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THE BIG SLEEP: HERODAS 8.5

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Herodas' eighth μίμιος has attracted a considerable amount of attention, especially for the account of the dream that occupies the bulk of the extant lines. This poem is a striking achievement with its bold combination of elements of the literary dream, *Dichterweihe*, and Hellenistic poetic polemic, although its native obscurity and poorly preserved state exacerbate interpretative difficulties.¹ The speaker, regularly identified as the poet himself, recounts his dream after rousing his household slaves before dawn (the early hour can be inferred from line 6, καὶ ἄψον . . . λύχνον). The details set out in the opening lines — the addresses to the various slaves, the concern with tending the sow, domestic chores — seem to locate the dramatic setting in the level of society familiar from other extant poems, a world which may recall the poetry of Hipponax, who is mentioned at the end of the preserved portion of the poem (78) and seems to be Herodas' poetic model.²

It is the purpose of the present note to discuss one brief phrase in the opening section of the poem, and that is the second part of line 5. Here is the relevant line with full context:

ἄκτηθι, δούλη Ψύλλα· μέχρι τέο κείητι
 ῥέγγουσα; τὴν δὲ χοῖρον ἀυονὴ δρύπτει·
 ἢ προσμένεις κὺ μέχρις εὖ ἥλιος θάλαψη
 τὸ]ν κῦρον ἐκδύς; κῶς δ', ἄτρυτε, κού κάμνεις

¹ There is a full bibliography in I.C.Cunningham, *Herodas: Mimiambi* (Leipzig 1987) XIII ff. See also Cunningham's earlier edition with commentary (Oxford 1971) and recent Loeb edition (J.Rusten *et al.*, *Theophrastus: Characters, etc.* [Cambridge, Mass. 1993]); R.M.Rosen, "Mixing of Genres and Literary Program in Herodas 8," *HSCP* 94 (1992) 205-216; V.G.Lanzara, "Il sogno di Eroda," in G.Arrighetti and F.Montanari (eds), *La componente autobiografica nella poesia greca e latina: fra realtà e artificio letterario* (Pisa 1993) 229-239. References to the text generally follow Cunningham's Teubner edition.

² For a convenient overview of Hipponax' poetry, see M.L.West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin and New York 1974) 29. For the affinities between Hipponax and Herodas, see E.Degani, *Studi su Ipponatte* (Bari 1984) 50-56, and, more generally, G.O.Hutchinson, *Hellenistic Poetry* (Oxford 1988) 237 f.; on the rôle of Hipponax in Herodas' dream, see Rosen 214 ff.; cf. also Lanzara 237 f. The influence of comedy and mime may be evident as well as that of Hipponactean ἴαμβος. For the literary dream, see A.Kambylis, *Die Dichterweihe und ihre Symbolik* (Heidelberg 1965) 106-109; R.G.M.Nisbet and M.Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes II* (Oxford 1978) 315; O.Skutsch, *The Annals of Quintus Ennius* (Oxford 1985) 147 ff. (useful bibliography at 150 n. 12); Lanzara 230-231, notes the relevance of *Od.* 19.535-553; Aesch. *Pers.* 175-210, *Cho.* 527-551; Soph. *El.* 417-423; Eur. *IT* 44-55, passages in which a dream is interpreted (cf. Her. 8.65 ff.). In general this tradition concerns higher forms of literature (especially epic and tragedy); accordingly, a closer parallel for Herodas' dream is *Anacreont.* 1 West, in which Anacreon in a dream appoints the poet his successor. Like Hipponax in Herodas (59), Anacreon is portrayed as an old man. In each case the succession is depicted in a way that is characteristic of the respective genres: with Anacreon it is accomplished through the sympotic images of a kiss and a garland; in Herodas' poem Hipponax appears amid threats (58 ff.). For discussion of the Anacreontic poem, see P.A.Rosenmeyer, *The Poetics of Imitation: Anacreon and the Anacreontic Tradition* (Cambridge 1992) 63-73.

τὰ πλ]ευρὰ κνώσσοι; αἰ δὲ νύκτες ἐννέωροι. 5
 ἄκτη]θι, φημί, καὶ ἄψον, εἰ θέλεις, λύχνον,
 καὶ τ]ήν ἄναυλον χοῖρον ἐκ νομὴν πέμψ[ο]ν.
 τ]όνθρυζε καὶ κνῶ, μέχρ' εὖ παρατά[ρ]χοι
 τὸ] βρέγμα τῶι κίπωνι μαλθακὸν θῶμα[ι].
 δει]λὴ Μεγαλλί, κα[ί] τ]ις Λάμπιον κνώσσει; 10

The reproach continues, and then at line 14 Annas is introduced and set apart from the other two by virtue of his superior intelligence (οὐ γὰρ νη[πία]ρ φρένας βόσκει, 15).³ It is this sensible slave to whom the dream is told.

αἰ δὲ νύκτες ἐννέωροι (5) is puzzling. ἐννέωρος is a Homeric word that seems to mean 'nine years long,' and is thus a synonym for ἐνναέτης,⁴ although in view of the ancient tendency to count inclusively ἐννέωρος, ἐνναέτης, and related terms may in fact refer to a period of eight years. It is usually understood to mean here simply 'very long,' and so the point is, as Cunningham says (*ad loc.*), that "The long winter night ought to provide enough time for Psylla to sleep." But this is difficult: as Cunningham further notes, it would be a "unique use of the Homeric adj." (so *LSJ* s.v.). Others have attempted to find the same general sense in the passage by suggesting unconvincingly that the word bears a special meaning, something like 'nine hours long,' and that νύκτες is used in the sense 'night watches' (see Headlam and Knox). Once again, however, there is no cogent parallel for this sort of understanding.

αἰ νύκτες ἐννέωροι is usually punctuated as a statement, but a question may in fact be more likely, the last in a series of questions that is brought to a halt by a return to the opening imperative ἄκτηθι in line 6 ("... Unwearied one, how is it that you do not wear out your ribs with slumber? Are your nights nine years long? Get up! ..."). There is a striking parallel with Callinus fr. 1.1 ff. Gentili-Prato = 1.1 ff. West², in which μέχρ' τεῦ κατάκειθε; is followed by a series of urgent questions with a statement of the reason for the urgency given in a non-question (4, ἀτὰρ πόλεμος γαῖαν ἄπασαν ἔχει; cf. Her. 8.2, τὴν δὲ χοῖρον ἀδονὴ δρύπτει).⁵ The usual understanding of αἰ νύκτες ἐννέωροι, however, ill suits a question, and I suspect that this kind of consideration has conditioned the usual presentation of the text. It may, however, be possible to interpret the phrase in another way. An ἐννεαετηρῖς is a regular length for divine punishment.⁶ Accordingly, the speaker may be asking ironically if Psylla's deep slumber is supernatural in nature, a sleep sent by the gods. On this understanding and with this punctuation, a conspicuous parallel between lines

³ It is also possible that the vocative Ἄννᾶ indicates a female name. On the problem of the form, see V.Schmidt, *Sprachliche Untersuchungen zu Herondas* (Berlin and New York 1968) 47 with n. 1.

⁴ The relevant lexicographical material is set out by W.Headlam and A.D.Knox, *Herondas: the Mimes and Fragments* (Cambridge 1922) 378 (*ad loc.*).

⁵ A lacuna after line 4 in the Callinus fragment prevents us from establishing the precise extent of the allusion. It is interesting to note that Callinus, like Hipponax, was an Ephesian.

⁶ See J.G.Frazer on Apollod. 2.11.1 (*Apollodorus: the Library* [Cambridge, Mass. 1921] 1.218-219).

5 and 10 emerges. In the latter passage the speaker asks Megallis if she too were sleeping a Latmian sleep (10). The καί points back to line 5, and this link is reinforced by the recurrence of the poetic verb κνώσσω, which is used by Herodas only in the present passage. Λάτμιος refers to the cave on Mt. Latmos, where Endymion, one of the paradigmatic sleepers of myth, was laid to rest.

The argument for punctuating αἰ νύκτες ἐννέωροι as a question seems to be adequately supported by the internal considerations hitherto discussed, but, if it is correct, the mention of a protracted period of sleep may well constitute an allusion to a possible understanding of a well-known passage of Hesiod. At *Theogony* 793 ff. there is a description of the dire fate suffered by an Olympian who breaks an oath sworn on the water of Styx:

ὅς κεν τὴν ἐπίορκον ἀπολλείψας ἐπομόσσει
 ἀθανάτων οἷ ἔχουσι κάρη νιφόεντος Ὀλύμπου,
 κεῖται νήυτμος τετελεσμένον εἰς ἐνιαυτόν · 795
 οὐδέ ποτ' ἀμβροσίης καὶ νέκταρος ἔρχεται ἄσσον
 βρώσιος, ἀλλά τε κεῖται ἀνάπνευστος καὶ ἄναυδος
 στρωτοῖς ἐν λεχέεσσι, κακὸν δ' ἐπὶ κῶμα καλύπτει.
 αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν νοῦσον τελέσει μέγαν εἰς ἐνιαυτόν,
 ἄλλος δ' ἐξ ἄλλου δέχεται χαλεπώτερος ἄθλος · 800
 εἰνάετεσ δὲ θεῶν ἀπαμείρεται αἰὲν ἐόντων,
 οὐδέ ποτ' ἐς βουλήν ἐπιμίγεται οὐδ' ἐπὶ δαίτασ
 ἐννέα πάντ' ἔτεα · δεκάτῳ δ' ἐπιμίγεται αὐτίς
 †εἰρέας ἀθανάτων οἷ Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσι.

The suffering of this god consists of two phases: a period marked by a deep death-like sleep that is called κῶμα,⁷ and a subsequent exile from the company of the Olympians. The exile clearly lasts for nine years (εἰνάετεσ ... ἐννέα πάντ' ἔτεα · δεκάτῳ δ' ...). West (on 798) is probably correct in arguing that Hesiod envisaged a single year of unconsciousness, but the mention of a 'great year' has led others to think differently. While there are passages in which this sort of phrase is used of a single year,⁸ Censorinus (*de die nat.* 18.4-5) preserves a different tradition, telling us that an *annus magnus* was in fact an ἐννεαητρίς, a period comprising eight years.⁹ Merkelbach has combined the reference to one year in 795 with

⁷ On the meaning and formation of κῶμα, see E.Risch, *MH* 19 (1962) 197-201; P.Wiesmann, *MH* 29 (1972) 1-11; M.Meier-Brügger, *MH* 50 (1993) 126.

⁸ μέγαν εἰς ἐνιαυτόν, Arat. 741; *magnum annum*, Verg. *Aen.* 3.284. As West notes, Rhian. fr. 10 Powell (*CA* p. 11) is ambiguous.

⁹ This is a suitable time for mythic punishment: cf. Apollod. 3.4.2, Κάδμος δὲ ἀνθ' ὧν ἔκτεινεν †αἰδίον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐθήτευσεν Ἄρει· ἦν δὲ ὁ ἐνιαυτὸς τότε ὀκτὼ ἔτη (the source is Pherec. *FG+Hist* 3 F 22/89). For the later (and very different) Stoic idea of the 'great year,' see B.L. van der Waerden, "Das große Jahr und die ewige Wiederkehr," *Hermes* 80 (1952) 129-157.

the μέγας ἐνιαυτός to arrive at a nine-year period.¹⁰ This is certainly a possible way to understand the text, but I find it difficult to confine the sleep to the first year, since the κῶμα seems to be the νοῦδος referred to in line 799. Accordingly, it is likely that μέγαν εἰς ἐνιαυτόν (799) looks back to τετελεσμένον εἰς ἐνιαυτόν (795). If this was understood to be a 'great year', the perjurer could be seen to endure nine years of unconsciousness followed by a correspondingly long period of exile (though the count does not seem to be inclusive at 803).

Another passage that may be noteworthy in this regard is Horace, *Ars* 386-390:

si quid tamen olim
scripseris, in Maeci descendat iudicis aures
et patris et nostras, nonumque prematur in annum,
membranis intus positis; delere licebit
quod non edideris, nescit uox missa reuerti.

In these lines Horace seems to be advising Piso's elder son to put his first drafts away for nine years safely wrapped in parchment.¹¹ R. D. Griffith has attractively argued that Horace is alluding to Hesiod's account of the consequences of breaking a Stygian oath.¹² In addition to the general conceit of treating a poem as though a divine criminal, Griffith finds a number of verbal parallels that reinforce the identification of the punished god with the dormant poem. Although Griffith does not address the issue, the allusion to Hesiod would be more effective if the period of dormancy were the same for both god and poem. In this light, it is possible that Horace understood Hesiod's poem as implying a nine-year term.

It should be stressed that understanding the μέγας ἐνιαυτός in this way is probably not what Hesiod's text implies; but it may well have been an interpretation of the passage held in antiquity, especially in view of the frequency with which an ἐννεαετηρίς occurs as a limit for divine punishment (cf. n. 5, above). In Herodas' poem the implications of the reference would have been clarified by the corresponding allusion to Endymion in line 5; in fact, it may be noteworthy that in some versions Endymion's sleep, like the κῶμα in Hesiod, seems to have been a punishment for some transgression.¹³ In addition, there may be a *Steigerung* as we pass from a nine-year slumber to the eternal sleep of Endymion.

¹⁰ R.Merkelbach, "Konjekturen zu Hesiod," *SIFC* 27-28 (1956) 286-301, at 292 with n. 1 ("Ein Jahr + ein grosses Jahr (8 Jahre) = 9 Jahre").

¹¹ This seems to be the understanding of Quint. *Ep. ad Tryph.* 2, *usus deinde Horati consilio, qui in arte poetica suadet, ne praecipitur editio 'nonumque prematur in annum', dabam iis otium, ut refrigerato inuentionis amore diligentius repetitos tamquam lector perpenderem.* For a different view, see Brink on 388-389.

¹² R.D.Griffith, "Nonum ... prematur in annum (Hor. *AP* 388)," *Mnemosyne* 45 (1992) 371-372. It should be noted that *nonus* can mean 'eighth': see *OLD* s.v. 1c.

¹³ Cf. Epimenides *FGrHist* 457 F 10 = DK 3 B 14 (Schol. A.R. 4.57-58). See T.Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: a Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore and London 1993) 35, for an overview of the tradition.

Owing to the fragmentary state of the dream narrative, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the details of the opening section are relevant to the rest of the poem. The commands to the three slaves are reminiscent of other passages in Herodas (cf. 1.79 ff.; 6.1 ff.). Particularly close is the opening of 6, where Koritto describes her slave as *τάλαινα* (3; cf. *δει]λή*, 8.10) and as muttering with discontent (*τονθορύζουσαν*, 7; cf. *τ]όνθορυζε*, 8.8). The chief difference between Koritto and the speaker of 8 is that the latter, perhaps significantly, is more temperate in his treatment of the slaves.¹⁴ Such scenes may simply be characteristic of the genre and the antecedent literary tradition; but in view of the obviously symbolic nature of the account of the dream with its striking Dionysiac imagery,¹⁵ it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the description of the awakening of the household serves some purpose within the larger poetic structure. For example, there may be some connection between the threat of the old man, who may be Hipponax, to strike the speaker with the whole of his *βατηρίη* (60: very likely an allusion to Hipp. fr. 8 Degani² = 20 West², *δοκέων ἐκεῖνον τῆι βακτηρίηι κόψαι*) and the speaker's similar warning to Psylla in line 9; but without a sounder textual basis such speculation cannot be substantiated.¹⁶ So far as the references to divinely inspired sleep are concerned, there is no evidence to suggest any direct point of contact with the details of the dream,¹⁷ but they are nonetheless significant, for they serve as a reminder that sleep too, like dreams, is the province of the gods.¹⁸

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¹⁴ The imperatives at lines 6 and 14 are both softened by *εἰ θέλει*, a phrase that would be uncharacteristic of the sharp-tongued Koritto. Headlam and Knox may well be right in holding that *εἰ θέλει* suggests impatience (cf. also Gow on Machon 383), but it nonetheless seems to make the command less peremptory. In this light, Hutchinson's description of the passage should be modified ([above, n. 2] 238, "The address to the slaves in the first section, with its air of bustle and its impatience and *ferocity of language*, belongs to a recurring type of passage in these poems...." [my italics]).

¹⁵ Rosen (above, n. 1) offers a compelling discussion of the implications of the dream. It seems clear that Dionysus is present as god of drama: cf. in particular the reference to the tragic buskin (*κ]οθήρνου*], 34; for the *κόθορνος* as a symbol of drama, see Brink on Hor. *Ars* 80 and 280) and the association of the *ἀκκωλιασμός* with the Rural Dionysia (A.W.Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*² [Oxford 1968] 45; Cunningham on 36 ff.). Relevant here is another account of poetic initiation, the story of the dream of Aeschylus in which the playwright was visited by Dionysus who told him to turn his hand to tragedy (Paus. 1.21.2 = T 111 Radt). We know nothing of the source of this story, but that it was a Hellenistic poem is a strong possibility.

¹⁶ Are we to infer that Herodas and his literary ancestor possess a similarity of temperament? Cf. Hutchinson (above, n. 2) 239 with n. 39.

¹⁷ It is tantalizing, however, to note in the description of the *ἀκκωλιασμός* a reference to Aeolus' bag of winds in line 37, *Ὀδ]υκκέως ο[....] Αἰόλ[ου] δῶρον*. At *Od.* 10.19 this bag is described as an *ἀκκός βοὸς ἐννεώροιο*. Although I see no special point to the adjective, it is interesting that Odysseus succumbed to a deep sleep with disastrous consequences.

¹⁸ I am indebted to R.L.Fowler, D.E.Gerber, R.D.Griffith, and E.Robbins for commenting on this note in draft.

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CORRIGENDUM

S. 96, Z. 10 des Texts: lies Λάτμιον.