“Accustomed to Obedience”? the Ionian reputation for weakness

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1. Proverbs

Strabo 14.1.28:

τὸν Κολοφῶνα ἐπέθηκεν – “he put Colophon to it,”

Athenaeus 12.26:

πάλαι ποτ᾽ἦσαν ἄλκιμοι, Μιλήσιοι – “long ago the Milesians were powerful”

2. Appian *Syr*. 3.12.1

Αἰολέας δὲ καὶ Ἴωνας οὐ συνεχώρει ὡς ἐκ πολλοῦ καὶ τοῖς βαρβάροις βασιλεῦσι τῆς εἰθισμένους ὑπακούειν.

The Aeolians and the Ionians he would not concede because for a long time they were accustomed to obedience to barbarian kings.

3. Hdt. 1.146

διὰ τοῦτὸν δὲ τὸν φόνον αἱ γυναῖκες αὗται νόμον θέμεναι σφίσι αὐτῇσι ὅρκους ἐπήλασαν καὶ παρέδοσαν τῇσι θυγατράσι, μή κοτε ὁμοσιτῆσαι τοῖσι ἀνδράσι μηδὲ οὐνόματι βῶσαι τὸν ἐωυτῆς ἄνδρα, τοῦδε εἵνεκα ὅτι ἐφόνεουσαν σφέων τοὺς πατέρας καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ παῖδας καὶ ἔπειτα ταῦτα ποιήσαντες αὐτῇσι συνοίκεον.

Because of this slaughter, these women established a custom that they bound with an oath and transmitted to their daughters that they would neither dine with their husbands nor call them by name because the men took them as wives after killing their fathers, husbands, and sons.

4. Definitions

τρυφή

LSJ: “softness, delicacy, daintiness”

Gorman and Gorman: “a kind of relationship in which the possessor will be attended to and fulfilled by others. It is a majesty or dignity…which is attended by, but not defined as, the physical paraphernalia of luxury.”

ἁβρός

LSJ: “graceful, delicate, pretty”… “dainty”

5. Herodotus 9.122.3

Κῦρος δὲ ταῦτα ἀκούσας καὶ οὐ θωμάσας τὸν λόγον ἐκέλευε ποιέενιν ταῦτα, οὕτω δὲ αὐτοῖσι παραίνεε κελεύων παρασκευάζεσθαι ὡς οὐκέτι ἄρξοντας ἀλλ᾽ ἀρξομένους: **φιλέειν γὰρ ἐκ μαλακῶν χώρων μαλακοὺς γίνεσθαι**: οὐ γὰρ τι τῆς αὐτῆς γῆς εἶναι καπρόν τε θωμαστὸν φύειν καὶ ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς τὰ πολέμια.

Hearing these things and finding nothing remarkable about the plan, Cyrus ordered them to do this, but advised them that they ought to prepare to no longer be rulers but to be ruled: **for fondness for soft lands breeds soft people**; for marvelous fruits of the earth and excellent warriors do not grow from the same land.

6. Miletus

Athenaeus 12.26

Μιλεσιοι δ᾽ ἕως μὲν οὐκ **ἐτρύφων**, ἐνίκων Σκύθας, ὥς φησιν Ἔφορος...ώς δὲ ὑπήχθησαν **ἡδονῇ καὶ** **τρυφῇ**, κατερρύη τὸ τῆς πόλεως ἀνδρεῖον.

ἡ Μιλησίων πόλις περιπέπτωκεν ἀτυχίαις διὰ **τρυφὴν** βίου καὶ πολιτικὰς ἔκθρας. οἳ τὸ ἑπιεικἐς οὐκ ἀγαπῶντες ἐκ ῥιζῶν ἀνεῖλον τοὺς ἔκθρους. στασιαζόντων γὰρ τῶν τὰς οὐσίας ἐχόντων καὶ τῶν δημοτῶν, οὓς ἐκεῖνοι Γέργιθας ἐκάλουν, πρῶτον μὲν κρατήσας ὁ

δῆμος καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους ἐκβαλὼν καὶ συναγαγὼν τὰ τέκνα τῶν φυγόντων εἰς ἁλωνίας βοῦς εἰσαγαγόντες συνηλοίησαν καὶ παρανομωτάτῳ θανάτῳ διέφθειραν. τοιγάρτοι πάλιν οἱ πλούσιοι κρατήσαντες ἅπαντας ὧν κύριοι κατέστησαν μετὰ τῶν τέκνων κατεπίττωσαν. (καὶ καιομένων…)

The Milesians, as long as they were not **sumptuous**, dominated the Scythians, according to Ephorus…but when they were yoked by **pleasure and luxury**, all *andriea* of the polis disappeared.

(According to Heraclides,) Miletus suffered misfortunes because of the **sumptuous** lives of the inhabitants and because of political enmity, for being unable to come to accord, they tore up their enemies by the root. Stasis broke out between the havers [i.e. the wealthy] and the rest of the populace. At first the latter, who were called Gergithae, had the upper hand and expelled the rich people. They gathered the children of those who fled into the threshing floor, led in oxen, and trampled them to death in this most gruesome and transgressive way. Later when the wealthy regained control they covered as many children as possible with pitch and lit them on fire.

7. Colophon

Athenaeus 12.31

Κολοφωνιοι δ᾽ ὥς φησι Φύλαρχος τὴν ἀρχὴν ὄντες σκληροὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀγωγαῖς ἐπεὶ εἰς **τρυφὴν** ἐξώκειλαν πρὸς Λυδοὺς φιλίαν καὶ συμμαχίαν ποιησάμενοι, προῄεσαν διησκημένοι τὰς κόμας χρυςῷ κόσμῳ, ὡς καὶ Ξενοφάνης φησίν:

**ἁβροσύνας** δὲ μαθόντες ἀνωφελέας παρὰ Λυδῶν,

ὅφρα τυραννίης ἦσαν ἄνευ στυγερῆς,

ᾔεσαν εἰς ἀγορὴν παναλουργέα φάνε᾽ ἔχοντες,

οὐ μείους ὥσπερ χίλιοι, εἰς έπίπαν

αὐχαλέοι, χαίτῃσιν ἀωαλλομεν εὐπρεπέεσσιν

ἀσκητοῖς ὀδμὴν χρίμασι δευόμενοι

The Colophonians, Phylarchus says, first adopted a strenuous course of life, but, when they ran afoul **sumptuousness** on account of friendship and alliance with the Lydians they began to adorn their hair with golden cicadas, as Xenophanes said:

They learned useless **graces** from the Lydians

While they were bound by hated tyranny

They went to the agora bedecked in purple robes

No fewer than a thousand men, on the whole

Boastful, exalting in their luxurious hair

Wetted with pungent and refined oils

8. Ephesus

Plutarch, *Lysander* 3.2

καὶ κινδυνεύουσαν ἐκβαρβαρωθῆναι τοῖς Περσικοῖς ἔθεσι διὰ τὰς ἐπιμιξίας, ἄτε δὴ τῆς Λυδίας περικεχυμένης καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν στρατηγῶν αὐτόθι τὰ πολλὰ διατριβόντων.

Ephesus “was in danger of becoming barbarized by mixing with Persian customs since it was surrounded by Lydia and the Persian king’s commanders had frequently resided there.”

9. Dercylidas

Xenophon, *Hellenica* 3.2.17

ὅσον μὲν δὴ ἦν ἐκ Πελοποννήσου στράτευμα ἡσυχίαν εἶχε καὶ παρεσκυάζετο ὡς μαχούμενον, ὅσοι δὲ ἦσαν ἀπὸ Πριήνης τε καὶ Ἀχιλλείου καὶ ἀπὸ νήσων καὶ τῶν Ἰωνικῶν πόλεων, οἱ μέν τινες καταλιπόντες ἐν τῷ σίτῳ τὰ ὅπλα ἀπεδίδρασκον, καὶ γὰρ ἧν βαθὺς ὁ σῖτος ἐν τῷ Μαιάνδρου πεδίῳ, ὅσοι δὲ καὶ ἔμενον, δῆλοι ἧσαν οὐ μενοῦντες.

Now the soldiers from the Peloponnese remained silent and prepared for battle; the soldiers from Priene, Achilleum, from the islands, and from the Ionian poleis, lay down their weapons in the tall grain of the Maeander plain and fled, and those who remained did not seem that they would stay long.

10. Agesilaus

Xenophon, *Hellenica* 3.4.16-17

ἐκ δὲ τούτου ἐπειδὴ ἔαρ ὑπέφαινε, συνήγαγε μὲν ἅπαν τὸ στράτευμα εἰς Ἔπφεσον: ἀσκῆσαι δ᾽ αὐτὸ βουλόμενος ἇθλα προύθηκε ταῖς τε ὁπλιτικαῖς τάχεσιν, ἥτις ἄριστα σωμάτων ἕχοι, καὶ ταῖς ἱππικαῖς, ἥτις κράτιστα ἱππεύοι: καὶ πελτασταῖς δὲ καὶ τοξόταις ἇθλα προύθηκεν, ὅσοι κράτιστοι πρὸς τὰ προσήκοντα ἔργα φανεῖεν. ἐκ τούτου δὲ παρῆν ὁρᾶν τὰ μὲν γυμνάσια πάντα μεστὰ ἀνδρῶν τῶν γυμναζομένων, τὸν δ᾽ ἱππόδρομον τῶν ἱππαζομένων, τοὺς δὲ ἀκοντιστὰς καὶ τοὺς τοξότας μελετῶντας. ἀξίαν δὲ καὶ ὅλην τὴν πόλιν ἐν ἧ ἦν τὴν Ἔφεσον θέας ἐποίησεν, ἥ τε γὰρ ἀγορὰ ἦν μεστὴ παντοδαπῶν καὶ ἵππων καὶ ὅπλων ὠνίων, οἵ τε χαλκοτύποι καὶ τέκτονες καὶ οἱ χαλκεῖς οἱ σκυτοτόμοι καὶ οἱ ζωγράφοι πάντες πολεμικὰ ὅπλα κατεσκεύαζον, ὥστε τὴν πόλιν ὄντως οἴεσθαι πολέμου ἐργαστήριον εἶναι.

After this when spring reemerged, [Agesilaus] gathered together his entire expedition force at Ephesus. Wanting to train his men, he set out prizes for the hoplite units, for whichever one should be in the best shape, and for the cavalry, whichever had the best horsemanship, and for the peltasts and archers he established a prize for those who displayed the best skill at their duties. One might have seen every gymnasia there full of men training and the hippodrome full of horsemen, and the javalineers and archers tending to their trade. In fact, he made the entire city of Ephesus a sight worth seeing; the agora was full of every sort of horse and weapon for sale, and the copperworkers, carpenters, smiths, leatherworkers, and painters made all kinds of martial tools, such that the city seemed to be a workshop of war.

11. Hdt. 6.12

ταῦτα ἀκούσαντες οἱ Ἴωνες ἐπιτρέπουσι σφέας αὐτοὺς τῷ Διονυσίῳ. ὁ δὲ ἀνάγων ἑκάστοτε ἐπὶ κέρας τὰς νέας, ὅκως τοῖσι ἐρέτῃσι χρήσαιτο διέκπλοον ποιεύμενος τῇσι νηυσὶ δι᾽ ἀλληλέων καὶ τοὺς ἐπιβάτας ὁπλίσειε, τὸ λοιπὸν τῆς ἡμέρης τὰς νέας ἕχεσκε ἐπ᾽ ἀγκυρέων, παρεῖχέ τε τοῖσι Ἴωσι πόνον δι᾽ ἡμέρης. μέχρι μέν νυν ἡμερέων ἑπτὰ ἐπείθοντό τε καὶ ἐποίευν τὸ κελευόμενον: τῇ δὲ ἐπὶ ταύτῃσι οἱ Ἴωνες, οῖα ἀπαθέες ἐόντες πόνων τοιούτων τετρυμένοι τε ταλαιπωρίῃσί τε καὶ ἡλίῳ ... καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα αὐτίκα πείθεσθαι οὐδεὶς ἥθελε, ἀλλ᾽ οἷα στρατιὴ σκηνάς τε πηξάμενοι ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ἐσκιητροφέοντο καὶ ἐσβαίνειν οὐκ ἐθέλεκον ἐς τὰς νέας οὐδ᾽ ἀναπειρᾶσθαι.

Hearing this, the Ionians turned themselves over to Dionysius. Each day he led them to sea with the ships in columns, ordering the rowers to make a *diekplous* with their ships against each other and arming the marines onboard. For the rest of the day he had the ships at anchor and he made the Ionians toil all day. For seven days [the Ionians] obeyed his command and did what he ordered; but on the next day, worn out from such unfamiliar hard labors and the sun, [they began to grumble about putting themselves in the hands of this Phocaean vagrant (ἀνδρὶ φωκαέι ἀλαζόνι)]. After that point no one would obey commands, but, as if they were an army, they erected tents on the island and reclined in the shade and refused to board their ships or continue training.

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