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THE EUROPEAN EXPEDITION OF DARIUS.

§ 1. HARDLY any episode in the work of Herodotus succumbs more easily to negative criticism than that of the Scythian expedition of Darius; and in none perhaps has positive criticism found more difficulty in attempting to discover the historical foundations of the fiction. Our only chances of reaching the truth lie in the fortunate fact that Herodotus, here as in other cases, put together his tale from different sources, and, with that artlessness which is one of his charms, did not take the pains to disguise the patchwork. This is the normal procedure of Herodotus and renders his work eminently amenable to historical criticism, within certain limits. It is generally possible, when there is any historical ground under our feet, to discover an incongruity which lets out the main secret. Nor will this method fail us, as I believe, in the case of the Persian expedition beyond the Danube.

Recently the text of the Scythian episode has been submitted to a thorough-going analysis by Mr. Macan,¹ and illustrated by four most useful comparative maps, showing the various conceptions of Scythia implied by the author. I shall have occasion to refer frequently to Mr. Macan's work in the course of this paper, but at the outset I would acknowledge my indebtedness to his investigations, which I have found, as always, most suggestive.

§ 2. Having passed through Thrace and subjugated the Thracian peoples, who, except the Getae are said to have offered no op-

position, Darius meets his Greek fleet on the Ister, presumably at the neck, near Galatz, where it divides into 'five' mouths. Up to this point, says Grote,² 'our narrative runs smoothly and intelligibly: we know that Darius marched his army into Scythia, and that he came back with ignominy and severe loss. But as to all which happened between his crossing and recrossing the Danube, we find nothing approaching to authentic statement, nor even what we can set forth as the probable basis of truth on which exaggerating fancy has been at work—all is inexplicable mystery.' Herodotus 'conducts the immense host of Darius as it were through fairyland—heedless of distance, large intervening rivers, want of all cultivation or supplies, destruction of the country (in so far as it could be destroyed) by the retreating Scythians &c.' Not the meanest of the miracles which the story implies is the rapid organization and active cooperation of so many Scythian peoples over such a vast area—a feat which would be only possible under the empire of an Attila or a Zenghis.

§ 3. The story of this wild goose chase to the banks of unknown rivers beyond the Don is no longer mistaken for history by the least critical authority. But it is not superfluous to insist that it is futile and foolish to compromise with it; for the compromise is merely a guess. It is useless to suggest that, though Darius certainly did not approach the Don, he advanced to the Dnieper, or that, though he did not get to the Dnieper, he may have halted on the banks of the Bug, or that, if the Bug is out of the question he

¹ In App. II. 'Geography of Scythia,' and App. III. 'The Date, Motives, and Course of the Expedition of Dareios in Europe,' in *Herodotus*, Vol. II.

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² IV. p. 190-1.

at least reached the Dniester.¹ All such suggestions are purely arbitrary; and that is objection enough. But apart from that, they are all forbidden by one general consideration. *It is not legitimate to assume a march eastward in any shape*; for instance, as Curtius suggested, with the object of opening up new trade routes along the coast. *For any such assumption involves the accompaniment of the army by the fleet; and, if there is one fact which was clearly primary in the sources of Herodotus, it was that the fleet did not sail beyond the Ister.* It should be remembered that the cooperation of army and navy was an invariable principle of Persian warfare in the west. We see it stringently applied in the expedition of Mardonius, and in the invasion of Xerxes.

§ 4. When the Scythian Walpurgis-nacht is left out of the play, our view of the European expedition of Darius is entirely transformed. The great result of that expedition was the reduction of Thrace,² roughly accomplished by Darius, completed by Megabazus. In Herodotus, Thrace is merely the passage to Scythia; the conquest of Thrace is a business merely subsidiary to the main business, the conquest of Scythia. When the design of conquering Scythia turns out to be a fable, the feat of conquering Thrace begins to assume different proportions. The necessary and obvious inference is that the object of Darius was the conquest of Thrace, and that, instead of Thrace being merely the preface to Scythia, Scythia, whatever is left of it, was the appendix to Thrace. And we may add that, as Herodotus has exaggerated the work of Darius beyond the Danube into fabulous dimensions, so he has underrated his work in Thrace. He represents the reduction of the warlike Thracian tribes as 'a walk over.' All submit except the Getae, the most warlike, who *πρὸς ἀγνωμοσύνην τραπόμενοι αὐτίκα ἐδουλώθησαν.* We

¹ For the Tyras or Dniester it may be urged there is something to be said on evidence outside Herodotus altogether. The notice of Strabo of the Desert of the Getae between the Pruth and the Dniester, and of the Dniester as the limit of the Persian expedition, lends itself of course to reconstruction. But what was the source of Strabo (or Ephorus)? How do we know that it was any source independent of Herodotus? Mr. Macan justly observes that the record 'may be in part or in whole a product of reflection and criticism, rather than a survival of living memory and tradition' (p. 47). Nor can we practically deal with the notice of Ctesias, or put any confidence in the fifteen days' march and the exchange of bows.

² And it is the conquest of Thrace without doubt that Darius means when he records an expedition overseas against the 'Scyths.' *Records of the Past*, 9, 68.

do not know how much may lie behind this statement and we may seriously question the exact significance of the summary *αὐτίκα*. Herodotus is fearfully impatient to leave the history which he did not know, to get to the fiction of which he knew so much.

Another important and related corollary from the collapse of the Scythian fable is that the primary purpose of the fleet was not—as in that fable—to transport the army across the Danube, but to support the army in the reduction of Thrace.

§ 5. It would be wrong to infer, however, that Darius did not cross the Danube at all. The application of historical method to our data enables us to conclude with certainty that he did.³ There cannot be much doubt that Herodotus, as Bishop Thirlwall suggested, derived his story of the action of the Greek trierarchs on the Danube, when they were tempted to leave the Great King in the lurch, from the tradition preserved in the family of Miltiades. It can be proved indeed that this tradition distorted facts for the purpose of representing Miltiades as a patriotic Hellene; it can be proved that Miltiades did not forfeit at that time the favour of the Great King. But while it was easy at the trial of Miltiades to represent him as doing and saying certain things which he never did or said—of which perhaps he did and said the exact opposite—, it is almost impossible to conceive a completely new historical episode concocted by the Philaids for the occasion. It is hard to fancy that Miltiades and his friends invented out of their heads a trans-Danubian expedition in which Darius met a disaster, if there had been no fact to suggest the idea. That would have been a stroke of genius. It is one thing to alter old, and add new, facts in a given framework; it is another to invent the framework itself.

This general argument would perhaps seem hardly sufficient, alone; but it is confirmed by certain facts which render the conclusion irresistible. It is confirmed by the relations of Darius to the adventurer Histiaeus. It is certain that Darius felt an abiding gratitude to Histiaeus, for some service rendered to him in the European

³ This seems to be Mr. Macan's opinion. 'Duncker has done more than any other scholar to rescue the story of events beyond the Danube from total and indiscriminate condemnation. The items...yield an historical deposit' (*op. cit.* p. 47). But on the same page he speaks doubtfully: 'If Dareios crossed the Danube at all, if the passage of the river be anything more than an exaggerated replica of the passage of the Bosphorus,' &c. Duncker's line of argument is not altogether convincing.

expedition, above and beyond the general service of help and faith, for which he rewarded the Greek tyrants. This is a cardinal point in the adventurer's subsequent career. It might, however, be suspected that the Danube incident was invented to account for the favour shown to Histiaeus by the Great King. And if it be said that the use of the same incident for a different purpose by the Philaids points to the conclusion that the incident is historical, it might still be argued that the Philaid version in which the interest centres in Miltiades was simply borrowed with suitable modifications from the Milesian (presumably Milesian) version in which the interest centred in Histiaeus. But fortunately we are in a position to prove that the groundwork of the story is historical. In a context which has nothing to do with either Miltiades or Histiaeus, in a passage which has no connection with Scythian geography, and does not even occur in the same book as the Scythian Logi, Herodotus, incidentally and as a pure matter of business, explains the Persian reduction of Antandros and Lamponium, Lemnos and Imbros by the following words: τοὺς μὲν λιποστρατίης ἐπὶ Σκύθας αἰτιεύμενος τοὺς δὲ σίνεσθαι τὸν Δαρείου στρατὸν τὸν ἀπὸ Σκυθῶν ὀπίσω ἀποκομίζόμενον (B. 5, c. 27 *ad fin.*). This precious notice supplies just the corroboration we require. We can regard as certain the three main facts: (1) that Darius crossed the Danube, leaving the fleet to bridge his return; (2) that his communications were cut; and (3) that there was a division of opinion among the Greek commanders whether they should leave him in the lurch, and, although the bridge was not broken down, some contingents were disloyal to him.

§ 6. Having established on these grounds the conclusion that Darius did engage in a trans-Danubian excursion of some sort, we have now to consider whether Herodotus reveals any facts bearing on the object, nature, or circumstances of this excursion. We have not to attempt to discriminate what is probable from what is improbable in a tale which as a whole is entirely fictitious. Such a method is false and the effort would be futile. But we have to seek whether there is, embedded in the story, anything which by its heterogeneity or incongruity betrays an origin distinct from its fabulous surroundings. If there is nothing of the kind, the key for the solution of the problem is hopelessly lost.

§ 7. Now there is one remarkable notice in the course of the fairytale, which stands

apart from the rest—the notice of the forts which the Persians built on the Oaros. It stands apart from the rest of the narrative, because Herodotus vouches in a special way for its truth. He states that the remains of the eight forts were preserved to his own day.¹ This implies that he had information from some who professed to have knowledge of the existence of the Persian forts. I cannot agree to pass over as lightly as Mr. Macan the statement concerning the forts on the Oaros. Its significance is that for this point Herodotus had another source. That source may or may not have been some one who knew the Euxine regions; but in any case Herodotus was credibly (in his own opinion) informed that remains of the Persian forts were still to be seen. And we have to reckon with this, as evidence—presumptive evidence, that there were forts: possibly false evidence, but evidence which can be dealt with, and therefore may not be summarily set aside as either worthless or impracticable. Now it is strange that the one fact in the whole story which—whether true or false—is at least tangible and, by itself, intelligible, and which seems to stand on a different footing, should be placed in the most uncouth of all the uncouth regions which are described, beyond the bounds of Scythia itself, on the banks of an undiscoverable river. The tale, which says not a word of the city of Olbia, knows about buildings on the banks of a stream beyond the Don. It was hardly unnatural that the candour of Herodotus should be questioned.

§ 8. The accompanying geographical statement must be considered. Four great rivers flow into the Maeotic lake: Lycus, Oaros, Tanais, and Syrgis. It is only at this stage that Herodotus has discovered this startling piece of his knowledge. In his geographical descriptions of southern Russia he does not betray the slightest suspicion of it. In cc. 20, 21, and again in cc. 57, 58, we hear nothing of the four great rivers, we hear nothing of the Lycus and Oaros. In those passages Herodotus restricts himself to fact, and only the Don flows into the sea of Azov. In the second passage indeed he mentions the Hyrgis, which is clearly the same as the Syrgis, but it is a tributary of the Don, and can naturally be identified with the Donetz. It is strange that, when we are arrested, in the career of the wild tale, by ruined forts

¹ C. 124 τῶν ἔτι ἐς ἐμὲ τὰ ἐρείπια σῶα ἦν. These words do not suggest to me that Herodotus desired to leave the impression that he had seen them, without stating it. But they do imply that he had special reasons for believing the ἐρείπια to exist.

which stood in the days of Herodotus, we should have at the same moment to assist in the discharge of two unheard of rivers into the lake of Maeotis; for one could hardly think seriously of equating them with the Manytz and the Sal.

But this very incongruity furnishes us with the key. The forts were built; remains of their walls may well have existed in the days of Herodotus; but, needless to say, they were not built in the regions of the Don. *The tale has translated the forts from the regions of the Danube to the other end of Scythia, and translated the river along with them.* The *Oapos belongs to western, or as it might be called Dacian, rather than to eastern Scythia: to the same area as the Téapos and the *Arapos.¹ It was necessary to the artistic economy of the tale that the forts should mark the ultimate point which the Great King and his host reached; but they were indissolubly associated with the *Oapos; and therefore forts and river were transported through space together by a wave of the story-teller's wand.

§ 9. We have now reached two conclusions. The trans-Danubian operations of Darius were confined to regions west of the river Pruth (for, had he advanced eastward, the fleet would have accompanied him); and one of those operations was the construction of forts on a river. Before attempting to define the scene more strictly or to discover the object, I have a word to say on the description which Herodotus offers² of the river system of Roumania. Five rivers are enumerated as augmenting the waters of the Danube on the Scythian, that is, the left side. Their names are: (1) Πόρατα or Πυπερός (2) Τιάραντος (3) *Αραπος (4) Νάπαρις (5) *Ορδησσός. Mr. Macan has projected these rivers on the rectangular chart of Scythia which Herodotus sketches in cc. 99-101. On that chart the Danube forms the west side of the rectangle and consequently, in all its lower course, flows from north to south, until it takes an eastward bend at the mouth. It seems to me that, when he wrote this account of the rivers, the geographer had not this rectangular scheme

in his head, but envisaged the course of the Danube (just as in c. 99, where he describes it as πρὸς εὐρον ἄνεμον τὸ στόμα τετραμμένον) in a manner which approached more nearly to its true direction. For it is hard to see what is meant by saying that the Porata (Pruth) flowed πρὸς ἡῶ and the Tiarantos πρὸς ἑσπέρας μάλλον, if the Ister's course was southward. Mr. Macan's map does not explain this. That Herodotus did not bind his imagination to one hard and fast scheme of Scythian geography, is shown abundantly by Mr. Macan's analysis. I therefore take it that in this context he conceived the Ister flowing rather from west to east than from north to south. Of the five tributaries the identity of the Porata with the Pruth is obvious. In regard to the Tiarantos, we are met by a difficulty. The name at once suggests the Sereth.³ But though Herodotus mentions it second in order, he goes on to say that the other three rivers, Araros, Naparis and Ordessos, flow between it and the Pruth (διὰ μέσου τούτων ἰόντες). We should have in that case to give up the comparison of the Sereth with the Tiarantos, and seek for the latter river in the Argèche or some stream further west. But as it happens that the Ordessos craves for comparison with the Arjish, and as the Aluta can hardly be anything but the Μάρις which Herodotus mentions presently, the Tiarantos would have to be the Vede, and the Naparis or Araros would correspond to the Sereth. It seems more likely that the first order is right, and the explanation (διὰ μέσου τούτων ἰόντες) wrong. Taking the rivers in the first order we get: (1) Porata = Pruth, (2) Tiarantos = Sereth, (3) Araros = Buzeo, (4) Naparis = Jalomnitza, (5) Ordessos = Arjish. These identifications of Tiarantos, Naparis, and Ordessos are adopted on the map of Thrace and Scythia which Mr. Macan prefixes to his Appendix volume. If they are admitted, the equation of the Araros to the Buzeo logically follows.

Then Herodotus proceeds: οὗτοι μὲν αὐτιγενεές ποταμοὶ Σκυθικοὶ συμπληθύνουσι αὐτὸν (Ister), ἐκ δὲ Ἀγαθύρσων Μάρις ποταμὸς ῥέων συμμίσγεται τῷ Ἴστρον. The Maris is not the Maros, which flows not into the Ister, but into the Theiss; a glance at the map shews that it is the Aluta (Olt). The Agathyrsi inhabited Siebenbürgen, and this river flows far through Siebenbürgen before it falls

¹ The name Lykos seems also out of place in the Maeotic region. This river, like the Hypakyris, Gerros, and Pantikaptes, remains unexplained. To interpret the Oaros as the Volga is to enter a new region and new difficulties. I cannot see the slightest plausibility in going to Hunnic (*var*, fluentum) and Lesghian (*wor*, river) for the etymology of the name. With our present lights, Iordanes cannot safely be used for the illustration of Herodotus.

² C. 48.

³ The earliest mention I remember of the name in its modern form is in the *De Adm. Imp.* of Constantine Porphy., c. 38, p. 171, ed. Bonn, ὁ καλούμενος Σέρετος. In the same passage the Pruth is Βροῦτος.

down into Walachia and reaches the Danube.¹

§ 10. It has been suggested by Thirlwall that in making an excursion beyond the Danube Darius only wanted to make a hostile demonstration, for the purpose of overawing the trans-Danubian Scythians and displaying to their amazement the power of the Great King. This theory is inadequate, for it does not explain the line of forts.

Another theory of the Scythian expedition is that it was an enterprise not of conquest, but of discovery. This view was maintained by Curtius. Now west of the Pruth there is only one exploring expedition that Darius could conceivably have undertaken, namely an Anaplús of the Ister; just as east of the Pruth the only enterprise of such a kind that could have occurred to him as practicable and worth the trouble was a Periplús of the Euxine. The Ister was one of the great rivers of the world, the Nile of the north, and one could imagine that the Persian monarch might have desired to trace its course or have had some thoughts of possibly discovering its source. Such an enterprise seems indeed one which Darius was the least likely of men to embark upon, but in any case this theory is inconsistent with our data. For there was no Anaplús. The fleet was used to transport the host across the river, and then awaited its return. The fleet did not accompany the army, and therefore the army did not follow the Danube. The fact that the fleet remained in one place while the army was gone is fundamental. Moreover the theory of exploration would not explain the line of forts.

A third possible motive for the expedition of Darius would be that of conquest. It might be held that Darius desired to make the Transylvanian mountains the northern frontier of his European dominion. The people of Walachia were homogeneous with the people of Thrace; in race and in language they probably differed as little from the folk between the Danube and the Haemus, as the Greeks in one Thessalian valley differed from their neighbours in another. It could then be maintained that the line of forts was a complement of the mountain rampart, and connected with the frontier in Moldavia. But this theory also breaks down on the data. Apart from the objection that Darius

would almost certainly have looked upon the Danube as the true northern frontier of his new provinces, it is sufficient to point out that the conquest of Walachia would certainly not have been attempted without the cooperation of the fleet; in other words, there would have been an Anaplús, and the river would have been explored as far as the Iron Gate. But there was no Anaplús.

§ 11. What then can the object of Darius have been? What can he have sought beyond the Danube? Not to conquer, not to explore, not to intimidate. But intimidation, discovery, and conquest seem to exhaust the possibilities. Besides ambition, military policy, and curiosity, what other motive can impel a ruler to undertake a dangerous excursion into the unknown? There is another motive which is not the weakest in the world. Darius wanted gold.

This is the only hypothesis which will explain the data. Darius aimed at gaining control of the goldmines of the land of the Agathýrsi—the goldmines of Siebenbürgen. Herodotus furnishes an important notice of the Agathýrsi. He states that, though in general their customs were similar to those of the Thracians, they had peculiarities of their own, and they were distinguished by their habit of wearing gold ornaments and their luxury. *Ἀγάθυρσοι δὲ ἀβρότατοι ἀνδρῶν εἰσι καὶ χρυσοφόροι τὰ μάλιστα.*² The Agathýrsi were already tapping the veins of gold, which in later ages brought wealth to the fisc of Roman Emperors. The plan of Darius is clear enough. Crossing the Danube near Galatz, he marches up the course of the river Buzeo, with the purpose of entering Siebenbürgen by the Bodza Pass. He will leave a garrison in the country to work the mines, and its communications with the Danube are to be maintained by a line of forts, whose construction was begun immediately, along the river Buzeo. A Persian mining settlement among the hills of the Agathýrsi was a bold idea; but, if the expedition had been skilfully carried out at first—as Alexander the Great would have carried it out,—the design was by no means impracticable. In strong stone forts, a foreign garrison might have maintained itself for years; and improved methods of mining, with more refined fashions of luxury, might have reconciled the luxurious Agathýrsi to the presence of the oriental in their midst. The later importance of the Transylvanian goldmines shows that the venture was worth making. Dacia, after the Roman

¹ Xénopol maintains this view, I believe rightly (*Hist. des Roumains de la Davie Trajane*, i. p. 11); but in doing so, he makes a curious mistake. He says that *Strabo* (7, 3, 13) states that *Trajan* sent boats with provisions up the Maris.

² IV. c. 104.

conquest, became a sort of Eldorado; and the goldworks were doubtless one of the chief motives which made the Emperors loth to abandon it.¹

§ 12. But the Persian enterprise was mismanaged. What happened we know not, except that the communications with the Danube were cut² and an opportunity was offered to the Greeks of leaving Darius in the lurch. Darius succeeded in reaching the Danube, whether with great or with small losses; but he had failed in the object of his raid. To seek to extract history from the fabulous story which has magnified a march to Transylvania into a march beyond the Don, seems, as I have already said, fruitless. But there is one detail which clearly corresponds to fact, whether it is an accident or a case of a real historical deposit. When the 'Scythians' succeeded in cutting the communications of Darius, it is quite certain that they would have been crafty enough, and sufficiently alive to the situation, to apprise the Greeks of the fact and urge them to desert the Persian. The incident therefore of Skopasis and the Scythians seeking to persuade the Ionians to leave Darius to his fate³ is essentially historical.

According to this reconstruction, the forts were on the banks of the Buzeo, and therefore the Oaros, which Herodotus locates

¹ Cp. Jung, *Die Römer und Romanen*, p. 44.

² Macan, *op. cit.* p. 48, 'It seems improbable that Darius voluntarily cut his communications with the Danube':—rather, impossible, in the circumstances—'it seems probable that they were cut, and therefore cut by the Scythians.'

³ C. 136 *sqq.* The name of the chieftain Skopasis should be claimed as Daco-Thracian. Σκόπας is Thracian (cf. *C.I.A.* 3, 2496). The Aga-thyrsi were a Dacian people, as the name shows, and Idan-thyrus too is clearly Dacian (presumably Aga-thyrsian) not Iranian. Nor is even the third leader, Taxakis, necessarily of Iranian character (for the termination cp. Thracian 'Πωδάκης').

beside the sea of Azov, is the Buzeo. But an analysis of the description of the tributaries of the lower Danube made it possible that the Buzeo was there designated by the Araros. Hence it would turn out that the Oaros and Araros are identical. The supposition of such an identity, taken by itself, seems to have little either against it or for it. The double forms Hyrgis and Syrgis, Porata and Pyretos, are hardly comparisons to the point. Nor can I reject the *possibility* that the Araros may after all be the Sereth; from which it would probably follow that Naparis = Jalomniza, Ordessos = Arjish, Tiarantos = Vede. In that case the smaller stream of the Buzeo would be left out of this enumeration. At all events, the Oaros was, if not the Araros itself, the next-door stream to it.

§ 13. Curtius, Niebuhr before him, and others, have referred to reports of gold in Scythia as among the commercial motives which may have instigated the expedition of Darius. The object of this paper is to show that gold was the sole motive; and not vague reports of gold, but knowledge of gold in a definite region. And the Scythian expedition turns out to be a premature attempt by a Persian king to do what it was reserved for a Roman emperor to accomplish six hundred years later. It was an essay at the conquest of Dacia.

J. B. BURY.

P.S.—I regret that I had not read the illuminating essay of Mr. J. L. Myres in the reconstruction of the maps used by Herodotus (*Geogr. Journ.* Dec. 1896), till this paper was in type. He has put the chartography of Herodotus in a new light; but his conclusions do not affect my thesis.

CATULUS OF PARMA.

I WISH to introduce to the notice of scholars the name of a Latin writer, hitherto unknown, whom I have found mentioned in the margin of two early MSS. of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*. One of these is No. 24 in the public library of Soissons. It is of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century; the name of a very early—possibly the original—possessor is erased from the inscription recording his ownership; it was

at a later date bequeathed by one Laurent Surreau, a canon of Rouen, to the cathedral library of his native city of Sens; and in the seventeenth century it was bought for the monastery of Prémontré, where it doubtless remained till the Revolution. The other MS. is No. 60 in the library of the Faculty of Medicine at Montpellier. The earlier part of this is of the same character and about the same date as the Soissons