

The location of the Celts according to Hecataeus, Herodotus, and other Greek writers

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Résumé

La localisation des Celtes d'après Hécatée, Hérodote et d'autres auteurs grecs

C'est par erreur que l'on a compris le texte d'Hécatée et d'Hérodote, deux contemporains des premières inscriptions celtiques du Nord de l'Italie et du Sud de la Suisse, comme des documents localisant les Celtes en Autriche et dans le Sud-Ouest de l'Allemagne, ce qui a eu pour résultat malheureux de conférer l'étiquette celtique à la culture halstattienne de cette région. En réalité, Hécatée et Hérodote renvoient à une localisation en Gaule – comme il a été confirmé plus tard par Timagète, Pythéas et Apollonius de Rhodes –, ainsi que, peut-être, dans une partie de la péninsule Ibérique, comme il a été affirmé par Éphore au IV^e siècle. L'aire ou les aires celtiques de la péninsule auxquelles se réfèrent Hérodote et Éphore ne peuvent pas aujourd'hui être définies, mais il n'est pas nécessaire de les faire s'étendre à l'ouest de la Celtibérie – au centre de l'Espagne –, d'où proviennent, plus tard, les plus anciennes inscriptions celtiques de la péninsule. Au milieu du IV^e siècle, le Pseudo-Scylax fait mention de l'installation de Celtes en Italie dans la plaine du Pô, de même peut-être que Apollonius au siècle suivant. À l'époque d'Apollonius, les Celtes étaient déjà engagés dans des migrations vers l'Ouest, si bien que tous les témoignages postérieurs concernant leur localisation, même les données toponymiques, sont d'une valeur incertaine comparée à celles des premiers auteurs, notamment Hécatée et Hérodote, malgré leurs limites et leur point de vue méditerranéen. Certes, les premiers auteurs sont eux-mêmes trop tardifs pour nous indiquer la région où sont apparus les Celtes et la langue celtique. Cependant, nous pouvons dire négativement qu'ils ne permettent d'appuyer ni une localisation à l'Est, en Allemagne ou en Autriche, ni une localisation à l'Ouest sur le rivage atlantique. Ce qu'ils nous disent s'accorde certainement avec une origine des Celtes située en Gaule, mais cette hypothèse ne peut être développée sans attribuer des identifications ethniques spéculatives aux données archéologiques préhistoriques.

Abstract

Hecataeus and Herodotus, who were contemporary with the earliest Celtic-language inscriptions in northern Italy and southern Switzerland, have been misunderstood as localising the Celts in Austria and south-west Germany, with the unfortunate result that its archaeological 'Hallstatt culture' has been wrongly labelled 'Celtic'. In fact, Hecataeus and Herodotus point to locations in Gaul (as later confirmed by Timagetus, Pytheas, and Apollonius of Rhodes) and possibly in part of the Hispanic Peninsula (as stated by Ephorus in the fourth century). The Celtic area or areas in the Peninsula to which Herodotus and Ephorus may refer cannot now be defined, but need not have extended west of Celtiberia in central Spain, which is later the source of the earliest Celtic inscriptions in the Peninsula. In the mid-fourth century the Italian Celtic settlements around the Po valley are referred to by Pseudo-Scylax, and possibly by Apollonius in the third. By Apollonius' day, Celts were already migrating eastwards, so that any subsequent evidence for their location, including onomastic data, is of doubtful value compared to that of the earlier writers, especially Hecataeus and Herodotus, despite their evident limitations and Mediterranean perspective. Even the earliest writers are too late to guide us to the area where the Celts and the Celtic language emerged. Negatively, however, we can conclude that they neither support a location in Germany or Austria in the east nor support a location on the Atlantic seaboard in the west. What they say is certainly consonant with Celtic origins in Gaul, but that hypothesis cannot be taken further without attaching speculative ethnic labels to prehistoric archaeological data.

THE LOCATION OF THE CELTS ACCORDING TO HECATAEUS, HERODOTUS, AND OTHER GREEK WRITERS

PAR
Patrick SIMS-WILLIAMS

Introduction

The two earliest Greek writers to mention the Celts, Hecataeus of Miletus (c. 560-480 BC) and Herodotus of Halicarnassus (c. 485-424 BC), were natives of Asia Minor, and their knowledge of western geography was inevitably hazy, as Herodotus himself admits:

I cannot speak with exactness concerning the westernmost regions of Europe. I personally don't believe there is a river called Eridanus flowing into a Northern Sea, from which it is said our amber comes. Nor do I know of the Cassiterides, from which tin is brought. Indeed the very name Eridanus is Greek, created by some poet, and is not foreign. Neither can I confirm that a sea beyond Europe even exists. All we know for certain is that our tin and amber come from very distant regions.¹

Despite their distance from the Celts, Hecataeus and Herodotus both distinguish them from their immediate neighbours (the Ligurians and Cynesians respectively), and are thus more useful to us than some later writers such as Ephorus (c. 400-330 BC), who used the term *Keltoi* in a generalized, schematic way, assigning the four points of the compass to Indians, Ethiopians, Celts, and Scythians.² This shorthand should not be taken out of its astronomical context, as it is by modern scholars who deduce that the *Keltoi* were just the western, non-Greek 'Other'. Just as Ephorus can hardly have imagined that the east and south were solely occupied by Indians and Ethiopians (without Persians, Egyptians, etc.), so he cannot be assumed to have believed that only Celts inhabited his 'Celtic' quadrant.³ In fact, in another context, he distinguished between Celts and Iberians, although getting their relative proportions wrong

1. Herodotus 3.115, transl. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 19, n. 26. Cf. the imaginary and inevitably speculative map of 'The World according to Herodotus' in TAYLOR, 1998, p. 386. A Celtic etymology, 'river of the west', is proposed for *Eridanos* [here the Rhine?] by DELAMARRE, 2008. He does not explain the Athenian river of the same name.

2. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 35-36. See PSEUDO-SCYMNUS, ed. MARCOTTE, 2000, p. 52-55, where Marcotte argues that the scheme was transmitted rather than invented by Ephorus.

3. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 1998, p. 24-25.

according to Josephus and Strabo.⁴ Other early Greek writers, including Timagetus, Timaeus, and Apollonius of Rhodes, also regard the Celts as a distinct people.

Hecataeus

Hecataeus' account of Europe in his 'Description of the Earth' survives in disjointed fragments, of which only two, transmitted by Stephanus of Byzantium, refer to the Celts.⁵

Nyrax: Austrian or Sardinian?

In one of the two relevant fragments (F56) Hecataeus refers to *Nyrax* (var. *Nyrakê*) as a 'Celtic city'. This cannot be identified with any certainty. The traditional equation with *Noreia* in Austrian *Noricum*⁶ has nothing in its favour apart from the *N* and *r*, and the scholars who popularized it, d'Arbois de Jubainville and Déchelette (followed by Powell),⁷ were clearly motivated by their own ethnological preconceptions, which included an unproven association of the Celts with the archaeological 'Hallstatt culture', named from the Austrian type-site of Hallstatt.⁸ Déchelette admitted that *Nyrax* = *Noricum* was a conjecture, already rejected by Müllenhoff, who had compared *Nora* in Sardinia, its eponymous Iberian founder *Norax*, and Sardinian *nurághe* 'fort'.⁹ Nevertheless, Déchelette referred to the authority of d'Arbois de Jubainville, who in fact had also noted the uncertainty of the Austrian identification, while remaining partial to the view that *Noricum* was a 'région celtique au sud du Danube'.¹⁰

If a choice is to be made, it is preferable – very tentatively, since coincidence cannot be ruled out – to revive Müllenhoff's equation of *Nyrax* (var. *Nyrakê*) with Sardinian *nurághe*, a word of obscure pre-Romance origin which refers to the prehistoric forts

4. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 35-37.

5. JACOBY, 1923, p. 17; FREEMAN, 1996, p. 14. Hecataeus should definitely *not* be cited as connecting Narbonne with the Celts; see COLLIS, 2003, p. 127 and 174-175, and 2014, p. 302.

6. e.g. KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 12 and 27, decisively rejected by STIFTER, 2008, p. 301-302. On the names see ANREITER, 2001, p. 95; SCHERRER, 2007, p. 221-222.

7. POWELL, 1980, p. 13 and 46.

8. On d'Arbois and Déchelette, and their impossible identification of *Nyrax* see COLLIS, 2003, p. 63-67, 87-92, 120-121, 126-127, and 188-189. I put 'Hallstatt culture' in quotation marks, in view of the way in which this 'culture' is composed of elements with varied and only partly overlapping distributions, as shown by the map in KARL, 2010, p. 51. For the early scholarship see ELSTON, 1934, and HUBERT, 1987, p. 142-188.

9. DÉCHELETTE, 1913, p. 567; MÜLLENHOFF, 1870, p. 96-97. This is problematic insofar as the vowel of *Nyrax* is *upsilon*, whereas that of *Nora* is *omega*. Müllenhoff's *Nyrax* = *Nora* has been advanced again, apparently independently, by KOCH, 2009, p. 94, who even suggests that *nurághe* may have a Celtic suffix. On its suffix see PAULIS, 1993, p. 542, and BLASCO FERRER, 2010, p. 115-116 (note that the latter's etymology for *nur-* is rejected by MORVAN, 2011, p. 403, and LAKARRA, 2013, p. 142, n. 17).

10. ARBOIS DE JUBAINVILLE, 1902, p. 14.

which are common all over Sardinia.¹¹ Its oldest form, attested on a first-century AD Roman inscription near Molaria in Sardinia, is *NURAC*, which in due course was assimilated to the Latin declensional pattern *-ax, -acis*.¹² A location for *Nyrax* nearer to Sardinia than to Austria would fit with the Mediterranean orientation of Hecataeus' work. Perhaps some Celts in Hecataeus' day occupied one of the Sardinian *nurághi*, or a fort on the mainland named with the Sardinian word.¹³ Admittedly, however, the Celtic label for *Nyrax* could be the result of some mistake in the transmission of Hecataeus' text. What Apollonius of Rhodes calls the 'Sardinian Sea' in the third century BC may be called the 'Celtic Sea' by Timagetus in the early fourth (see below).

The meagre justification for the 'Celtic' label for the whole 'Hallstatt culture' is clear from Déchelette: '*les documents*' – namely Hecataeus on *Nyrax* and Herodotus on the Danube (see below) – showed that '*les Celtes*' were installed on the upper Rhine and upper Danube in the fifth century BC; hence, he says, the undocumented western Hallstatt zone in central Gaul must also have been Celtic.¹⁴

It is true that Noricum *became* a 'région celtique', rich in Celtic place-names and in particular in Celtic personal names,¹⁵ but these names are all attested long after the historically recorded eastwards migrations of Celts in the third century BC. The older, pre-Celtic, Indo-European substratum in the place-names of the 'East Alpine Region' – 'east', that is, of Lake Constance – is akin to that of Pannonia to the east, where again the Celtic names seem to be a superstratum.¹⁶ A recent theory,¹⁷ based on the names *Hallstatt* and *Hallein*, that there was a very early 'Hallstatt' branch of the Celtic language in which Indo-European *s- in the word for 'salt' had changed to *h-* is undoubtedly circular as well as incorrect.¹⁸ It depends on an assumption that the 'Hallstatt culture' was Celtic.

The Marseilles hinterland

In the second of the two relevant fragments (F55), Hecataeus situates the Ionian Greek colony of *Massalia* (Marseilles) in the territory of the Ligurians, beyond whom lies *Keltike*:

11. WAGNER, 1962, p. 176-179, s.v. *nuráke*.

12. PAULIS, 1993.

13. It is of course possible that Celts occupied places in Sardinia, and especially Corsica, from time to time; see BERNARDO STEMPEL, 2005; SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2006, p. 251-255.

14. DÉCHELETTE, 1913, p. 570-571 (cf. COLLIS, 2003, p. 89-90). He thought that the Hallstatt necropolis itself was Illyrian, not Celtic, and that the Taurisci ('*peuple celtique ou celto-illyrien*') may have arrived later (DÉCHELETTE, 1913, p. 602 and n. 3).

15. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2006; FALILEYEV *et al.*, 2010; RAYBOULD and SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2009, p. 33-41 and 52.

16. See ANREITER *et al.*, 2000; ANREITER, 2001, especially p. 203, n. 702-703; and FALILEYEV, 2002. The name of the great Hercynian forest is attested as early as Aristotle and is plausibly Celtic (see FALILEYEV, 2014, p. 46-47), but it need not have been named by Celtic-speakers in its immediate vicinity.

17. WATKINS, 1999, p. 540.

18. STIFTER, 2012, p. 529-530.

Massalia: A Ligurian city near (*katà*) Celtica, a colony of the Phocaeans. Hecataeus in *Europa*.¹⁹

Presumably Hecataeus' information came from Marseilles, near the mouth of the Rhône, an important western listening-post for Greeks throughout the Mediterranean.²⁰ His distinction between Ligurians and Celts shows that for him Celtic was more than a vague term for northern or western barbarians (see above on Ephorus).

Herodotus 5.9.3 confirms the presence of 'Ligurians living inland above Marseilles'. He does not mention the Celts, but does not need to in the context, which is a discussion of the word *sigynnae* 'merchants' in the (ill-attested) Ligurian language.²¹

An early division of the Marseilles hinterland between Ligurians and Celts is borne out by later writers, starting with Apollonius of Rhodes in the third century BC. He has the Argonauts sailing down the Rhône to the Mediterranean unharmed by 'the countless tribes of the Celts and the Ligvans', thanks to a mist created by the goddess Hera. His ordering of the two names arguably confirms that the Celts were north of the Ligurians.²² Hecataeus' work on Europe seems to have hugged the coastlines, so it probably never indicated how far Celtica stretched north of Marseilles.²³ Apollonius' story indicates, however, – if one can trust poetic fiction – that potentially aggressive Celtic tribes were believed to inhabit territory further up the Rhône.

Celts in Gaul according to later writers (Timagetus, Pytheas, Aristotle, Timaeus, Apollonius)

Apollonius of Rhodes also mentions 'stormy lakes that spread throughout the vast territory of the Celts' (or 'spread for a vast distance...').²⁴ These lakes were possibly the lakes of north Italy, where we have Celtic-language inscriptions well before the time of Apollonius, and/or those of Switzerland.²⁵ By Apollonius' time, of course, hostile Celts

19. JACOBY, 1923, p. 17; FREEMAN, 1996, p. 14. On the bare possibility that *Keltike* was added in transmission see HOZ, 2005, p. 174, n. 2, and 2011, p. 490, n. 28.

20. MOMIGLIANO, 1975, p. 50-60.

21. A linguistic distinction between Ligurian and Celtic is sometimes denied, but see HOZ, 2005, p. 175; FALILEYEV, 2015, p. 175-76. The earliest Gaulish inscriptions, north-west of Marseilles, are mapped by HOZ, 2007, and KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 155. Throughout this article I refer to linguistic evidence because, despite COLLIS, 2014, p. 291 and 296, I believe it usually *is* valid to use the Celtic language 'as a proxy for ethnicity' (cf. Pliny 3.1.13; Tacitus, *Germania*, 43). See SIMS-WILLIAMS, 1998, p. 16 and 27-29.

22. APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautica*, 4.646-647: see APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, with notes on p. 157 and 170; for the transl., see APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, ed. RACE, 2008, p. 381.

23. PEARSON, 1934, p. 330, is rather disingenuous in stating that '[w]e cannot tell how far to the north Hecataeus supposed this Celtic territory to extend, but there is nothing to show that he drew the line farther south than the actual source of the Danube at Donaueschingen in the Black Forest'. It is Herodotus who associates the Celts with the Danube, and he is unlikely to have thought it rose in the Black Forest (see below).

24. APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, ed. RACE, 2008, p. 381 and n. 88, offers both translations of line 636.

25. See below. The Lepontic inscriptions are mapped in KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 154, and KOCH, 2014, p. 12.

were on the move, going as far as Greece and Asia Minor,²⁶ and this development may be reflected in his allusion to their potential threat to the Argonauts.²⁷ Yet already in the early fourth century, before those documented migrations, Timagetus seems to have envisaged inland Celts in his lost work *On Ports*, where he spoke of ‘Celtic mountains in the land of the Celts’, whence the Istros (Danube) flowed into a ‘Celtic lake’ out of which two rivers flowed: one (the Danube) fell into the Black Sea, and the other fell into the ‘Celtic sea’.²⁸ This latter river is probably the Rhône.²⁹ An alternative would be an imaginary branch of the Danube running into the Adriatic.³⁰ Be this as it may, Timagetus’ remarks support the impression given by Apollonius that early Celtic territory was supposed to stretch considerably north of the Marseilles hinterland.

How much farther north? Slightly later than Timagetus, Aristotle (384-322 BC) reported that the donkey ‘does not reproduce in wintry climates, such as Scythia and neighbouring regions, or the Celtic lands beyond Iberia, which are also cold’. Vague though this is, it seems to point to the Atlantic or northern coasts of France, and perhaps still farther.³¹ Again, Timaeus of Tauromenium (c. 350-260 BC), claiming that the Argonauts, starting northwards along the Tanaïs (the Don), reached the Ocean and followed the Ocean anticlockwise to Libya (Africa), adduced as proof a report that ‘the Celts who dwell along the Ocean venerate the Dioscuri above any other of the gods’.³² Whatever lies behind this report, Timaeus (a Sicilian) evidently took it for granted that some Celts lived on non-Mediterranean shores, whether Baltic, North Sea or Atlantic ones.³³ The most minimal, compact interpretation would be that Celtic territory was supposed to stretch from the Marseilles hinterland up to the western or

26. See TOMASCHITZ, 2002. If we can trust the name *Tektosakes* in Ptolemy’s *Geography* 6.14.9, they may even have reached eastern Kazakhstan. See SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2006, p. 295 and 298-299, and 2009, p. 464, and FALILEYEV, 2014, p. 35. This possibility is taken seriously by KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 27, and MANASSERO, 2013, p. 77-78.

27. Cf. THALMANN, 2011, p. 163, n. 47. Callimachus, Apollonius’ contemporary (cf. APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, p. 21), refers to the ‘Celtic war’ in his hymn to Delos (*Hymns* 4.173).

28. Text and translation in LACHENAUD, 2010, p. 438-439. Cf. JACOBY, 1923, p. 11. The scholiast who transmits his work may mean that Timagetus also asserts that the Phasis (the Rioni in the Caucasus) descends from the same ‘Celtic mountains’, but this is not at all clear; Timagetus may rather be countering the idea that the Phasis came from the Ocean (rather than from a mountain), as stated by Hecataeus and rejected by Artemidorus and Eratosthenes. In fact Timagetus’ ‘Celtic mountains’ could be the Pyrenees; see below. Apollonius is said in the scholia to have followed Timagetus in having the Argonauts sail along the Danube on their return journey (LACHENAUD, 2010, p. 450-451).

29. APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. VIAN, 1981, p. 17-18; CLARE, 2002, p. 125-126; SHIPLEY, 2011, p. 105.

30. According to Pseudo-Aristotle, *Marvellous Things Heard*, 105, ‘They say that the Ister flowing from the forests called Hercynian divides, and one part flows into the Pontus, and the other into the Adriatic’ (ARISTOTLE, transl. HETT, 1936, p. 285). Cf. ŻMUDZIŃSKI, 1999; SHIPLEY, 2011, p. 58 and 105; APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, p. 9, 122, and 169-170.

31. Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 2.8 (748a), quoted with *History of Animals* 7.8 (606b) by FREEMAN, 1996, p. 33. JULLIAN, 1905, p. 379, n. 4, argues, over literally, that Aristotle must be speaking of Celts in the Netherlands or beyond, and links this with passages where he refers to the Celts taking up arms against the sea (on these passages cf. references in SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2011b, p. 82, n. 8). Donkeys are already *relatively* rare in northern France: DENT, 1972, p. 57.

32. Quoted by Diodorus Siculus 4.56.3-4. See PEARSON, 1987, p. 62-63; APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, p. 9 and 171.

33. Statements about Celts on northern coasts (much used by nineteenth-century scholars) are attested, but are too late to be reliable: SIMS-WILLIAMS, 1998, p. 23, n. 86.

northern coast of France (or both). This would explain how *Keltike/Celtica* came to be the standard term for Gaul. Thus Pytheas in the late fourth century reported on the sailing time from *Kantion* (Kent) to *Keltike* (the French coast).³⁴

The most minimal interpretation is not necessarily correct, however. Timaeus' Celtic Dioscuri were possibly the *Lugoues* (singular *Lugus*), the best attested of Celtic multiple gods.³⁵ In the Roman period dedications to them are widespread (e.g. at Nîmes, Avenches, and Osma), but the only ones in provinces near Atlantic coasts are in Galicia and Cantabria.³⁶ These dedications are much later than Timaeus, of course, but an inscription in the 'South-Western script' (employed c. 700-500 BC), at Fonte Velha, Bensafirim, in the Algarve, *may* – the transliteration is disputed – begin with an invocation to *lok^oob^ooniirab^o*. This was interpreted by J. A. Correa as a dative plural of *Lugoues* (cf. *Lugubo*, *Lucoubu*, *Lucobo* on the Galician altars) followed by a word (adjective?) in the same case referring to the *Neri*, the people beside the *Promuntorium Celticum*, the most westerly point in Galicia, whom Pliny (4.111) calls *Celtici cognomine Neri*.³⁷ Fonte Velha is only 25 km from the corresponding *Sacrum Promuntorium* in Portugal, so it would be appropriate that an exotic cult from the northern promontory should be replicated there, even borrowing a Celtic-language opening dative formula. If this speculation is correct, one might guess that in Timaeus' day the *Lugoues* were already culted along the Atlantic from the Algarve to Cantabria (and perhaps further north as well), that they were his Celtic 'Dioscuri', and that knowledge of them reached him in Sicily from Atlantic mariners.

Apollonius has a further mention of Celts in connection with the river Po (which he calls *Eridanos*): the Celts claim that drops of amber in a lake or marsh by the *Eridanos* are tears shed by Apollo (*Argonautica* 4.611-617). Aeschylus has previously located these amber tears beside an *Eridanos* in Iberia, which he identified with the Rhône (Pliny 37.11.31-32).³⁸ Apollonius may introduce the Celts as witnesses because he was aware of the historic Celtic settlements in the upper Po valley, attested by Pseudo-Scylax (mid-fourth-century) and later writers (Polybius, Livy).³⁹

34. Strabo 1.4.3; FREEMAN, 1996, p. 41. The fact that Pytheas does not include Britain in *Keltike* should not be used as evidence that the cross-Channel linguistic and cultural links noted much later by Tacitus in *Agricola* 11 were not already in existence; we simply do not know. Britain v. *Keltike* may have been a convenient geographical shorthand like Britain v. 'Europe' in modern British parlance. See SIMS-WILLIAMS, 1998, p. 26-27. Exceptionally, Hipparchus in the second century BC (cited by Strabo 2.1.18) may have counted the inhabitants of Britain as Celts; cf. COLLIS, 2003, p. 27.

35. LAMBERT, 1994, p. 60; HILY, 2012, p. 82-84.

36. TOVAR, 1982; MARCO SIMÓN, 2006.

37. See discussions by VILLAR, 2004, p. 262-263, and 2007, p. 435-442 (he notes problems, to which the Roman-epigraphy-like *ii* for the *e* of *Neri* is added by ZEIDLER, 2011), and by MARCO SIMÓN, 2006, p. 213 (who, like Villar, suggests that the *Lugoues* were sometimes female). KOCH, 2011, p. 70, has a different interpretation and thinks the entire inscription Celtic, whereas HOZ, 2010, p. 397-398, has a different transcription and rejects any Celticity (on the Algarve inscriptions more generally see below). It is not clear that any distinction between dative plural and dual should be expected; Old Irish may imply **-bis* versus **-bin*, but like much Continental Celtic the Hispanic inscriptions have a different vowel and no final consonant.

38. Cf. EURIPIDES, ed. DIGGLE, 1970, p. 27 and n. 3.

39. See SHIPLEY, 2011, p. 104, and other references in FREEMAN, 1996, p. 28-29. THALMANN, 2011, p. 161, n. 38, takes Apollonius' Celts by the Po to be an 'indigenous people'. Possibly, howe-

Herodotus

The Celts and the Cynetes

Herodotus mentions the Celts only twice in his *History*, in both cases in connection with the course of the river Danube and not because he had any particular interest in so distant a people. In Book II 33 he discusses the problematic course of the river Nile, a topic on which he had made inconclusive enquiries on a visit to Egypt. Leaning towards the – to us irrational – principle of geographical symmetry, he supposes, ‘calculating unknown things from known’, that the Nile must flow as far through Africa as the Ister (Danube) was known(!) to flow through Europe on its way to the Black Sea:

For the Ister, beginning in the land of the Celts and the city of Pyrene flows through the middle of Europe. The Celts live beyond the Pillars of Heracles and border on the Cynesii, who are the westernmost inhabitants of Europe.⁴⁰

Then in Book IV 48-50, discussing the many rivers that flow into the Black Sea, he refers to the Danube as the largest known river in the world, larger even than the Nile, owing to the numerous tributaries feeding it rather than to its inherent size, unlike the tributary-less Nile. After naming only the most easterly tributaries, he concludes:

For the Ister flows through all of Europe, rising among the Celts who are the westernmost inhabitants of Europe, except for the Cynetes.⁴¹

Herodotus’ *Kynēsioi* are evidently the same as his *Kynêtes*, the more common form of the name, which is found elsewhere, alongside *Konioi* and *Kouneoi*. Herodorus of Heraclea (c. 400 BC) also places them in Iberia, and they can be securely located in the south of Portugal, in the Algarve, around the area later called *ager Cuneus* in Latin (cf. Latin *cuneus* ‘wedge’).⁴² Ephorus claimed that the *Cuneus* promontory was connected with Herakles (Strabo 3.1.4). This would explain the early Greek interest

ver, they are mentioned because amber, which came from the far north of Europe, was associated with them and because Apollo was connected with the Hyperboreans; cf. APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, p. 165. Or perhaps Aeschylus had already referred to Iberian Celts.

40. Herodotus 2.33; transl. FREEMAN 1996, p. 18. On geographical symmetry see PRIESTLEY, 2014, p. 113-115 and 134.

41. Herodotus 4.49; transl. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 19. The World’s Classics translation has the Celts and Cynetes in the opposite order to Freeman and most other translators: ‘It rises in the land of the Celts, who live beyond the Cynesians, further west in Europe than any other race’ (HERODOTUS, transl. WATERFIELD, 1998, p. 251). This is unsatisfactory. For superlative + *meta* + accusative see POWELL, 1938, p. 220. The construction at 4.49.3 recurs just afterwards at 4.53.1, where Herodotus, comparing the rivers of Scythia, says that the river Borysthenes (the second largest) is ‘greatest of them all *after* [*meta*, i.e. except for] the Ister’. Aristotle has the same construction in connection with the Ister in the passage cited in n. 79 below.

42. JACOBY, 1923, p. 216 (F2) and 502-503; TOVAR, 1976, p. 193-194; *Tabula Imperii Romani*, 1995, J-29, p. 66 and 73, and map; FREEMAN, 1996, p. 18, n. 25; HOZ, 2010, p. 74-75, 252-253, and 456 (deriving – *sio*- < **-tio* -); BRANDHERM, 2016, p. 207, n. 129.

in the *Kynetes*, for Herodorus of Heraclea is known to have written at least seventeen books on Herakles.

Since Herodotus *contrasts* the Cynetes with the Celts, there is no *prima facie* case for seeking a Celtic etymology for their tribal name; Rivet and Smith are no doubt right to reject a superficial comparison between *Cynetes*, the Romano-British place-name *Cunetio* (Mildenhall, on the eponymous river Kennet), and Welsh *Cynwyd*.⁴³ The suffix *-êtes* is not particularly Celtic, being widely used to form ethnonyms,⁴⁴ and even if the first element is **ku(o)n-* ‘hound’, this stem occurred in many Indo-European languages besides Celtic; thus *Kynesii* and *Kynetes* had ‘a look of Greek words meaning dog-men’ to Rhys.⁴⁵ In any case, *K + vowel + N* could recur by chance in many languages and need not be the ‘hound’ word. A connection with Latin *cuneus* ‘wedge’ (cf. Greek *gûnía* ‘angle, joiner’s square’), referring to the promontory at Cabo Santa María, as Strabo (3.1.4) claims, is not impossible. It has been suggested that these were technical loanwords transmitted from Greek to Latin via Etruscan.⁴⁶ Be this as it may, they could have been current among Mediterranean mariners of various nationalities.

The Algarve area is rich in inscriptions, generally labelled ‘South-Western’ (or, more tendentiously, ‘Tartessian’), some of them contemporary with Herodotus. Most linguists agree that they are in an unknown language, despite intermittent claims for Celtic since 1989.⁴⁷ Thus the inscriptions support the hypothesis that the Cynetes, though in some sense neighbours of the Celts, were not themselves Celts. It has been argued that some people with specifically Celtic names appear in the inscriptions;⁴⁸ while this would not be surprising if the Cynetes had Celtic close neighbours, even the more promising looking of these names, such as *Aipuris*, are ambiguous.⁴⁹ In fact there may be *no* Celtic words or names at all in the ‘Tartessian’ inscriptions, with the quite doubtful exception of the exotic formula *lok^oob^ooniira-b^oo*, discussed above.

43. RIVET and SMITH, 1979, p. 328. KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 12-13, favour Celticity. Cf. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2003, p. 192.

44. HOZ, 2010, p. 456, n. 748; GARCÍA ALONSO, 2013, p. 156.

45. RHYS, 1904, p. 268.

46. ERNOUT and MEILLET, 1959, s.v. *cuneus*. This is rejected by VAAN, 2008, p. 154, following BIVILLE, 1990, p. 228-229. The *cuneus* metaphor is used by Tacitus, *Agricola*, 10, in his description of Britain.

47. For the Kynesioid and a map of the ‘Inscriptions of the South-West’ see HOZ, 2010, p. 252-254, 310-317, 608-609, and 616, and 2011, p. 491. Against the Celticity of ‘Tartessian’ see e.g. CLACKSON, 2007, p. 4; HOZ, 2010, p. 386-402, and 2011, p. 556 and 588; ZEIDLER, 2011; SIMKIN, 2012, p. 80-81; NOCENTINI, 2013, p. 37; GORROCHATEGUI, 2013, p. 51-54; LUJÁN, 2013, p. 103; ESKA, 2013 and 2014; PRÓSPER, 2014; SCHRIJVER, 2015, p. 201; MIKHAILOVA, 2015; RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS, 2015, p. 125, n. 50; cf. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2012, p. 431.

48. KOCH, 2009, pp. 79-99.

49. VILLAR, 2004, p. 263-64; GORROCHATEGUI, 2013, p. 52.

Herodotus and others on *Pyrene* and the course of the Danube

The above two passages in Herodotus have been exploited to support quite contradictory opinions about the location of the Celts. Ignoring the full context, nineteenth-century scholars strove to place Herodotus' Celts in or near the Black Forest, around the true source of the Danube. However, Greeks later than Herodotus were still in the dark about its true course⁵⁰ and its source may have remained unknown until 15 BC when Tiberius came across it, a day's march from Lake Constance (the Bodensee).⁵¹ Nevertheless, the nineteenth-century scholars tried to associate *Pyrene* with a *mons Piri*, located by Ammianus Marcellinus (28.2.5) *trans Rhenum*, apparently near Heidelberg, or conjectured that *Pyrene* might have been an Iberian name from the Black Forest region, carried westwards and re-applied to the Pyrenees by 'Iberians' retreating from the Celts.⁵² The identification of *Pyrene* as the Heuneburg on the upper Danube is just the latest stage in this line of interpretation, bolstered by preconceptions about the Celticity of the region's 'Hallstatt culture'.⁵³ The argument that Herodotus 'is correct that the Celts inhabited the region around the headwaters of the Danube in the fifth century BC, as archaeology confirms'⁵⁴ overlooks the fact that the Celtic label for the archaeology derives from the text of Herodotus himself plus the Austrian mis-identification of *Nyrax* in Hecataeus (see above). The argument is circular.

Déchelette suggested that Herodotus knew both about a group of Celts at the real source of the Danube in south-west Germany and about another group of Celts in the Iberian peninsula, and that he assumed that they were the one and the same people, therefore proceeding to place the source of the Danube in the far west. This hypothesis was influentially presented by T. G. E. Powell in *The Celts* (1958), a book with no footnotes, but here evidently following Déchelette.⁵⁵ Some scholars have continued to elaborate it, for example: 'Languages descended from Proto-Celtic were spoken in extreme south-west Europe and probably at the source of the Danube by Herodotus' day'.⁵⁶

One obvious objection is this: Hecataeus was one of Herodotus' few named sources, so Herodotus is unlikely to have been ignorant of the presence of Celts near Marseilles, even though he does not trouble to mention them.⁵⁷ He is unlikely, then, to

50. See Pseudo-Aristotle (quoted in n. 30 above).

51. Strabo 7.1.5, who says that the Lake lies between the sources of the Ister and Rhine.

52. BERGK, 1887, p. 273. Bergk's theory was endorsed by HAUVETTE, 1889, p. 20, and PEARSON, 1934, p. 336.

53. FISCHER, 1972; cf. HIND, 1972, p. 50; COLLIS, 2003, p. 126.

54. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 19.

55. POWELL, 1980, p. 13-14; DÉCHELETTE, 1913, p. 568. Powell was a pupil of H. M. Chadwick, who regularly used Déchelette in his lectures (LAPIDGE, 2015, p. 245, 251, and 260).

56. KOCH, 2014, p. 14.

57. KRINGS, 1998, p. 116-117, discusses Herodotus' lack of interest in Marseilles (his reference at 5.9.3 in connection with the Ligurians in the hinterland is incidental, as discussed above). ASHERI *et al.*, 2007, p. 262 and 617, suggest that Herodotus was aware of a 'Danube' land route from the

have believed that there was only one group of Celts in Europe so that all references to Celts must refer to a single location (unless, of course, the Marseilles region were the single location in question, which would not suit the Black Forest theory). There must be a better explanation of his words.

If Herodotus knew anything about western geography, how could he suppose that the Danube somehow crossed not only the Alps but also the great north-south Rhône/Saône waterway, which must have been well-known to the Greek traders of Marseilles?⁵⁸ From our point of view, which is also that of Aristotle (see below), it makes no sense, since we expect rivers to rise in mountains, not cross them nor cross other rivers. However, the early Greek texts about the Argonauts offer a different perspective: what we call a river could in fact be a trans-continental channel, possible intersecting other such channels. In Apollonius' *Argonautica* the river Po (called *Eridanos*) flows up from the Adriatic into 'stormy lakes that spread throughout the vast territory of the Celts', possibly those of north Italy and/or those of Switzerland.⁵⁹ From these lakes Apollonius has one branch, the Rhône, descending through seven mouths into the 'Sardinian Sea' (the Gulf of Lion or western Mediterranean more generally), and another (the Rhine, according to Fränkel) flowing northwards to the Ocean.⁶⁰ In Green's words,

the Po, Rhône and Rhine all do, in fact, though unconnected, rise in the Swiss Alps [...]. The Rhône *does* flow through Lake Geneva; the Po (Eridanós) *does* discharge into the 'Ionian sea' (Adriatic). It was a natural temptation to have their headwaters all converge, and where better than an inland mountain lake?⁶¹

Herodotus' transcontinental Danube sounds more plausible from such a perspective.

Even more relevantly, Timagetus in the early fourth century, as we have seen, had the Danube flowing from 'Celtic mountains in the land of the Celts' into a 'Celtic lake', from which it continued to the Black Sea while another unnamed river (the Rhône?), from the same 'Celtic lake', reached the 'Celtic sea' (the Gulf of Lion?). Herodotus, or his source, may have entertained a similar notion. Perhaps, then, his imagined Danube ran west from the Black Sea to an Alpine 'Celtic lake' and then either turned south to run into the 'Celtic sea' in the western Mediterranean or continued to the 'Celtic mountains in the land of the Celts' (or did both).

Black Sea towards the Pyrenees which started along the Danube and that he simply assumed that the Danube ran along its whole course.

58. PEARSON, 1934, p. 331, suggests that Herodotus 'probably heard about the Rhone when he was in Thurii'.

59. See above. In our terminology the river from which they enter the lakes must be the Po, not the Rhône as in the translation by Race (APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, ed. RACE, 2008, p. 381).

60. APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015: notes on 4.631-636 and map on p. x. See also Map I in APOLLONIUS DE RHODES, ed. VIAN, 1981.

61. GREEN, 2007, p. 317-318 and Map 5. See FRÄNKEL, 1968, p. 507-509 (cf. APOLLONIUS DE RHODES, ed. VIAN, 1981, p. 18 and 97, n. 3); THALMANN, 2011, p. 157, n. 25, and 162, n. 43; APOLLONIUS OF RHODES, ed. HUNTER, 2015, p. 168-169. Extreme examples of interconnected rivers (the Boyne connected with the Severn, Tiber, Euphrates, etc.) appear later in Irish sources: TONER, 2014, p. 281, n. 31.

Could Timagetus' 'Celtic mountains' be the Pyrenees?⁶² This raises the difficult problem of Herodotus' *Pyrene*. We do not know whether his calling *Pyrene* a *polis* was just a mistake (compare Aristotle below) or whether there really was a place called *Pyrene*, presumably named from the Pyrenees or giving its name to them.⁶³ The only other evidence for a place with this precise name is the *Ora maritima* by Avienus (fourth century AD), who is generally supposed to depend, probably indirectly, on very ancient sources, many of which are listed in lines 32-50. Discussing the lands of the Sordi beside the 'pine-bearing heads of Pyrene' (the Pyrenees), Avienus adds:

in Sordiceni caespitis confinio
quondam Pyren[aje] [latera] civitas ditis laris
stetisse fertur, hicque Mas(s)iliae incolae
negotiorum saepe versabant vices.
sed in Pyrenen ab columnis Herculis
Atlanticoque gurgite et confinio
Zephyri(di)s orae cursus est celeri rati
septem dierum...

It is said that once upon a time the city Pyrene, a prosperous town, stood upon the boundary of the Sordicene land. Here citizens of Massilia often carried on business. But the run to Pyrene from the Pillars of Hercules, the Atlantic swell and the boundary of Zephyris is, for a fast ship, seven days long.⁶⁴

If Herodotus or his source imagined that the Danube was connected with a major river that fell into the sea at a *polis* near the Pyrenees, the closest estuary to them on the Mediterranean side is the Rhône delta, some 100 km south-east of the foothills of the Pyrenees, measuring from Lattes, dép. Hérault, at the west of the delta. Indeed, the unmetrical word *latera* in the text of Avienus is thought to be a gloss identifying *Pyrene civitas*, rightly or wrongly, with *Lattara* (Lattes), on the Gulf of Lion. A discrepancy of 100 km is not an insuperable objection, seeing that Herodotus was writing at a great distance, and might not make a fine distinction between the Rhône mouth and the Pyrenees; Strabo (3.4.19) says that 'historians of former times' regarded the Rhône as marking the start of Iberia, and Pliny (37.11.32) records that Aeschylus thought the Rhône reached Iberia.⁶⁵

The Celts were already known to dwell in the vicinity of the Rhône, inland from Marseilles (Hecataeus), and the Gulf of Lion was possibly Timagetus' 'Celtic Sea',⁶⁶ so

62. APOLLONIUS DE RHODES, ed. VIAN, 1981, p. 17, n. 5, where Vian seems to imply this.

63. The Pyrenees were named from the *polis* according to DION, 1968, p. 9-10. An old identification is Port-Vendres, *Portus Pyrenaei* in Livy 34.8 (ARBOIS DE JUBAINVILLE, 1888, p. 61). For other claimants see below, n. 77. D'Arbois notes that before Herodotus the Danube was believed to rise among the Hyperboreans and claims that Herodotus was the first to move its source to the west. There is no evidence for this claim. Cf. JULLIAN, 1905, p. 376, n. 1.

64. *Ora maritima*, lines 558-565: AVIENUS, ed. MURPHY, 1977.

65. Cf. HOZ, 2010, p. 113-114, and 2011, p. 61-62. Cf. n. 38 above. I am indebted to Dr Jacopo Bisagni for the comment that 'the Pyrenees can actually be seen from Lattes on a clear day, and this would of course be even more true for anyone observing the coast from the sea'.

66. See above. It is possible, but doubtful, that Agde, dép. Hérault, was described as Celtic by Eudoxus of Cnidos (c. 390-c. 340 BC); see FREEMAN, 1996, p. 29-30.

there is no difficulty in supposing that Herodotus could have regarded a *Pyrene* on the Gulf of Lion, or close to it, as a *polis* ‘in the land of the Celts’. But if Herodotus’ *polis* is near the Pyrenees, as its name indeed suggests, why does he refer to Celts beyond the Pillars of Hercules? One simple solution is that Herodotus is referring to two groups of Celts, not necessarily contiguous. First he situates *Pyrene*, where the Danube starts, in the land of the Celts, and then adds, as a sort of gloss or footnote – indeed the sentence is printed as a footnote in the Penguin Classics translation⁶⁷ – that ‘The Celts live beyond the Pillars of Heracles and border on the Cynesii, who are the westernmost inhabitants of Europe’. Inclusion of this ‘footnote’ would help Herodotus to emphasise the Danube’s great length. His later statement in Book IV – ‘For the Ister flows through all of Europe, rising among the Celts who are the westernmost inhabitants of Europe, except for the Cynetes’ – would be a sort of abbreviated recapitulation.

It is also of course possible that Herodotus imagined, not two discrete groups of western Celts, but a swathe of Celts occupying the whole territory between *Pyrene* and the Cynesians on the Atlantic seaboard. A century later, Ephorus, according to his detractors, thought that *Keltike* was so large as to include ‘most of Iberia, as far as *Gades* (Cadiz)’ and that ‘the Iberians lived in a single city, whereas in fact they occupied a large portion of the western lands’.⁶⁸

The theories of Hauvette, Jullian, and Dion

In 1889 Hauvette took Herodotus’ statement that the Celts were beyond the Pillars of Hercules to mean simply that they could be reached by that sea-route (compare Aristotle’s phrase ‘the Celtic lands beyond Iberia’, quoted above),⁶⁹ and in 1968 Dion, agreeing with Hauvette, deduced that they could be anywhere from Portugal to Brittany.⁷⁰ Hauvette’s idea was not unreasonable at the time, since he thought the *Cynesioi* unlocalizable. If, however, we accept, as Dion does, that they were in south-west Hispania, are not their neighbours, the Celts, most likely to be in Hispania too? Dion takes a slightly different view. For him, the Celts could lie anywhere north of the Cynesians along the Atlantic seaboard right up to Finistère in Brittany. At this rate, Herodotus’ Celts could lie in western France, in *Keltike*, in the far west of Europe, though not at quite so westerly a longitude as the Cynesians, whose territory included Portugal. This is just about possible insofar as early Greek knowledge of the Iberian Peninsula is likely to have been so limited that the Cynesians could be imagined to spread over a vast distance from the Algarve, perhaps as far as Cantabria and

67. HERODOTUS, transl. SÉLINCOURT, 1965, p. 115.

68. Strabo 4.4.6 and Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, 1.67, quoted by FREEMAN, 1996, p. 35-37. JULLIAN, 1905, p. 377, n. 2, saw a parallel here for Herodotus mistaking *Pyrene* for a *polis*.

69. Illegitimately conflating various sources, JULLIAN, 1905 (quoted by DÉCHELETTE, 1913, p. 568, n. 4) went further and located them on the Germanic Ocean, where amber came from.

70. See HAUVETTE, 1889, p. 19-20; DION, 1968, p. 7-8. Cf. COLLIS, 2003, p. 126: ‘[Herodotus] says that if one goes out through the Pillars of Hercules, one encounters Celts on the coast. However, as he makes no mention of the Pyrenees, it is not clear if he is referring to the coast of Iberia or the coast of Gaul’.

the Pyrenees (thus Jullian).⁷¹ Alternatively, Herodotus's Celts could occupy all the Atlantic coastline north of the Algarve, for, as Jullian remarked, 'comme Hérodote ne mentionne, à l'Occident de l'Europe, que ces deux noms, on peut, sur la carte, leur donner à l'un et à l'autre la plus grande extension possible'.⁷²

A problem with Dion's theory is that he regards Herodotus' *Pyrene* as a Mediterranean location (perhaps Port-Vendres), following Avienus, not an Atlantic one. He gets round this by translating Herodotus literally as '*le Danube vient du pays des Celtes et [kaì] de la ville Pyréné*', with *Pyrene* being merely a stage on a hypothetical voyage from the land of the Atlantic Celts, through the Pillars of Hercules, into the Mediterranean, past *Pyrene* and along the Danube to the Black Sea.⁷³ But surely it would be perverse, even disingenuous, for Herodotus to include such a long stretch of ocean and sea in a discussion of the length of the Danube by comparison with the Nile?

If there is any merit in revising Dion's suggestion, it may be to suppose that *Pyrene* was at the *Atlantic* end of the Pyrenees and that the imagined course of the Danube reached the Atlantic in *Keltike* via the Adour or even the Garonne. In support one might note an obscure passage in Pseudo-Scymnus (c. 135 BC) which can be taken to mean that the Danube flows into the sea among *Keltoi* called *Enetoi*, arguably the Veneti along the Loire.⁷⁴ On such a hypothesis, Herodotus' Atlantic Celts would be a long way north of the historic Cynesians in south-west Iberia. But how likely is it that the names of any intervening peoples between Portugal and the Bay of Biscay would be known c. 450 BC? Even Avienus is distinctly vague about this coastline.

This hypothesis seems to leave us with two different 'cities' called *Pyrene*: an Atlantic one near the source of the Danube in Herodotus and a Mediterranean one in Avienus – an odd coincidence, unless we suppose that Avienus, or his source, followed and misunderstood the text of Herodotus. That is quite possible. Avienus cites Herodotus among the sources of his *Ora maritima* (line 49) and what he says in lines 565-568, following on from the lines quoted above, looks like a misunderstanding of Herodotus on *Pyrene* and the *Cynesioi/Cynetes*:

*post Pyrenaenum iugum
iacent harenae lit[t]oris Cynetici,
easque late sulcat amnis Rhoscynus.
hoc Sordicenaë, ut diximus, glaeb(a)e solum est.*

After the ridge of *Pyrene*, there lie the sands of the Cynetic shore, and the river Rhoscynus widely furrows them. This as we have said is the land of the Sordi.⁷⁵

In lines 201-223 Avienus has already told us, correctly, about the *Cyneticum iugum* (the Cabo de São Vicente, Portugal) and about the *Cynetes* there, neighbours

71. JULLIAN, 1905, p. 376.

72. JULLIAN, 1905, p. 376.

73. DION, 1968, p. 14, thinks that Herodotus was unaware of the Alps and probably of the Pyrenees.

74. PSEUDO-SCYMNUS, ed. MARCOTTE, 2000, p. 112 (lines 191-195) and 165-166.

75. AVIENUS, ed. MURPHY, 1977, p. 36-37.

of the Tartessians. But here in lines 552-568, immediately following the references to the city of *Pyrene* and the voyage to the Pillars of Hercules, we have an otherwise unknown, northern *litus Cyneticum* in Roussillon, around the *Rouskinon* (the river Têt, which runs from the Pyrenees into the Gulf of Lion).⁷⁶ The passage may be based, ultimately, on a misreading of Herodotus' passage on the city of *Pyrene*, the Pillars of Hercules and the Cynetes. This would explain why a port *Pyrene*, in a busy, well-documented stretch of the Mediterranean, is mentioned *only* by Avienus, who himself sounds doubtful about its existence: 'It is said that once upon a time the [a?] city *Pyrene*, a prosperous town, stood upon the boundary of the Sordicene land...'⁷⁷

If Avienus' independence is dismissed, Herodotus' *polis* can be moved to the Atlantic end of the Pyrenees, helping to save the hypotheses of Hauvette and Dion. But dismissing Avienus opens the way for a more radical reappraisal of Herodotus in the light of Aristotle.

Aristotle on *Pyrene* and the source of the Danube

It would be unlikely for a 'city' *Pyrene* to arise by mistake on two separate occasions from misunderstandings of the mountain-name *Pyrene*, but if we suppose that Avienus' *civitas* derives from Herodotus' *polis*, that raises the possibility that the statement in Herodotus that the Danube rose at the *polis Pyrene* is itself due to a single misunderstanding of a statement that the Danube rose in the Pyrenees *mountains* (which were possibly Timagetus' 'Celtic mountains in the land of the Celts', as noted above).

Support for this solution comes from Aristotle's *Meteorology*, 1.13 (350b). Aristotle teaches that 'the largest rivers flow [...] from the highest mountains' and that 'even when rivers flow from marshes it will almost always be found that these marshes lie beneath either mountains or gradually rising ground'.⁷⁸ Some of his many illustrations are clearly taken from older reports:

Beneath the Bear itself [i.e. in the extreme north] beyond the farthest part of Scythia is a range of mountains called the Rhipae: the stories of their size are too fanciful for credence, but they say that from them the greatest number and, after the Istrus, the largest of other European rivers flow.⁷⁹

On the latter river Aristotle says:

From *Pyrene*, this is a mountain towards the equinoctial sunset in Celtica, there flow the Ister [Danube] and the Tartessus [Guadalquivir]. The latter

76. See TALBERT, 2000, Map 25 H3/I3. HÖZ, 2011, p. 27, 60, and 125, rightly observes that the reappearance of the Cynetes here is incomprehensible. HIND, 1972, p. 48, called it a 'geographical blunder which can probably best be explained by a dependence on Herodotus'; nevertheless he still assumed that Avienus was right to situate *Pyrene* on the Mediterranean coastline (at Ampurias, he suggests).

77. On the longstanding puzzle on its position see HIND, 1972; *Tabula Imperii Romani*, 1997, K/J-31, p. 129; DAN, 2011, p. 41. Cf. n. 63 above.

78. ARISTOTLE, transl. LEE, 1952, p. 95 and 99.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

enters into the sea outside the Pillars of Hercules, while the Ister flows across Europe into the Euxine [Black Sea].⁸⁰

In the sources which Aristotle says he consulted (1.13), the Ister may have taken a northern route; otherwise it would conflict with his opinion about the normal course of rivers: both the Rhône/Saône and the Alps blocked the way of a gradual eastwards descent from the Pyrenees to the Black Sea.⁸¹ Where in the Pyrenees Aristotle supposed the Danube to rise is unclear; Collis suggests the headwaters of the Ariège or Garonne, in the area that was – or was to become⁸² – the territory of a Celtic tribe, the Volcae Tectosages.⁸³

Herodotus on the western Celts, reconsidered

If we suppose that Herodotus misunderstood a report similar to that in Aristotle,⁸⁴ the possible locations of Herodotus' western Celts are multiplied. It may be the whole of the Pyrenees which are in 'the land of the Celts': the Pyrenean Celts may be imagined to be on the Spanish as well as the French side. Seeing that Ephorus in the fourth century supposed that *Keltike* included most of Iberia, as far as Cadiz,⁸⁵ it is possible that in Herodotus' time the Celts were already supposed, rightly or wrongly, to stretch from the Pyrenees to the lands of the Cynetes in southern Portugal.

If Herodotus or his source imagined a maritime approach to Iberia from the west, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, any Celts up to the Pyrenees on the western side might reasonably be counted as 'Celts beyond the Pillars of Hercules', for we cannot take his phrase so literally as to mean 'only Celts west of the precise longitude of Gibraltar'. The south-western part of the Peninsula was traditionally viewed from the perspective of traders coming into Tartessos to obtain the abundant silver that came, it was supposed, from territory stretching right up to the Pyrenees, where fires had first melted it into molten silver streams (following a folk-etymology from Greek *pyr* 'fire').⁸⁶ Such a perspective is suggested by a passage in Pseudo-Scymnus (c. 135 BC): listing the commodities seafarers might obtain at Tartessos, he has 'alluvial tin from *Keltike*, gold, and copper' (line 165). This tin may be imagined as having come down the

80. FREEMAN, 1996, p. 34; ARISTOTLE, transl. LEE, 1952, p. 97. The Latin translation via the Arabic agrees: ARISTOTLE, ed. VUILLEMIN-DIEM, 2008, p. 37.

81. It is hard to imagine that Aristotle, who knew about the sack of Rome by *Keltoi* (FREEMAN, 1996, p. 34), was totally ignorant of the Alps over which they were generally supposed to have come – his pupil Heraclides Ponticus called them Hyperboreans i.e. northerners (*ibid.*, p. 26-27). Aristotle refers to the Rhône as 'large enough to be navigable' in *Meteorology* 1.13 (351a). Lee's map in his edition keeps the Rhône short, so as not to cross Aristotle's imaginary Ister. Similarly JULLIAN, 1905, p. 376.

82. Cf. COLLIS, 2003, p. 126 and 175-76; Hoz, 2005, p. 177 and 184.

83. COLLIS, 2014, p. 302.

84. It has been suggested that Herodotus and Aristotle had a common source: JULLIAN, 1905, p. 377, n. 2.

85. Strabo 4.4.6, cited above, n. 68.

86. Strabo 3.2.9; Diodorus 5.35.2-5; POSIDONIUS, ed. EDELSTEIN and KIDD, 1972-1999, fragments 239-240b. See AUBET, 2001, p. 279-280.

Tartessus (Guadalquivir), as Avienus claims (line 296).⁸⁷ Of course, the Guadalquivir does not really reach the Pyrenees, despite Aristotle, but it points in their direction, and any Celts upwards along its navigable course and its imagined course beyond might count as ‘beyond the Pillars’. Of course, we do not know how wide the Pyrenees were imagined to be in Aristotle’s day; perhaps they were thought to merge with the Duero plateau.

In Roman times one could not go far up the Guadalquivir before reaching a group of Celtic-looking place-names – *Segida*, *Segovia*, *Celti*, *Arialdunum*, and *Esttledunum* – all on the same longitude as the Pillars of Hercules.⁸⁸ One need not be so literal, however, as to restrict the Celts ‘beyond the Pillars’ to this area. Proceeding in the same north-eastern direction from Tartessos one reaches *Celtiberia*, south-west of the river Ebro. The Celtiberians are the Peninsular Celts *par excellence*, known as Celts in antiquity and evidenced by inscriptions in their own Celtic language from the second century BC onwards, as well as by an above average proportion of Celtic place-names and personal names later on.⁸⁹ The early Greeks may have heard about the inland Celtiberians from traders at the mouth of the Ebro (Iberus) and perhaps exaggerated the extent of their territory northwards and southwards, perhaps misleading writers such as Herodotus and Ephorus.

Although the Celtiberians are an attractive option, ultimately we cannot be certain which group of Peninsular Celts are meant by Herodotus. There are too many possibilities. Place- and personal names with Celtic elements are attested, admittedly much later than Herodotus, quite widely in the Peninsula (excluding the Mediterranean seaboard from Cataluña to Andalucía).⁹⁰ We also hear from Pliny and Strabo of various groups of *Celtici* in north-western and western Hispania. These are generally believed to be offshoots of Celts elsewhere, as Pliny says explicitly of the *Celtici* between the Guadalquivir and the Guadiana, deriving them from the *Celtiberi*.⁹¹ There would seem to have been Celts as well as *Celtici* in Galicia.⁹² These might be the Cynetes’ Celtic neighbours in Herodotus.

It is more doubtful that the Cynetes had Celtic neighbours to the south, despite modern claims that Celts sometimes ruled Tartessos, made on the strength of the name of *Arganthonios*, the legendary, 120-year old king of Tartessos and friend of the

87. PSEUDO-SCYMNUS, ed. MARCOTTE, 2000, p. 111 and 162-163. Pseudo-Scymnus could arguably be using *Keltike* in the vague sense popularised by Ephorus, but why single out the tin in that case? Whatever Pseudo-Scymnus or Avienus thought, alluvial tin traded at Tartessos might in fact have been imported from Galicia or even from overseas. See POSIDONIUS, ed. EDELSTEIN and KIDD, 1972-1999, Vol. II/ii, p. 835-836.

88. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2006, p. 226-228 and 265; TALBERT, 2000, Map 26 E4. Cf. TOVAR, 1963; HOZ, 2000, p. 20-21. On *Celti* cf. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2011a, p. 277-278.

89. On the name *Celtiberi* see HOENIGSWALD, 1990. On the inscriptions see HOZ, 2007, and 2010, p. 41-42 and 587 (both with maps), and LUJÁN, 2013, p. 100-102. For place-names and personal names see SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2006, p. 266-267 and 304, RAYBOULD and SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2009, p. 48 and 56-57, and SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2012, p. 439-442.

90. See maps cited in preceding note.

91. Pliny 3.1.13; cf. Strabo 3.2.15; TALBERT, 2000, Map 26 C2-3. See HOZ, 2000, p. 18-19, and 2010, p. 600-601; also VILLAR, 2004, p. 244-249; LUJÁN, 2013, p. 98.

92. VILLAR, 2004, p. 247; cf. LUJÁN, 2000.

Phocaeans, mentioned by Herodotus (1.163-65) and other ancient writers. The Celtic stem for ‘silver’ was indeed *argant-* and the name *Arganthonios* obviously conjures up the silver for which Tartessos was famous.⁹³ The Celtic word *argant-* was no doubt familiar to Phocaean traders at Marseilles, Tartessos, and elsewhere, and could have been used by them to create the legendary king’s evocative name. Unfortunately, however, the stem was also current in other Indo-European languages (e.g. Latin *argentum*, Sanskrit *rajatá-*), probably including unattested ones, so it is impossible to label *argant-* as exclusively Celtic on the basis of the typical Celtic *-ant-* (versus *-ent-*). No doubt the name of such a valuable commodity was current in non-Indo-European languages as well; the speculation that *Arganthonios*’ name derives from *arcti*, an Indo-European loanword in Etruscan, is not absurd.⁹⁴ Clear proofs that the stem is widespread are the names of a mountain called *Arganthon(e)ion* in Mysia (Asia Minor) and its supposed eponym, the nymph *Arganthon* of Kios, lover of Rhesus of Thrace.⁹⁵ Moreover, an Attic cup from Sindos, Macedonia bears the graffito *Arganthonios*, dated c. 450. Although the editors of *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* say ‘name of the king of Tartessos, given to a local person’, it is difficult to be sure that it is not a local name.⁹⁶ Certainly, the evidence that Tartessos was in any way Celtic is flimsy.

Ultimately, we must conclude that we do not know where Herodotus placed the Celts in the Peninsula – if indeed he did place them there rather than, say, in the Pyrenees or on the southern or western French coast. His testimony is too ambiguous to be used.

Conclusions

1. Hecataeus (c. 560-480 BC) and Herodotus (c. 485-424 BC), who were contemporary with the earliest Celtic-language inscriptions in northern Italy and southern Switzerland, are the only historical sources for the position of the Celts at that early date.

2. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars were wrong to interpret them as locating the Celts in Noricum (Austria/Slovenia) and around the source of the Danube in south-west Germany. As a result this region’s archaeological ‘Hallstatt culture’ was wrongly labelled ‘Celtic’ and the distribution of the ‘Hallstatt culture’ was misused to map the position of the Celts and their language in the sixth and fifth centuries.

93. KRINGS, 1998, p. 116, n. 189; ASHERI *et al.*, 2007, p. 185. Celticity is favoured by KOCH *et al.*, 2007, p. 13. (They quote me as giving a Celtic etymology for *Tartessos*, but this was only offered as a methodological *reductio ad absurdum*, as noted by FALILEYEV, 2008, p. 210.)

94. For this and other theories see KRINGS, 1998, p. 116, n. 189; VALLEJO RUIZ, 2005, p. 186-187. On words for ‘silver’ see MALLORY and HULD, 1984; UNTERMANN, 1989; MATASOVIĆ, 2009, p. 41.

95. The mountain is already recorded by Apollonius of Rhodes, 1.1178. See HUBERT, 1927, p. 84-85, who supposed the mountain-name to be Thracian; *Arganthonios*, however, he regarded as Celtic. Cf. HUBERT, 1987, p. 288.

96. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, XLIII, 1993 [1996], p. 144, no. 453. This name is mentioned by FALILEYEV, 2008, p. 210, and HOZ, 2010, p. 453-454, referring to FRASER and MATTHEWS, 2005, p. 40.

3. The Celtic onomastic data from the above region may well be later and reflect Celtic eastward migrations from Gaul in the fourth century or later.

4. Hecataeus confirms that there were already Celts in the hinterland of Marseilles, where Celtic inscriptions and names are found in later periods, and at *Nyrax*, possibly a Sardinian name.

5. In the early fourth century Timagetus seems to have envisaged Celts further up the Rhône, as does Apollonius of Rhodes in the third century.

6. To the south, the historic Celtic settlements in the Po valley are referred to by Pseudo-Scylax in the mid-fourth century, and possibly by Apollonius of Rhodes as well.

7. By the late fourth century Pytheas regarded Celtic territory as extending up to the English Channel. Pytheas distinguishes the island of Britain from *Keltike*, but this distinction may be merely geographical shorthand, with no ethnological or linguistic significance for the Celticity or non-Celticity of Britain.

8. Already in the third century, Timaeus may refer to the Celtic cult of the *Lugoues* on the Atlantic coast of Gaul or Hispania (or both).

9. Herodotus' belief that the Danube came from 'the land of the Celts and the city of Pyrene' may be the result of supposing that: (a) the Danube was connected with the Rhône, as in Timagetus, or (b) that it rose in the Pyrenees, as in Aristotle, or (c) that it was connected with a French river flowing into the Atlantic such as the Adour (compare Pseudo-Scymnus (c. 135 BC), assuming he is referring to the Loire, which is uncertain).

10. Avienus' *Ora maritima* (fourth century AD) cannot be used to support a location for *Pyrene* on the Mediterranean coast as the *Ora maritima* is probably not independent of Herodotus.

11. Herodotus' statement that the Celts lived beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, next to 'the most westernmost inhabitants of Europe', the Cynetes (in the Algarve), may reflect a view similar to that of Ephorus in the fourth century, that the Celts occupied most of Iberia. This is uncertain, however, as it could reflect awareness of separate, non-contiguous groups of Celts (e.g. one near the Cynetes, one around the Pyrenees, one, as in Hecataeus, above Marseilles, etc.).

12. Herodotus' distinction between Cynetes and Celts is borne out by contemporary inscriptions in the Algarve, which are in a non-Celtic language (now sometimes called 'Tartessian').

13. Ultimately, we cannot locate Herodotus' 'Danubian' Celts with certainty. They could be in central Spain (e.g. Celtiberia) – or even in Galicia, north-eastern Spain, or south-western France. A location *south* of the Cynetes, in Tartessian territory, is less plausible, and is only weakly supported by the vaguely Celtic-looking name of *Arganthonios*, the legendary king of Tartessos whom Herodotus mentions in a non-Celtic context.

14. In general, the Celts known to the earliest Greek writers seem to have been in parts of northern Italy, Switzerland, France, and Spain. These happen to be the areas in which Celtic-language inscriptions first appear (i.e. those in Lepontic, Gaulish, and Celtiberian). Celtic place- and personal names further east may be due to the migrations of the third century onwards.

15. The early Greek writers' knowledge was biased towards southern Europe, as is the distribution of Celtic inscriptions, which depended on the availability of Mediterranean writing systems.⁹⁷ Thus it remains *possible* that there were already Celts in areas such as northern Spain, Germany, and the British Isles. This will remain hypothetical, however, unless a chronology for the Celtic onomastic evidence can be worked out.⁹⁸

16. So far as the written evidence is concerned, the 'Atlantic Celtic' or 'Celtic from the West' hypothesis⁹⁹ is no less speculative than the old equation (2. above) between the Celts and the 'Hallstatt culture'.

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97. Hoz, 2007.

98. Cf. SIMS-WILLIAMS 2006, p. 306-314.

99. For which see e.g. CUNLIFFE and KOCH, 2010, and KOCH, 2014. Formulations vary, but the basic idea is that the Proto-Indo-European language only evolved into Celtic after it reached the Atlantic seaboard, whence Celtic spread eastwards. All this is hypothesised to have occurred long before there is any evidence by which the hypothesis could be tested (cf. SIMS-WILLIAMS, 2012).

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