

Habaj, Michal

**The territorial gains made by Cambyses in the eastern Mediterranean**

*Graeco-Latina Brunensia*. 2015, vol. 20, iss. 1, pp. [33]-46

ISSN 1803-7402 (print); ISSN 2336-4424 (online)

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/133964>

Access Date: 30. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

MICHAL HABAJ

(UNIVERSITY OF SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS, TRNAVA)

## THE TERRITORIAL GAINS MADE BY CAMBYSES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

*The Persian king Cambyses is most often mentioned in the context of his successful expedition to Egypt. Both antique sources and modern scholarly research tend to focus on the success of Cambyses in Egypt, which is undoubtedly deserved of attention. As a result however, scholarly interest in Cambyses' other territorial gains is marginal. His successful Egyptian expedition required extensive preparation. For example, one crucial factor was his ability to seize control over the eastern Mediterranean in preparation for the naval part of the campaign. These territorial gains, as well as his control over the sea in the region, inspired Herodotus to refer to Cambyses as 'the master of the sea'. This is an important epithet which Herodotus grants Cambyses, since it seems to suggest that it was Cambyses who expanded the Persian empire to the eastern Mediterranean. Based on the aforementioned reference by Herodotus, the following study provides an analysis of the process of incorporation of these areas into the Persian Empire, insofar as the sources differ on whether these territories were annexed under Cyrus, Cambyses or Darius. In so doing, the analysis attempts to shed more light on the meaning of Herodotus' words, and gives an account of Cambyses' territorial gains in the Mediterranean.*

**Key words:** Achaemenid Persia, Cambyses II, Cyprus, Samos, Cilicia, Phoenicia

### Introduction

The Persian king Cambyses is best known for his invasion and subsequent successful conquest of Egypt. His expedition of 525 B.C. was conducted on two fronts – the mainland and the sea. In preparation for the naval phase of the campaign, the Persians had to seize control over the eastern Mediterranean. This tactical maneuver was given specific mention in Herodotus' account of Cambyses' success. According to the Greek

historian, Cambyses conquered the sea for the Persians.<sup>1</sup> This is an important piece of information, which supports the fact that there were some additional territorial gains made under Cambyses. However, it is unclear which areas Herodotus was referring when he stated ‘the sea’. Commentaries on Herodotus’ *The Histories* differ;<sup>2</sup> and there have been ambiguous results from research into the developments in the eastern Mediterranean which concern the subject to some extent.<sup>3</sup> The problem is largely related to correct dating – it is difficult to assess which land was annexed by Persia under Cyrus, and which territorial gains can be attributed to Cambyses. In addition to that, the annexation of Samos can also be dated to the reign of Darius I.

This study focuses on understanding the given question with all its complexities. This necessarily entails a thorough analysis of the annexation process of those individual countries not explicitly mentioned by Herodotus as having been captured by the Persians under Cyrus or Darius. These include Cyprus, Samos, Cilicia and Phoenicia. Since Herodotus does not provide us with the exact time of their inclusion into the empire, the sources relevant to this question will be examined and checked for the possibility that the land was captured under Cambyses. The key objective of this study is not to ascertain which areas Herodotus was referring to, but rather which areas were actually taken by Persia in preparation for the campaign to conquer Egypt. Herodotus’ information is used here solely as an important starting point of examination, which implies that some territorial gains in the eastern Mediterranean were achieved under Cambyses.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hdt. 3.34: *For it is said that ere this, certain Persians and Croesus sitting with him, Cambyses asked what manner of man they thought him to be in comparison with Cyrus his father; and they answered, “that Cambyses was the better man, for he had all of Cyrus’ possessions and had won besides Egypt and the sea.”* (translation Godley 1928).

<sup>2</sup> How & Wells (1912) suggested a hypothesis that Cambyses subjected the Phoenicians, however there are several arguments against this notion presented herein. A commentary by Asheri & Lloyd & Corcella (2007) does not provide an explanation of the given location.

<sup>3</sup> For more on Cyprus, see Gjerstad (1948); Watkin (1987); Lipinski (2004). For Samos, see Boffo (1983); Balcer (1995); Cawkwell (2005); Austin (1990). For Cilicia, see Casabonne (1996); Casabonne (2004). For Phoenicia, see Markoe (2003); Elayi (2013). For a basic introduction to the policies of Cyrus and Cambyses, see Dandamajev (1989) and Briant (2002).

## Cyprus

Although some authors date the inclusion of Cyprus into the empire to the time of Cyrus,<sup>4</sup> Cyprus seems in fact to have been one of those lands seized by Cambyses. The wording adopted by Herodotus, taken from the official Persian rhetoric, seems to be an important argument for this. Herodotus must have been well familiarized with the exact phrasing used in the king's official propaganda, spread by word,<sup>5</sup> and undoubtedly it was for reasons of authenticity that he put the exact wording of the official documents of the king into the mouths of the Persians. His reference to 'Egypt and the sea' to mean the territorial gains made by Cambyses, corresponds exactly, and in the same sequence, to a similar reference made in Herodotus' lists of lands controlled by Darius, which reads 'Egypt, Beside the Sea'.<sup>6</sup> Exact identification of the areas referred to by these lists would help us move closer towards a full understanding of the meaning of Herodotus' words, as well as towards the exact territorial gains achieved by Cambyses. Some authors suggest, for instance, that it refers to Cyprus.<sup>7</sup> Apparently, the areas mentioned in the lists are ordered in a certain sequence.<sup>8</sup> The relevant section provides the following sequence: Egypt, Beside the Sea, Lydia, Ionia. If we accept the hypothesis that the peoples of the sea represent those of Cyprus, then the kingdoms mentioned subsequently in the inscription continue quite clearly from south to north.<sup>9</sup>

The conquest of Cyprus by Cambyses is also supported by ancient sources. According to Herodotus, the Egyptian king Amasis was the first to sub-

<sup>4</sup> Gjerstad (1948: 471) argued in favor of a later dating based on the loss of Cypriot-Egyptian patterns in sculptures originating from Cyprus during that period, which, as he suggests, points to a shift away from the Egyptian to the Persian sphere of influence, which, in turn, can be traced based on a growing number of Greek patterns in Cypriot sculptures. He also argued from the abandonment of the Cypriot workshops on Samos, Rhodes and Naucratis. Gjerstad's dating was also picked up by Karageorghis (1982: 69) for the Cambridge edition of ancient history. Gjerstad's arguments, however, were quite convincingly rejected by Watkin (1987: 161–163) due to chronological irregularities.

<sup>5</sup> This is evident in the fundamental compliance of his narrative with various cuneiform documents, both in Akkadian and Old Persian language, such as the *Nabonidus Chronicle*, the *Cyrus Cylinder*, and the *Behistun Inscription*. For the usage of Near Eastern rhetoric by the Greeks, see e.g. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1985); Metzler (1984).

<sup>6</sup> See Lipinski (2004: 78); Behistun Inscription=DB§6; Darius' inscription at Susa=Dsaa.

<sup>7</sup> Lecoq (1997: 141); Lipinski (2004: 78).

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. Briant (2002: 180).

<sup>9</sup> Other countries are listed in differing geographical directions.

due Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> Assuming that he controlled it until his death (526 B.C.), the island could have become a part of the empire under the reign of Cambyses.

Considering these facts, Cyprus seems to have been one of those lands seized by Cambyses. In my view, it is unlikely that the reversal of the Cypriot political strategy was connected to the annexation of Phoenicia by the empire,<sup>11</sup> since the annexation of Phoenicia did not automatically lead to the formation of the imperial fleet. Indeed, this is documented by the events in the Neo-Babylonian empire, during which Cyprus did not become a Babylonian vassal.<sup>12</sup> The Cypriots accepted the vassalage voluntarily,<sup>13</sup> probably as a logical consequence of the shifts of power in the eastern Mediterranean. By the time Cambyses had formed an imperial fleet, and Persia had conquered the eastern Mediterranean, the inhabitants of Cyprus quite logically chose to pay tribute to the new naval power, and switched from their Egyptian vassalage to subjugation by Persia.

### Samos

The Ionians, and the inhabitants of the islands along the Ionian coast, were subjugated by Cyrus;<sup>14</sup> and the islands between Greece and Asia

<sup>10</sup> Hdt. 2.182; and also Diodorus (1.68.6), affirms that he subjected the Cypriot cities but does not state he was the first to achieve it. The Babylonian Chronicle of Nebuchadnezzar II. (BM 33041=Pritchard 1969: 308) also seems to affirm that in 567 B.C. Amasis controlled the Cypriot military forces. According to the Babylonian Chronicle, the military forces from “the distant regions in the midst of the sea” were called to fight in the battle of Amasis against Nebuchadnezzar. See also Tuplin (1996: 37). In any case, the Cypriots were already vassals of the Assyrians, and it has also been suggested that Cyprus was even controlled by the predecessor of Amasis, Apries, see Tuplin (1996: 36–37). To support our view, it is important that Herodotus mentions the dependence of Cyprus on Egypt.

<sup>11</sup> Also in Tuplin (1996: 16) *contra* Watkin (1987: 159).

<sup>12</sup> No evidence is provided to support the Babylonian dominion in Cyprus, and moreover, Herodotus (3.19) states Amasis was the first who made the Cypriots pay the tribute. However, this piece of information should not be overrated, because the Assyrian kings had already claimed title to the Cypriot vassals (see also Note 10).

<sup>13</sup> Hdt. 3.19.

<sup>14</sup> According to Herodotus (1.169) they succumbed after the Persians subjugated the Ionians on the mainland. However, this did not occur immediately, but only after the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire and a change in situation on the sea (Hdt. 1.143), since at that time the Phoenicians had already been subjugated by the Persians. The inhabitants of Lesbos, and probably other islands also, must have become Persian subjects some time between 539 B.C. (the conquest of Babylon, hence also the Phoenician cities) and 535 B.C. (the latter date corresponds to the fact that the Phoenicians

Minor were largely conquered by Darius.<sup>15</sup> However, the status of Samos remains questionable and poses two specific problems. Firstly, ancient sources do not clearly indicate whether the island had already come under Persian dominion under Cyrus, or whether it was in fact later rulers who had conquered Samos. Secondly, reconstruction of the events can only rely on a rather exaggerated biography of Polycrates by Herodotus,<sup>16</sup> wherein the only reference Herodotus makes in respect of chronology is the island's subjugation under Darius.<sup>17</sup>

The first problem with Samos stems from the question of whether the island became part of the empire under Cyrus, or rather under later rulers. Some scholars support the dating to the period of Cyrus.<sup>18</sup> Such a dating, however, does not seem to comply with Polycrates' policy as described by Herodotus, according to which Polycrates targeted islands, and cities on the mainland, in equal measure.<sup>19</sup> He mentions the island Lesbos specifically, but as mentioned above, it had apparently already belonged to the empire at the time of Cyrus. Polycrates would certainly not have looted in Persian territory if he were a Persian vassal. Indeed, he became a vassal only when he needed to resolve conflicts on Samos, which can be dated from Herodotus' writings to the period of Cambyses' reign.<sup>20</sup>

This brings us to the second problem. Herodotus dates the island's subjugation to the rule of Darius. According to this account, Polycrates became

---

might not have become Persian vassals immediately; it can be assumed that at the time when Gobryas took the office of Governor of Babylonia and *Ebir Nāri*, i.e. the lands west of the Euphrates river, the Persians already ruled in this area). However, in Grote's words (2001: 134), it could also have been sooner, and he adds that they may in fact have succumbed voluntarily because they were unable to defend the mainland. Briant (2002: 38) for instance, assumes they remained outside Cyrus' influence.

<sup>15</sup> Thuc. 1.16.1; Hdt. 6.49, 95–101.

<sup>16</sup> Not only do *The Histories* provide an extensive account of Polycrates, but Herodotus also regards him as a remarkably successful military leader (3.39), a cunning politician (3.44) and someone who negotiated with the Egyptian king as an equal ally (3.40–43). In his words, he was the first of the Hellenes who had set his mind upon having command of the sea (3.122).

<sup>17</sup> Hdt. 3.140–149.

<sup>18</sup> For example, Cawkwell (2005: 39) assumed, based on Herodotus' report (1.69) about the Ionian islands after Harpagus' subjection of the mainland, that Samos had become a part of the empire earlier under Cyrus. Likewise, Balcer (1995: 65) formulated the theory of the subjection of Polycrates by Cyrus. In his view, Polycrates could have been a vassal of Cyrus and an ally of Amasis at the same time, since during that period Egypt maintained neutrality.

<sup>19</sup> Hdt. 3.39.

<sup>20</sup> Hdt. 3.44.

an ally only, not a vassal, when a number of his political adversaries were able to gain considerable support abroad. This is especially true for the case of the Lacedaemonians, who threatened his rule on the island. Herodotus framed the subsequent events into a shrewd plot line, wherein Polycrates asks Cambyses to send a messenger with a request for assistance in his expedition to Egypt. He then sent his adversaries on this expedition and thus got rid of the opposition. In this version of events, Herodotus transformed the obligation of a vassal into the unforced contribution of an ally.

Herodotus' interpretation of Polycrates as merely a Persian ally is untenable. It seems this view of Polycrates was espoused in an exaggerated biography of the tyrant that had spread across the island of Samos. It should be noted that Herodotus spent some time on the island,<sup>21</sup> and was influenced by the local tradition insofar as he had begun to overestimate the status of Polycrates.<sup>22</sup>

If we consider Herodotus' description, omitting the heroic biography of Polycrates, and focus exclusively on potential signs of vassalage, i.e. dependent foreign policy and the payment of tribute, Polycrates can be clearly described as a vassal. Moreover, when Polycrates attempts to act independently and ignore Persian dominion, he is removed – in accordance with Persian policy toward their vassals. This can also be seen in one of Herodotus' versions of Polycrates' death. The Greek historian recorded that Polycrates had not respected the authority of the hyparch of Lydia, Oroetes. As a result, Polycrates was removed by a representative of the Persian administration.<sup>23</sup> Of course, Herodotus adds that most of his sources saw the desire of Oroetes to directly rule the island as the motive behind the removal of Polycrates,<sup>24</sup> but both versions imply a Persian claim on the island. More-

<sup>21</sup> *Suda* s.v. However, the historicity of his own experience on the island as the basis for his knowledge has been recently discussed. For an example of “mirroring” in Herodotus' political perception on archaic Samos, see Irwin (2009: 404–415). Her excellent contribution engages with the “Now” in “Herodotus Now” and examines Herodotus' method of writing about the island. In my view, Herodotus political “mirroring” on archaic Samos was due to his own experience of the island, *contra* Pelling (2011: 1–2).

<sup>22</sup> For Herodotus' sources on Samos see Mitchell (1975).

<sup>23</sup> Hdt. 3.121. Apart from the personal insult, the wording implies such a course of events, however the reason Herodotus looks for motives in the sphere of human emotions only reflects his own view of the causality of events. The key point of reference here is that Oroetes sent a messenger to Polycrates, who ignored his request. Thus, in Herodotus' view, Polycrates offended the pride of Oroetes and, between the lines, one can gather that Polycrates had refused to meet the obligations of a vassal and therefore he had to be removed.

<sup>24</sup> Hdt. 3.120. In a similar manner to the previous note, this point should be considered separately from Herodotus' excrescences. The island was controlled and governed au-

over, it is hard to imagine the Persians – considering their campaign against Egypt – would have left behind such a powerful naval force as the one available to Polycrates.<sup>25</sup> He could easily have invaded Cyprian or Phoenician ports that had been left unguarded by the Persian fleets. Thus, Samos seems to have been seized by necessity under Cambyses.

One has to admit that H. T. Wallinga is right to assume that Polycrates could only have built his navy and army with the help of Egypt. Thus, even before his vassalage to the Persians, he had acted as a vassal of the Egyptian king Amasis, and for Egypt's benefit he had provided the sea transport necessary for the Greek mercenaries to Africa.<sup>26</sup> When for some reason Polycrates lost the support of Egypt during a period of internal turbulence at Samos, enhanced by the foreign support of his political adversaries, he was forced to seek help from the Persians. However, in Herodotus, these interrelations are encumbered by the excrescences of various narratives.

### Cilicia

The southern coast of Asia Minor was inhabited by Carians, Lycians, and Cilicians, and we learn from Herodotus that Caria and Lycia came under the dominion of the empire under Cyrus.<sup>27</sup> However, Cilicia remains questionable, because the exact dating of its subjugation cannot be ascertained definitely due to the scarcity of our sources. Thus, I will now summarize what is known about Cilicia in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C., and thereafter I will examine the date on which Cilicia came under the dominion of Persia.

Cilicians were subjugated neither by the Neo-Babylonian Empire<sup>28</sup> nor the Lydian Empire,<sup>29</sup> but there are reports available describing Cyrus' attitude towards this land.<sup>30</sup> One cannot say that he had no interest in Cilicia,

---

tonomously by Polycrates. He probably did not act in accordance with Oroetes' policy and therefore he had to be removed, while Oroetes planned direct control of the island.

25 He had a hundred fifty-oared ships, and a thousand archers (Hdt. 3.39), he provided Cambyses with forty triremes (Hdt. 3.44) and had great hope of ruling the eastern Mediterranean (3.122).

26 Wallinga (1991: 181–182).

27 For more on Carians see Hdt. 1.174; for Lycians see Hdt. 1.176. According to Isocrates (*Pan.* 4.161.) the Persians had never controlled Lycia, but he was probably pointing to the fact that, even under the Persians, local rulers governed the land.

28 In Herodotus' narrative (1.74) Syennesis acts as an independent ruler, *contra* Petit (1990: 42).

29 Hdt. 1.28.

30 Except for Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (7.4.2; 8.6.7), which mentions the inclusion of

because that would be an example of the *ex silentio* argument, considering specifically the facts we know about the subjugation of Lycia, which at the time of the Lydian hegemony in Asia Minor remained independent, only to be subjugated later by Cyrus. Thus, from the period of Cambyses we do not have any reference regarding Cilicia. Quite unexpectedly however, references to this region appear in Herodotus' list of Darius' tax districts.<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, in Herodotus' list, this land represents a separate, fourth tax district, and a similar status within the Persian administration was only assigned to India.<sup>32</sup> All other lands are clustered into higher regional units, but only Cilicia and India feature separately. Even more surprisingly, Cilicia is not included in the lists of subjugated lands in the imperial inscriptions of either Darius or Xerxes.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the land may have been regarded as less significant by the Persians than by the Greeks. This in turn may have resulted in its special status within the empire, and in Herodotus' reference to this land as an independent vassal ruled to a great extent by individual kings.<sup>34</sup>

Let us now turn to the key question of the date on which Cilicia came under the dominion of Persia. Direct reports of this historic event are not available. As a result, it can only be confirmed with certainty that it became a part of Persia at some point during the reign of Cyrus, Cambyses or Darius. Indirect references to the event are contradictory. On the one hand, one could regard the reports of the considerable amount of tribute paid by the Cilicians at the time of Darius<sup>35</sup> as an indication of Cilician vassalage during the reign of Cyrus, since the land and its resources must have attracted the attention of Cyrus. Moreover, one more indication works in favor of Cyrus. *The Cyrus Cylinder* draws upon the policies of Ashurbanipal,<sup>36</sup> and if Cyrus maintained

---

Cilicia by Cyrus. However, Xenophon's account of the inclusion of individual lands by Cyrus sounds unreliable. In his view, Egypt was annexed to the empire by Cyrus, and thus his account is often anachronistic.

31 Hdt. 3.90.

32 Hdt. 3.94.

33 However, India is documented in Darius' inscription at Naqsh-e Rostam=DNa§6; Darius' inscription at Persepolis=DPe§2; Darius' inscription at Susa=DSm§2; Xerxes' inscription at Persepolis=XPh§3.

34 After the unsuccessful expedition of Xerxes, Herodotus informs us that Xerxes appointed Xenagoras, son of Halicarnassus, as the ruler of Cilicia (9.107). For a brief summary of the status of Cilicia in the empire, see Dusinberre (2013: 46–47). Persian influence in the province is suggested by Casabonne (1996) based on numismatic finds and low-relief sculptures.

35 Hdt. 3.90. Cilicians paid 500 talents of silver, thereof 360 directly to the ruler. In addition they also paid with 360 white horses.

36 *Cyrus Cylinder* 43. The Cylinder refers to the Cyrus' construction in Babylon fol-

this course of policy beyond the context of the Cylinder, and regarded the Persian empire an Assyrian heritage, then he would naturally also claim his right to rule Cilicia. Cilicia was, after all, among the Assyrian vassals,<sup>37</sup> and Ashurbanipal himself boasted over its subjugation.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, the silence of Herodotus with regard to Cilician participation in the expedition to Egypt indicates the inclusion of these people later – by Darius. This dating to Darius' reign seems even more justified when one considers Herodotus' references to Phoenicians, Cypriots, and Ionians participating in Cambyses' fleet. Furthermore, the fact that Cilicians were omitted seems even stranger in the light of the fact that, under Darius and Xerxes, Herodotus often referred to the Cilicians as an important part of the Persian navy. According to his report, Cilician commanders – along with the Phoenicians – were held in high regard among the subjugated peoples at the time of Xerxes' expedition to Greece with the Persian naval force.<sup>39</sup> Cilician ports played an important role in this narrative, as it was from Cilicia that the Persians set out for battle against the Cyprian insurgents during the Ionian revolt.<sup>40</sup> The Cilician ports also served the Persian fleet during the expedition of Mardonius and Datis against Greece.<sup>41</sup> It is also known that as many as one hundred Cilician ships were involved in Xerxes' expedition to Greece in 480 B.C.<sup>42</sup> If the Cilicians had taken part in Cambyses' expedition, Herodotus would presumably have mentioned them too.

The above mentioned indications lead me to the assumption that Cilicia came under the dominion of Persia either under Cyrus or Darius; no evidence points to Cambyses.

## Phoenicia

The inclusion of Phoenicia into the empire is substantiated by two sources. The first of these is *The Cyrus Cylinder*, which refers to Cyrus' rule after the conquest of Babylon from the Mediterranean sea to the Persian Gulf.<sup>43</sup>

---

lowing the previous construction under Ashurbanipal.

37 For the Assyrian policy in Cilicia, see Bing (1969).

38 Piepkorn (1933: B ii.73).

39 Here, the following sequence can be found: Phoenicians, a Cilician, Lycian, Cypriots and a Carian (Hdt. 7.98).

40 Hdt. 5.108.

41 Hdt. 6.43 (Mardonius' expedition) and 6.95 (Datis' expedition).

42 Hdt. 7.90–91.

43 *Cyrus Cylinder* 29.

However, the trustworthiness of the document should be regarded with caution due to its propagandistic nature.<sup>44</sup> Secondly there are the Babylonian records, which suggest that Phoenicia had been a vassal during the times of Cyrus. The dating of those records implies that Cyrus appointed Gobryas a satrap of Babylonia in 535 B.C. He acted as the satrap of Babylonia, and of *Ebir Nāri*, i.e. the lands west of the Euphrates river.<sup>45</sup> Having said that, even this title does not directly indicate the status of Phoenicia. Even previously, the Phoenician cities had paid tribute to the Neo-Babylonian kings, which implies that the title truly points to their influence in the region of Phoenicia.

No other written report of the annexation of Phoenicia by the empire under Cyrus the Great is available.<sup>46</sup> However, considering the fact that the Phoenician cities made their naval force available to the potential new ruler, as well as the fact that their annexation by the empire would help the ruler gain access to the Mediterranean trade routes, a lack of interest in the Phoenician cities on the part of Cyrus during his reign seems unlikely. It should also be noted that a Phoenician influence can already be garnered from the artistic expression of the Persians under Cyrus, as evidenced by the relief of a winged genius in Pasargadae at Gate R.<sup>47</sup>

In my view, an additional two arguments speak in favor of the subjection of the Phoenician cities by Cyrus. 1) It seems unlikely that the course of action taken by Cyrus in the western parts of the Neo-Babylonian Empire<sup>48</sup> would differ from the course he had taken against the vassals of the subjected former Lydian Empire.<sup>49</sup> 2) If we admit as a fact that Judea had become a Persian vassal as early as under the reign of Cyrus,<sup>50</sup> it seems unlikely

---

<sup>44</sup> Cyrus is referred to as the ruler of all kingdoms previously controlled by the Neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus. However, this, at least for the Quedarites, does not correspond to reality (Hdt. 3.4).

<sup>45</sup> San Nicolò (1941: 56); Oppenheim (1985: 544).

<sup>46</sup> The Old Testament report by Ezra (3.7) about Cyrus and his consent to the trade between Judea on one hand, and Sidon and Tyre on the other, as part of which they were allowed to obtain cedar wood from Lebanon to construct the Temple of Jerusalem, is regarded in this research as a source unrelated to the status of the Phoenician cities. As noted by Briant (2002: 48) the report does not indicate the subjugation of Phoenicia.

<sup>47</sup> Farkas (1974: 7–9); Stronach (1978: 842); Jacobs (2010: 95).

<sup>48</sup> For an overview of events related to the Neo-Babylonian reign in Phoenicia, see Elayi (2013: 213–233).

<sup>49</sup> Hdt. 1.28. This report can be trusted since the events in Asia Minor, especially those related directly to the Greeks, Herodotus must have been consistently informed.

<sup>50</sup> Indicated by the following testimonies in the Old Testament: Ezr. 1:1–4; 5:13–14;

that the nearby Phoenician cities would have been spared the obligation of paying tribute to the Persians.

The question that remains is how to reconcile these logical assumptions with Herodotus' claim that it was Cambyses who had conquered the peoples of the sea. The key to at least a hypothetical answer to that question seems to be associated with the status of Miletus. This Ionian city had signed a contract with the Persians even prior to Cyrus' conquest of the Lydian empire. The exact scope of this contract is unknown, but according to Herodotus, the Milesians had nothing to fear from the Persians.<sup>51</sup> Thus, Miletus and Phoenicia could be related, based on the facts of their status and their similar manner of bondage toward Persia. These lands were probably vassals with no obligations beyond the payment of a tribute and a theoretical protection of the Persian territory. At the time of Cyrus, they were probably permitted not to join in on conquering campaigns. For it is known that Cyrus did not undertake any expedition that would have required a naval force. Thus the Phoenicians probably got away with the payment of a tribute. Such a favorable status probably resulted from their voluntary subjection to Persia.<sup>52</sup> Thus, Herodotus' claim that Cambyses was the conqueror of the sea stems from his movements in the Mediterranean and not from any subjugation of Phoenicia.

In my view, the hypothesis of the Phoenician vassalage already existing during the period of Cyrus is plausible, despite the theory of H. J. Watkin,<sup>53</sup> who assumed that Cambyses subjected the Phoenicians to the empire upon the conclusion of an agreement with the Arabs when the Persian army crossed the Arab territory. He argued that the annexation of the Phoenician cities by the empire was carried out in order to instigate changes in the geopolitical situation of Persia. According to Watkin, the Cypriots and the inhabitants

---

6:3; 2Ch. 36.22; Is. 45.1–2. For a critical evaluation a large number of sources are available, e.g. Bedford (2001); Fried (2002); Grabbe (2006).

<sup>51</sup> Hdt. 1.143.

<sup>52</sup> Hdt. 3.19. Here, Herodotus' words are usually interpreted differently. The most natural interpretation of the text, according to Watkin (1987: 159) is that their submission occurred just before they joined the Egyptian expedition. However, Herodotus does not explicitly state that they succumbed to Cambyses; he only makes clear that they succumbed. The reference to Cambyses is only related to the note that they were recruited for the navy. Plusquamperfect tense in Herodotus' expression may also indicate a date of subjugation prior to Cambyses' reign, see Asheri & Lloyd & Corcella (2007: 419). I do not use the argument in my reasoning, because of the uncertain meaning of this passage.

<sup>53</sup> Watkin (1987: 159). Other authors also favored the annexation of Phoenicia during the period of Cambyses' reign, although not directly on the occasion of Cambyses' agreement with the Arabs. See Briant (2002: 49).

of Samos, who had abandoned their Egyptian ally, followed suit and joined the Persians. It seems that the turnaround at the sea is indeed somehow related to Persian policy in Phoenicia. However, such a scenario does not necessarily entail acceptance of the vassalage by the Phoenicians, and that is exactly the assumption that Watkin makes. In my view, Cyprus joined the Persians as a result of the fleet formation by Cambyses, and not as a result of the annexation of the Phoenician cities, which may have taken place much earlier. The formation of a fleet consisting mostly of Phoenician ships does not necessarily mean that the Phoenician cities joined the Persians under the reign of Cambyses. As mentioned above, Cyrus may have obtained the tribute from Phoenicians in another form, and he probably did not have to use the Phoenician navy at all, as he did not launch any military operation in the Mediterranean.

### **Final evaluation:**

1. The territorial gains made by Cambyses, as reported by Herodotus, pertain to the eastern Mediterranean. Under Cambyses, the Persians used the Phoenician navy for the first time, and in contrast to the events during the reign of Cyrus, they also maintained control over both Cyprus and Samos.
2. The voluntary subjugation of Cyprus resulted from the formation of the Phoenician fleet, and not from the annexation of Phoenicia. Phoenicians who lived in Cyprus must have been well informed about Cyrus' reluctance to use the military on the sea; thus it would be surprising had they succumbed voluntarily at such an early stage.
3. Samos was one of Cambyses' territorial accomplishments. The alliance between Polycrates and Amasis, and subsequently also Cambyses, indicated by Herodotus reflects an overstated tradition associated with the period of his reign on the island. The annexation of Samos occurred due to a change in the external circumstances of the eastern Mediterranean, whereby the Egyptians ceased to subsidize Polycrates, who as a result needed to obtain resources at a time of internal turbulence on the island.

### **Bibliography**

- Asheri, D. & Lloyd, A. & Corcella, A. (2007). *Commentary on Herodotus Books I–IV*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Austin, M. (1990). Greek Tyrant and the Persians, 546–497 B.C. *Classical Quarterly*, 40, 289–306.
- Balcer, J. (1995). *The Persian conquest of the Greeks 545–450 B.C.* Konstanz: Universität Konstanz.

- Bedford, P. (2001). *Temple Restoration in early Achaemenid Judah*. Leiden: Brill.
- Bing, J. (1969). *A History of Cilicia during the Assyrian Period*. Ann Arbor: Indiana University Press (Diss.).
- Boffo, L. (1983). *La conquista Persiana delle citta greche d'Asia Minore*. Roma: Accademia Naz. dei Lincei.
- Briant, P. (2002). *From Cyrus to Alexander*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Casabonne, O. (1996). Presence et influence Perse en Cilicie a l'Époque Achéménide. *Anatolia Antiqua*, 4, 121–145.
- Casabonne, O. (2004). *La Cilicie à l'Époque Achéménide*. Paris: De Boccard.
- Cawkwell, G. (2005). *The Greek Wars. The Failure of Persia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dandamaev, M. (1989). *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire*. Leiden: Brill.
- Elayi, J. (2013). *Histoire de la Phénicie*. Paris: Perrin.
- Farkas, A. (1974). *Achaemenid Sculpture*. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Fried, L. (2010). Because of the Dread upon them. In J. Curtis – J. Simpson, (Eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia*. (457–471). London – New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Gershevitch (Ed.), *Cambridge History of Iran*. (volume 2, 529–588). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gjerstad, E. (1948). *The Swedish Cyprus Expedition*. Stockholm: Swedish Cyprus Expedition.
- Godley, A. D. (Ed. et Transl.) (1928). *Herodotus in four volumes*. (volume 2). London: William Heinemann.
- Grabbe, L. (2006). *Judah and Judeans in the Persian Period*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
- Grote, G. (2001). *A History of Greece: From the Time of Solon to 403 B.C.* Condensed and ed. by J. M. Mitchell and M. O. B. Caspari. With a new introduction by Paul Cartledge. London – New York: Routledge.
- How, W. & Wells, J. (1912). *A Commentary on Herodotus*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Irwin, E. (2009). Herodotus and Samos: Personal or Political? *Classical World*, 102, 395–416.
- Jacobs, B. (2010). From Gabled Hut to Rock-Cut Tomb: A Religious and Cultural Break between Cyrus and Darius? In J. Curtis – J. Simpson, (Eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia*. (91–103). London – New York: I. B. Tauris.
- Karageorghis, V. (1982). Cyprus. In J. Boardman – N. Hammond, (Eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*. (volume III/3, 57–70). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lecoq, P. (1997). *Les Inscriptions de la Perse achéménide*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Lipinski, E. (2004). *Itineraria Phoenicia*. Leuven – Paris – Dudley: Peeters.
- Markoe, G. (2003). *Die Phöenizier*. Stuttgart: Theiss.
- Metzler, D. (1987). Stilistische Evidenz für die Benutzung persischer Quellen durch griechischer Historiker. In H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg – A. Kuhrt, (Eds.), *The Greek Sources*. (89–91). Leiden: Nederlands Instituut vor het Nabije Oosten.
- Mitchell, B. M. (1975). Herodotus and Samos. *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 95, 75–91.
- Oppenheim, L. (1985). The Babylonian Evidence of Achaemenian Rule in Mesopotamia. In I. Pelling, Ch. (2011). Herodotus and Samos. *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 54, 1–18.
- Petit, T. (1990). *Satrap et satrapies dans l'empire achéménide de Cyrus le Grand à Xerxès Ier*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Piepkorn, A. (1933). *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Pritchard, J. (Ed.) (1969). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- San Nicolò, M. (1941). *Beiträge zu einer Prosopographie der neubabylonischen Beamten der Zivil- und Tempelverwaltung*. Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Sancisi-Weerdenburg, H. (1985). The death of Cyrus: Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* as a source for Iranian history. *Acta Iranica*, 25, 459–471.
- Stronach, D. (1978). *Pasargadae*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tuplin, C. (1996). *Achaemenid studies*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- Wallinga, H. (1991). Polycrates and Egypt: the testimony of the *Samaina*. In H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg – A. Kuhrt, (Eds.), *Asia Minor and Egypt: Old Cultures in a New Empire*. (179–197). Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Watkin, H. (1987). The Cypriote surrender to Persia. *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 107, 154–163.

## RESUMÉ

V článku su rozobrané možné územné zisky achajmenovskej Perzie vo východnom Stredomorí pred výpravou do Egypta v roku 525 pred n. l. Keďže perzské velenie naplánovalo výpravu v dvoch prúdoch, na mori a na súši, Peržania potrebovali zaistiť oblasť juhovýchodného Stredomoria a odrezať Egypt od novej pomoci. Z tohto dôvodu prišlo k vytvoreniu prvej imperiálnej flotily. Výsledkom štúdie je hypotéza, že Kambýses si pred samotným vypuknutím výpravy zaistil Cyprus aj Samos. Ostrovy zostávali po smrti jeho otca nezávislé, ale Peržania ich nemohli ponechať kvôli egyptskej výprave nezaistené. Oba ostrovy totiž disponovali silnou flotilou a Kambýses ju potreboval kontrolovať. Pri pripútaní Samu k ríši zohrali významnú úlohu aj vnútorné nepokoje na ostrove. Výsledkom štúdie je aj tvrdenie, že Kilikiu a Feníciu Kambýses ovládnuť nemusel, lebo boli súčasťou ríše už za vlády jeho otca, Kýra II.

michal.habaj33@gmail.com