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Herodian on *Stasis*

> ὡς δὲ διέδραμε ⟨ν ἡ⟩ φήμη τῆς Σεβήρου νίκης, εὐθὺς ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐκείνοις στάσις καὶ διάφορος γνώμη ἐνέπεσε ταῖς πόλεσιν, οὐχ οὕτως τῇ πρὸς τοὺς πολεμοῦντας βασιλέας ἀπεχθείᾳ τινὶ ἢ εὐνοίᾳ ὡς ζήλῳ καὶ ἔριδι τῇ πρὸς ἀλλήλας φθόνῳ τε καὶ καθαιρέσει τῶν ὁμοφύλων. ἀρχαῖον τοῦτο πάθος Ἑλλήνων, οἳ πρὸς ἀλλήλους στασιάζοντες ἀεὶ καὶ τοὺς ὑπερέχειν δοκοῦντας καθαιρεῖν θέλοντες ἐτρύχωσαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα. ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἐκείνων γηράσαντα καὶ περὶ ἀλλήλοις συντριβέντα Μακεδόσιν εὐάλωτα καὶ Ῥωμαίοις δοῦλα γεγένηται· τὸ δὲ πάθος τοῦτο τοῦ ζήλου καὶ φθόνου μετῆλθεν ἐς τὰς καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ἀκμαζούσας πόλεις.
>
> When news of Severus' victory spread, its immediate effect was to cause an outbreak of civil strife and factional politics in the cities of all the eastern provinces, not really because of partisanship for or against one of the warring emperors so much as jealous inter-city rivalry and because of envy towards and a desire to destroy their compatriots. This continual inter-city struggle and the desire to ruin a rival who seems to have grown too powerful is a long-standing weakness of the Greeks and sapped the strength of Greece. But as their organizations grew feebler and were mutually destructive, they fell easy victims to Macedonian domination and Roman enslavement. This same disease of jealous envy has been transmitted to the cities that have prospered right up to the present day. (Hdn. 3.2.7–8)[1]

Towards the end of the Fifth Century BCE, or at the very beginning of the Fourth, Thucydides of Athens interrupts the third book of his eight-book history for a disquisition upon *stasis*, or civic unrest. This analysis is founded on a concrete example: the behaviour of the small polity Corcyra (Th. 3.70.1–81.5). The behaviour is a reaction to the armed conflict between more powerful entities: the Athenians, the Spartans, and their respective allies (Th. 3.70.1–2, 70.6, 72.1–3, 75.1–3). Thucydides generalizes upon *stasis* as a destructive phenomenon that will continue to appear across the board, albeit with local variation, so long (the historian asserts) as "the human situation is unchanged" (Th. 3.82.2).

Towards the middle of the Third Century CE, Herodian interrupts the third book of his eight-book history for a disquisition upon *stasis*, or civic unrest. This analysis is founded upon concrete examples: the behaviour of cities in Asia – principally Nicomedia and Nicaea (Hdn. 3.2.9), but also Laodicea and Tyre (Hdn. 3.3.3).[2] The behaviour is a reaction to the armed conflict between more powerful entities: Septimius Severus and Pescennius Niger, pretenders alike to the imperial purple of the Roman Empire (Hdn. 3.2.7, 3.2.9, 3.3.3–4). Herodian generalizes upon *stasis* as a destructive phenomenon, which has been a constant (the historian asserts) in inter-relations between the Greeks (Hdn. 3.2.7–8).

1 Text and translation based on Whittaker (1969), except with φθόνῳ ("jealousy") rather than φθορᾷ ("destruction"); see the discussion at n. 24 below. The author is grateful to the editors for several corrections and suggestions of further illustrative material.

2 For a difference in how Herodian handles the individual cases here, see below, 289.

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One or two of the similarities between these passages are, perhaps, fortuitous. A certain sense of continuity and conscious emulation, however, seems likely.[3] It may be accidental that both Thucydides and Herodian wrote eight-book histories, with *stasis* occupying a position of particular thematic prominence in the third. Other historians wrote eight-book histories (Procopius being the most famous extant one);[4] alternate, if apparently less authoritative,[5] book divisions for Thucydides are attested from antiquity.[6] But there are certainly other likely instances where the book numbering, at least, devised by a Greek historian writing under the Roman Empire seems to allude to the book numbering of an admired paradigm and predecessor. Arrian may have carried emulation of Xenophon to the point of taking on his name;[7] certainly, his *Anabasis Alexandri* is in seven books, as Xenophon's *Anabasis Cyri* was.[8] Cephalion, a lost historian of Assyria in the time of Hadrian, elaborated Herodotean allusion to the extent not merely of writing in literary Ionic, but also of composing his history in nine books.[9] Cassius Dio *may* (though this is very much a conjecture) have alluded, by writing the final version of his history in eighty books, to the eighty-book edition of the *Annales Maximi.*[10]

Even without the weight of structural parallels elsewhere in Greek imperial historiography, Herodian's general debt to Thucydides remains difficult to ignore. Herodian's claims at the outset of his history concerning the exciting events in the period he proposes to cover in the body of his work consciously evoke (while slyly expanding)[11] the similar assertions that Thucydides makes at the outset of his (Hdn. 1.1.4, Th. 1.23.3). Herodian's vocabulary is saturated with reminiscences of the older historian's; recent scholarship has been increasingly receptive to the idea that this may include instances of studied allusion, rather than simply mechanical reiteration of a lexical model popular under the Empire.[12]

In this instance, one notes in particular that both historians use compounds of πίπτειν to express the idea of *stasis*-related evils besetting multiple polities. Thucydides as-

3 Galimberti (2022) 1 n. 4; Kemezis (2022) 26.

4 The lost Bithynian history of Arrian was also in eight books (Phot. *Bibl.* 93 p. 73 a 32 = *BNJ* 156 F14), as was the Emperor Claudius' Greek history of Carthage (Suet. *Cl.* 42.2 = *FRHist* 75 T2).

5 Marcellinus *Life of Thucydides* 58 notes that the eight-book version was more usual. For Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the Siege of Plataea and Mytilene were in Book Three (D. H. *Th.* 9), as they are for us. No alternative division appears in the extant manuscript tradition. It seems reasonable to assume that for Herodian, as for us, Thucydides was an eight-book wonder.

6 Pelling (2022a) 14 n. 45. Diodorus knew a nine-book division (D. S. 12.37.2, 13.42.5); Marcellinus one of thirteen (*Life of Thucydides* 58, but see previous note).

7 Stadter (1967); Leon (2021) 33–34; cf. Bowie (1974) 191 n. 69.

8 On the intertextual relationship between the two *Anabases*, see now Miltsios (2022) especially 330–333.

9 *Suda* s. v. Kephalion κ 1449 Adler = *BNJ* 93 T1.

10 Pitcher (2023) 81.

11 Pitcher (2018) 236; Chrysanthou (2022) 10; Kemezis (2022) 23.

12 Kemezis (2014) 230–233; Mallan (2022) 53.

serts that many dreadful things fell upon cities through *stasis:* καὶ *ἐπέπεσε* πολλὰ καὶ χαλεπὰὰ*κατὰ στάσιν ταῖς πόλεσι* (Th. 3.82.2); Herodian that *στάσις* καὶ διάφορος γνώμη *ἐνέπεσε ταῖς πόλεσιν* (Hdn. 3.2.7). Indeed, Herodian seems not to be echoing merely a single sentence of Thucydides here, but condensing vocabulary from across the whole of the earlier writer's analysis. Herodian's use of the adjective διάφορος echoes the vocabulary of Thucydides' opening contention that a division opened up across the Greek world between those elements that favoured the Athenians, and those that preferred to court the Spartans: *διαφορῶν* οὐσῶν ἑκασταχοῦὸτοῖς τε τῶν δήμων προστάταις τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐπάγεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ὀλίγοις τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους (Th. 3.82.1).[13] γνώμη (admittedly a very common and obvious word) is Thucydides' locution later in his passage for the attitudes of both cities and private individuals, which he sees as generally being healthier in conditions of peace, but prone to deteriorating under the press of circumstance: ἐν μὲν γὰρ εἰρήνῃ καὶ ἀγαθοῖς πράγμασιν αἵ τε πόλεις καὶ οἱ ἰδιῶται ἀμείνους τὰς γνώμας ἔχουσι (Th. 3.82.2).

It seems reasonable, then, to see Herodian's disposition to hold forth upon *stasis* as, at least in part, a reaction to the celebrated passage in Thucydides. The later historian, it might be thought, bears out the bold claim of the earlier. *Stasis* stayed an evil in the centuries between them; it never went away.

Yet the emulation here is not, in fact, a simple one. Once we compare the disquisitions on *stasis* in Thucydides and Herodian, it becomes clear that the two historians are not analysing the same phenomenon under that name. Herodian has, perhaps consciously, staged a moment of reflexion on *stasis* which formally (and, to an extent, thematically) evokes that of his great predecessor. However, the concept of *stasis* with which he is working in his reflective passages has telling differences from its Thucydidean analogue.

Thucydides' account of *stasis* has been extensively studied, alike in antiquity and in the modern world;[14] Herodian's has seen much less attention – and reasonably so.[15] We are now, thankfully, beyond the stage where one must apologize for an interest in Herodian.[16] It will nevertheless be uncontroversial to say that his account of *stasis* is sketchier, less influential, and much shorter, than Thucydides' one. There is nothing in Herodian's remarks on *stasis* that approximates to Thucydides' meditations on the corruptions of how language is used (Th. 3.82.4),[17] or how individual intellect and prudence are evaluated (Th. 3.82.5), as soon as *stasis* takes hold.

All the same, Herodian's passage on *stasis* turns out, on closer inspection, to be illuminating, even more so for its divergence from Thucydides than for its similarity.

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13 Compare also the use of τὸ διάφορον at Th. 7.55.2, discussed below.

14 Antiquity: D.H. *Dem.* 1, *Th.* 29–33. Modern treatments include Edmunds (1975), Macleod (1979), and Palmer (2017) 410–414.

15 Bekker-Nielsen (2014) 230–233 is an honourable exception. *Stasis* in Cassius Dio, by contrast, has seen more recent attention: Lange (2018); Lange and Scott (2020) 4–6; Asirvatham (2020) 302–303.

16 La Porte and Hekster (2022) 88 notes the historian's recent vogue.

17 Spielberg (2017) 332 notes cases from antiquity where authors *do* pick up this theme.

Herodian's differing use of *stasis* has its own logic. This logic sheds light upon a number of topics: the evolution of notions of *stasis* in Greek prose literature across the centuries; the differing accounts of "Greekness" that obtain throughout a similar period; and Herodian's own larger strategy for figuring the relationship between power units within a larger political system, both in the Greek cities and (more signally) at Rome.

1 Thucydides and Classical Athenian Conceptions of *stasis*

As we have already seen, the accounts of *stasis* offered by Thucydides and Herodian do share some key similarities, beyond the formal one of the positions they occupy within their respective works. Thucydides and Herodian alike bring out the fact that a background of war can cause *stasis* to erupt. Thucydides is more explicit about this than Herodian, with his characterization of war as a βίαιος διδάσκαλος which permits the expression of tendencies that the more favourable conditions of peacetime tend to keep under wraps (Th. 3.82.2). All the same, Herodian, too, leaves no doubt about the connexion he sees between the eruption of *stasis* amongst the Greek cities in 193 CE and news of the struggle between Septimius Severus and Pescennius Niger: "Once news of Severus' victory circulated, *stasis* immediately fell upon all those people and contrary opinion upon the cities, not so much from some antipathy or favour towards the warring emperors as from jealousy and strife towards each other and because of envy towards and a desire to destroy their compatriots". Herodian's vision of *stasis*, like Thucydides', makes much of the essential opportunism of those involved in it.

Even the very beginning of Herodian's *stasis*-narrative, however, shows a crucial difference between his conception of *stasis* in this passage, and the one that informs its Thucydidean predecessor. Thucydides' test-case for *stasis* is the polity of Corcyra. Other polities are significant in how the account of the Corcyrean *stasis* plays out: the part played by prisoners suborned and released by the Corinthians (Th. 3.70.1), which Thucydides sees as marking the beginning of the troubles; the refuge offered, at one point, by an Athenian galley (Th. 3.70.6); the arrival of a Corinthian ship carrying Spartan envoys (Th. 3.71.2); an attempted settlement by the Athenian general Nicostratus (Th. 3.75.1); a stand-off between Peloponnesian and Athenian ships (Th. 3.77.3); seven days of carnage which coincide with the presence of Eurymedon of Athens and his sixty ships (Th. 3.81.4). Aid (or the expectation of aid) from one side or another in the greater Peloponnesian War repeatedly plays a key role in emboldening or strengthening one or another of Corcyra's internally dissenting factions. This accords with Thucydides' opening statements, once he moves from the particular case of *stasis* at Corcyra to generalizations about the phenomenon in the greater Greek world. From the beginning, Thucydides frames the characteristic dissension of *stasis* in terms of an

opposition, in the affected polity, between the leaders of the *dēmos*¸ who characteristically call upon the Athenians, and the *oligoi*, who call upon the Spartans (Th. 3.82.1). Appeal to outside powers is seen as a consistent part of the script of *stasis*; outside powers are aware of this, and the Athenians receive a nasty shock in a case where there is no opportunity for them to exploit τὸ διάφορον in a city to their own advantage (Th. 7.55.2).[18] For all that, however, Thucydides' focus, in his account of the troubles at Corcyra, remains on how elements *within* the city turn upon each other. Forces from outside the *polis* may impinge upon this intra-civic struggle, but their intervention merely influences the *stasis*; they are not the players that Thucydides sees as principally contending with each other. Foreign agents such as Nicostratus and Eurymedon (on the Athenian side) and Alcidas (on the Spartan) have their role, but the focus is on what the Corcyreans themselves – largely unnamed, apart from the volunteer *proxenos* Peithias, who is murdered near the start (Th. 3.70.6) – are doing to each other.

Throughout the text of Thucydides, the usage is consistent: *stasis*, present or feared, refers to dissension *within* a city. Corcyra, to be sure, is where he explores the phenomenon in the greatest depth. But the *intra*-civic nature of *stasis* is a constant throughout Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War. *stasis*, whether at Rhegium (Th. 4.1.3), Thurii (Th. 7.33.5–6), Acragas (Th. 7.46), Metapontum (Th. 7.57.11),[19] or, ultimately, at Athens itself, with the oligarchic revolution near the very end of the text (Th. 8.78), is focussed upon the destructive actions perpetrated by citizens of a given polity against each other.[20]

This usage is essentially in line with that of most texts about *stasis* written around Thucydides' period. These texts, to be sure, do not necessarily embrace Thucydides' tendency to see contention between the *dēmos* and the *oligoi* as its principal manifestation. Xenophon, at one point, figures *stasis* as part and parcel with the struggle between distinguished citizens for pre-eminence: οἱ ἀρετὴν ἀσκοῦντες στασιάζουσίὸτε περὶ τοῦὸπρωτεύειν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι καὶὸφθονοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς μισοῦσιν ἀλλήλους (X. *Mem.* 2.6.20).[21] A recent treatment of *stasis* in the fragments of Old Comedy suggests that the term might there be more broadly applied to the misbehaviour of politicians, without overt reference to the quarrelling of power-blocs within the state.[22] Herodotus' Darius, warning about the characteristic flaws of oligarchy in the Debate of the Constitutions, observes that *stasis* tends to arise when powerful men have private enmities

18 Pelling (2022a) 33.

19 On how the behaviour of the Sicilian Greek cities in this respect mirrors those of the mainland, see Pelling (2022a) 34.

20 For a register of historical instances of *stasis* in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE, with inscriptional evidence, see Gehrke (1985).

21 Christodoulou (2013) 246; Tamiolaki (2018) 451–453.

22 Christodoulou (2013) 239 [on Cratinus fr. 258, K.-A.], where *stasis* is seen as a parent of the tyrant Pericles: "[…] for Cratinus *stasis* is not only associated with civil conflict or armed conflict between the rich and the dēmos. *Stasis* in the city may be caused by the behaviour of statesmen and, most of all, by their inability to serve the public interest".

(Hdt. 3.82.3). All the same, the focus in these texts remains squarely on the internal dysfunction of a particular polity, and that dysfunction's ramifications for how life is led there. Plato's Athenian stranger, speaking at the beginning of the *Laws*, addresses this intra-civic character to *stasis* directly, when he asks against what sort of threat a city should ideally be girding itself: "Should it rather organize itself with an eye towards opposing war from without, or with an eye towards *war that from time to time comes about in the city itself, which is called* 'stasis'?" (πρὸς πόλεμον αὐτῆς ἂν τὸν ἔξωθεν βλέπων τὸν βίον κοσμοῖ μᾶλλον, ἢ πρὸς πόλεμον τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ γιγνόμενον ἑκάστοτε, ἣ δὴ καλεῖται στάσις; Pl. *Lg.* 628a–b).[23]

2 Herodian on *inter*-civic *stasis*

Herodian speaks of the 193 CE *stasis* as motivated οὐχ οὕτως τῇ πρὸς τοὺς πολεμοῦντας βασιλέας ἀπεχθείᾳ τινὶ ἢ εὐνοίᾳ ὡς ζήλῳ καὶ ἔριδι τῇ πρὸς ἀλλήλας φθόνῳ τε καὶ καθαιρέσει τῶν ὁμοφύλων "not really because of partisanship for or against one of the warring emperors so much as jealous inter-city rivalry and because of envy towards and a desire to destroy their compatriots." There is a textual issue here, since the second pair of causal datives in the sentence (φθόνῳ "envy" and καθαιρέσει "destruction") sit oddly together. It is likely that one or other of them is corrupt, although no proposed solution is altogether compelling.[24]

Whatever the exact wording, we can be sure that the ideas of jealousy and desired destruction as motives for *stasis* are both in Herodian's mind for this passage, since he uses καθαιρεῖν θέλοντες and ζήλου καὶ φθόνου in the following sentence (which might explain the corruption of one or both of the datives at the end of this one). In itself, the notion that *stasis* is driven by *phthonos* is, once again, in line with much older Greek thinking. We have already seen that Xenophon views those involved in *stasis* as φθονοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς, "begrudging each other".[25] Democritus asserts that *phthonos* makes the beginning of *stasis.*[26]

The similarity of vocabulary between Herodian and these much earlier treatments of *stasis* risks obscuring a crucial difference: Herodian's notion of *stasis*, by contrast with that of Thucydides and Thucydides' Athenian more-or-less contemporaries, is fo-

23 Price (2015) 58; see also Lange (2018) 171.

24 Whittaker proposes φθορᾷ for φθόνῳ, which would make more sense as a pair for καθαιρέσει. Stroth proposes μίσει for καθαιρέσει, which would make more sense as a pair for φθόνῳ; μῖσος is paired with envy amongst those involved in *stasis* by Xenophon, at X. *Mem.* 2.6.20, and is used by Herodian later to characterize the *stasis* between Laodicea and Antioch (Hdn. 3.3.3; see below) and also that between Geta and Caracalla (Hdn. 4.4.1, on which, again, see below). Lucarini (2005) obelizes καθαιρέσει.

25 This is a case of the reflexive pronoun being used in place of the reciprocal (Goodwin [1879] 996; see the discussion at Arnold [1848] 1009–1010).

26 φθόνος γὰρ στάσιος ἀρχὴν ἀπεργάζεται (Stob. 3.38.53 = Democritus DK 68 B 245; aptly quoted at Christodoulou [2013] 246 n. 114).

cussed upon rivalry not *within* cities, but *between* them. The narrative that follows bears this out. We do not hear about the internal tensions of Nicomedia or Nicaea. Citizens of Nicomedia do not imprison or murder other citizens of Nicomedia; the Nicaeans do not prosecute each other. Rather, Herodian tells the story of how the two cities end up on different sides in the war between Septimius Severus and Pescennius Niger because of mutual animosity. Nicomedia throws in its lot with Septimius Severus after his success at the Battle of Cyzicus (μετὰ τὰ ἐν Κυζίκῳ τὰ Νικομηδεῖς μὲν Σεβήρῳ προσέθεντο, Hdn. 3.2.9). Herodian's vocabulary does not entail the supposition that Nicomedia had *switched* allegiance,[27] although, in historical reality, it is unlikely that Nicomedia could have got away down to that point without having made at least a show of support for Niger, who would have sent his forces through Nicomedia and Nicaea on their way from Syria to Byzantium.[28] The Nicaeans, through their hatred towards the Nicomedians, τῷ πρὸς Νικομηδέας μίσει, adopt the other cause, and welcome in Pescennius Niger's army. Again, Herodian makes no suggestion at this point that Nicaea had declared for Niger before Nicomedia declared for Septimius Severus: τἀναντία ἐφρόνουν, where the imperfect is probably inceptive, suggests that Nicaea started following Niger's cause after Nicomedia attached itself to Severus, even though (as we have just seen) the idea that Nicaea could have got away without at least a show of support for Niger in historical reality before that point is quite unlikely.[29] In any event, Herodian presents the decision as proceeding from animosity between the two polities.

The pattern set out with Nicomedia vs. Nicaea repeats itself with Laodicea vs. Antioch and Tyre vs. Berytus (Hdn. 3.3.3). In these cases, Herodian chooses to focus upon the animosity of one side in the equation. He speaks of the Laodiceans and the Tyrians making decisions "against" (*kata*) Antioch and Berytus, respectively, without according as much narrative agency to the other two cities as he has just done with Nicomedia and Nicaea. We may speculate that this decision arises because Herodian wishes his readers to be left with an unmixed vision as to the folly of *stasis.* Laodicea and Tyre pay for their opportunism. They are both slapped down for acting as they do, even though both chose the side (that of Severus) which will ultimately win.[30] In none of these cases, however, does Herodian remark upon struggles *within* the relevant polities. His vision of *stasis* is based upon polities as single (and, for this purpose, monolithic) entities.

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27 *Pace* Bekker-Nielsen (2014) 231 ("If Nicomedia indeed 'went over' to Severus 'immediately after' the battle of Cyzicus, they must obviously have been on the side of Niger until then […]"). προσέθεντο lacks the necessary implication of *changing* sides that "went over" suggests. Cf. Tissaphernes' strategy of keeping the Athenians and Spartans balanced at Th. 8.87.4, applying this verb to the (rejected) idea of siding with either.

28 Hdn. 3.1.5 and D.C. [Xiph.] 75[74].6.3, as Adam Kemezis points out to me.

29 Bekker-Nielsen (2008) 149. Note, too, that in Book Two, Herodian has claimed that support for Niger amongst the peoples of Asia was universal (Hdn. 2.8.7).

30 In fact, Severus *will* ultimately make Antioch subservient to Laodicea (Hdn. 3.6.9), but it does not suit Herodian's moralizing implications in the present passage to mention this.

Herodian is able to see conflict between cities as a species of *internal* dissension, and so still meriting the name of *stasis*, because his sense of what is the most important level for thinking about Greeks is different from the one we usually find in Thucydides. Thucydides is, of course, capable of thinking about Greeks *qua* Greeks. This is often, but not always, in contradistinction to the Persians; he does so, for example, at the very beginning of his history, which claims that the Peloponnesian War was the greatest upheaval to have beset "the Greeks and some part of the barbarians – one might say over most of mankind" (Th. 1.1.2). "The rest of the Greek world", τὸ ἄλλο Ἑλληνικὸν, is, from the beginning, a "favourite expression"[31] of his (Th. 1.1.1, 1.15.3 [of the Lelantine War], and 4.20.4 [from Spartan ambassadors after Pylos]). For the most part, however, the important functional unit in Thucydides is the individual polity.

Herodian's different stance is, once again, evident from the opening sentence of his *stasis*-narrative: the foolish cities act "because of envy towards and a desire to destroy *their compatriots* (*homophulōn*)".[32] In themselves, elements of the vocabulary and the concepts behind it are, again, originally Thucydidean. Thucydides' very first remarks on *stasis*, long before Corcyra becomes a consideration, present two complementary and contrasting threats that emerge from having good land. *stasis* is concurrent with, but in contrast to, being schemed against by *allophulōn*, "those who are of a different kindred": διὰ γὰρ ἀρετὴν γῆς αἵ τε δυνάμεις τισὶ μείζους ἐγγιγνόμεναι στάσεις ἐνεποίουν ἐξ ὧν ἐφθείροντο, καὶ ἅμα ὑπὸ ἀλλοφύλων μᾶλλον ἐπεβουλεύοντο (Th. 1.2.4). Thucydides does not use the actual word *homophuloi* here, although he does later in the history (e. g., Th. 1.141.6). All the same, the mirroring of the expressions makes the implication clear: *stasis* occurs, implicitly, between *homophuloi*, whereas external conspiracies are the work of *allophuloi.* Certainly, the hint that *stasis* occurs between *homophuloi* is spelt out in other post-Thucydidean treatments of the theme.[33]

Herodian's sense of *homophuloi* here is different from that implied at the beginning of Thucydides: *homophuloi*, for Herodian, refers to Greeks as a cultural totality. The sentences that follow make this clear: *stasis* is the "ancient woe of *Greeks*, who incessantly engaging in *stasis* against each other and wanting to destroy those who are pre-eminent have worn out *Greece*". For Herodian, in this passage, at least, the functional unit for thinking about Greeks is "Greece" (in the extended cultural usage, rather than simply the inhabitants of the Greek mainland, which was now the Roman province of Achaia).[34] In this sense, dissension between individual Greek cities *can* be figured as the sort of *internal* division that one might characterise as *stasis.*

31 Hornblower (1991) 6, on Th. 1.1.1.

32 Cf. the use of this term at Aristid. *Or.* 26.63 – 64, dissolving the distinction of Roman and non-Roman.

33 E. g., J. *BJ* 4.134, with Mader (2000) 73.

34 For a perception of such a distinction earlier in the Empire, cf. Juv. 3.61 – 65; Umbricius, Juvenal's secondary narrator, disapproves of all Greeks, but nevertheless makes a point of observing that it is only a tiny proportion of the "Greeks" in Rome who actually hail from Achaea ("quamvis quota portio

Such a sense is foreign to Thucydidean thinking. Thucydides, *ceteris paribus*, prioritizes the individual city as the autonomous unit. Notably, Thucydides has Pericles make the argument, at the end of book one of his history, that the Greeks of the Peloponnesian League are *not homophuloi* with each other, and that this impairs their ability to make decisions fast and effectively as a collective (Th. 1.141.6). Of course, Pericles has a clear rhetorical aim here, to make the Peloponnesians look ineffectual and buoy up Athens for the coming war, but the point remains that his argument hangs on the proposition that Greeks can be not-*homophuloi* with other Greeks.

3 Dio of Prusa, Herodian, and the Refiguring of *stasis*

This un-Thucydidean mode of figuring *stasis* – between, rather than within, city-states – does not originate with Herodian. The most acute students of the passage in which Herodian discourses thus on civil strife have observed that it is very reminiscent, and possibly making use, of Dio of Prusa's Thirty-Eighth Oration.[35] This speech also concerns an instance of destructive tension between Nicaea and Nicomedia, whose historical rivalry long preceded, and long survived,[36] the events of 193 CE.

Dio, addressing the Nicomedians towards the end of the First or the beginning of the Second Century CE, urges the city to abstain from unprofitable rivalry with Nicaea.[37] Dio frames the issue as a struggle to be top dog amongst the local cities: the justification he imagines the proponents of strife as giving is simply Ὑπὲρ πρωτείων ἀγωνιζόμεθα "we contend for the primacy" (D.Chr. 38.24). Dio is at pains to paint this fixation on primacy as empty. Success (according to Dio) will bring no economic, territorial, or moral benefits (D.Chr. 38.22, 39).

For our purposes, the key thing to note in this speech is that Dio talks about the issue of contention between two *cities* explicitly in the vocabulary of *stasis.* When he announces that he is buckling down to consideration of the issue at hand, *stasis* is the word he uses: "first of all, men of Nicomedia, let us look at the reasons for the *stasis*" (Τὸ μὲν οὖν πρῶτον, ἄνδρες Νικομηδεῖς, τὰς αἰτίας τῆς στάσεως ἴδωμεν, D.Chr. 38.21). References to the disagreement between Nicomedia and Nicaea as a *stasis* continue to pepper the speech (e.g., D.Chr. 38.24, 43, 48, 50). True enough, Dio, unlike Herodian, does hint at the presence of sinister individuals *within* the polity of Nicomedia itself agitating to foment this discontent, whose motives for doing so he ostenta-

faecis Achaei?"), while the rest have effectively brought the Syrian Orontes to the Tiber. See also Bérenger (2022) 223, quoting this passage.

35 Above all, Bekker-Nielsen (2014) 232–233. See also Makhlaiuk in this volume, 248.

36 The rivalry was still a going concern in 451 CE, when Nicaea, originally a suffragan bishopric of Nicomedia, used preferment under Valentinian and Valens to assert its own status as an ecclesiastical metropolis (Levick [2000] 616, citing *Act. Conc. Oec.* 11.1.416–421).

37 Asirvatham (2020) 301.

tiously declines to discuss (δι᾽ ἃς δὲ αἰτίας οὐκ ἐμὸν ἴσως ἐξελέγχειν, D.Chr. 38.24). But the fact remains that the entities Dio sees as engaging in *stasis* against each other are cities, rather than fellow-citizens; the notion we saw in Xenophon of *stasis* arising from individuals contending περὶ τοῦ πρωτεύειν has been transferred to polities.

Dio's warning against inter-civic *stasis* engages in some of the same rhetorical moves as Herodian's, although with a more overt demonstration of particularity as regards earlier Greek history. Herodian says rather vaguely that "their affairs" (viz., the affairs of the earlier Greeks) "having grown weak and old and worn out against each other became ripe for conquest and slavery by the Macedonians and the Romans". Dio fastens more precisely upon the case of the Athenians and the Spartans: "I am told that this same thing has caused Greek *stasis* before, and that the Athenians and the Spartans contended for primacy" (καὶ πρότερον γὰρ δήποτε ἀκούω τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦτο γενέσθαι στάσεως Ἑλληνικῆς αἴτιον, καὶ πολεμῆσαι περὶ τῶν πρωτείων τοὺς Ἀθηναίους καὶ τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους, D.Chr. 38.24–25).[38]

Both Dio and Herodian are drawing upon an established notion of the Succession of Empires, for a more detailed version of which one has to look elsewhere – such as the general preface to the *Roman History* of Appian, whose work we shall later find useful as a comparator in a different sense. Appian sees what he calls the "hegemony" of the Greeks as being succeeded in turn by that of the Macedonians and the Romans (App. *Praef.* 8.29); he subdivides this Greek hegemony into those of the Athenians, the Spartans, and the Thebans. (The Fourth Century BCE political heyday of Thebes is mentioned neither by Dio nor by Herodian. Dio, as we shall see shortly, has an interest in figuring the Greek politics of this period as a two-horse race, although this does not stop him from comparing himself to the Theban Epaminondas in another speech.[39] The Medism of Thebes during the Persian Wars also contributed, perhaps, to a lasting unpopularity as an *exemplum*, and it does not seem to have had the success in leveraging its pre-Roman past to become a "museum city" in Imperial times as Athens and Sparta did,[40] although its history, unsurprisingly, retains a high profile in the works of the Chaeronean Plutarch.)[41] Dionysius of Halicarnassus follows a similar schema, with the addition of precise, and rather problematic, lengths for the respective periods of dominance enjoyed by the three Greek cities (D.H. 1.3.2).

Whereas Dionysius and Appian plot these Greek hegemonies within a longer succession, with each one yielding place to another, Dio openly recasts the Peloponnesian War as an incident of *stasis* between Athens and Sparta. Herodian does not do so quite as conspicuously. We may note, however, an intertextual echo in his claim that *stasis* has continued to beset Greece "even down to the cities prospering in our own day", ἐς τὰς καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ἀκμαζούσας πόλεις (Hdn. 3.2.8). Thucydides, in the opening sentences of

38 Cf. also Aristid. *Or.* 26.53. For Athens as a negative *exemplum* elsewhere in Dio's speeches, see Jazdzewska (2015) especially 263–264 (on Athens and Sparta at D. Chr. 34.49–50).

39 D. Chr. 43.4–6, as Adam Kemezis points out to me.

40 For Sparta and Athens as "museum cities" under the Empire, see Swain (1996) 40, 74–76.

41 E.g., Plu. *De gen.* and, more humorously, *De garr.* 22 (= *BNJ* 70 F213).

his work, claims that he realized from the outset how worthy of note the Peloponnesian War was going to be on the grounds that both sides were prospering as to every resource: ὅτι ἀκμάζοντές τε ἦσαν ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμφότεροι παρασκευῇ τε πάσῃ (Th. 1.1.1). ἀκμάζω, to be sure, is not an especially unusual verb, and Thucydidean vocabulary in Herodian, despite the clear results we have already seen, does not necessarily *always* have a particular allusive force.[42] It is still a little tempting to see Herodian as doing implicitly in this passage what Dio does in his oration: making the contention of the Athenians and the Spartans (the implied "prospering" states of long ago which are the counterpart to those "in our own day") an earlier link in the chain of *stasis* that stretches down to the historian's own present. (Thucydides himself, of course, foresees the possibility that the dominant cities of his own day may ultimately cease to be so (Th. 1.10.2), and that it would then be hard to guess that Sparta had been so pre-eminent.)

Herodian's notion of inter-civic *stasis* in his disquisition upon it is, then, essentially un-Thucydidean, but represents an expansion of the notion of "internal discord" to Greece as a corporate entity in its own right which is already established in other Greek historiographical (or historiography-adjacent) texts written under the dominion of Rome. We have seen that this shift has knock-on effects for how Herodian deploys other items of Thucydidean vocabulary. For Herodian, all Greeks can be considered *homophuloi*, in a way that would not have occurred to Thucydides' Pericles. This urge to recast Thucydides into a way of thinking that privileges "Greece" and "Greeks" as a structural unit rather than the autonomous city-state can be discerned beyond Herodian and Dio Chrysostom. One notes, for example, the dismay shown by Dionysius of Halicarnassus at what he perceives as the cold-bloodedness of Greeks towards other Greeks shown by Thucydides in the Melian Dialogue: "no Athenian should have spoken thus to Greeks whom they had liberated from the Persians" (D. H. *Th.* 39).[43] The expansion is, of course, part of a larger tendency in Imperial Greek literature to figure "Greece" primarily as a *cultural* unity.

In any event, Herodian, like Dio before him, is living in a world where the failure of earlier Greeks to match Macedon or Rome, for whatever reason, means that the possibilities of independent power for individual Greek polities are seriously curtailed. Dio is forthright is calling attention to this, as he reminds the Nicomedians that their envisioned struggle for "primacy" with the Nicaeans can never be what the contest between Athens and Sparta was during the Fifth Century BCE:

> τὰ δὲ ἐκείνων εἶπον ἤδη που καὶ πρότερον ὅτι μὴ κενόδοξα ἦν, ἀλλ᾽ ὑπὲρ ἀρχῆς ἀληθοῦς ἀγών· εἰ μή τι νῦν δοκεῖτε αὐτοὺς ὑπὲρ τῆς προπομπείας καλῶς ἀγωνίζεσθαι, καθάπερ ἐν μυστηρίῳ τινὶ παίζοντας ὑπὲρ ἀλλοτρίου πράγματος.

42 On the larger question of where precise verbal intertextuality with Thucydides is (or is not) significant in Greek imperial texts, see Pelling (2010) 106.

43 See also Wiater (2018) 58.

> I have already noted perhaps earlier that *their* deeds [viz., those of the Fifth Century Athenians and Spartans] were not matters of empty repute, but a contest over authentic dominion – unless you think that they were contending valiantly over the right to lead a procession, like people sporting in some mystery celebration over something which actually belongs to someone else. (D.Chr. 38.38–39)[44]

Herodian presents this truth rather differently from how Dio does,[45] but the underlying perception of the shift in the true locus of political power is the same. As far as struggles for true power on the global stage, the ἀρχῆς ἀληθοῦς ἀγών, are concerned, Thucydides' favoured unit of attention, the individual Greek city-state, has become, under the Roman Empire, essentially obsolete.

4 Herodian and the Absence of Thucydidean *stasis*

If we continue this comparison of Herodian to other Greek imperial historiography, however, we find that there is a further complication. The idea of *stasis* as occurring between polities expands Thucydides' concept of the phenomenon. All the same, *stasis* can usually still refer, in Greek texts written under the Roman Empire, to discord within an individual polity. The idea of inter-civic *stasis* expands the Thucydidean use of the concept, but does not replace it.

In the historical works by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing under Augustus, and the *Roman History* of Appian, written around the middle of the Second Century CE, *stasis* as the *mot juste* for dissension within an individual polity is a usage that is still alive and kicking. In Dionysius, the most straightforward example of this is probably his handling, in Book Six of the *Roman Antiquities*, of the run-up to the first Secession of the Plebs, in the wake of Roman success at the Battle of Lake Regillus: "discord within the city once again arose for the Romans after they had put an end to the foreign wars, when the Senate had decreed that the law-courts should sit, and that the suits which had been put off on account of the war should be decided according to the laws" (Ῥωμαίοις δὲ καταλυσαμένοις τοὺς ὑπαίθρους πολέμους *ἡ πολιτικὴ στάσις* αὖθις ἐπανίστατο τῆς μὲν βουλῆς ψηφισαμένης καθίζειν τὰ δικαστήρια καὶ τὰς ἀμφισβητήσεις, ἃς διὰτὸν πόλεμον ἀνεβάλλοντο, κρίνεσθαι κατὰτοὺς νόμους, D.H. 6.22.1). In this passage, the contrast between *internal stasis* and threats from without which

44 Dio revisits the theme that political power no longer resides with the Greek cities, and once again presses into service the examples of Sparta and Athens, in an address to the people of Tarsus (D.Chr. 34.48–51). Cassius Dio, too, is notably sceptical in an aside about the emptiness of some manifestations of civic self-aggrandisement under the High Empire (D.C. 54.23.8, cited by Millar [1964] 8 with n. 7).

45 Bekker-Nielsen (2014) acutely notes that, while Dio frames inter-civic rivalries in terms of what he claims to be the Roman perception of them as Ἑλληνικὰ ἁμαρτήματα ("Greek failings/mistakes", D.Chr. 38.38); Herodian straightforwardly calls then a πάθος Ἑλλήνων (a "malady of Greeks"). This both elides the Roman perspective, and takes some agency from those who are afflicted by them.

we saw as assumed in Thucydides's account of early Greek history appears again: once the wars with others, τοὺς ὑπαίθρους πολέμους, are put to bed, the Romans face the recrudescence of a challenge from within the city itself. In the following book, Dionysius explicitly draws on an analogy with the Corcyrean *stasis* to illustrate his argument that Roman *stasis* (at least in the period he is discussing) had a happier outcome, because of the Roman talent for resolving disagreement with *logos* (D.H. 7.66.5).[46]

Appian's usage is still more interesting than that of Dionysius. Intra-civic discord is explicitly the subject for five full books of Appian's (originally) twenty-four book history. This preoccupation is advertised from the start. Appian notes in his general preface that "the deeds which the Romans committed in *stasis* and civil war against each other (which things above all were more fearful to them) have been divided up according to the leaders of the *stasis*" (ὅσα δ' αὐτοὶ Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐστασίασάν τε καὶ ἐπολέμησαν ἐμφύλια, φοβερώτερα σφίσι ταῦτα μάλιστα γενόμενα, ἐς τοὺς στρατηγοὺς τῶν στάσεων διῄρηται, App. *Praef.* 14.59).

In some ways, Appian's outlook aligns with that of Dio Chrysostom and Herodian. Appian's general preface plots the transfer of global hegemony from the Greeks (subdivided, as we have already seen, into the Athenians, the Spartans, and the Thebans) to Macedonia and then to Rome. At the conclusion of this passage, Appian seems to assert that *stasis* is the *only* thing that brings down great empires, ᾧ μόνως ἀρχαὶ μεγάλαι καταλύονται (App. *Praef.* 10.42). The corruptness of the text here is unfortunate,[47] but Appian seems to be deploying the later, somewhat expanded sense of *stasis* which we have detected in other Imperial Greek texts. For Appian, the Successor Kings eventually undo Alexander's legacy not because of issues within their own discrete realms, but because they insist on vying with *each other*, a tendency of which Herodian, too, is critical (Hdn. 6.2.7).[48] This *stasis* between the Successors can still be regarded as happening "within" an empire so long as the discussion is framed in terms of Alexander's original legacy, as Appian does (App. *Praef.* 10.38). In similar vein, it is hard to see how such a *stasis*-driven explanation could apply to Appian's account of the earlier fall of the "Greek" hegemony if Appian were not entertaining here an inter-polity model of *stasis* like (if more detailed than) the one in Dio and Herodian.[49] Greece falls before Philip of Macedon because the Greek city-states contend with each other, not because of issues internal to the polity of Thebes, who are, according to the strict succession, the actual top dogs when power is lost to Macedonia. In any event, *stasis* is of ongoing thematic significance for Appian. A recent reading argues that Appian's decision to devote five books of his history to Rome suffering *and emerging* from *stasis* makes the point

46 Pelling (2010) 113–114.

47 The text here is uncertain (Viereck *et al.* [1962] 8). McGing (2019) 19 n. 19 notes: "This is a highly problematic sentence in the manuscripts, although its general meaning seems to be reasonably clear."

48 Goukowsky (2020) 192 n. 320 notes similar sentiments at Liv. 45.9 and D.H. 1.2.3, as well.

49 Interestingly, both Appian (App. *Praef.* 10.42) and Herodian (Hdn. 3.2.8) deploy the unexpected verb συντρίβω to evoke the pointless grinding down of resources which unprofitable *stasis* entails; this may be a (very unusual) evocation of the former by the latter.

that Rome has now defeated the one force that might conceivably have threatened the continuance of its hegemony.[50]

Once Appian's narrative is underway, however, he typically continues the Thucydidean usage of having *stasis* refer to dissension *within* an individual polity. Such a conception, to take only the most obvious example, informs the opening sentence of Appian's whole narrative of the Roman Civil Wars. "The Senate and the people of Rome often engaged in *stasis* against each other, over legislation and the forgiveness of debts, or over land distribution or high offices (Ῥωμαίοις ὁ δῆμος καὶ ἡ βουλὴ πολλάκις ἐς ἀλλήλους περί τε νόμων θέσεως καὶ χρεῶν ἀποκοπῆς ἢ γῆς διαδατουμένης ἢ ἐν ἀρχαιρεσίαις ἐστασίασαν, App. *BC* 1.1.1).

Herodian, by contrast to Dionysius and Appian, barely uses *stasis* in the more Thucydidean sense. Dissension within a polity certainly appears in his history. That polity is usually Rome; not without justice does a recent study of Severan historiography subtitle its chapter on Herodian "a dysfunctional Rome".[51] Herodian seems, however, very reluctant to label contemporary Roman dysfunction as *stasis.*

Herodian tends to categorize Rome's internal problems during the period with which he is concerned as *emphulios polemos*, "civil war", instead. This, to be sure, is a usage we find in Appian, as well. We have already seen that Appian's opening description for his *Civil War* books in the general preface to his work is ὅσα δ' αὐτοὶ Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐστασίασάν τε καὶ ἐπολέμησαν ἐμφύλια. For Appian, however, *emphulios polemos* is usually presented as the terminal stage to which particularly violent and pernicious *staseis* ultimately progress. In Book One of the *Civil Wars*, for example, the use of *polemos* at a key moment denotes how the contention between Marius and Sulla represents an escalation from what has been described before: "Thus far the murders and *staseis* had still been *emphulioi* in a piecemeal fashion, κατὰ μέρη, but thereafter the faction leaders engaged each other with great armies, as if they were at war" (τάδε μὲν δὴ φόνοι καὶ στάσεις ἔτι ἦσαν ἐμφύλιοι κατὰ μέρη: μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο στρατοῖς μεγάλοις οἱ στασίαρχοι πολέμου νόμῳ συνεπλέκοντο ἀλλήλοις, App. *BC* 1.55.240).[52]

Herodian's customary usage, by contrast with Appian's, jumps straight to *emphulios polemos*, without any intermediary stage of *stasis.*[53] When Cleander sets the imperial cavalry upon the Roman people as they gather *en masse* to demand his death, the narrator's comment after the ensuing massacre is that "no one else wanted to report to Commodus what was being done for fear of Cleander's power, even though there was a civil war in progress (ὄντος δὲ πολέμου ἐμφυλίου)" (Hdn. 1.13.1). In similar vein, Herodian says of Gallicanus' attempt to mobilize and arm the people of Rome against the

50 Price (2015) 59–60.

51 Kemezis (2014) 227–272.

52 On Appian's vision of a development from *stasis* to *polemos emphulios*, see Lange (2018) 167, who also has some remarks on the knotty issue of the difference (if any) between the two at 169–171.

53 Herodian *does* use *apostasis* at various points (e. g., Hdn. 7.4.1, 7.12.9), but the sense of this, as in other Greek usage, is rather different from *stasis.*

soldiery that he "began to stir up civil war (ἐμφύλιον πόλεμον) and great destruction for the city" (Hdn. 7.11.6, and cf. the narrator's closural comment at 7.12.9). The rumour that Maximinus is dead brings about wide-spread slaughter and the authorial comment that "Ostensibly in conditions of freedom and the security of peacetime, acts of civil war (ἔργα πολέμου ἐμφυλίου) took place" (Hdn. 7.7.3).[54]

Outside of inter-civic rivalry in the eastern provinces, Herodian's main example of using *stasis*-vocabulary is one applied not to groups within a polity, but to two particular individuals. These are the warring emperors Geta and Caracalla.[55] Herodian describes the two brothers as "engaging in *stasis* (στασιάζοντας δὲ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς) with regard to every single thing they did" (Hdn. 4.3.4). The growth of their enmity brings the authorial comment that "the hatred and the *stasis* grew" (τὸ δὲ μῖσος καὶ ἡ στάσις ηὔξετο, Hdn. 4.4.1). The terminology of *stasis*, in fact, haunts the relations of the brothers with each other, even before the demise of their father Septimius Severus (Hdn. 3.10.3, 3.13.5).

This deviation from Herodian's more standard practice is striking. It is tempting to see this anomaly as part of the historian's larger strategy of playing up how this one instance of ruinous kin-strife comes close to tearing the empire apart; familial division and larger division, whether of the influential men within the polity (Hdn 4.3.2) or of the royal palace itself (Hdn. 4.1.5), mirror each other. Familial *stasis* as a concomitant of civic *stasis*, after all, is a trope that goes back to Thucydides. One of the horrors of the *stasis* in Corcyra is that father killed son (Th. 3.81.5); Appian, too, gathers instances of how familial bonds are perverted under the *stasis* of the Triumviral proscriptions (App. *BC* 4.18.70 – 72).

The studied and anomalous case of Geta and Caracalla aside, the comparative dearth of *stasis* vocabulary in Herodian where one might perhaps expect it is accompanied, perhaps, by a more subtle quirk of his narrative strategy: a tendency to avoid or downplay at key points the more conventional tropes of *stasis* in places where one might have expected to see them.[56] Greek historiography (and Greco-Roman historical reality) had developed, by the time of Herodian, a repertoire of factors and strategies which tended to produce or strengthen instances of *stasis* within a polity. In Herodian, these classic factors do sometimes appear – but they have a tendency not subsequently to amount to much. For example, grain-hoarding (or the rumour of such hoarding) so as to gain an economic or political advantage when dearth ensues is an established feature in accounts of civil disruption from the Greco-Roman world. Dio Chrysostom, dur-

54 For other instances of *polemos emphulios* in Herodian – some within the period of his narrative, some looking back at the struggles of the Republic – compare Hdn. 1.1.4, 1.13.3, 3.7.8 ("battles", rather than wars), 3.9.1, 3.15.3.

55 Chrysanthou (2022) 44 – 45, 98 – 99. Asirvatham (2020) 307 notes the tendency for *stasis* vocabulary in Herodian to cluster around Geta and Caracalla.

56 There is an interesting comparison and contrast here with Cassius Dio, who seems to avoid some classic civil war tropes, but only in the particular context of 193 – 197 CE; see Kemezis (2020) especially 170 – 173.

ing a speech delivered in his native city of Prusa, has to defend himself against the charge that he has done so (D.Chr. 46.8–10). Cleander attempts such a strategy in the first book of Herodian (Hdn. 1.12.4). Its only result is that everyone except Commodus works out what he is doing (Hdn. 1.12.5).[57] There is a united front of disapprobation. Even Cleander's subsequent attempt to quell this censure by use of the imperial cavalry, to which we have already alluded, proves successful only in the short term. The cavalry swiftly realize the error of their ways, in the wake of Cleander's almost immediate bloody demise (Hdn. 1.13.5). In similar vein, a classic trope of disunity within a polity, from Thucydides downwards, is one faction within a city selling out to a besieging force at the expense of another; we have already seen how the unexpected absence of this usually tried and tested strategy catches Thucydides' Athenians on the hop (Th. 7.55.2, above). In Herodian, the possibility that such a selling-out might happen preys upon the mind of Crispinus at the siege of Aquileia; he fears that the populace might open the gates of the city to the investing troops of Maximinus (Hdn. 8.3.4). Even here, though, this possibility is figured in terms of a preference for peace on the part of the people, rather than of class-struggle against the local elite. In any event, the fears turn out to be groundless. Aquileia goes on presenting a united civic front.

On the other hand, it would be prudent not to push this observation about the comparative dearth of conventional *stasis* tropes in Herodian too far. Some classic manifestations of *stasis*, hallowed by Thucydidean usage, *do* appear in their wonted colours when the polity of Rome is undergoing upheaval. This happens even when Herodian is studiously analogizing the situation to *emphulios polemos* rather than calling it *stasis*. Chaotic times lead to the murder of creditors by their debtors, as much in Herodian's Rome as in Thucydides' Corcyra (Hdn. 7.7.3; cf. Th. 3.81.4). Setting light to the troubled polity in the midst of internal strife is likewise a feature that appears in both narratives (Th. 3.74.2, Hdn. 7.12.5).

In any event, it is interesting to speculate why the older concept of *intra*-civic *stasis*, below a state of what is asserted to be full-on *emphulios polemos*, sees so little explicit use in Herodian, when it is still clearly available to other imperial Greek historians, such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Appian. Part of the answer to this question lies in the passage from which we started, where Herodian discourses upon the proneness to *stasis* (in the *inter*-civic sense) of the Greek cities. Herodian's disposition to figure *stasis* as a persistent *Greek* problem carries with it a clear, if unspoken corollary. *Stasis* has not continued to be an issue amongst the Romans.

The issue of temporality is key here. The historians whom we have noted to expatiate upon the topic of *stasis* at Rome, Appian and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, are both writers whose extant works on that subject are about the distant past. The *Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius, even when they were complete, did not extend beyond the outbreak of the First Punic War in the Third Century BCE (D.H. 1.8.1). With regard to Appian, we may note his insistence, at the end of Book Four of his *Civil Wars*, that the

57 Motta (2022) 176–177.

stasis between Octavian and Marcus Antonius was the *last* that ever afflicted Rome (App. *BC* 4.138.580). An accident of transmission conceals quite how provocative such a claim would have been, had Appian's entire text remained intact. The exact disposition of the lost books of the *Roman History* is hard to determine, but the work as a whole seems to have taken Roman history down to Trajan's Dacian campaigns and annexation of Arabia Petraea (Phot. *Bibl.* 57). How Appian would therefore have figured the two turbulent changes of imperial dynasty in the course of the First Century CE in a way that did not make them look like an instance of another *stasis* is an intriguing question. It may have helped that Book Twenty-Two, "the hundred years", ended, on the most likely showing, with the death of Nero, and that Appian may not have handled the Flavians substantially at all, although he does seem to have included a prophecy about the ascendancy of Vespasian (App. F. 17).

Herodian takes as his theme more contemporary history. He does not have to cope with the potential awkwardness that Appian's comprehensive chronological sweep and avowed preoccupation with *stasis* as a unifying theme creates for the earlier historian. Herodian is able to keep substantial *stasis* a problem of Rome's distant past. Where something that *looks* like *stasis* at Rome might be happening in his text, even to the extent of showing, as with the torching of the city or the murder of the creditors, some of its characteristic tropes, Herodian tends to reclassify it as *polemos emphulios* (*without* Appian's tendency to think of that as often a logical development of *stasis*) instead.

There is, however, more than verbal legerdemain at play in Herodian's avoidance of the category of intra-civic *stasis* within his work. Herodian's conceptualization of how power articulates itself in the Rome of his lifetime, and the historical reality behind that conceptualization, genuinely do not leave much space for some of the classic manifestations of intra-civic *stasis* that throng the pages of the earlier historians. In Thucydides' Corcyra, the main axis of confrontation to the emergent *stasis* is rivalry between the *dēmos* (or those purporting to represent it, like the unlucky Peithias) and the *oligoi* (Th. 3.82.1). In Dionysius on the early Roman republic, as we have seen, one possible such axis is between the plebeians and the patricians. Appian's *Civil Wars* embraces several (particularly in Book One), but begins its survey of *stasis* at Rome with contention between the people and the senate (in his terms, the *dēmos* and the *boulē*).

In Herodian's text, by contrast with the interrelations of social units within the Roman polity that we find mapped out in his predecessors, the dominant theme tends to be not discord, but unity. In Appian, the *dēmos* and *boulē* are initially presented as fractious towards each other. In Herodian, they more often than not agree – often in approbation or censure of someone else. Both senate and people are happy to see Commodus return to Rome (Hdn. 1.7.3)[58] and, likewise, Geta and Caracalla (Hdn. 4.1.3); senate and people alike approve of Severus Alexander's opening behaviour

58 Motta (2022) 175 notes the "backdrop of full political consensus" here.

(Hdn. 6.1.2). Examples of such concord may be multiplied.[59] Herodian, to be sure, does indulge in some traditional vilification of (elements within) the *dēmos*. The *dēmos* is supposedly fickle, and easily whipped up to destructiveness and irrationality (7.7.1); some amongst it envy the rich, and delight in their perdition (7.3.5).[60] Neither of these observations, however, leads to immediate contention with the senate; they just contribute to the unpopularity of Maximinus. It is only towards the end of Herodian's narrative, with the people's disapproval of Maximus and Balbinus, and espousal of the cause of Gordian, that tension between the people and the senate really becomes palpable and destructive (Hdn. 7.10.5–6, and cf. 8.8.7); we may perhaps see this as symptomatic of the gathering darkness at the close of the history, which Whittaker rightly reads as ending on a gloomy note,[61] with the succession of the boy emperor Gordian III.

The general accord between senate and people in Herodian often plays out in a combined hostility to a unit which (for obvious historical reasons) tends not to be presented as a discrete entity in much earlier historiography: the soldiery (as, for example, in Gallicanus' uprising, which we have discussed above).[62] For Herodian, the process which we can see taking place in the course of Appian's five books of *Civil Wars*, where the initial contention between senate and people is ultimately joined by a third term, the soldiers, whose power and interests at first countervail, and ultimately usually overcome,[63] the others, has now been completed. As with the autonomous Greek city-state of Thucydides, one traditional figuring of intra-civic *stasis* in historiography, that between the *dēmos* and the *boulē*, has had its day by the time of Herodian's writing. We may recall that Tacitus, listing all the exciting themes from the history of the Republic which are no longer available to one who writes imperial history, notes "plebis et optimatium certamina" amongst them (Tac. *Ann.* 4.32.2).

For Herodian, then, the shift in the balance of power between different constituencies under the Empire, as opposed to the state that obtained under the Republic, means that the classic polarities of intra-civic *stasis* at Rome which we see in Dionysius of Halicarnassus – above all, the epic and enduring struggles between *boulē* and *dēmos* – rarely, if ever, have much force. It is tempting to hypothesize that a similar perception may have underlain Appian's reluctance to identify civic turbulence under the Empire as *stasis*, so enabling Appian to claim, as we have seen, that the contention be-

59 E. g., Hdn. 2.6.1–2 (the reception of Pertinax's murder), 2.14.1 and 3.8.3 (celebration, but trepidation, at the arrival of Septimius Severus), 5.5.2 (gloom at the death of Macrinus), 7.10.1 (reception of the death of Gordian I), and 7.12.1 (joint anger against the soldiers).

60 Motta (2022) 190–192; Buongiorno (2022) 214. Elsewhere, the *dēmos* shows lack of restraint at Hdn. 2.2.9, and is criticized for flightiness by Maximinus (who is, however, hardly a reliable witness) at Hdn. 7.8.6.

61 Whittaker (1970) 310–311 n. 1.

62 Motta (2022) 181: "the contrast between civilians and soldiers, a contrast which appears throughout Herodian's entire body of work".

63 On the comparative power of senate, people, and soldiery in the period covered by Herodian, see Sidebottom (2022) 159–164.

tween Marcus Antonius and Augustus was the last instance of *stasis* that afflicted Rome. The disappearance of Appian's later books, especially "The Hundred Years", means that this must remain a conjecture. On the other hand, it is perhaps pertinent that Cassius Dio, who talks a great deal about *stasis* at Rome in his books about the history of the Republic,[64] seems to fight shy of characterizing the chaos after the fall of the Julio-Claudians as such in his (admittedly very fragmentary) books on that period as an example of it. Dio's narrator appears to call the state of affairs after the death of Nero a *tarakhē* (D.C. 63[63].29.4; cf. also 63[64].15.1a),[65] a word for unrest which Herodian, too, deploys;[66] both Dio's Otho and the narrator speak of *polemos emphulios* (D.C. 63[64].13.1, 64[65].10.4).[67] *Stasis*, however, seems to be avoided in Dio's account of this period. It may be, then (though the evidence is scanty), that Herodian's apparent reluctance – except in the memorably bizarre case of the warring brothers Geta and Caracalla – to characterize civic disturbance at Rome under the Empire as *stasis* is not just a strategy for polishing an alleged contrast with the behaviour of contemporary Greeks, but also symptomatic of a more general such tendency amongst the Greek historians of the High Empire.

5 Conclusion

Our study of *stasis* in Herodian has been illuminating, not just for the passage in Book Three where he openly discusses his conception of it, but also for other areas of his history. We have seen that Thucydides' examination of *stasis* in Corcyra may, indeed, have nudged Herodian in the direction of fashioning his own generalizing account of *stasis.* However, as in Herodian's other cases of programmatic Thucydidean intertextuality, what we find is more complex than simple and unthinking emulation. Herodian redeploys Thucydidean vocabulary, and not just from the Corcyra passage (note the possible glance at Thucydides' own opening in the use of *akmazein*), to develop a vision of *stasis*, inter- rather than intra-civic, which is at some distance from Thucydides, even as it proclaims a kinship to that earlier work.

Herodian's *stasis* has turned out to be in line with some expansions in the sense of that term which we find in other historiographical and para-historiographical texts of the Roman Empire – prompted, at least in part, by historical contingency, which has

64 Lange (2018).

65 Itself a word used by Polybius to characterize the Mercenary War and its attendant problems at Carthage (e.g., Plb. 3.9.9), which Polybius also sees as an instance of *stasis* (Plb. 1.66.10). See also Lange (2018) 171.

66 Hdn. 1.12.6, 2.6.1, 2.12.2, 4.4.4. In Herodian, *tarakhē* is almost always used to describe disturbance of the *dēmos* alone; it is perhaps symptomatic of the darkness towards the end of the narrative that its last appearance, at 7.10.1, sees it spreading to the Senate, as well.

67 On *polemos emphulios* in Dio, see also Lange and Scott (2020) 5 and Asirvatham (2020) 302–303, with n. 54.

left the days of autonomous political power for the individual Greek city-state behind.[68] We have also seen, however, that Herodian's usage reflects the particular interests and interpretations that inform his unique work, as well as the terminology he has inherited from other imperial authors. By shying away from Thucydides' earlier sense of *stasis*, in a way imperial Greek authors such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Appian do not when talking about the Roman Republic, Herodian cements his own vision of how power works in the Rome of his lifetime. Contention between senate and people, or the other axes available to older treatments of intra-civic discord, are not altogether impossible in Herodian; we can see tension building in the history's grim closing stretch.[69] But the settled power of the Emperor and the armies makes such contention a lot less relevant than it was. The world has changed since the early Republic, and Thucydides' Corcyra.

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68 For another way of refiguring Thucydidean *stasis* in Greek under the Empire, rather different from those explored above, compare the polemical use of the term in Josephus (Davies [2017] 187).

69 Davenport and Mallan (2020) especially 437– 438, is insightful on the difficulty imperial claimants have in juggling various political constituencies in Herodian, and on the particular challenges they face in the last two books.

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