

### Where was Simplicius?

In *Simplicius: sa vie, son oeuvre, sa survie* (Berlin 1987, reviewed in *JHS* cx [1990] 244-45), the editor, Mme I. Hadot, in the first part of the biographical introduction, cites Agathias *Hist.* ii 31, 4. This is usually taken to show that the Neoplatonists, who had fled to the Persian court when Justinian closed down the Academy in 529, went back to Athens after 532. That view, she holds, rests on a misreading of the text (...δεῖν ἐκείνους τοὺς ἀνδράς ἐς τὰ σφέτερα ἦθη κατιόντας βιοτεθεῖν ἀδεῶς τὸ λοιπὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς...). However, she herself misconstrues ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς as 'selon leur choix': that is, on returning from exile to their own accustomed places, these men should henceforth live without fear as they might choose. To yield that version, the Greek would have to be καθ' ἑαυτοῦς. The actual expression means 'amongst themselves': they might philosophise, but not in public. That a touch of private heterodoxy amongst the learned few is harmless if it does not stir up the ignorant many was well understood, indeed explicitly so later, in Islam and mediaeval Christianity.

Where, then, did the returned exiles settle? We do not know. That the Persian king sought to ensure protection for them in their previous habitat neither shows nor refutes that they went back there, or to any other nameable place.

Mme Hadot certainly cannot well enlist M. Tardieu's inference, in the second part of the introduction, from Simplicius on the four calendars (*Comm. in Arist. Graeca* x 875, 19-22). Simplicius there states that 'we <humans> posit the beginning of the year' (ὅς δὲ ἡμεῖς ποιοῦμεθα ἀρχὰς ἐνιαυτοῦ) to fall at four times, namely the summer solstice, as at Athens, the autumnal equinox, as in the then province of Asia, the winter solstice, as with the Romans, or the vernal equinox, as with the Arabs and Damascenes.

In context, Simplicius here contrasts beginnings that are natural (φύσσει) and imposed (θέσει). Adding the sentence before and after the one on the four types of year, the passage runs thus: 'As regards time, flow or becoming, the natural beginning comes first. We ourselves put the beginning of the year at (1) or (2) or (3) or (4). Likewise, those who say that a month begins at full-moon or new-moon, will be imposing this'. The passage figures in his comments on *Arist. Ph.* 226b34-227a10, on consecutiveness.

Simplicius never says that all four types of year were in use at one place, nor does his text imply it. Of the two solstitial years, Academics would use the summer one from tradition, while the winter one is Roman imperial. The equinoctial years were used in the areas stated.

If the equinoctial and Roman calendars existed together in some place where the Neoplatonists did settle, then in that place there must have been four calendars. Clearly, though, the reverse inference is invalid: that the four calendars co-existed does not prove the presence of Neoplatonists. The Athenian calendar may have existed there for other reasons: its being there is necessary, but not sufficient, for the Neoplatonists' presence.

As to Harran (Carrhae), which Tardieu argues is where Simplicius settled, Arab sources confirm that the

equinoctial calendars and the Roman one did exist there. We have no independent evidence that the Athenian one did. We have only Simplicius's statement, if he was at Harran. That, however, is precisely what must be established. To cite the four-calendar passage as proof that he was, begs the question and ignores the context.

Where Simplicius wrote his commentaries thus remains unclear, for lack of evidence.

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### Plataea's relations with Thebes, Sparta and Athens

Plataea was an ancient city of 'Boiotoi' (*Iliad* ii 494 and 504; cf. *Thuc.* iii 61.2). Throughout its chequered history the citizens were always described as 'Boiotoi' (e.g. *Thuc.* iii 54.3; *Isoc. Panath.* 93; [D.] lix 95; *Arr. An.* i 8.8; *Paus.* i 15.3). The citizens were 'the Plataeans', whether they were in possession of their city or not. They figured as Πλαταιες on the serpent column of 479/8 (M-L 27,7), as Πλαταιης in the list of Athens' allies in 431 (*Thuc.* ii 9.4), and as Πλαταιης ψιλοῖ fighting alongside Athenians in 424 BC when their city was in enemy hands (*Thuc.* iv 67.2 and 5). Although the majority of the Plataeans lived as refugees in Attica between 428 and 382, and again from 373 to 338, they continued to be 'Plataeans' and were never described in our sources as Athenians. The ability of the Plataeans to survive as a refugee community was paralleled, for example, by the ability of the Aeginetan refugees between 431 and 405 and the Samian refugees between 366 and 322 (*Diod.* xviii 18.9) to survive and ultimately to reoccupy their homeland. It was as such a community that 'the Plataeans' were brought back 'from Athens' to their ruined city in 382 (*Paus.* ix 1.4).\*

#### I. The period from c. 520 to the Battle of Plataea

The Plataeans were immediate neighbours of the Thebans. Indeed their cities were only eight miles apart (*Thuc.* ii 5.2). Plataea and Thebes were each a long

\* This article owes a great deal to the comments of the Editor and his readers on an earlier draft. I am most grateful to them. The following special abbreviations are used: Badian = E. Badian, 'Plataea between Athens and Sparta', *Boiotika*, edd. H. Beister and J. Buckler (Munich 1989). Buck = R.J. Buck, *A history of Boeotia* (Edmonton [Alb.] 1979). Burn = A.R. Burn, *Persia and the Greeks* (London 1962). Gomme C = A.W. Gomme, *A historical commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1945-56). Gomme-Andrewes-Dover C = A.W. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K.J. Dover, *A historical commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1970). Koumanoudes = S.M. Koumanoudes, *AAA* xi (1978) 232 ff. Shrimpton = G.S. Shrimpton, 'When did Plataea join Athens?', *CP* lxxix (1984) 295 ff. *Studies* = N. G. L. Hammond, *Studies in Greek history* (Oxford 1973). Themeles = P.G. Themeles, *AD* xxix (1974) μελέται 244. Welwei = K.-W. Welwei, 'Das sog. Grab der Plataier im Vranatal bei Marathon', *Historia* xxviii (1979) 101 ff. Worthington = I. Worthington, 'Aristophanes' 'Frogs' and Arginusae', *Hermes* cxvii (1989) 359 ff. I am most grateful to Professor Badian and Dr Worthington for giving me offprints of their articles.