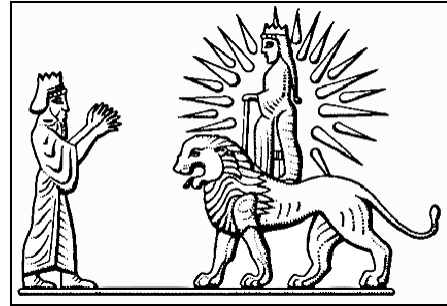


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## *“Archaic Greek Aristocrats as Carriers of Cultural Interaction”*

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## ARCHAIC GREEK ARISTOCRATS AS CARRIERS OF CULTURAL INTERACTION

Kurt A. Raaflaub

### Background and question

In an earlier paper, I discussed an old and much contested question: to what extent was the formation of the Greek polis and its institutions influenced by impulses from Phoenician city states? (Raaflaub 2004 with bibliog.). In my conclusion, I suggested that one of the problems in urgent need of investigation is how (through what channels of transmission or what kinds of persons) such impulses might have reached the Greeks. Since my earlier thoughts on this issue serve as a starting point for my present exploration, I briefly repeat them here,<sup>1</sup> although I will then abandon my specific focus on things Phoenician and investigate more generally the personnel responsible for the transmission of intellectual, ideological, and political influences from the entire ancient Near East and Egypt. My interest lies in the transfer of ideas, not in that of material goods and the skills to produce them.

That Phoenicians may have played a crucial role in such transmissions is an obvious possibility (Niemeyer 1984; Patzek 1996). Evidence for any full-scale Phoenician settlement in the Aegean is lacking so far, but it is likely that clusters of Phoenician settlers (*enoikismoι* of traders, craftsmen, and the like) existed in some Greek towns and villages (such as Kommos in southern Crete: Shaw 1989).<sup>2</sup> Such *enoikismoι* were established as well by Greeks especially in towns on the Levant (Al Mina is only the best known among these; see Niemeier 2001, 12-16). Thus it might have been small groups or individuals who transmitted stimuli that proved useful in the formation or further development of Greek poleis. We might think of Greek traders who returned from the Levant or who had communicated with Phoenician traders in the West, or of Phoenician traders or migrating artisans who visited Greece or even settled there for extended periods or permanently.<sup>3</sup> Such contacts were numerous and are well attested. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the Greeks of the late Dark Ages and early Archaic Period knew of the Phoenician city states and probably also of some of their institutions. The question only is whether the Greeks respected these types of informants sufficiently to be interested in learning from them not only about crafts but also about issues that concerned their communities and their interaction with each other (that is, about “political issues”).

As Barbara Patzek points out (1996, 3-4), Herodotus sees the Phoenicians, before they became the naval arm of the Persian empire, as peaceful transmitters of

- 1 I cite in this first section only some recent bibliography, referring the reader for fuller references to my 2003 paper. I now see that Patzek 1996, 31 also concludes that the Phoenician city did not serve as a model for the formation and institutionalization of the Greek polis.
- 2 See generally Coldstream 1982; Markoe 1985, 110-27; Gehrig 1990; Burkert 1992, chap. 1; Hoffman 1997.
- 3 Matthäus 1993, esp. 176-84 emphasizes that transmission of social and religious customs required as a necessary precondition close and extended familiarity between Greeks and Easterners. He thinks of Easterners living in Greece. I will explore the reverse possibility.

cultural goods and skills (most important among them, of course, the art of writing: 5.58). In Homer we find admiration for the skills of the “Sidonians” next to contempt for Phoenician traders who enjoyed a dubious reputation, perhaps like gypsies in modern Europe, as cheaters and kidnappers (Latacz 1990; Patzek 1996, 9-19). Phoenician artisans who settled in Greek villages may have been respected more highly, comparable perhaps to the *dēmiourgoi* whom we meet already in Homer’s epics. However, in a world of farmers, in which those who wanted to be accepted and belong needed to own land, even Greek traders probably were not esteemed highly (Donlan 1997, 651-54; Tandy 1997, 62-75). The *dēmiourgoi* were in demand because of their skills and products, but they remained outsiders (*metanastai*) and were unprotected (Gschnitzer 1981, 29, 33-34).

If individuals played a significant role in transmitting intellectual and political knowledge, I suggest, we need to look for them in different circles. We should think of aristocratic relations that typically connected Greek elite families with their peers in other poleis and even non-Greek states (such as, in the sixth century, Lydians and Persians in Asia Minor). Greek aristocrats collected and exchanged prestige goods and hired migrating artisans. As leaders of colonizing ventures and raiding expeditions and for numerous other reasons, they traveled through the entire Mediterranean and beyond (Humphreys 1978, chap. 7; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989). From the late eighth century, they met with their peers at events that took place at the emerging panhellenic sanctuaries (especially at Delphi and Olympia but also in the Heraion at Samos), and there they were joined by non-Greeks as well (Morgan 1990; Rosenberger 2003). At such occasions, and during their travels, they may have exchanged information and knowledge and discussed ideas that seemed useful, not least for tackling and resolving communal problems. I think of three obvious examples, among others, that are well attested in the ancient Near Eastern world long before they were applied in the emerging Greek poleis. One is the possibility of enacting laws (and inscribing them on durable material) as a means to resolve urgent problems that threatened the well-being of the community (Gehrke 2000). The second is the possibility of debt relief or even the abolition of debt bondage as a means to avoid civil strife and assuage the anger of masses of impoverished farmers (Raaflaub 2000, 54-57). The third is the possibility of concluding binding treaties and contracts, firmed up by specific formulae and religious sanctions (Karavites 1992; Rollinger 2004).

What we know about colonization suggests that especially at the oracle of Delphi a vast amount of knowledge about geography and political experiences was accumulated and that such knowledge was used to advise those who planned new colonizing ventures (Malkin 1987, chap. 1; Malkin 1989; Londey 1990). The elite thus had access to information from all over the world.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, ten years

4 Sacks 2003 warns against taking the notion of “elite” too narrowly and to distinguish rigidly and on the basis of untested assumptions between an active and purposeful elite and passive nonelites. My purpose here is to investigate what we can find out about the elite’s role as transmitters of ideas and thus to build a stronger foundation for further discussion. My understanding of “elite” is not very narrow anyway, and in the archaic period, which was charac-

ago Klaus Seybold and Jürgen von Ungern-Sternberg (1993) suggested that we should perhaps think of a cultural *koinē* that developed in the early Iron Age in the Eastern Mediterranean and in which Phoenicians, Greeks, and others participated (cf. R. Rollinger's introduction to this volume).

So far my premise. In this chapter, I hope to substantiate this thesis. Since, elsewhere in this volume David Tandy discusses the evidence on trade that is offered by the lyric poets, I will focus here on some of the information preserved by Herodotus and explore how far back it can be extended. But first a few general observations on the Greeks' own views on some of the issues we are concerned with here.

### Greek views on cultural transmission

In his digression on the Scythians in book four, Herodotus characterizes the Scythians as adamantly opposed "to adopting customs imported from anyone else, especially Greeks." He illustrates this with the tales of two Scythians of royal lineage (Anacharsis and Scyles) who were killed by their own relatives because they engaged in Greek religious rituals (Hartog 1988, 61-84), and concludes, "The Scythians are so conservative, then, that this is how they treat people who adopt foreign ways" (4.76-80; tr. here and elsewhere Waterfield 1998). The offenses of these two persons may have been considered especially grave precisely because they were members of the royal family and because religion was involved. Still, as many have observed, Herodotus has a strong tendency to use especially the Scythians as a mirror for the Greeks (Hartog 1988). Hence, we understand, in this respect too the Greeks are exactly the opposite of the Scythians: they like to adopt foreign customs.

At the beginning of this particular passage, Herodotus alerts us that in this respect the Scythians are not alone (*kai houtoi*: they too). This cross-reference leads us back to book two. At the beginning of his description of Egyptian customs, Herodotus states: "In keeping with the idiosyncratic climate which prevails there and the fact that their river behaves differently from any other river, almost all Egyptian customs and practices are the opposite of those of everywhere else" — which the historian illustrates with numerous examples (2.35-36). Not only that, but their customs are also entirely their own. With very few exceptions, "they perpetuate their traditional customs rather than acquiring new ones" (2.79), and: "The Egyptians avoid using Greek customs or, by and large, those of any other people either" (2.91). In this case, Herodotus makes the contrast explicit. The Greeks have adopted a great deal from the Egyptians, things well-known and others, as the historian insists, that closer inspection reveals as undeniably imported from Egypt: Dionysiac rituals, the names of gods, general festive assemblies and religious processions (2.49-50, 58), and so on. In the latter case, Herodotus explains: "My evidence for this suggestion is that these activities have obviously been going on

terized by much social mobility, it was (and was perceived as) rather fluid and contested (Donlan 1980, chaps. 2-3; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989, chap. 3).

in Egypt for a very long time, whereas they have only recently started in Greece” (58).

Herodotus is only the first in a long tradition of Greek writers (Plato, Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch foremost among them) who tell stories about Greek borrowings from Egypt and travels of Greek sages and lawgivers especially to this country. Many of these stories are taken at face value by modern scholars. Yet, I believe, caution is due. Some of them are perhaps based on vague memories and genuine traditions but most are the result of rationalization and constructions intended to explain phenomena that seemed similar in both cultures. They follow well-established patterns, as Andrew Szegedy-Maszak (1978) has shown in a classic article. Usually, they do not represent historical fact (Raaflaub 2000, 60-61 with bibliography).

My purpose in emphasizing all this is not to deny that the Greeks learned from the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Phoenicians, and others. It would be absurd to do that, given the pervasiveness of cultural borrowings we observe in what has come to be called the “Orientalizing Period” and far beyond.<sup>5</sup> Rather, I wish to make clear that we are not obliged to accept specific Greek ideas about how, and by whom, such cultural transfers were realized. Who, then, were the carriers of cultural (especially intellectual and political) influences and exchange?

#### Greeks in contact with the Persian court or its representatives

I begin at the lower chronological end, which is too late for my primary question but illustrates some significant facts. Josef Hofstetter’s prosopography of Greeks in the Persian empire before Alexander lists six names under Cyrus, seven under Cambyses, and some forty under Darius I (1978, 192-93). These include a number of exiled Greek elite persons who found refuge at the Persian court (the Athenian Peisistratids and the Spartan king Demaratus are prominent examples), tyrants of Greek poleis under Persian rule (some of whom, like Histiaeus of Miletus, spent time at the court for various reasons), kings of other territories (like Macedonia or Cyprus) that were Greek but part of the Persian Empire, and ambassadors of Greek cities to the Great King (such as the Spartan envoy Lacrines who warned Cyrus, to no avail, not to attack the Ionian Greek poleis, Hdt. 1.152-53).<sup>6</sup> Most of these persons, whether major political players or incidental figures (such as Hermippus whom Histiaeus sent from the Persian court to Miletus with a message written on his head that triggered the Ionian revolt, Hdt. 6.4), are mentioned in connection with the story of Persia’s conquest or reconquest of the Aegean coast and islands from 546 to 490.

5 See recently Burkert 1992; Morris 1992; West 1997, and the bibliog. cited in Raaflaub 2000, 53 n.6. For critiques of the concept of simple dissemination, see Humphreys 1993; Patzek 1996.

6 Hofstetter’s title is thus slightly misleading: his prosopography includes all persons who are known to have had any contact with the Persians, even if they did not spend much time in Persia. See Walser 1984, chap. 5 for additional names and bibliog.

If we deduct these from the list (because they did not really spend much time in Persia), few persons remain: a prophetess (Herophile, who warned Cyrus not to execute Croesus, Hdt. 1.86-87) and a seer (Onomacritus, whose false prophecies supported the Peisistratids' request for reinstatement in Athens, 7.6), Pythagoras the philosopher (who supposedly, according to various traditions, spent some years in Babylon before he emigrated to Magna Graecia; Hofstetter, no. 281), two mercenary generals (one of whom, Eurybatus, defected from Croesus to Cyrus [1.76, 141, 149], the other, Phanes of Halicarnassus, from Amasis to Cambyses [3.4ff., 11]), Scylax (admiral of a naval expedition from India to Egypt, 4.44), Mandrocles of Samos (the builder of the bridge over the Bosphorus during Darius' Scythian expedition, 4.87-89), Democedes (Darius' doctor, 3.125, 129-37), and Gillus of Tarentum (an exile, who did Darius a great favor, 3.138). Pythagoras' stay in Babylon, not mentioned by Herodotus, is likely to be pure fiction. Of Herophile we know nothing else. Onomacritus, linked with the Peisistratids, presumably did not return to Greece. The others, without exception, are interesting cases, representing various categories of Greek elite persons who came into close contact with the Persians. I shall use them as leads for my discussion of the types of persons who had intimate knowledge of Near Eastern civilizations and might have served as carriers of cultural transmission or exchange.

Including other persons who were not connected with the Persian Empire but whom Herodotus mentions elsewhere, I distinguish the following categories: (a) colonizers, raiders, or adventurers, (b) "specialists," (c) mercenaries, (d) traders or travelers who engaged in trade.<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that Herodotus mentions these persons because they were especially memorable for some specific reason. They were the best in some way or other, they had done or achieved something that deserved to be qualified with a superlative (for example, making a particularly conspicuous or interesting dedication in a sanctuary), or they were linked to an otherwise noticeable person. This probably means that they merely represent the "tip of an iceberg": there were others like them, whose fates or accomplishments were not quite as memorable and who thus escaped remembrance and mention in Herodotus. Many of them lived in the sixth century, too late for our purposes. In some cases, other sources, Greek, Egyptian, and Near Eastern, help us trace their predecessors back to the seventh or even late eighth century.<sup>8</sup> Even when this is not the case, we are able to make a plausible argument that such fore-runners were active many decades earlier.

7 I will thus omit artisans and craftsmen who only in very exceptional cases rose to elite status; they are discussed thoroughly by Burkert and Hoffman (cited in n. 2).

8 On Greeks in the Near East and Egypt, see, for example, Austin 1970; Braun 1982a; Braun 1982b; Haider 1988, Haider 1996; Helck 1995; Niemeier 2001; Rollinger 2001 (most with excellent bibliog. of recent scholarship).

## Colonizers, adventurers, or raiders

The adventures of the Spartan Dorieus and some of his companions offer an illuminating example (Hdt. 5.41-48).<sup>9</sup> He was king Cleomenes' younger half-brother, the "outstanding man of his generation." Refusing to be ruled by his brother, he collected a band of settlers and led them on a colonizing expedition, without, however, consulting Delphi and observing any of the other rules an oikist was supposed to follow in preparation for such a venture. Not surprisingly, therefore, the colony he founded in Libya collapsed after two years because of native resistance. He returned to Greece and was advised to colonize Heraclea in Sicily, for which he received a positive oracle. Enlisting the same men, he took off for Sicily. After perhaps stopping on the way to support Croton in a war against Sybaris (Herodotus received conflicting reports on this issue), he reached Sicily in full strength but perished with most of his men in a battle against an army of Phoenicians and Segestans.

Euryleon, one of four Spartiates involved in this expedition, survived. He gathered the remnants of Dorieus' army, conquered Minoa (a colony of Selinus), helped the Selinuntians drive out their tyrant, but was killed when he tried himself to establish a tyranny (5.46).

Another person who went to Sicily with Dorieus was Philippus of Croton. He had been engaged to the daughter of Telys, the tyrant of Sybaris. The war between Croton and Sybaris not only spoiled his marriage plans but also caused him to be exiled by his fellow citizens. He sailed to Cyrene and then joined Dorieus' expedition, providing his own trireme and paying the expenses for his entire crew. "He was an Olympic victor and the most handsome man of his generation in Greece. His good looks have earned him a unique accolade from the people of Segesta: they offer propitiary sacrifices at his tomb, where they have erected a hero's shrine" (5.47).

Such colonizing ventures were frequent from the second quarter of the eighth century. They were preceded by exploratory and trading expeditions throughout the Mediterranean. Adventurers had roamed the seas all along. The colonizers retained contact with their mother cities and often returned if they were unsuccessful, only to try again later.<sup>10</sup> To be sure, Greeks were not able to found independent settlements in areas that were controlled by organized states and superior powers (such as Carthage or the Phoenicians). But controlled settlements of Greek mercenaries are attested in Egypt from the mid-seventh century, and of traders not much later. Greek *enoikismoi* existed with great probability from at least the seventh century in several Syrian and Phoenician ports (Haider 1996, 60-79; Niemeier 2001, 12-16 with bibl.), perhaps even encouraged by the Assyrians (Lanfranchi 2000, 9-12). Moreover, Greeks settled in Cilicia as well, after their violent intrusions had been repelled by Sargon in 715 and Sennacherib in 696 (Lanfranchi 2000, 13-31). Apparently the Assyrian kings did not tolerate full-scale foreign settlements (colonies) in the territory they controlled, but had no objections to, or

9 Malkin 1994, chap. 7; Dougherty 1993, 17-19; *DNP* 3 (1997) 778-9 with bibliog.

10 For a survey, see Graham 1982a, Graham 1982b. On the narrative patterns of colonization stories, see Dougherty 1993.

even encouraged, *enoikismoι*. Whether farther west, in Rough Cilicia, Greek colonies existed already at that time remains uncertain (Haider 1996, 92-95 is perhaps too optimistic: Lanfranchi 2000, 29-30). Hence Greek settlers were not even excluded from those areas where major cultural influences originated. In addition, Greeks must have been in touch frequently elsewhere with representatives of these cultures, especially with the Phoenicians who were equally active in the western Mediterranean around the same time (Niemeyer 1982; Aubet 1993), and not all encounters were as hostile as that which brought about Dorieus' demise.

The *Odyssey*, composed in the late eighth or early seventh century, refers to experiences of the age of colonization, especially in the foundation story of the Phaeacian town of Scheria (6.3-10) and the description of an ideal spot for a colony on "goat island" off the coast of "Cyclops country" (9.116-41). The same epic mentions Greek raiding expeditions to distant shores. Odysseus, sailing by the Thracian coast on his way home from Troy, spots a town and cannot resist the temptation to raid it, with harmful consequences for his undisciplined companions (9.39-61). In his fictitious life story, Odysseus "the Cretan" boasts of having undertaken nine successful raids against foreign men. "I made a lot in those wars. I would cull / the loot I liked best and get even more / when the rest was divided later by lot. / So my house grew rich, and I became / one of the most feared and respected men in Crete" (14.230-34, tr. S. Lombardo).

The earliest known Assyrian reference to Greeks tells precisely of such a raid undertaken by "Ionians" against the southern Phoenician coast in the reign of Tiglath-pileser around 730 BCE (Braun 1982a, 15; Rollinger 2001, 237-39). Assyrian sources mention several royal interventions on the Mediterranean coast and in Cilicia from the late eighth century, not least to suppress Greek intrusions (Haider 1996, 79-80; Lanfranchi 2000, 13-31). In such contexts, they allude several times to "Ionians" (Braun 1982a, 16; Rollinger 2001, 239-41). "Ionians," in various Assyrian forms, was the name used for all Greeks, whether from Cyprus or the Aegean (Rollinger 2001, 235-36; Lanfranchi 2000, 13 n. 20). It is likely that as the result of such interventions Greeks were deported to the interior of Assyria (see below). Some of them may have returned later. We tend to think of neither raiders nor deportees as carriers of cultural transmission, but they may have included elite leaders, and if these kept their eyes and ears open, they may well have picked up some pieces of information that could prove helpful at home.

It is worth listening once more to Odysseus "the Cretan." After the nine raids mentioned earlier, he was compelled by his community to become one of the leaders of the Cretan contingent in the Trojan War. He returned home safely but could not stand the peaceful life with wife and children. Soon he set out again, this time on an expedition all the way to Egypt. Ignoring all precautions, his companions went about plundering and abducting women and children, only to be surprised, decimated, and enslaved by an Egyptian counterattack. He himself survived by supplicating the Egyptian leader, who took pity on him and accepted him into his home. "Seven years I stayed there, amassing wealth, / for all the Egyptians gave me gifts. / When the eighth year rolled around, there came / a man from Phoe-



nicia, / and I stayed with him there for one full year, / after which he took me in a seafaring ship / bound for Libya.” His treacherous Phoenician host intended to sell him into slavery, but a storm destroyed the ship, while he, clinging to the mast, was washed ashore in Thesprotia (14.235-315, quote: 285-95; cf. 17. 425-44 with a different ending) and eventually reached Ithaca — destitute and as a beggar, to be sure, but obviously intending to find a way home, where presumably, like the real Odysseus, he would resume his former life as a respected member of his community. This story, invented on the spot to disguise Odysseus’ true identity, had to sound realistic enough to be credible. The pattern it describes thus must have been familiar to a Greek of Homer’s time.

### “Specialists”

In this category I include the two architects and the physician who, according to Herodotus, rendered important services to Persian kings and were awarded generously by them. Mandrocles of Samos built the bridge over the Thracian Bosphorus for Darius’ Scythian campaign. He used part of the reward he received to commission “a painting of the whole bridging of the Bosphorus, with the king sitting on a dais and his army crossing the bridge.” This painting was dedicated in the Heraion of Samos, with an epigram quoted by the historian (4.87-89). One of Mandrocles’ successors, not named by Herodotus (7.34-36), was Harpalos of Tenedos who, succeeding where Egyptian and Phoenician engineers had failed, built the bridge over the Hellespont that Xerxes used in his great expedition against Greece (Hofstetter 1978, no. 130; on the bridge, see Hammond and Roseman 1996).

While these men may not have been more than superficially familiar with Persia, Democedes, son of Calliphon, of Croton certainly was. He was the best physician of his day. He left Croton because of a disagreement with his father and emigrated to Aegina, where he was hired as state physician for one talent a year. Soon the Athenians hired him away for 100 minas, only to be topped by Polycrates of Samos who offered two talents. Democedes accompanied Polycrates on his fatal visit to the Persian satrap Oroites and was sent to Susa with all of Oroites’ belongings after the latter’s violent death. Pulled out of oblivion, when Darius’ doctors failed to heal his sprained ankle, he succeeded and then helped the queen Atossa overcome a serious health problem as well. He was richly rewarded and rose from a slave’s misery to become an influential personality at the Persian court. Desiring to return home, he convinced the king to send him to Greece with a Persian reconnaissance mission and jumped ship in Croton (3.125, 129-37).<sup>11</sup> The Persians continued their trip without him and were shipwrecked and enslaved by the Iapygians. An exile from Tarentum, Gillus, obviously a wealthy man, ransomed them and brought them back to Susa. In gratitude, Darius mobilized the Cnidians to return him to Tarentum, but his fellow-citizens rejected him; his further fate is unknown (3.138). By contrast, Democedes married the daughter of the world-

11 Griffiths 1987; Austin 1990, 299; Asheri 1990, 341-42 with bibliog.

famous wrestler Milo, who boasted 32 victories at panhellenic games (*DNP* 8 [2000] 191-92 with bibliog.). Although Herodotus does not say so, Democedes' marriage suggests that he assumed high status and an important position in his home town. He certainly is the type of person we are looking for: he spent an extended period of time at the Persian court, was thoroughly familiar with Persian customs and government, returned home to tell about it, and was in a position to be taken seriously when he did so.

So far Herodotus. Do we find any clues that take us farther back? From the time of Cyrus' conquest of the Greek poleis on the west coast of Anatolia many Greek architects, stone masons, building engineers and other specialists were attracted to or pressed into Persian service. Their participation, for example, in the construction of the palaces of Cyrus and Darius can be inferred from specific technical indications preserved among the remains and is confirmed by explicit references in inscriptions on walls and columns (Walser 1984, 23). Early sixth-century documents attest to the presence of Ionian specialists working in Nebukhadnezzar's capital Babylon (Haider 1996, 94).

Sennacherib deported those who did not submit to his victorious campaign in 696 to Nineveh, where they were used as construction workers (Haider 1996, 90-91). These included Greeks, for in 694 the king undertook a ship building program in Assyria, in which Phoenicians and "Ionians" were involved: "Khatti people, plunder of my bow, I settled in Nineveh. Mighty ships after their workmanship of their land, they built dexterously. Tyrian, Sidonian and Ionian sailors, captives of my hand, I ordered to descend the Tigris with them" (Braun 1982a, 19 with tr.; Rollinger 2001, 242-43). According to Robert Rollinger, this "is to date the only text telling what happened to some Greeks after they had been beaten and taken prisoners by the Assyrians," and showing that "Greeks also came into contact with the interior of the Assyrian empire" (243; see *ibid.* for a tiny fragment mentioning an "Ionian" who obviously was in the capital of Assyria, and 252 about one Antikritos who in the first half of the seventh century moved about the eastern part of the Assyrian empire: below n. 15). Among tributary kings who provided timber and other building materials for Esarhaddon's palace in Nineveh, sources name the kings of "Ionians" on Cyprus (Braun 1982a, 19-20). Building materials were perhaps accompanied by builders (we think of the Phoenicians who built Salomon's temple and palace in Jerusalem, *1 Kings* 5:15-32, 7:13-50). At any rate, knowledge about Assyrian (and even more so Phoenician) customs and institutions must have been especially broad among Cypriote Greeks, and Cyprus probably played a role comparable to that of Phoenicia in the transmission of Near Eastern information to the Aegean.

For our purposes, other types of specialists, familiar with various aspects of Near Eastern religious and intellectual achievements, might seem even more important. Migrating healers, professional ancestors of Democedes, as well as priests and seers or diviners are amply attested both in the ancient Near East and Greece. The *Odyssey* (17.383-85) counts them, like accomplished workmen and inspired singers, among the *dēmioergoi* sought after because of their skills. Walter Burkert and others have suggested that oriental specialists of these types were

present in Greece (especially in Crete) from the eighth century. So far, only similarities in practices support this assumption; explicit testimony is lacking (Burkert 1983; 1992, chap. 2; Rollinger 1996, 203-10). Many practices, of course, can migrate without the specialists, for example, “in the luggage” of craftsmen or traders. Nor do we know, although it is not a priori unlikely, that Greek seers or healers traveled to the Near East and learned such practices there. At any rate, such persons, who often enjoyed high social prestige, would seem to be perfect candidates as transmitters of ideas even outside their field of specialization, including political knowledge. Epimenides, who supposedly purified Athens in the late seventh or early sixth century from the pollution caused by the murder of Cylon’s followers, is a good example. Though shrouded in the mist of miracle legends, he was a Cretan and apparently connected with Delphi and perhaps also Solon (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 1; cf. Rhodes 1981, 83; *DNP* 3 [1997] 1144).

Finally, I should at least mention yet another category of specialists with potential importance for our topic: *poinikastai* (“secretaries, scribes,” that is, men in charge of Phoenician letters, although this is not the only explanation of the term) who also serve as *mnamones* (“rememberers,” “living archives” [Koerner 1993, 539], that is, men in charge of the polis’ cultural and institutional memory). They are attested in Crete from around the mid-sixth century. In my view, the *histōr* (“knower”) in the famous arbitration scene on the shield of Achilles has a similar function (*Il.* 18.501; see Edwards 1991, 213ff., esp. 216). Knowing the customary law and oral traditions of his community, such a specialist is capable of sorting out problems, assessing a dispute, resolve it himself, or pass it along to a more elaborate arbitration panel (Connor 1993, 5-7 with bibliog.). The best-known among the *poinikastai* is Spensithios, whose elaborate contract with the polis Dattalla is preserved (van Effenterre and Ruzé 1994, no. 22). Whether or not he was a native of this town is debated but he certainly was Greek. As pointed out earlier, the concept of engraving laws on durable materials, perhaps even of writing them down at all, was Near Eastern; so, of course, was that of writing. The function of these specialists, to serve both as rememberers and recorders, reflects a period of transition in which orality and literacy complemented each other (Gehrke 1997, 46). Yet nothing suggests that they depended on—or could even have profited from—contacts with their Near Eastern colleagues. Once Greek scripts were adapted from their Phoenician model, they became fully independent; alphabetic scripts, however limited their use may have been in the first centuries, did not require long training in scribal schools; and the preservation of memory was dictated by the needs and traditions of a given community. It would be surprising, therefore, if the *poinikastai* were among the transmitters of Near Eastern ideas.

### Mercenaries

Greek military leaders were active in the early Achaemenid Empire. Eurybatus of Ephesus was despatched by Croesus to Greece to hire Peloponnesian mercenaries. He defected to Cyrus and informed him of Croesus’ preparations. His name became

proverbial for a traitor (Hdt. 1.76, 141, 149; Diod. 9.32). Phanes of Halicarnassus served as a mercenary general under Amasis in Egypt. He became disgruntled, defected to Cambyses, and offered him valuable advice for his Egyptian campaign. He was remembered especially because the Greeks and Carians in the Egyptian army took revenge by murdering Phanes' children in a particularly gruesome way in sight of both armies (Hdt. 3.4, 7, 11). In the service of Darius, Scylax of Caryanda led a naval expedition from India to the Red Sea (Hdt. 4.44), circumnavigating the Arabian peninsula and writing a report (*Periplus*) which was used by Hecataeus and later authors.

The presence of Greek mercenaries in Egypt is well attested from the time of Psammetichus I (664-10). Under Apries they supposedly numbered 30,000 (Hdt. 2.163). The "Bronzemen" (2.152) made a deep impression, and it is likely that Carians and Greeks served as mercenaries even earlier (Haider 1988, 183).<sup>12</sup> A fragment of Archilochus' poetry (no. 216 in West 1971) indicates that around the mid-seventh century "mercenary" was almost synonymous with "Carian." The great numbers of mercenaries in Egypt, their permanent settlement, and their gradual adaptation to Egyptian society (Haider 1996, 95-113; 2004) suggest that the Egyptian case represents a particular type of mercenariate, different from the short-term employment usually associated with this phenomenon, and more comparable to the contemporaneous colonization movement.<sup>13</sup>

Still, some of these "military emigrants" returned to Greece later. A spectacular case is Pedon, son of Amphinnes, who settled in or near Priene after highly successful service in Egypt under Psammetichus I. He set up an Egyptian statue with a Greek inscription recording the rewards he had received for his outstanding achievements.<sup>14</sup> Another example is Euthykartides from Naxos, who in the late seventh century dedicated in Delphi a kouros standing on the backs of men — an Egyptian royal motif which this Greek, probably returning from foreign service, used to emphasize his importance (Haider 1996, 113). Herodotus, at any rate, assumes firm contacts between Egyptian and Aegean Greeks: "They were the first foreigners to live in Egypt, and it is thanks to their residence there that we Greeks have had some connection with the country, and that is how we have reliable information about Egyptian history from the reign of Psammetichus onwards" (2.154).

Nor did Greek mercenaries apparently avoid the Near East (Bettalli 1995, 43-52). In the late seventh century, several forts on the Phoenician and Palestinian coast as well as farther inland (Austin 1970, 16; Haider 1996, 69-76) seem to have been staffed with Greeks. In 664 Carian (and probably Greek) mercenaries served in the Assyrian army that defeated a usurper and reinstalled Psammetichus I as vassal on the Egyptian throne (Bettalli 1995, 54-59; Haider 1996, 92-93). Gyges of Lydia (ca. 680-644 BCE) also sent a contingent of mercenaries to Egypt to support Psammetichus, and it seems certain that Gyges himself employed large num-

12 On early Greek and Carian mercenaries, see now Kammerzell 1993; Bettalli 1995; Niemeier 2001, 16-24. See also the excellent observations by Morgan 2001.

13 For detailed discussion, see Haider 1988, chap. III; Austin 1970, chap. 2.

14 Ampolo and Bresciani 1988; Masson and Yoyotte 1988; Haider 1996, 100-2.

bers of Carian and Ionian mercenaries (Haider 1988, 164-74; Kammerzell 1993, 111-14; Bettalli 1995, 75-76). In 681 Asarrhadon conquered the Assyrian throne with the help of a mercenary army he had gathered in Cilicia; this army included Greeks (Haider 1988, 183; 1996, 91).<sup>15</sup> In the late eighth century, Sargon II reports an intervention in Ashdod on the Levant, where the people had deposed their king, Azuri, and made one Yamani (the “Ionian”?) their ruler. Sargon besieged Ashdod, Yamani fled to Egypt and was later extradited to Sargon. Was he a Greek mercenary officer in Azuri’s bodyguard? (Braun 1982a, 16; Haider 1996, 81-82; see now the detailed discussion by Rollinger 2001, 245-51). The same name occurs in various tablets in Nineveh: one Yamani sold a slave woman to an officer in 661, was captain in 659 and witnessed a similar sale and served as witness in 654. Are we dealing here with one or several persons and with Greeks? (Braun 1982a, 21; Rollinger 2001, 244-45). Attractive though this possibility seems, strong doubts remain, and “the use of the name ‘Yamani’ proves no more than that Greeks were at that time familiar in the Levant” (Niemeier 2001, 17).

According to Strabo the geographer (13.2.3), “Mytilene produced famous men: in olden times Pittacus... and the poet Alcaeus and his brother Antimenidas, who according to Alcaeus performed a great feat while fighting as ally of the Babylonians, and rescued them from trouble by killing a warrior who, he says, was only one palm’s breadth short of five royal cubits.” Alcaeus probably refers to Antimenidas in an extant fragment: “You have come from the ends of the earth with the hilt of your sword ivory bound with gold” (fr. 350 in Campbell 1982 with both tr.). An ancient commentary (*scholion*) on this fragment specifies that Antimenidas achieved his spectacular deed during Nebuchadnezzar’s campaign against Ascalon in 604 (Quinn 1961; Braun 1982a, 22). Alcaeus himself may have entered foreign service while in exile (Kaplan 2002, 234-35).

Reliable textual and documentary information thus helps us establish a *terminus ante quem* in 664 or perhaps even 681 for the presence of Carian and Greek/Ionian mercenaries in the Near East. Their numbers increased dramatically when Psammetichus and his successors made large-scale use of this resource. A magnificent Cypro-Phoenician silver bowl from Amathus, dated to 710-675 BCE (Markoe 1985, 151-56), shows East Greek hoplites, together with Assyrian archers, horsemen, and chariots, among the attackers and defenders of a citadel (Cy4 in Markoe 1985, 51-52, 172-74). As Niemeier concludes (2001, 21), whether “the scene represented is a mythological... or a real one..., there is no doubt that the Amathus bowl reflects warlike events in the Near East around 700 B.C., in which Greek hoplites were involved.” All this brings us close to the time of the composition of the Homeric epics, which, for good reasons, do not mention mercenaries (but see Bettalli 1995, 39-40; Morgan 2001, 29, 36; Rollinger 2001, 256).

Several scholars have proposed recently that these Greek and Carian mercenaries in the Near East, apparently forming only small groups among much larger

15 What Antikritos (Addikritusu), a (Cypriote?) Greek mentioned in a letter of the time of Asarrhadon, did in the eastern part of the Assyrian empire is unknown: see Rollinger and Korenjak 2001, esp. 333.

numbers of native soldiers, must have been members of the elite.<sup>16</sup> They were driven by misfortune, civil strife, and exile, or a spirit of adventure. As Philip Kaplan puts it (2002, 241), “To be a soldier of fortune, one must not only be able to afford arms, one must also be trained to use them. In addition, one must have the education to function in a foreign society and to make contact, directly or through officers, with the sort of people who are likely to hire mercenaries. The evidence... certainly suggests that it was a literate elite from eastern Greece that made contact, perhaps through the mediation of their Carian neighbors, with the powers of the Eastern Mediterranean.” These suggestions may well be correct but none of them supports the view, contradicted by all historical analogies we know, that early mercenary service in the Near East was exclusively or mostly an elite phenomenon.<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, recent work on Homeric warfare has dispelled the long-held view that only elite warriors wore the panoply and excelled as well-trained, almost professional fighters, while the masses of commoners were poorly equipped and ineffective in battle. Closer inspection reveals that the poet assumes the masses as well to be armed with the panoply; they fight in formations and tactics that clearly foreshadow the hoplite phalanx, and they play a crucial role in deciding the battle.<sup>18</sup> The Homeric “proto-hoplites” were thus commoners who fought side-by-side with their elite leaders, and I see no good reason to think that the hoplite mercenaries showing up in the Near East were different.<sup>19</sup> In fact, we should consider the possibility that elite leaders (perhaps like Antimenidas a century later), used to undertaking raiding expeditions with their own warrior bands (Jackson 1993; Raaflaub 1997, 51-52), discovered that there were other profitable ways to employ such bands and offered their services to interested buyers; even to their followers, the expected rewards would have seemed attractive (Morgan 2001, 34-35). I do not believe, therefore, that we should consider the mercenary, as Bettalli (1995, 23) suggests, only as an isolated individual, completely cut loose from all social ties connecting him to his native community. In fact, Herodotus tells us that the first Ionian and Carian mercenaries in Egypt had left home on a raiding expedition (2.152). Similarly, a pattern of raiding and trading expeditions may have preceded the appearance of Carian and Greek mercenaries in Cilicia and the Levant (Bettalli 1995, 52; Luraghi 2003). As Catherine Morgan observes, “military mobility forms part of a complex pattern of commercial and political interaction and cannot be understood in isolation” (2001, 37).

Clearly, then, Eurybatus and Phanes had their predecessors, probably from the late eighth or at least the early seventh century. Some of these elite mercenary generals must have returned to Greece (as Antimenidas and Pedon did) and held important positions in their communities. The analogy to successful raiders (as de-

16 Bettalli 1995, 24-27, 52, 108-9; Niemeier 2001, 23-24; Kaplan 2002, 241.

17 Rollinger 2001, 256; Luraghi 2003 also oppose this view.

18 See recently van Wees 1994, 1997, 2000; Raaflaub 1997, forthcoming.

19 Bettalli 1995, 101-5; van Wees 2000 emphasize correctly that these early hoplites must have been able to fight individually as well as in close formation. On leaders and followers, see Donlan 1994.

scribed in the story of Odysseus “the Cretan,” mentioned above) and traders (below) seems obvious. Hoplites were respected members of their communities. What a hoplite mercenary or general coming back from foreign service had to tell would have been taken seriously — much more seriously, at any rate, than the tales of a common trader. The self-confidence and independence of such types is well attested in the fragments of Archilochus and Hybrias, who both taunt their spear as the source of their wealth and power.<sup>20</sup>

### Traders and Travelers

I am interested here only in elite traders, and I do not distinguish between these and elite travelers who on the side engaged in trade and other forms of exchange.<sup>21</sup> The prime example here is Sostratos, son of Laodamas, of Aegina, whom Herodotus considers the unsurpassed leader in profits from trade (4.152.3). The dedication on an anchor found in Gravisca, the harbor of Tarquinia, dating to the late sixth or early fifth century, reads: “I belong to Aeginetan Apollo; Sostratos, son of . . ., had me made.” About one hundred Attic vases found in Etruria and dated to ca. 535-505 bear the trademark *SO*, suggesting that Sostratos specialized in trade with Etruria (Möller 2000, 56-57 with bibliog.).

Herodotus mentions Sostratos incidentally, while telling a story connected with the foundation of Cyrene (ca. 630). One Kolaïos of Samos, captain of a ship on the way to Egypt, was blown off course twice by storms, the second time all the way through the pillars of Heracles to Tartessos. “This trading center was virgin territory at the time, and consequently Kolaïos came home with the biggest profit any Greek trader we have reliable information about has ever made from his cargo” (except for Sostratos)! He spent ten percent of his profit, six talents, on a bronze vessel in the style of an Argive bowl with protruding griffin heads, supported by three kneeling bronze figures, each seven cubits high. This bowl was dedicated, of course, in the Heraion of Samos (4.152; on Kolaïos, see Möller, 54-55). Samian trade with Egypt from the seventh century is documented abundantly by bronzes and ivories in this very sanctuary (Shipley 1987, 54-65; Haider 1988, 208-9).

Herodotus also tells us about Charaxos of Mytilene, the brother of Sappho (2.134-35). He became famous because he spent a great deal of money to buy the freedom of the renowned courtesan Rhodopis, who had been brought to Egypt by another Samian, Xanthos. Rhodopis became wealthy enough to make her own dedication to Apollo in Delphi (a bundle of ox-sized iron spits, which “even today are still lying in a pile behind the altar which the Chians dedicated and in front of the actual temple”). Sappho’s poetry attests to the embarrassment Charaxos

20 Archil. fr. 2 in West 1971; Hybrias: no. 909 in Page 1962; on the latter, see Page 1965; Gehrke 1997, 29 (with a different interpretation).

21 The nature of trade in the Archaic Period is much debated; see recently Tandy 1997; Foxhall 1998; Möller 2000, esp. ch. IV. See also Tandy, this volume. On trade and cultural influences, see Patzek 1996 (with further bibliog.).

caused his family, although she speaks of Doricha; we do not know whether this was another woman or a different name for Rhodopis (frs. 5 and 15 in Campbell 1982). Strabo in turn tells us the reason why Charaxos traveled to Egypt in the first place: he brought wine to Naucratis (17.1.33; cf. Möller 2000, 55). Strabo does not say, and it is not important here, whether he did this once or several times. What matters is that this is a Greek elite person who went to Egypt, apparently stayed there for a while, and returned home.

Greek sources thus allow us to trace this type of traveler back to the time of Sappho, that is, no later than the early sixth century. The travels of Solon the Athenian, if authentic, would fit the same pattern and time (Möller, 55-56). Nothing prevents us from assuming that Charaxos had many predecessors, some of them probably even in the century before colonization began. That Greek traders lived in many sites of Cilicia and the Levant from at least the early seventh century is suggested by the distribution of Greek pottery (Haider 1996; Lanfranchi 2000; Niemeier 2001). They had their own settlement in Naucratis from the early sixth century (Möller 2000) and formed *enoikismoι* elsewhere as well (Haider 1996, 103-4). The *Iliad* mentions a market in the Achaean camp, where elite traders from nearby islands exchanged wine for booty (7.467). This is an incidental remark, thus describing something well familiar to the audience and taken for granted in the late eighth or early seventh century. Similarly, in the *Odyssey* (1.179-89), Athena assumes the persona of Mentēs, a friend of Odysseus' family, who is described as an elite leader on his way, with a crew of companions, to trade a ship load of iron against bronze (Patzek 1996, 27). In his contribution to this volume, David Tandy discusses related evidence from lyric poetry and Walter Donlan that from the epics (Donlan 1997). Their results are clear: Greek elite persons often were involved in extensive travel abroad, and their travel was usually combined with some form of trade or exchange of goods or gifts. Such activities were perfectly compatible with an elite ideology that focused on fighting and raiding and despised the professional trader, whether Greek or Phoenician.

### Conclusion

Scattered though it is, and mostly reduced to single examples that were especially memorable, enough evidence survives to illustrate the important role Greek elite persons played in interactions and exchanges between the Archaic Greek world and that of the ancient Near East and Egypt. Hints in the epics and other early Greek poetry as well as Near Eastern sources permit us to trace the activities of such persons long before the emergence of the Persian empire, to the early sixth, the seventh and even the late eighth century. The names we know form just the tip of an iceberg, and it is almost certain that at least some of the categories of persons we discussed had predecessors in the tenth, ninth, and early eighth centuries.

The evidence assembled here suggests that Greek elite persons in various functions (as mercenary officers, specialists, traders and travelers, and colonizers, raiders, or adventurers) had frequent and often intensive contacts with the cultur-



ally superior areas of the eastern and southern Mediterranean or, elsewhere in the Mediterranean, with representatives of these areas. Some hints (such as the characterization of Mentos and Odysseus “the Cretan” in the *Odyssey*, Philippus of Croton, and perhaps one or the other of the mercenary generals, all discussed above) suggest that aristocrats with their bands of followers and companions (Donlan 1994) pursued various purposes, according to circumstances and opportunities; they went on raiding or trading expeditions or hired themselves out as mercenaries. It does not seem far-fetched to assume that some of these elite persons served as transmitters of intellectual issues and political ideas, whether practical or theoretical, and that they did this precisely in the period in which the Greek polis and its institutions were shaped and refined.

Barbara Patzek (1996, 27-32) argues plausibly that exchange by trade concerned what we might call “cultural forms,” that is, objects and technology, and in itself did not affect “cultural contents,” that is, ideas, social values, and institutions. In other words, the integration of cultural forms did not prompt the imitation of their social or political contexts. This confirms my thesis: influences on the level of cultural contents and most importantly on that of social and political institutions could only be transmitted by persons who enjoyed high status and social prestige in the receiving society. The transmitters on that level had to be Greek elite persons. That there was no lack of such potential transmitters—this, and only this, was to be demonstrated in this chapter.

The next question is what such intellectual issues and political ideas might have been, where they originated, how they were integrated into the rather different world of the emerging Greek poleis, and how they were transformed and filled with new contents and meanings in the very process of such integration.<sup>22</sup>

22 I thank Robert Rollinger for valuable comments and suggestions and Nino Luraghi for drawing my attention to the silver bowl from Amathus and to recent scholarship on mercenaries.

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