neat match between the two lineages should have struck an unprejudiced enquirer as too good to be true; the figure for the high-priests must derive from the other; see further n. 54.

²⁷ See, e.g., Lloyd's discussion (*ad loc.*).

²⁸ It has been put to me that this last phrase takes for granted an anachronistic sophistication in methods of enquiry. But in practical matters (buying a cow, assessing the relative merits of spring and autumn ploughing, assigning blame in questions of disputed responsibility) every canny peasant surely recognizes that it is futile to seek information in terms which suggest the desired answer, and I find it difficult to believe that in Herodotus' day the relevance of this principle to questions of less practical moment would have seemed novel. Of course, it takes some sophistication to recognize that apparently straightforward questions in fact point an informant in a particular direction; but this is not what seems to be involved here.

this apparently unhesitating acceptance of the authenticity of wooden images allegedly many millennia old and of the invariable transmission of the high priest's office from father to son²⁹ throughout this period. If Hecataeus had recorded anything so extraordinary, would we not expect Herodotus, in seeking to improve on his predecessor's account, to have scrutinized with a particularly sceptical eye the evidence adduced for the antiquity of the Theban priesthood, implying as it does woodwork unnaturally immune to the ravages of woodworm and a dry atmosphere, along with a lineage miraculously blessed in its continuous procreation of sons from generation to generation? Undeniably we know of some impressive examples of Egyptian genealogical documentation, more than adequate to demonstrate that the time-scale implied by Greek legend was not long enough;³⁰ but there is still a vast difference between the longest of such genealogical records and the millennia which Herodotus supposed to be implied by the Theban *veterum effigies ex ordine avorum antiqua e cedro*. Here, where we might expect Herodotus' powers of critical observation to be particularly stimulated by manifest improbabilities, he seems willingly to have suspended his unbelief.

This problem cannot be treated without reference to the recurrent doubts, first raised in antiquity, about Herodotus' travels in Upper Egypt.³¹ Discussion has centred upon clearly identifiable topographical errors; but surely more serious is the general thinness of information about the country south of the Fayum. Few Upper Egyptian towns are named, while the stories of the Pharaohs which constitute Herodotus' history of Egypt are associated with the Fayum and the country north of it, not with Thebes, rich as the city was in sights which should have stimulated the curiosity of the most blasé traveller and correspondingly inspired the native dragoman to memorable narrative. 'No-one who has seen the ruins of Thebes' wrote A. H. Sayce, 'can have any doubt that had Herodotus also seen them the extravagance of his admiration would not have been

²⁹ According to D. Henige, *Oral historiography* (London-New York-Lagos 1982) 100 'It is very rare (only about .02% incidence) that succession to an office follows directly from father to son (or uncle to nephew) more than eight consecutive times'. In calculating the period of time implied by the Memphite king-list (142.1-2) Herodotus assumes the equivalence of a reign and a generation, though the sequence of Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus (124-9) should have alerted him to the possibility of succession by a brother or nephew, also to be borne in mind here. 'The tendency to assume reflexively that a ruler is the son of his predecessor is nearly universal' (Henige, *The chronology of oral tradition* (Oxford, 1974) 70). On the propensity to interpret lists of successive office-holders as linear genealogies see R. Thomas, *Oral tradition and written record in classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989) 191-2.

³⁰ See in particular L. Borchardt, 'Ein Stamm- baum memphitischer Priester', *Sitzungs- b. d. preuss. Akad. Wiss.* xxiv (1932), 618-22; *Die Mittel zur zeitlichen Festlegung von Punkten der ägyptischen Geschichte und ihre Anwendung* (Cairo, 1935) 96-112, Plate 2. A limestone plaque in low relief represents four rows of figures uniformly depicted in distinctive priestly dress and originally 60 in all; beside each figure is a brief hieroglyphic record of his name and title, and a specific statement that he was the son of his predecessor. (It is generally supposed that these figures were intended to represent

memorial statues of those depicted.) The composer of this record, which covers a period from Dynasty 11 to Dynasty 22 (i.e. from c. 2200 to c. 850), apparently anticipated some scepticism, and in (at least) 27 cases has given the name of the reigning pharaoh; where the document can be checked (and the family's distinguished connexions allow some control from other sources) it appears on the whole reliable, while the relatively lowly offices held by some of those named further inspire confidence. This product of well-justified family pride requires very little gloss for its gist to be intelligible, though the uniform depiction could easily leave the impression that all those represented had held the same office. At least equally impressive, though one generation shorter, is the genealogy of the nomarch of Meir, from the early second millennium, published by A. M. Blackman, *Rock tombs of Meir iii* (London 1915) 16-20; see also Borchardt, *Mittel zur zeitl. Festlegung* 112-4. See further L. Bull, *The idea of history in the ancient Near East* ed. R. C. Dentan (New Haven-London 1955) 9-11, H. Brunner, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* i (Wiesbaden, 1975) 13-8, s.v. Abstammung, D. B. Redford, *Pharaonic king-lists, annals and daybooks* (Mississauga 1986) 63 f.

³¹ See Aristid. *Or.* xxxvi 46 ff. More recent discussions have not superseded A. H. Sayce's excellent essay 'The season and extent of the travels of Herodotus in Egypt', *JPh* xiv (1885) 257-86.

reserved for the labyrinth alone.³² Thebes is not among those sites which seem more important to us than they might reasonably be supposed to have appeared to Herodotus and his audience; no Greek familiar with Homer could have failed to feel a lively curiosity about the city which for the poet of the *Iliad* was the richest in the world.³³ If Herodotus went south of the Fayum, what objective could he have had more important than a visit to Thebes? And how, if he really was there, are we to explain his very sketchy treatment? It is not entirely reassuring that it is only at Thebes that he would have us believe that he had got within the temple's encircling wall. μέγαρον ἔδον μέγα is decidedly short measure for the spectacular Hypostyle Hall of the temple of Amun (which is presumably where he must be supposed to be, if anywhere),³⁴ and the lack of any further description of the vast and imposing temple complex appears the stranger if we compare his descriptions of other Egyptian constructions, since size and evidence of conspicuous expenditure clearly appealed to him.³⁵ The meagreness of his account raises the suspicion that he had not been to Thebes himself and did not have much solid information at his disposal.

Of course a heavy burden of proof must rest with those who cast doubt on Herodotus' veracity in his claims to personal observation. Our own hazy recollections of visits to castles or cathedrals should convince us that vagueness and inaccuracy are compatible with autopsy; it is all too easy to be content with general impressions and a sense of atmosphere without making sufficient effort to fix details of dates, defensive possibilities, or architectural peculiarities in one's memory. But this suspicion receives some confirmation from Herodotus' earlier reference to traditions alleged to be Theban in connexion with the foundation of the oracle of Dodona which, together with that of Ammon at Siwa, is attributed to the initiative of two priestesses kidnapped from Thebes by Phoenician traders (ii 54). Here Herodotus seems not to have noticed the basic improbability involved in envisaging seaborne raiders operating so far from the coast. But any traveller who had made the long journey to Thebes should have been powerfully struck by the difficulties to be surmounted by marauders attempting to make good their escape to the Mediterranean in the face of the prevailing winds.³⁶

This is not the place for a catalogue of passages where Herodotus' appeals to first-

³² *op. cit.* 262–3. It is incidentally interesting that Herodotus seems unaware that Θῆβαι bears no relation to the city's native name; contrast Pl. *Phdr.* 274 d τὴν μεγάλην πόλιν τοῦ ἄνω τόπου ἦν οἱ Ἕλληνες Αἰγυπτίας Θήβας καλοῦσι.

³³ *Cf. Il.* ix 381–4 οὐδ' ὄσα Θήβας / Αἰγυπτίας, ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοις ἐν κτήματα κείται, / αἶθ' ἑκατόμυλοι εἰσι, διηκόσιοι δ' ἄν' ἑκάστας / ἄνδρες ἔξοιχνεῦσι σὺν ἵπποισιν καὶ ὄχεσφιν (*cf. Od.* iv 126–7). In particular, we might have expected some discussion of ἑκατόμυλοι. Lloyd's attempt to explain Herodotus' very sketchy treatment of Thebes (n. on c. 29) fails to take account of the expectations raised by the Homeric references.

³⁴ 'Auffallend ist, dass Herodot von dem Amontempel in Karnak Nichts zu sagen weiss, als dass sein Inneres gross sei' (Wiedemann *ad loc.*)

³⁵ Contrast his description of the temples at Sais (169, 170, 175, 176), Bubastis (137–8; the unusually detailed description of the temple's layout is explained by its situation, ἐδον δ' ἐν μέσῃ τῇ πόλει τὸ ἴρον κατορθᾶται πάντοθεν περιόντι· ἄτε γὰρ τῆς

πόλιος ἐκκεχωσμένης ὑψοῦ, τοῦ δ' ἱεροῦ οὐ κεννημένου ὡς ἀρχῆθεν ἐποιήθη, ἔσοπτόν ἐστι), Buto (155) and Memphis (99, 101, 110, 112, 121, 136, 141, 153, 176), of the pyramids (124–34), and of Lake Moeris and the Labyrinth (148–9): an extremely perplexing section; see further O. K. Armayor, *Herodotus' autopsy of the Fayoum: Lake Moeris and the Labyrinth of Egypt* (Amsterdam 1985)). See further J. Berlage, 'De Herodoto artificiorum aestimatore', *Mnemosyne* n.s. xliii (1915) 170–83.

³⁶ The story presents other difficulties; it ignores the considerable differences in the practices of the three oracles concerned, and offers a very un-Egyptian rationalization of a legend related by Pindar, probably in the Paean to Dodonaean Zeus (fr. 58, from sch. on *S.Tr.* 172): (πελειάδας) γεγονέναι... δύο, καὶ τὴν μὲν εἰς Λιβύην ἀφικέσθαι Θήβηθεν εἰς τὸ τοῦ Ἄμμωνος χρηστήριον, τὴν <δὲ εἰς τὸ> περὶ τὴν Δωδώνην. See also Fehling, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 65–70 (*Quellenangaben* 50–4).

hand observation or experience should lead to some raising of eyebrows.³⁷ I do not want to suggest that he did not sincerely believe that what he says he saw was there to be seen; there is all the difference in the world between Herodotus and Baron Munchausen. Perhaps indeed we are at fault in interpreting his first-person references as straightforwardly autobiographical; maybe we take too literally a storyteller's assumed narrative *persona* when we ought to distinguish the 'real' from the 'implied' narrator as we naturally would in reading a novel or poem written in the first person. But, whatever the explanation, it has to be allowed that Herodotus' claims to autopsy are not invariably to be relied on.

Now back to Hecataeus. We have seen reason to doubt that Herodotus could have drawn his Theban story from either of the only two sources which might be deemed satisfactory, Hecataeus' own writings and the testimony of local witnesses; we have also found highly dubious his claim to have replicated Hecataeus' experiences. We should now consider seriously the suggestion, advanced from time to time but not much regarded, that the episode is Herodotus' own invention.³⁸

We have already seen that the scenario is almost too good to be true, the *locus classicus* for 'the confrontation of Greek ἡρωολογία with the archival millennia of the older civilisations.'³⁹ Hecataeus is introduced to us demonstrating his art as a genealogist, only to have his display-piece exposed as trivial.⁴⁰ Significant confrontations are an important part of Herodotus' stock-in-trade, a valuable narrative device for conveying abstract ideas; in some cases, at least, it is generally agreed that they have no historical basis.⁴¹ Thus Solon, the wisest Greek of his day, being granted an audience with the richest man in the world, delivers a sermon on the fragility of human prosperity (i 29–33), striking the keynote of Herodotus' whole work (i 32.9): σκοπέειν δὲ χρῆ παντὸς χρημάτων τὴν τελευτὴν κῆ ἀποβήσεται. Even if the chronological objections to this encounter could be overlooked, no-one would believe this conversation to be

³⁷ Indisputably to be included in any such list would be his account of the skeletons of winged snakes to be seen near Buto (ii 75; see further Fehling, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 24–7 (*Quellenangaben* 20–23); we have another curious sight-seeing trip involving bones at iii 12, where we are expected to believe that skeletons identifiable as Persian and Egyptian had been left until Herodotus' day undisturbed on the battlefields of Papremis and Pelusium. Armayor's comprehensive indictment of Herodotus' account of Lake Moeris and the Labyrinth (*op. cit.* n. 35) is also very disturbing. (The editor of *JHS* suggests that Arph. *Birds* 1130 καὶ γὰρ ἐμέτρῃσ' αὐτ' ἐγὼ might be taken as evidence of contemporary scepticism about Herodotus' claims to autopsy.)

³⁸ Fehling (*loc. cit.* n. 17) deserves the credit for pioneering this approach to the passage, though the first (so far as I know) to venture in this direction in print was J. W. Swain who, in reviewing L. Pearson's *Early Ionian historians* (Oxford 1939), offhandedly and quite groundlessly attributed this suggestion (with approval) to Pearson (*CPh* xxxvi (1941) 90). Since Fehling the case has been reopened by Hartmut Erbse (*Ausgewählte Schriften zur klassischen Philologie* (Berlin–New York 1979) 183–5), who emphasizes the weaknesses of the traditional views and takes Herodotus' account to be a rather speculative reconstruction in which the genuinely Hecataean elements were a reference to his pedigree, perhaps in the *Genealogies*, and a

mention of Thebes in the *Periegesis*; the 345 statues reflect Herodotus' own visit to Thebes, and Hecataeus' reactions are guesswork.

³⁹ M. Miller, *Klio* xlvi (1965) 109.

⁴⁰ For far too long it has been loosely assumed that lengthy genealogies, tracing descent from a god through a continuous series of forebears, were normal in Greek aristocratic families at this time. Rosalind Thomas' valuable study (*op. cit.* (n. 29) 155–95) emphasizes the close connexion between the (very few) full, continuous genealogies known to us from this period and the work of the genealogists, Hecataeus and his successors, Hellanicus and Pherecydes; these proto-historians appear to have organized confused family traditions and the names of vaguely remembered forebears into a smooth linear sequence suiting the family's image of itself. Left to itself Greek family tradition would preserve the memory of a heroic ancestor (and his descent from a god) but tended to fade out after the fourth generation back, leaving a great gap in the sequence; this 'telescoping' effect is highly characteristic of orally transmitted genealogies where no special measures are taken to ensure accurate preservation.

⁴¹ On anecdotes dealing with confrontations between the representatives of different cultures see Fehling, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 193–4 (*Quellenangaben* 139–40). We have another good example in the confrontation between Darius and the priest of Hephaestus at ii 110; see below, pp. 00–0.

basically historical.⁴² Here we notice the assumption that a figure important in Greek eyes is bound to be an object of interest in the wider world. The king of Lydia has plenty of time to spare for Solon, and hears him out, uncongenial as his discourse is. Similarly the Theban clergy go to some trouble to demonstrate the inadequacy of Hecataeus' historical perspective, and do not expect him to accept their claims to antiquity *ex cathedra*. The two episodes express the contrast between Greek ideas and those of another culture. We miss the point of this story if we interpret it primarily as an episode in Hecataeus' biography; its true significance lies in its vivid presentation of the Greek reaction to the vast antiquity of Egyptian civilization,⁴³ an antiquity substantiated by royal and priestly records faithfully preserved from generation to generation, so that Egyptian history could be related from a far earlier point than Herodotus deems feasible elsewhere.⁴⁴

Has this chapter, then, any relevance to Hecataeus' life and thought? The details of his genealogy are hardly likely to be Herodotus' invention, and it would have been reasonable enough for Hecataeus to refer, in one or other of his works, to his distinguished ancestry and to display the fruits of his genealogical techniques as applied to his own family traditions,⁴⁵ even if he himself was sceptical about the god's role. But this is not a matter of much substance. More important is the fact that this passage is our only evidence that Hecataeus ever left his native Ionia.⁴⁶ We cannot argue that the *Periegesis* must have involved its author in extensive travel, since its scope was too wide-ranging for systematic personal verification of its material. Miletus, with its extensive colonial network and overseas trade, would have been an ideal locale for accumulating topographical information. Had Herodotus good reason to credit Hecataeus with a journey to Karnak, well south of the normal range of Greek visitors to Egypt? Or is the Theban setting pure fantasy?

Oriental *Wanderjahre* are a stock motif in the biographies of Greek sages,⁴⁷ and Herodotus is rather inclined to account for interesting Greek ideas as the result of Egyptian influence.⁴⁸ It would not be surprising if he explained Hecataeus' novel approach to Greek legend in this way; the opening of the *Genealogies* (F1) could be taken

⁴² Cf. F. Wehrli, *Haupttrichtungen des griech. Denkens* (Zürich-Stuttgart 1964) 39 f., 54–7. This episode looks like a forerunner of such edifying conversations as those recorded by Aristeeas, *ad Philocraten* and in the *Questions of King Milanda*, where a great foreign king puts hard questions to a sage (or sages) of the author's own race and creed, and is at length convinced of his interlocutor's superior wisdom. Was this already a familiar genre in Herodotus' time? If his audience anticipated that Solon's discourse would bring Croesus to his senses, the unexpected postponement of the king's enlightenment would have underlined the point that his whole scale of values is incommensurate with Solon's, and the latter's message, for the moment, beyond his understanding.

⁴³ Cf. E. Meyer, *Forschungen zur alten Geschichte* (Halle 1892) i 193: 'Noch deutlicher als in den directen Angaben Herodots spricht sich darin der Eindruck aus, welchen das Bekanntwerden mit dem Alter der ägyptischen Geschichte auf die Griechen gemacht hat'.

⁴⁴ Cf. ii 77.1 αὐτῶν δὲ δὴ Αἰγυπτίων οἱ μὲν περὶ τὴν σπειρομένην Αἴγυπτον οἰκέουσι, μὴ μὴν ἀνθρώπων πάντων ἐπασκέοντες μάλιστα λογιώτατοί εἰσι μακρῶ τῶν ἐγὼ ἐς διάπειραν

ἀπικόμην (Herodotus expresses himself in a terminology more appropriate to oral tradition, but plainly what he has in mind are written records; see Lloyd *ad loc.*); 145.3.

⁴⁵ Perhaps at the beginning of the *Genealogies*? Cf. F 1c.

⁴⁶ Admittedly Agathemerus describes Hecataeus as ἀνήρ πολυπλανῆς (T 12), but he need not have had in mind anything beyond this chapter; Thebes was far enough from Miletus to justify the epithet. Despite Jacoby (2688–90) I cannot see anything in the surviving fragments which necessarily indicates first-hand observation.

⁴⁷ Cf. A. B. Lloyd, *Herodotus, Book ii: introduction* (Leiden 1975) 49–60, J. Fairweather, *Ancient Society* v (1974) 268.

⁴⁸ Thus geometry is alleged to come from Egypt (ii 109.3) and Solon is said to have based his law on ἀργία (an ἄμωμος νόμος) on Amasis' legislation (177.2). Herodotus saw pervasive Egyptian influence in Greek religious practices (49–54, 58, 171); but the curious misapprehension which led him to suppose that the Greeks owed to Egypt the names of many of their gods (50.1; 52) must have predisposed him to look for other borrowings in this sphere.

to imply acquaintance with some non-Hellenic traditions⁴⁹ and Herodotus himself evidently saw a connexion between demythologization and contacts with foreign sources (*cf.* i 1–5; ii 54; 113 ff., 118 f.).⁵⁰ Moreover, Hecataeus presumably had something to say about the relative age of Greek and Egyptian culture, since he argued that script was an Egyptian invention (F 20). Given Herodotus' assumptions the circumstantial evidence might seem to justify the inference that Hecataeus must have been to Egypt. The skimpy treatment of Upper Egypt in the surviving fragments hardly suggests that Hecataeus offered the laboriously garnered fruits of first-hand observation, and the inadequacies of Herodotus' own account of this area suggest that the *Periegesis* was not much help to him here.⁵¹ Still, we can hardly rule out the possibility that he thought he saw evidence that Hecataeus had visited Karnak.

Are we entitled to infer from this anecdote that Hecataeus shared Herodotus' belief in the immense antiquity of Egypt? For Herodotus the traditions of Memphis and Thebes add substance and precision to a conception of Egypt's history which he accepts unquestioningly,⁵² though the proof offered to support an origin 341 generations before Psammetichus' accession (or 345 before the Persian conquest)⁵³ could not possibly convince an unprejudiced enquirer. We have already noted the unsatisfactory quality of the Theban evidence. At Memphis the king-list of 330 names was all-important (100.1; 142);⁵⁴ yet the fact that 328 of the rulers listed had apparently done nothing worth recording⁵⁵ should have made Herodotus consider the possibility that some of them might have reigned concurrently, as under the dodecarchy (147), or even that some of the names were bogus, inserted to produce an impressively lengthy catalogue. In any case, we might have expected more cautious handling of the evidence provided by a document in a completely unintelligible script;⁵⁶ but evidently, as far as Herodotus was concerned, Egypt's extraordinary antiquity was a foregone conclusion. Some have seen here the influence of Hecataeus. But Herodotus' confidence that a date for Min in the

⁴⁹ τάδε γράφω, ὡς μοι δοκεῖ ἀληθέα εἶναι: οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοὶ τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσιν. It seems more likely that this disparaging reference to οἱ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι was meant to contrast the notions of people in general, the public at large, with what an intelligent man might accept, not to mark a distinction between Greek and foreign traditions; so Fränkel, *op. cit.* (n. 12) 394 n. 9 (= *Early Greek poetry* 346 n. 9), who compares Ion of Chios, *ap. Athen.* xiii 604 ab, οὐδὲ τόδε σοι ἀρέσκει ἄρα... τὸ Σιμωνίδειον, κάρτα δοκέον τοῖς Ἑλλησιν εὖ εἰρηῆσθαι;

⁵⁰ On the first of these passages David Asheri (*Erodoto, Le storie: libro 1*, Rome 1988) robustly observes 'Le presunte "fonti" persiane e fenicie, citate da Erodoto in questi capitoli, sono... pura invenzione e convenzione letteraria'. I believe the same to hold for the Egyptian 'sources' cited in the other three; *cf.* Fehling, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 49–86 (*Quellenangaben* 38–66).

⁵¹ It has sometimes been suggested that in his treatment of Upper Egypt Herodotus intended merely to supplement a more detailed account by Hecataeus. But on this hypothesis Herodotus' much fuller account of Lower Egypt would seem to imply a corresponding neglect of this area on Hecataeus' part, which is surely absurd.

⁵² It is significant that his account of Egypt starts with this topic; the tale of Psammetichus' experiment strikes the keynote (ii 2), even if rather illogically.

⁵³ The inaccurate conversion of generations into years, which imparts a meretricious precision to this section, is surely Herodotus' own idea; for similar elaborate, and largely unnecessary, calculations *cf.* i 32, iii 95, iv 85, vii 187. 'Es ist fast komisch, zu sehen, wie dieser fast immer, wenn er mit exakten Zahlen operiert, völlig in die Brüche gerät'. (W. Aly, *Volksmärchen, Sage u. Novelle bei Herodot u. seinen Zeitgenossen* (Göttingen 1921) 74).

⁵⁴ Herodotus' use of this figure as the basis for further calculation prevents our treating it as simply a symbolic or typical number, used to promote verisimilitude but not to be taken literally (*pace* Lloyd, *Historia* xxxvii (1988) 41).

⁵⁵ To the modern Egyptologist this lack of record of individual achievement may seem quite in order: 'die für eine ägyptische Königsliste nicht weniger charakteristische Angabe, von all diesen Königen seien keine Taten zu berichten, denn gerade das Fehlen besonderer Einzelnachrichten hat nach allem, was wir wissen, für solche Listen als typisch zu gelten' (Kaiser, *op. cit.* (n. 21) 100). But Herodotus might reasonably be expected to have found it strange.

⁵⁶ It is typical of the widespread tendency to treat ii as distinct from the rest of Herodotus' work that discussions of his principles and methods of historical enquiry generally ignore his uncritical acceptance of this very flimsy evidence, despite the importance of the inference based on it.

twelfth millennium will meet with no serious resistance rather suggests that such ideas were fairly widespread and not specifically associated with a single intellectual.

The discovery of hitherto unsuspected antiquity is a well-attested response to foreign domination and the loss of sovereignty.⁵⁷ I suspect that this immensely inflated estimate stems from nationalist propaganda percolating to Egypt's Greek community, a group likely to sympathize with native resentment of Persian rule and with the aspirations eventually fulfilled in the recovery of independence. It is interesting that Herodotus does not update the figure for Hecataeus' day to suit his own, a tourist reaction so natural and obvious that we might expect it to have occurred to him even if, as I have argued, the whole twofold episode is his own invention. 345 generations represent (as he sees it) the span of Egyptian history down to the Persian conquest, Egypt's existence as an independent nation being set forth in tangible form through the effigies of the high priests of her supreme god.

This chronological inflation has a geopolitical counterpart in the extension of Sesostri's conquests, imperial high noon in Herodotus' account of Pharaonic Egypt, to surpass those of Darius (102–110). The figure of Sesostri/Sesonchosis (basically Senwosret III of Dynasty 12) was to be a focus of Egyptian nationalism,⁵⁸ and his prominence in Herodotus' narrative surely reflects nationalist propaganda. But the extension of Sesostri's conquests to Scythia, far beyond Egyptian horizons, must stem from a Greek mind, and some may see here Herodotus' personal contribution to the development of the Sesostri legend.⁵⁹ To conclude his tale of 'the glory extreme of high Sesostri'⁶⁰ Herodotus records another significant confrontation (110), involving (as with Hecataeus) a rather abrupt leap forward in time, as once again commemorative sculpture provides the occasion for an Egyptian priest to demonstrate that a foreigner, in this case the King of Kings, has overbid his hand.⁶¹

We have thus seen reason to question the historicity of Hecataeus' encounter with the priests of Thebes; like Plato's account of Solon's visit to the temple of Neith (*Ti.* 21e ff.) this narrative serves to point the contrast between the antiquity of Egyptian recorded history (and of course of Egyptian culture generally) and the inadequacy of Greek traditions about the past, and is no more to be taken at face-value than Solon's interview with Croesus. What are we to make of Hecataeus' appearances on home-ground, among the freedom-fighters who engineered the Ionian Revolt?⁶²

ἐβουλεύετο ὦν (sc. Ἀρισταγόρης) μετὰ τῶν στασιωτῶν, ἐκφήνας τὴν τε ἑωυτοῦ γνώμην καὶ τὰ παρὰ τοῦ Ἰστιαίου ἀπιγμένα. οἱ μὲν δὴ ἄλλοι πάντες γνώμην κατὰ τῶντοῦ ἐξεφέροντο, κελεύοντες ἀπίστασθαι, Ἐκαταῖος δ' ὁ λογοποιὸς πρῶτα μὲν οὐκ ἔα πόλεμον βασιλείῃ τῶν Περσῶν ἀναιρέεσθαι, καταλέγων τὰ τε ἔθνεα πάντα τῶν ἦρχε Δαρείος καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ· ἐπειτέ δὲ οὐκ ἔπειθε, δεύτερα συνεβούλευε ποιεῖν ὅπως ναυκρατέες τῆς θαλάσσης ἔσονται. ἄλλως μὲν νυν οὐδαμῶς ἔφη λέγων ἐνορᾶν ἐσόμενον τοῦτο (ἐπίστασθαι γὰρ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν Μιλησίων εἰσὶν ἀσθενέα), εἰ δὲ τὰ χρήματα κατααιρεθῆι τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ ἐν Βραγχίδησι, τὰ Κροῖσος ὁ Λυδὸς ἀνέθηκε, πολλὰς εἶχε ἐλπίδας ἐπικρατήσῃ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ οὕτως αὐτοὺς τε ἔξῃν <τοῖσι> χρήμασι χρᾶσθαι καὶ τοὺς

⁵⁷ See further Henige, *Chronology* 6–9.

⁵⁸ See further A. B. Lloyd, 'Nationalist propaganda in Ptolemaic Egypt', *Historia* xxxi (1982) 33–55, esp. 37–40.

⁵⁹ I have discussed Herodotus' account of Sesostri in *CQ* xxxv (1985) 298–302; I find quite unconvincing the attempt by Claude Obsomer, *Les campagnes de Sésostris dans Hérodote* (Brussels 1989), to interpret Herodotus' narrative of conquest in Asia Minor and Europe as based on a misunderstanding of information about the Nubian

campaigns or Sesostri III.

⁶⁰ So Leigh Hunt, in his sonnet 'The Nile'.

⁶¹ This story has taken on a new interest since 1972 with the discovery of the Susa statue of Darius; see appendix.

⁶² P. Tozzi, *La rivolta ionica* (Pisa 1978) provides detailed guidance through the quicksands of this area (on Hecataeus' role see pp. 139–141); for a brief account, throwing an interesting light on Herodotus' work in general, see O. Murray, *CAH²* iv (Cambridge 1988) 461–90, esp. 480–90.

πολεμίους οὐ συλήσειν αὐτά. τὰ δὲ χρήματα ἦν ταῦτα μεγάλα, ὡς δεδήλωται μοι ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν λόγων. αὕτη μὲν δὴ οὐκ ἐνίκα ἢ γνώμη, ἐδόκεε δὲ ὁμῶς ἀπίστασθαι. (v. 36)

ἀλικομένων δὲ τῶν πολιῶν, ἦν γάρ, ὡς διέδεξε, Ἄρισταγόρης ὁ Μιλήσιος ψυχὴν οὐκ ἄκρος, ὃς ταραξάς τὴν Ἴωνίην καὶ ἐγκερασάμενος πρήγματα μεγάλα δρησμὸν ἐβούλευε ὀρῶν ταῦτα· πρὸς δὲ οἱ καὶ ἀδύνατα ἐφάνη βασιλέα Δαρεῖον ὑπερβαλέσθαι· πρὸς ταῦτα δὴ ὦν συγκαλέσας τοὺς συστασιώτας ἐβουλεύετο, λέγων ὡς ἄμεινον σφίσι εἶη κρησφύγετόν τι ὑπάρχον εἶναι, ἦν ἄρα ἐξωθέωνται ἐκ τῆς Μιλήτου, εἶτε δὴ ὦν ἐς Σαρδῶν ἐκ τοῦ τόπου τούτου ἄγοι ἐς ἀποικίην, εἶτε ἐς Μύρκινον τὴν Ἡδωνῶν, τὴν Ἰστιάϊος ἐτείχεε παρὰ Δαρείου δωρεὴν λαβών. ταῦτα ἐπειρώτα ὁ Ἄρισταγόρης. Ἐκαταίου μὲν νυν τοῦ Ἠγησάνδρου, ἀνδρὸς λόγοποιοῦ, τουτέων μὲν ἐς οὐδετέραν στέλλειν ἔφερε ἢ γνώμη, ἐν Λέρῳ δὲ τῇ νήσῳ τεῖχος οἰκοδομησάμενον ἡσυχίην ἄγειν, ἦν ἐκπέσει ἐκ τῆς Μιλήτου· ἔπειτα δὲ ἐκ ταύτης ὁρμώμενον κατελεύσεσθαι ἐς τὴν Μίλητον. (v. 124–5)

These passages provide our only direct evidence for Hecataeus' date⁶³ and political standing; from them we infer that at the beginning of the fifth century he was neither in his first youth nor regarded as a learned recluse completely averse to political involvement. Scholars have, in general, supposed that Herodotus drew these anecdotes not from Hecataeus' own writings but from Ionian (perhaps specifically Milesian) popular tradition,⁶⁴ thought to be likewise the source of rather similar anecdotes told of Bias and Thales (i 27; 170), Ionian intellectuals characteristically being credited with a just appreciation of the importance of sea-power and unity for their chances of independence. As with every aspect of the Ionian Revolt, there has been much disagreement about the truth of these stories; but the general opinion is that Herodotus drew on traditions which he believed trustworthy.

Yet several features should make us uneasy. Lattimore's famous article on the role of the wise counsellor in Herodotus drew attention to the narrative function of the adviser whose objections are disregarded.⁶⁵ 'The introduction of a speaker presenting arguments against an undertaking is one of Herodotus' methods of explaining and justifying its failure, since refusal to heed a warning demonstrates the kind of blindness that leads to ruin'.⁶⁶ The failure of the Ionian Revolt was evidently in Herodotus' eyes a foregone conclusion; it is very much more in accordance with his methods to present the factors which affect policy or strategy through the mouth of one of those involved than to offer an abstract analysis, and Hecataeus was undeniably well qualified to fill the warner's role here.

Hecataeus' general opposition to the plan is founded on geopolitical considerations. It would be difficult to believe that the conspirators could be supposed to be unaware of the Persian Empire's vast extent, but Herodotus may well have thought that they were not exempt from a general Greek tendency (as he saw it) to under-estimate the Persians, and that a wise man would, in these circumstances, offer a reminder of the forces at

⁶³ Cf. Jacoby 2668–9 (on Hecataeus' biography): 'Brauchbar sind nur die Angaben Herodots v 36, 125 (und Ephoros bei Diod. x 25.4?), die allerdings nicht auf H. selbst zurückgehen... sondern vermutlich auf mündliche Tradition über den Ionischen Aufstand... , denen wir aber ihrer inneren Wahrscheinlichkeit wegen den Glauben nicht versagen.'

⁶⁴ So Jacoby *loc. cit.* (n. 63) and on *FGrH* I T5, 6; Tozzi, *Athenaeum* n.s.xli (1963) 320 f., T. S. Brown, *AJP* lxxxvi (1965) 63 n. 14, K. von Fritz, *op. cit.* (n. 5), Anm.–Bd. 33–5 n. 12. For the view ('più arbitraria che conseguente' (Tozzi)) that Hecataeus' own work was Herodotus' source here see, e.g., Bury, *op. cit.* (n. 12) 12, J. A. S. Evans,

Historia xxv (1976) 33–4.

⁶⁵ 'The wise adviser in Herodotus', *CPh* xxxiv (1939) 24–35. Cf. H. Schwabl, *Gymnasium* lxxvi (1969) 267: 'Mit Hekataios sind wir bei einer typischen Figur, die immer wiederkehrt: der Weise, der dem zum Handeln Drängenden einen Sachverhalt vor Augen führt und ihn damit (zumeist vergebens) vom Handeln abhalten will, überhaupt Einsicht gegenüber einer falschen Haltung und Bewertung vermittelt'; see also Fehling, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 209 (*Quellenangaben* 149).

⁶⁶ M. L. Lang, *Herodotean narrative and discourse* (Cambridge, Mass.–London 1984) 55; cf. *Historia* xvii (1968) 29–30.

Darius' disposal; at the same time καταλέγων τά τε ἔθνεα πάντα τῶν ἤρχε Δαρεῖος καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ serves nicely to remind us of Hecataeus' geographical work (just as γενεηλογήσαντι and ἀντεγενεηλόγησαν in the Theban episode call to mind his antiquarian researches).

With its stress on the importance of gaining command of the sea Hecataeus' second, positive, proposal takes up a theme introduced in i (27) and foreshadowing Themistocles' strategy. Decidedly more idiosyncratic is his scheme to meet the need for extra capital from the temple treasures of Branchidae, which would thus be secured against the Persians. This has looked like a *post eventum* invention even to many scholars who have been happy to accept as historical Hecataeus' opposition to Aristagoras' scheme; since in general (so far as our evidence goes) the Persians respected their subjects' sanctuaries and began to plunder Greek temples only in retaliation for the destruction carried out at Sardis by the Ionians and their allies,⁶⁷ there has been judged to be some anachronism in the argument that it was better that the Greeks should make use of the treasure than that it should fall into Persian hands. I am not sure that this argument is sound; even if, so far as was known in Miletus at the time, the Persian record in this matter could not be faulted, it might well have seemed unrealistic to rely on the scrupulous observance of such conventions on the part of troops engaged in suppressing a revolt.⁶⁸ But at the beginning of the fifth century too many people would surely have been likely to judge such a suggestion sacrilegious for it to be worth advancing; indeed, it would be all too likely to create a prejudice against the policy which it was intended to facilitate. More advanced religious ideas were generally acceptable by the time Pericles proposed a similar measure (with repayment in the event of success) at the start of the Peloponnesian War (Th. ii 13). But undeniably this innovative proposal reminds us of Hecataeus' character for impatience with traditional religious ideas (as exemplified in F 1).

There can have been no official record of the deliberations of the freedom-fighters. Was it popular tradition that attributed to Hecataeus what with hindsight appeared the only sensible strategy, or was Herodotus responsible?

Years later Aristagoras, hoping to escape the hornets' nest which he had stirred up, again called together the leading spirits among the rebels and argued the need to secure a refuge in case they were driven from Miletus, suggesting either Sardinia or Myrcinus, Histiaeus' stronghold, in Thrace. Again (125), Hecataeus⁶⁹ is the only speaker with an alternative proposal. We might feel some surprise that he is still welcome in the inner councils of the liberation movement; such groups tend to be highly fissiparous, and Hecataeus, whose counsels had not been heeded at the outset, might not have been expected to enjoy Aristagoras' complete confidence. His plan to fortify Leros, Miletus' colony,⁷⁰ and establish a base there for an eventual return to the city makes no sense as an anti-Persian tactic.⁷¹ Hecataeus' thoughts are apparently concentrated on securing a refuge for Aristagoras until the resentment of his fellow-citizens had cooled sufficiently to allow his return to Miletus.⁷² It seems an odd idea at this juncture, but the proposal serves a useful compositional function; Herodotus knew that Aristagoras met his end fighting in Thrace (126), and for his death to achieve its proper narrative force it is

⁶⁷ According to Ctesias (*FGrH* 688 F 13.21) Darius ordered the destruction of temples at Chalcedon on his return from the Scythian campaign.

⁶⁸ Rumours (even if completely groundless) of Cambyses' extraordinary acts of sacrilege in Egypt (iii 27-9, 37; 64.3) would have shaken their subjects' confidence that the Persians would respect their holy places.

⁶⁹ It is a nice illustration of Herodotus' lack of system that this is the first time he gives Hecataeus' father's name.

⁷⁰ Cf. Strab. xiv 1.6.

⁷¹ Macan surmised that it was Herodotus' purpose here to make Hecataeus look ridiculous.

⁷² See further G.de Sanctis, *Problemi di storia antica* (Bari 1932) 89 (= *RF* n.s.ix (1931) 71).

obviously effective that he should seem to have disregarded constructive advice to the contrary.⁷³ We hear no more from Herodotus about Hecataeus' part in public affairs⁷⁴ once Aristagoras has left the scene.

This is hardly coincidence. Herodotus' account of the Ionian Revolt is constructed, characteristically, around the actions and reactions of a few prominent personalities;⁷⁵ Hecataeus, typecast for the role of the wise counsellor, plays out his part as a foil to the hare-brained Aristagoras. He is involved only in deliberation; since the strategies which he advocates are invariably rejected, there is no reason for him to be associated with any action.

This restriction is likely to strengthen any doubts which we may have begun to entertain about the historicity of the part assigned to him here. It is generally accepted that many of Herodotus' speeches are simply comment and analysis presented in a literary guise. He required the conspirators to be warned that their prospects were poor and that the strategy which they adopted was not the best imaginable; but had he really any evidence that Hecataeus was a party to their deliberations?⁷⁶ The views advanced by Hecataeus in the preliminary discussions surely reflect Herodotus' own ambivalent attitude to the rising. The Ionian Greeks on their own had little chance of regaining their independence, and a prudent man could not approve Aristagoras' scheme; nevertheless, where freedom is at stake right-minded men do not count the cost by normal standards, and we have to reckon with the principle that those who are not committed to the cause are held to be against it.

Hecataeus rises in our estimation by his association with the rising, the first significant Greek attempt to seize the initiative against Persia. Wide-ranging geographical and antiquarian knowledge does not by itself suffice to recommend its possessor to the leaders of a liberation-movement, and Hecataeus' presence in this company implies qualities of character which we cannot fail to admire, while his contributions to the first meeting show an admirable grasp of the problems to be faced.⁷⁷

Questions have thus been raised about the historicity of Hecataeus' appearances both in the Theban episode and in connexion with the Ionian Revolt, though, curiously, these doubts have not been discussed in relation to one another. But clearly suspicions cast on the one instance have implications for the other. If these doubts are accepted as well-founded, we lose nearly all the data for Hecataeus' biography; his travels and his political prominence are alike called in question, and we can no longer use his

⁷³ Cf. M. L. Lang, *Historia* xvii (1968) 33: 'Since Aristagoras met his death in the fighting and so came to personal defeat, there had to be a warning which he disregarded so that he might seem to have invited disaster.'

⁷⁴ I feel little confidence in the role assigned to him by Ephorus in the subsequent settlement of Ionia (T 7); there is no call for surprise in Herodotus' failure to mention it.

⁷⁵ Cf. K. H. Waters, *Herodotos on tyrants and despots* (*Historia Einzelschr.* 15, Wiesbaden 1971) 35 n. 101: 'Herodotos was bound to represent his main characters as directly responsible for actual occurrences; this is the popular or unsophisticated way of speaking, much in use today, but it does not mean that Herodotos had no deeper understanding of causation. In the case of the Ionian revolt however, the failure to indicate any underlying motive is probably due to the fact that a revolt either against

a tyrant or against foreign domination is thought to be self-explanatory, unlike a war of conquest; yet it still requires agents, for whom individual personal motives have to be provided.'

⁷⁶ For good analyses of Hecataeus' role in the narrative see Schwabl, *op. cit.* (n. 65) 268, Tozzi *op. cit.* (n. 62) 139.

⁷⁷ Cf. Jacoby's tribute (2669): 'Wir bewundern den klaren politischen Blick des Mannes, der auf Grund seines Wissens auch praktisch die Machtmittel der Staaten richtig abschätzte und erkannte, dass Ionien allein keine Basis zum Kampfe gegen Persien bot, dass die Freiheit der Griechen in Asien durchaus auf der Beherrschung des Ägäischen Meeres beruhe. Athen hat später den Beweis für die Richtigkeit dieser Überzeugung geliefert.' Similarly Fränkel, *Early Greek poetry* 343 (= *Dichtung u. Philosophie*² 391).

statesmanlike role among the moving spirits of the Ionian Revolt as a rough guide to his date of birth.⁷⁸

It is always disheartening to find that we know less than we supposed, and some may be reluctant to accept that our conception of Hecataeus owes as much to Herodotus' imaginative reconstruction as I have suggested. But during the past decade there has been a growing acceptance that not everything Herodotus wrote is to be taken *au pied de la lettre* and, indeed, that we may miss something important by concentrating on literal veracity.⁷⁹ Even the most conservative of his interpreters would not maintain that all his speeches are to be taken as faithful reports of actual utterances; on occasion it has to be accepted that Herodotus cannot have had good evidence for the events to which those speeches are attached.⁸⁰ Further definition of the conventions by which he was guided lies outside the scope of this article. But living as we do in a period which has seen a pullulation of novels and films exploiting highly speculative reconstructions and even the distortion of known historical facts we ought not to find it hard to credit that Herodotus may have treated his material somewhat in the spirit which produced a cinematographic masterpiece out of the damp squib ignited by the battlecruiser *Potemkin's* ineffectual mutineers,⁸¹ and that his presentation of his great predecessor owes more to his imagination than to the other's writings or to oral tradition.

In attempting to assess Herodotus' procedure we ought, in principle, to extend our range beyond explicit references to take account of passages where an ancient reader familiar with Hecataeus' work would have seen an allusion to the latter. However, we run into difficulties immediately, partly because so little survives of Hecataeus' work and partly because it is impossible to tell how far what seems to us, for lack of other evidence, to be specifically Hecataean had, by the time Herodotus wrote, passed into a common stock of ideas widely entertained by the lively-minded. Thus when, by way of prologue (i 1–5.2), Herodotus demythologizes heroic saga in the manner pioneered by Hecataeus before abandoning it with a brisk comment on the uncertainty involved in studying these traditions, are we to see here, specifically, a criticism of Hecataeus' attempts to extract history from legend, or had this approach become an intellectual commonplace? Herodotus' account of Egypt offers several points of contact, as it seems; but the general effect is rather perplexing. Hecataeus' description of the allegedly floating island of Chemmis (F 305), ἔστι δὲ ἡ νῆσος μεταρσίη καὶ περιπλεῖ καὶ κινεῖται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος, is echoed in Herodotus' wording (ii 156.2), αὐτὸς μὲν ἔγωγε οὔτε πλεύουσαν οὔτε κινηθεῖσαν εἶδον, τέθηπα δὲ ἀκούων εἰ νῆσος ἀληθέως ἐστὶ πλωτή. A connexion appears unquestionable; yet it is to the Egyptians, not to Hecataeus, that Herodotus attributes the belief in the island's peculiar geology which he regards with scepticism.⁸² That Herodotus got from Hecataeus the memorable description of Egypt as 'the gift of the river' (ii 5.1) is attested by Arrian (F 301), and it is tempting to see an allusion to Hecataeus not only here but whenever a similarly polemical tone is observable;⁸³ yet the expression could by Herodotus' time have become a commonplace. Conversely, Herodotus' failure to give the Egyptian name of the god whom the

⁷⁸ Cf. Jacoby 2670: 'Für uns ist das einzig sichere Zeitindizium, dass H. beim Ausbruch des Ionischen Aufstandes nicht nur αἰσθανόμενος τῆι ἡλικίαι, sondern ein gereifter und erfahrener Mann war.'

⁷⁹ This may seem an understatement; some recent literary studies leave the impression that their authors think it rather naive, or in poor taste, to express an interest in the reliability of the information which Herodotus offers.

⁸⁰ E.g. Solon's interview with Croesus (i 29–33)

or the proceedings at the Persian court initiating Xerxes' campaign against Greece (vii 8–19).

⁸¹ See further A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in classical historiography* (London 1988) 207–12. For a convenient account of the reality behind the *Potemkin* legend see E. Crankshaw, *The shadow of the Winter Palace* (Harmondsworth 1978) 406–8.

⁸² Lloyd's discussion (*ad loc.*) well explains the problem; I am not satisfied with his solution.

⁸³ So Jacoby; but see Lloyd *ad loc.*

Greeks identified with Hephaestus, though we now know it to have occurred in Hecataeus,⁸⁴ suggests that he was less influenced by the other's account than has often been assumed. Certainly there is some anachronism in the notion that he consistently and methodically consulted Hecataeus' work whenever it might be relevant, whether he was sight-seeing or writing up the results of his enquiries.⁸⁵

A systematic survey of everything to be considered under the heading of covert allusion (including some omissions which might be judged significant⁸⁶) would undeniably be interesting, but would raise more questions than it answered; too many imponderables are involved. But in any case, explicit references must carry far more weight, with ancient readers as with modern, and I do not think we shall seriously misjudge Herodotus' depiction of Hecataeus by restricting ourselves to passages where the latter is actually named.

It is to Herodotus that we owe our sense of Hecataeus as a personality while other early prose-writers with similar interests remain mere names to us. He clearly acknowledges Hecataeus as his precursor. At Thebes we see the logographer employing just such methods of enquiry as Herodotus would have us believe were his own; energetic and adventurous in his pursuit of knowledge, he travels widely and talks to local experts. There may be a somewhat astringent note in γενεηλογήσαντι, but Herodotus is not, I think, so much concerned about a snub to Hecataeus' pride in his lineage as with the devaluation of his genealogical researches, impressive as they might seem by Greek standards, when their results are compared with Egyptian historical traditions. At home in Ionia we see him in a role in which Herodotus could not hope to emulate him. He does not forfeit the confidence of the leaders of the liberation movement by his disapproval of their strategy, and his clear-sighted estimate of their prospects demonstrates the practical value of geographical study for those who wish to serve their fellow-citizens' best interests.⁸⁷ The character of the aristocratic scholar-statesman has an abiding appeal, and there is a peculiar charm in the idea that knowledge acquired for its own sake may prove to be practically relevant. Herodotus' presentation of his great predecessor well exemplifies the power of prose-literature to commemorate subjects ill-suited to poetic celebration.

APPENDIX: HERODOTUS II 110 and the Susa statue of Darius

Originally *c.* 3 metres high but now lacking its head, the statue of Darius discovered at Susa in December 1972⁸⁸ was intended, according to the hieroglyphic inscription

⁸⁴ See above, n. 6.

⁸⁵ This assumption is fundamental to Heidel's very acute discussion (*op. cit.* n. 9), which paradoxically credits Herodotus with a massive debt to a book he was too obtuse to understand. Still, though Heidel's general thesis has rightly won little support, he calls attention to several problems which deserve more thought than they normally get.

⁸⁶ Thus, when Aristagoras, seeking military support at Sparta (v 49.1) produces χάλκεον πίνακα ἐν τῷ γῆς ἀπάσης περιόδῳ ἐνετέτμητο καὶ θάλασσά τε πᾶσα καὶ πόταμοι πάντες, prompted by our commentaries we think of Hecataeus' improved version of Anaximander's map (T 12). Did Herodotus intend this association of ideas? If so, his reasons for not mentioning Hecataeus offer plenty of scope for speculation. (An appreciation of the

value of maps in planning a campaign would be wholly to Aristagoras' credit, but what is here described would be too small-scale to be of any military use: but did Herodotus realise this?)

⁸⁷ Contrast Heraclitus' view (12 B 40 D-K (FGrH I T 21)) πολυμαθὴ νῶον ἔχειν οὐ διδάσκει· Ἡσίοδον γὰρ ἂν ἐδίδαξε καὶ Πυθαγόρην αὐτίς τε καὶ Ξενοφάνεά τε καὶ Ἐκαταῖον. However, the company in which he includes Hecataeus robs this animadversion of much of its force.

⁸⁸ First published in *Journal Asiatique* cclx (1972) 233–66. For a convenient brief account see E. Porada, *Cambridge History of Iran* ii (Cambridge 1985) 816–8, Plates 25, 26 (where references to more detailed discussions may be found). For a colour photo see W. Hinz, *Darius u. die Perser* (Baden-Baden 1976) Taf. 22.

engraved on it, to stand for ever in the temple of Atum at Heliopolis 'so that he who should see it in time to come should know that the Persian man has taken Egypt'; it is made of the dark greenish-gray stone called *grauwacke*, not found near Susa, though there were quarries in the region of the Wadi Hammamat, and an Egyptian provenance for the stone would suit the sculptural style. We naturally wonder what it is doing at Susa, where it was set up, presumably as one of a pair, to flank the palace gateway. It is conceivable that it was made as a duplicate and that its presence so far from its homeland is to be construed as a fitting tribute to consummate Egyptian craftsmanship. But against this rather happy scenario we must set the possibility that a too blatant image of empire proved inconveniently provocative, and was therefore shipped away to Susa, perhaps during the rising of 486.⁸⁹ It seems a fair guess that Darius intended similar statues to stand in the other principal temples of Egypt, and Herodotus' story of successful protest (ii 110) looks like a reminiscence of native opposition to this ostentatious symbol of alien rule,⁹⁰ though of course this picture of personal confrontation between spiritual and temporal powers must be invention.⁹¹

It is tempting to wonder whether Herodotus' story of Hecataeus at Thebes has evolved from another tale of a snub to Persian pretensions, the Johnny-come-lately empire of the Achaemenids being contrasted with the immemorial civilization of the Nile valley.⁹²

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⁸⁹ So W. Hinz, *Arch.Mitt.Iran* viii (1975) 115 ff., esp. 120 f.; cf. H. Luschey, *ZDMG* Suppl. iv (1980) 369–73. I find very unconvincing the suggestion of J. M. Cook (*The Persian empire* (London 1983) 100) that Xerxes removed the statue from Heliopolis as a sign of the royal disfavour.

⁹⁰ Cf. Obsomer, *op. cit.* (n. 59) 151–5.

⁹¹ It has often been noted that the reference to Darius' failure in Scythia betrays a Greek mind.

⁹² It has sometimes been suggested that Hecataeus came to Egypt at the time of Cambyses' invasion (cf. iii 139.1), and this may well be what Herodotus meant to imply.