

Studies in Aetiology and Historical Methodology in Herodotus

by

Mackenzie Steele Zalin

Department of Classical Studies  
Duke University

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
William A. Johnson, Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carla M. Antonaccio

\_\_\_\_\_  
Emily E. Baragwanath

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua D. Sosin

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of  
Classical Studies in the Graduate School  
of Duke University

2016

ABSTRACT

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## Abstract

This dissertation interrogates existing scholarly paradigms regarding aetiology in the *Histories* of Herodotus in order to open up new avenues to approach a complex and varied topic. Since aetiology has mostly been treated as the study of cause and effect in the *Histories*, this work expands the purview of aetiology to include Herodotus' explanations of origins more generally. The overarching goal in examining the methodological principles of Herodotean aetiology is to show the extent to which they resonate across the *Histories* according to their initial development in the proem, especially in those places that seem to deviate from the work's driving force (i.e. the Persian Wars). Though the focus is on correlating the principles espoused in the proem with their deployment in Herodotus' ethnographies and other seemingly divergent portions of his work, the dissertation also demonstrates the influence of these principles on some of the more "historical" aspects of the *Histories* where the struggle between Greeks and barbarians is concerned. The upshot is to make a novel case not only for the programmatic significance of the proem, but also for the cohesion of Herodotean methodology from cover to cover, a perennial concern for scholars of Greek history and historiography.

Chapter One illustrates how the proem to the *Histories* (1.1.0-1.5.3) prefigures Herodotus' engagement with aetiological discussions throughout the *Histories*. Chapter Two indicates how the reading of the proem laid out in Chapter One allows for Herodotus' deployment of aetiology in the Egyptian *logos* (especially where the pharaoh Psammetichus' investigation of the origins of Egyptian language, nature, and custom are

concerned) to be viewed within the methodological continuum of the *Histories* at large. Chapter Three connects Herodotus' programmatic interest in the origins of *erga* (i.e. "works" or "achievements" manifested as monuments and deeds of abstract and concrete sorts) with the patterns addressed in Chapters One and Two. Chapter Four examines aetiological narratives in the Scythian *logos* and argues through them that this *logos* is as integral to the *Histories* as the analogous Egyptian *logos* studied in Chapter Two. Chapter Five demonstrates how the aetiologies associated with the Greeks' collaboration with the Persians (i.e. medism) in the lead-up to the battle of Thermopylae recapitulate programmatic patterns isolated in previous chapters and thereby extend the methodological continuum of the *Histories* beyond the "ethnographic" *logoi* to some of the most representative "historical" *logoi* of Herodotus' work. Chapter Six concludes the dissertation and makes one final case for methodological cohesion by showing the inextricability of the end of the *Histories* from its beginning.

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## **Abbreviations**

Journal names are abbreviated according to *L'année philologique*. Modern reference works, ancient authors, and ancient works are abbreviated according to the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford, 1996).



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## Introduction

Since antiquity, aetiology has occupied an indispensable place in the study of history. As the scholar and critic of Greek and Roman historiography, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, once postulated, “those who read histories do not derive sufficient benefit from hearing the outcome (τέλος) of deeds alone, but everyone demands that the causes (αἰτίας) of events be related as well—including the ways in which things happen, the designs behind them, and cases of divine intervention—and that they remain ignorant of nothing that naturally attends these matters.”<sup>1</sup> Dionysius’ deep concern on many levels for origins and causes (i.e. αἰτία (pl.), αἰτή (sg.), the root of our word aetiology) finds one of its earliest expressions in Herodotus, whose inquiry, the *Histories*, constitutes the oldest fully-extant work of its kind in Greek. Though it has long been recognized that aetiology looms large in the *Histories* from the very beginning when Herodotus first sets out to explain why barbarians and Greeks came to war against one another (δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι, 1.1.0),<sup>2</sup> it is only somewhat recently that scholars have begun to look carefully at the meaning of aetiology and its many roles throughout such a vast and varied work.

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<sup>1</sup> ... τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσι τὰς ἱστορίας οὐχ ἰκανόν ἐστιν εἰς ὠφέλειαν τὸ τέλος αὐτὸ τῶν πραχθέντων ἀκοῦσαι, ἀπαιτεῖ δ’ ἕκαστος καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἱστορῆσαι τῶν γινομένων καὶ τοὺς τρόπους τῶν πράξεων καὶ τὰς διανοίας τῶν πράξαντων καὶ τὰ παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου συγκυρήσαντα, καὶ μηδενὸς ἀνήκοος γενέσθαι τῶν πεφυκότων τοῖς πράγμασι παρακολουθεῖν (*Ant. Rom.* 5.56.1). See also Cic. *De or.* 2.63 on the responsibilities of the orator in writing history: *Haec scilicet fundamenta nota sunt omnibus, ipsa autem exaedificatio posita est in rebus et verbis: rerum ratio ordinem temporum desiderat, regionum descriptionem; vult etiam, quoniam in rebus magnis memoriaque dignis consilia primum, deinde acta, postea eventus expectentur, et de consiliis significari quid scriptor probet et in rebus gestis declarari non solum quid actum aut dictum sit, sed etiam quo modo, et cum de eventu dicatur, ut causae explicentur omnes* etc. Cf. Polyb. 3.32.6 & 12.25b and Verg. *G.* 2.490.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 1.1 below for a detailed discussion of this passage.

In what can be considered the first work devoted to aetiology in Herodotus, Pagel's dissertation, *Die Bedeutung des aitiologischen Momentes für Herodots Geschichtsschreibung* (1927), inaugurated the modern discussion on the subject by making the word αἰτία the measuring stick of why things happen the way they do in the *Histories* and by situating αἰτία in light of vengeance (τίσις).<sup>3</sup> However, as Immerwahr later demonstrated in his landmark article, "Aspects of Historical Causation in Herodotus" (1956), αἰτία is ineffective as the sole criterion of causality, not only because it is just one of several terms that may explain historical outcomes of varying significance (e.g. πρόφασις, πρόσχημα, etc.), but also because αἰτία and its derivatives fail to reach a consensus of meaning and to describe causality systematically in the *Histories*.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Immerwahr advocated instead for the existence of "individual schemes of causal complexes"<sup>5</sup> of "fundamental" and "incidental" varieties<sup>6</sup> at the level of the λόγος (pl. λόγοι), the basic narrative building block of the *Histories*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For support of the vengeance motif as a guiding causal principle in the *Histories* (now a minority view), see e.g. de Romilly (1971) and Lang (1972). In the vein of Pagel (1927), see also Hart (1982) 72-112 for a traditional causal analysis of the *Histories* beginning with Croesus.

<sup>4</sup> Immerwahr (1956) 243-247 (see also Maddalena (1942) 59-63 for an early approximation of this thesis). Even at the most basic level, αἰτία (along with the corresponding adjective αἰτιος and substantive αἴτιον) encompasses a range of meanings in Herodotus, as Powell (1960) shows (*ad loc.*): αἰτία: 1) "reason why", 2) "alleged reason", 3) "charge, fault, blame"; I) αἰτιος: 1) "responsible", "to blame"; II) subst. τὸ αἴτιον: "cause". What's more, some uses of αἰτία, αἰτιος, κ.τ.λ. could be classified under more than one of the categories established by Powell (see e.g. Lateiner (1989) 279 n. 5, Evans (1991) 29-33). For a case-by-case study of the uses of αἰτία in the *Histories*, see Bornitz (1968) 139-163. Kirkwood (1952) 45 notes that πρόφασις also accommodates a range of meanings like αἰτία and its derivatives, and can connote not just the usual sense of "pretext", but "cause" as well (e.g. Hdt. 4.79). For a general overview of the distinction between αἰτία and πρόφασις in Herodotus and Thucydides, see Sealey (1957).

<sup>5</sup> Immerwahr (1956) 278.

<sup>6</sup> Immerwahr (1956) 253.

<sup>7</sup> Immerwahr (1956) 276. For a schematic breakdown of the λόγοι which make up the *Histories*, see e.g. Cagnazzi (1975).

Following in the footsteps of Immerwahr’s circumspect treatment of aetiology in the *Histories*, Gould and Lateiner (whose chapters in their respective books from 1989, *Herodotus* and *The Historical Method of Herodotus*, still represent the most recent and most detailed discussions dedicated to the subject)<sup>8</sup> argued that Herodotus’ understanding of why things happen is too complicated to be reduced to individual motives (e.g. vengeance) and analyzed according to post-Aristotelian rubrics that would have been alien to a fifth century audience.<sup>9</sup> To demonstrate this, Gould and Lateiner each measured Herodotean causality not just within the framework of the word αἰτία and its relatives, but also according to “the richness and diversity of suggestive comparisons, analogues, parables, and parallels”<sup>10</sup> which so vividly color the *Histories*. Thus, both scholars concluded in the vein of Immerwahr that no individual factor can account for causal primacy throughout the *Histories* at large, but that aetiology is fundamentally multiplex for Herodotus.

Although the major studies of Immerwahr, Gould, and Lateiner have made great strides towards improving our understanding of aetiology in the *Histories*, much work remains to be done. In keeping with the consensus that “Herodotus’ perception of causation embraces variety and multiplicity in the answers that he gives to the question:

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<sup>8</sup> i.e. Gould (1989) 63-85 and Lateiner (1989) 189-210. Cf. Pelling (2000) 82-103. On the related topic of motivation in the *Histories*, see esp. Baragwanath (2008) and now Froehlich (2013).

<sup>9</sup> See also Hunter (1982) 224: “...it is quite mistaken to abstract types of causation from [Herodotus’] narrative, for example, to distinguish political from “metaphysical” causes. As correct and natural as it may appear, it has nothing to do with the categories of Herodotus’ mind. Such levels of causation, which are modern and so anachronistic, distort the fluidity both of the process of history itself and of the dynamic of that process, as Herodotus perceived it.” For overviews of Aristotelian causality, see e.g. Hankinson (1998) 125-200 and Shields (2014) 43-115.

<sup>10</sup> Lateiner (1989) 191.

why did this happen?”<sup>11</sup> this dissertation enriches existing scholarly paradigms regarding aetiology in the *Histories* and opens up new avenues to approach a complex and varied topic. Since aetiology has mostly been treated as the study of cause and effect in the *Histories*,<sup>12</sup> my work expands the purview of aetiology to include Herodotus’ explanations of origins more generally and what “naturally attends these matters”, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus does.<sup>13</sup> My overarching goal in examining the methodological principles of Herodotean aetiology is to show the extent to which they resonate across the *Histories* according to their initial development in the proem, especially in those places that seem to deviate from the work’s driving force (i.e. the Persian Wars). Though I focus on correlating the principles espoused in the proem with their deployment in Herodotus’ ethnographies and other seemingly divergent portions of his work, I also demonstrate the influence of these principles on some of the more “historical” aspects of the *Histories* where the struggle between Greeks and barbarians is concerned. In turn, I make a novel case not only for the programmatic significance of the proem, but also for the cohesion of Herodotean methodology from cover to cover, a perennial point of contention among scholars of the *Histories*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Gould (1989) 65. See also Lateiner (1989) 208: “Multiple aetiology is supplementary rather than contradictory.” Cf. Pelling (2000) 86: “...explanations are cumulative rather than competing” (86).

<sup>12</sup> Lateiner (1989) 189-210 is something of an exception, but even his nuanced and sophisticated investigation of the methodology of Herodotean aetiology is limited to five causal systems and their mostly political ramifications (206): 1) divine jealousy (*phthonos*), 2) a) fate (*moira*), b) the cycle (*kyklos*), 3) divinities (*theos*, *theoi*, *to theion*), 4) act & retribution (*tisis*), and 5) historical analysis (*logos*; first person verbs and pronouns).

<sup>13</sup> i.e. ...τῶν πεφυκότων τοῖς πράγμασι παρακολουθεῖν (*Ant. Rom.* 5.56.1). See n. 1 above, including the similar manner in which Cicero describes aetiology.

<sup>14</sup> For a general overview of the question of the unity of the *Histories* as it has been posed since antiquity, see e.g. de Jong (2002).

In the six studies that comprise this dissertation, I base my arguments on close readings of the original Greek of Herodotus, using the contextual approach pioneered by Immerwahr in *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (1966) and advanced by his most influential successors.<sup>15</sup> Though the following vignettes on aetiology are necessarily selective, these studies have broad ramifications for the interpretation of the *Histories* beyond the confines of the particular passage in question. Careful attention paid to context makes this possible, since Herodotean λόγοι, the Janus-faced accounts which comprise the narrative building blocks of the *Histories*, do not “...exist in isolation, but form the link between what precedes and what follows.”<sup>16</sup> The study of aetiology in the *Histories* thereby transcends textual fixedness and becomes more than the sum of its parts, not only as it concerns narrative, but also as it comes to bear upon Herodotus’ unique intellectual outlook.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Immerwahr (1966) 7 for a distillation of this approach: “The best method of studying Herodotus seems to us a close investigation of narrative structure, and of the stylistic means by which this structure is wrought. On the simplest level, Herodotus’ work is a prime example of archaic parataxis, by which short individual items are placed in a row to build up larger compositions. In this manner, individual accounts, or parts thereof, are combined in Herodotus into larger pictures, like the pebbles in a mosaic.” Modern proponents of this contextual approach include (but are certainly not limited to) e.g. Dewald (1987), Thomas (2000), Munson (2001), and Baragwanath (2008), to whom I owe a great deal in crafting my own work.

<sup>16</sup> Hunter (1982) 183, with specific reference to Cambyses’ invasion of Ethiopia. This remark likely has its genesis in Immerwahr (1956) 276: “The Herodotean logos, as a unit of narrative, is to a large degree self-contained, but nevertheless related to its surroundings by overt references and thematic connections.” See also n. 15 above.

<sup>17</sup> Momigliano (1958b) 202 sees aetiology as the *sine qua non* of Herodotus’ innovativeness: “If I had to answer the famous question an Oxford undergraduate once put to Sir John Myres—‘Sir, if Herodotus was such a fool as they say, why do we read him for Greats?’—my answer would be that Herodotus was not only the founder of European historiography in a generic way: he provided European historiography with one of its leading and recurring themes, the study of a war, in its origins, main events, results.”

Chapter One illustrates how the proem to the *Histories* (1.1.0-1.5.3) prefigures Herodotus' engagement with aetiological discussions throughout the *Histories*, even in those sections which do not ostensibly concern the work's *raison d'être*. Building on Cook's remark that "the great exemplum of the *History* is not the Persian War but... the method of *historie* [i.e. historical inquiry] itself",<sup>18</sup> I make a case for seeing how "narrative and explanation are one",<sup>19</sup> beginning with an analysis of the multivalence of the word *αἰτία* in the opening sentence of Herodotus' work. In correlating *αἰτία* with *ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις* (the "display of inquiry"), I argue in turn for the inextricability of aetiology from its narrative presentation starting in the very first sentence of the *Histories*. In not limiting himself to one answer to the question why Greeks and barbarians came to war with each other (*δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι*, 1.1.0), I maintain that Herodotus establishes an important precedent by not refuting individual explanations, but by combining them with others. He thereby shows the study of causes and origins to be fundamentally integrative from the start. In so doing, Herodotus ultimately invites the reader to look past the status quo and to continue his wide-ranging inquiry beyond the aetiological question at hand.

Chapter Two indicates how the reading of the proem laid out in Chapter One allows for Herodotus' deployment of aetiology in the Egyptian *λόγος* to be viewed within the methodological continuum of the *Histories* at large. By juxtaposing the inquiries of the pharaoh Psammetichus with those of Herodotus (i.e. the narrative persona), I contend

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<sup>18</sup> Cook (1976) 62.

<sup>19</sup> Gould (1989) 85.



that the aetiological discussions surrounding the origins of Egyptian language, nature, and custom do not merely represent the products of an anomalous ethnography, but reaffirm the goals of the proem and look forward to their further substantiation in latter portions of the *Histories*.

Chapter Three connects Herodotus' programmatic interest in the origins of ἔργα (i.e. "works" or "achievements" manifested as monuments and deeds of abstract and concrete sorts) with the patterns addressed in Chapters One and Two. In examining representative ἔργα from a variety of narrative contexts, I argue that "works", like all components of Herodotean aetiology and methodology considered in this dissertation, cannot be privileged absolutely or taken as a part to represent the whole. Instead, when seen within the context of the *Histories* as a cohesive entity, ἔργα can offer further evidence that aetiology constitutes a nexus of mutually inclusive factors which belie homogeneity of explanation.

Chapter Four examines aetiology in the Scythian λόγος. Rather than viewing this ethnographic narrative as an aberrancy in the grand scheme of Herodotus' work, I argue that it, like the analogous Egyptian λόγος, is an integral part of the *Histories*, as indicated by the methodology of the many aetiologies that harken back to the proem.

Chapter Five investigates the origins of the Greeks' collaboration with the Persians (i.e. medism) in the lead-up to the battle of Thermopylae (7.148-171). Beginning with an analysis of the paradigm of the Argives, I demonstrate how the aetiologies of this λόγος recapitulate programmatic patterns isolated in previous chapters and thereby

extend the methodological continuum of the *Histories* beyond the “ethnographic” λόγοι to some of the most representative “historical” λόγοι of Herodotus’ work.

Chapter Six concludes the dissertation by showing the inextricability of the end of the *Histories* from its beginning. In pairing these all-important bookends, I make one final case for methodological cohesion by signaling the influence of those patterns brought to the fore of discussion in previous chapters on the work’s end. In particular, I emphasize that the manner in which Herodotus concludes his work by prompting us, the readers, to see the bigger picture and to perpetuate his inquiry by undertaking our own investigation of the origins of the past finds its inception in the work’s programmatic introduction, and so likens teleology to aetiology in the *Histories*.

## 1. Establishing a Paradigm: Aetiology in the Proem to the *Histories*

Leo Strauss once remarked that “a hundred pages—no, ten pages—of Herodotus introduce us immeasurably better into the mysterious unity of oneness and variety in human things than many volumes written in the spirit predominant in our age.”<sup>1</sup> It is not unreasonable to suppose that Strauss had in mind the beginning of the *Histories*, including the proem to the work<sup>2</sup> (i.e. 1.1.0-1.5.3).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, from a methodological standpoint, there is perhaps no other place in the *Histories* where the paradoxical “unity of oneness and variety” is so pronounced. Though scholars have long sought to demonstrate the existence of this sort of unity in the *Histories*,<sup>4</sup> there have been surprisingly few attempts (none of them systematic or comprehensive) to locate its genesis in the proem,<sup>5</sup> in large part because 1.1.0-1.5.3 has typically been seen as an anomaly in the grand scheme of Herodotus’ work.<sup>6</sup> Instead of dismissing the proem as an incongruity, the following chapter argues that the proem is in fact paradigmatic of the

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<sup>1</sup> Strauss (1989) 343.

<sup>2</sup> The exchange between Gyges and Candaules just three chapters later (see 1.8 ff.) was instrumental in Strauss’ early formation of esotericism, according to a letter written to Jacob Klein in October 1938 (Lampert (2009) 66).

<sup>3</sup> I define the proem according to the textual range established by Jacoby (1913) cols. 283-285.

<sup>4</sup> See n. 14 in the Introduction.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Węcowski (2004) for a wealth of bibliography on the proem.

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. Starr (1968) 142, whose critique of the proem condenses the traditional objections to the integration of the proem with the rest of the *Histories* that will be addressed throughout this chapter: “If Herodotus could only have introduced his work with a few brief but pithy paragraphs, like those in which Thucydides discussed the difficulty of establishing the truth and proclaimed his own zeal in ferreting it out, we should be likely to think much better of the Father of History; but alas! he actually commences with a faradiddle of women-stealing...” See also Hankinson (1998) 79-81 for similarly dismissive remarks.

ways in which Herodotus deals with causes and origins more generally across his vast work, as subsequent chapters will substantiate in turn.

### **1.1 Setting the Stage: the *Einleitungssatz***

One of the major obstacles to this thesis is the opening sentence of the *Histories* (hereafter referred to as the *Einleitungssatz*), which does not seem to clearly define the objective of the forthcoming project:

Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ιστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλέα γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι (1.1.0).<sup>7</sup>

This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Thurii, so that the things brought into being by humans may not grow faded in time, and so that great and wondrous works, some manifested by Greeks and others by barbarians, may not be without glory, and in particular the reason why they came to war with one another.

Although there is still no firm consensus on how to parse the *Einleitungssatz*,<sup>8</sup> most scholars now accept Krischer’s tripartite division, which evinces a gradual winnowing not of one objective, but of *objectives*, from the vague to the specific:

1. Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ιστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε,
2. ὡς    a). μήτε            (α) τὰ γενόμενα  
  (β) ἐξ ἀνθρώπων  
  (γ) τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται,  
          b). μήτε            (α) ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά  
  (β) τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα,  
  (γ) ἀκλέα γένηται,
3. τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Except where noted otherwise, passages cited in Greek from Herodotus’ *Histories* are taken from Legrand’s Budé edition (1932-1954) and translations of primary sources are my own.

<sup>8</sup> For a survey of scholarship from the past century on the *Einleitungssatz*, see e.g. Erbse (1992) 123-125.

<sup>9</sup> Krischer (1965) 159-160. This division is endorsed explicitly by Bakker (2002) 6 and implicitly by Lateiner (1989) 14. See also Nagy (1987) 175-177 = Nagy (1990) 217-218, who agrees with Krischer’s

While the paratactic structure<sup>10</sup> of the *Einleitungssatz* does appear to build to a climax in the third and final colon (i.e. “and in particular the reason why Greeks and barbarians came to war with one another”), this clause does not negate the importance of what comes before.<sup>11</sup> As we will see throughout this dissertation, Herodotus’ concern for the preservation of “the things brought into being by humans” (τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων) and “great and wondrous works” (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά) will have programmatic significance as well.<sup>12</sup> For our immediate purposes, however, it is most significant, as Krischer argues, that the final colon of the opening sentence of the *Histories* serves to respond to the first, much in the way that the final clause of the similarly paratactic opening sentence of the *Iliad* expands upon the premise laid out in the first.<sup>13</sup>

**μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος** 1  
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἄχαιοις ἄλγε’ ἔθηκε,  
πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν  
ἠρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν  
οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή, 5  
**ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε**  
**Ἄτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς** (1.1-7).

**Sing, goddess, of the rage of Achilles, son of Peleus,** 1  
and of its destruction, which set countless woes upon the Achaeans  
and hurled many stout souls of heroes into Hades

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general division, but interprets the third colon somewhat differently. Cf. Hommel (1981) 277 ff., whose division has not received broad support. See also Erbse (1956) and Drexler (1972) 3-11 on the *Einleitungssatz*.

<sup>10</sup> Parataxis has been recognized as the hallmark of Herodotean style since the time of Aristotle (i.e. *Rh.* 1409a 24). On the importance of parataxis to the analysis of the *Histories*, see e.g. Dewald (1998) xix-xx and Immerwahr (1966) 7 (cited at n. 15 in the Introduction).

<sup>11</sup> I support Wood (1972) 14 in his belief that τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ in the third and final colon (“and in particular”) is indicative of a “perspective...which views discrete events as parts of a whole” and not to the exclusion of one another.

<sup>12</sup> For a dedicated treatment of ἔργα, see Chapter Three. On Herodotus’ desire to preserve κλέος (glory) in the proem (a fundamentally Homeric enterprise), see e.g. Nagy (1987).

<sup>13</sup> Krischer (1965) 161-163. See also Bakker (2002) 6 ff.

and provided them as carrion for dogs  
and all birds, and the will of Zeus was done, 5  
**from the time when the son of Atreus, lord of men, and godlike Achilles,  
first stood apart in their quarrel.**

Thus, “the reason why Greeks and barbarians came to war with one another” (δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι) comes to be subordinated to “the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Thuri” (Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε).

This Homeric analogue affirms that aetiology is not only a programmatic concern of the highest order from the very beginning of the *Histories*; it also affirms that it is inextricable from its narrative presentation. Though there is much debate on what this “display of inquiry” (ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις) entailed and how it was originally transmitted,<sup>14</sup> there can be no denying that it is subjected to the author’s persona from the get-go.<sup>15</sup> By giving his name in the genitive case (Ἡροδότου) and placing it at the very beginning of the sentence, Herodotus thereby asserts his authority over the entirety of the work that is to follow in a way that recalls the conventions of the Homeric proem, but notably invokes a human agent instead of a divine one. That Herodotus’ display can innovate and still remain rooted in the traditions of its progenitors is a dichotomy we will revisit many

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<sup>14</sup> The main point of contention among scholars is whether ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις constitutes a performance or a publication, whether as a memorialization of the past in the former or as a product of contemporary scientific inquiry in the latter (see e.g. Nagy (1987) and Thomas (2000) 249-269 respectively). For extensive bibliographies on the interpretation of ἀπόδεξις, see Asheri et al. (2007) 72-73 (ad 1.1.0) and Bakker (2002) 8 n. 11. See also Kirk (2014) for a new interpretation of ἀπόδεξις as a display of inventory, a perspective which will lend itself to the interpretation of “works” (i.e. ἔργα, another concern of the *Einleitungssatz*) discussed in Chapter Three below.

<sup>15</sup> N.B. When I refer to Herodotus throughout this dissertation, I mean the narrative persona and not the autobiographical figure (except where noted otherwise).

times in the course of this dissertation on aetiology in the *Histories*.<sup>16</sup> However, before we can address the nature of this uniquely heterogeneous display and the authority behind it, we must first consider the meaning of αἰτία, the foundational word which this ἀπόδεξις has already been shown to govern.

## 1.2 Charting the Difference

As with nearly every other aspect of the *Einleitungssatz*, controversy abounds over what the last clause is actually referring to. Attempts to isolate “the reason (αἰτία) why Greeks and barbarians came to war with each other” by studying the use of the word αἰτία in the *Histories* inevitably come up short, since the semantic range of this word and its derivatives (e.g. “reason why”, “alleged reason”, “charge”, “fault”, “blame”, etc.)<sup>17</sup> is too broad for one single meaning to be applied absolutely to this particular usage.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, if we remain mindful of the influence of parataxis, we may find that careful

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<sup>16</sup> See Moles (1993) 92-98 for a discussion of how this and other Homeric analogues show the proem to be a “glorious mixture” (98), in which “Herodotus has it all possible ways” (96). Herington (1991b) 14 attributes this to the *Histories*’ position “at the frontier where two great literary eras meet: the era in which poetry and legend were the prime media for the interpretation of our world, and the era of prose, of history, of rational enquiry generally.” It is no wonder, then, that according to a recently discovered inscription from Hellenistic Halicarnassus dating from around the second to the first century B.C.E. (see Isager (1998) for the *editio princeps*), Herodotus was lauded as “the Homer of history in prose” (Ἡρόδοτον τὸν πεζὸν ἐν ἱστορίαισιν Ὅμηρον, ln. 43). For an overview of how this distinction held for Herodotus’ critics throughout antiquity, see e.g. Priestley (2014) 187-220.

<sup>17</sup> Powell (1960), ad αἰτία. Cf. the entries for αἴτιος and τὸ αἴτιον.

<sup>18</sup> The conclusion of the comprehensive word study of αἰτία conducted by Bornitz (1968) 139-163 nicely illustrates this point: “Die Interpretationen zeigten, daß Herodot an allen Stellen, selbst wenn die Vorgeschichte ungewöhnlich ausführlich dargestellt war, immer den bestimmten Punkt sorgsam herausstellte, an dem die eigentlich inkriminierbare Schuld oder schuldhafte Verbindlichkeit eintrat, aus der rechtliche Forderungen ableitbar wurden. **Die einzige Stelle, die noch ungeklärt blieb, ist die αἰτία am Ende des ersten Satzes im Werke Herodots**” (163, emphasis my own). See also n. 4 in the Introduction.

attention paid to context can once again provide an illuminating solution in the very next sentence:

Περσέων μὲν νῦν οἱ λόγιοι Φοίνικας αἰτίους φασὶ γενέσθαι τῆς διαφορῆς · (1.1.1)

The Persian *logioi* say that the Phoenicians were responsible [*aitious*] for the difference.

Here, Herodotus begins to address the question of why (αἰτίην) Greeks and barbarians came to war with one another by looking at the implicated parties (αἰτίους) in a way that invites further comparison with the analogous opening to the *Iliad*:<sup>19</sup>

Τίς τάρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;  
Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός · (1.8-9)

Which of the gods set them [i.e. Agamemnon and Achilles] to quarrel?  
It was the son of Leto and Zeus [i.e. Apollo].

But whereas the role of Apollo in instigating the strife between Agamemnon and Achilles is unequivocal in the *Iliad*, the question of responsibility in the corresponding passage in the *Histories* is opaque, not least of all because the culpability of the Phoenicians is alleged indirectly (φασί) by the Persian λόγιοι, whose identity and function is subject to interpretation.<sup>20</sup> As Dewald argues, this oblique frame is the first of several warnings that “narrative is likely to be self-interested”<sup>21</sup> in what follows of the proem.<sup>22</sup> However, Herodotus does not despair at this reality nor does he allow it to remain an ironic gesture.

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<sup>19</sup> Krischer (1965) 160-161. See also Nagy (1987) 180 for a discussion of this and other parallels in verse.

<sup>20</sup> Luraghi (2009) 444 makes a compelling case for understanding λόγιος as “...a quality that a person may possess to a varying degree, [and] not a term that identifies a category of people [i.e. “masters of speech” (Nagy (1990) 221, following Nagy (1987) 175-184) and “unlettered oral memorialist[s]” (Evans (1991) 95)].”

<sup>21</sup> Dewald (1999) 225. See also Dewald (2002) 270.

<sup>22</sup> On the use of *oratio obliqua* to prompt the reader to reflect upon the veracity of a given account, see esp. 2.2-3 and 4.5-12 (discussed in Chapters 2.1 and 4.1).



As we shall see, his commitment to extricating the claims stemming from 1.1.1 will ultimately make *him* responsible for explaining not only the war, but also the difference (διαφορά) between Greeks and barbarians, thereby establishing aetiology in the *Histories* as more than just the study of the causes of the historical conflict of the fifth century and their influence on a single group of people.<sup>23</sup> However, before this ecumenical and fundamentally multiplex undertaking can be realized,<sup>24</sup> Herodotus must defer from interjecting *in propria persona* in order to weigh additional claims.

Following the indictment set out above in 1.1.1, the Persian λόγιοι seek to substantiate the claim that the Phoenicians were to blame for the “difference” between Greeks and barbarians by relating their abduction of Io, the daughter of the Argive king Inachus (1.1). Though the Greeks agree with the Persians that Inachus’ daughter was named Io (τὸ δὲ οἱ οὖνομα εἶναι, κατὰ τούτῳ τὸ καὶ Ἕλληνας λέγουσι, Ἰοῦν τὴν Ἰνάχου, 1.1.2), they do not agree with their explanation for how she came to Egypt (Οὔτῳ μὲν Ἰοῦν ἐξ Αἴγυπτον ἀπικέσθαι λέγουσι Πέρσαι, οὐκ ὡς Ἕλληνας..., 1.2.1). This point of contention raised by the Greeks represents the first of several “shifting focalizations” in the proem, in which all of the implicated parties seek to absolve themselves of

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<sup>23</sup> Bakker (2002) 17-19, who sees the arbitration of difference as part and parcel of the duties of the ἵστωρ (see discussion of 1.5.3 ff. in the next section below). Bakker’s broad interpretation of διαφορά which I advance is made possible in part by the *Einleitungssatz*, which in no way states that the content of the forthcoming work will be confined to the Persian Wars (see e.g. Immerwahr (1966) 17-19 and Payen (1997) 88-91).

<sup>24</sup> Though I am somewhat wary of using the word “universal” to describe Herodotus’ project as it is laid out in the proem (for fear of employing an anachronism that would have been out of place in the fifth century), I support van Wees (2002) 321 in his assessment of the *Histories* as a wholly ecumenical work, beginning with the programmatic introduction (see also van Wees (2002) 321 n. 1 for an extensive bibliography on this interpretation).

wrongdoing.<sup>25</sup> So, just as the Greeks dispute their role in this “first injustice” (τῶν ἀδικημάτων πρῶτον τοῦτο ἄρξαι, 1.2.1),<sup>26</sup> so, too, do the Phoenicians, who counter that they did not kidnap Io, but that they facilitated her voluntary departure from Argos in order to allow her to save face after she slept with the ship’s captain and became pregnant by him.<sup>27</sup>

In juxtaposing the self-serving views of the Persians, Greeks, and Phoenicians, Herodotus’ narrative signals a fundamentally human bias inherent in the process of historical inquiry and so takes the first step towards establishing aetiology as something that is to be fundamentally multiple in the *Histories*.<sup>28</sup> The second step comes after the Persian λόγοι relate how a group of Greeks went to Phoenicia and kidnapped Europa to requite the theft of Io. While scholars usually accept that this second seizure (ἀρπαγή) was originally undertaken as an act of “tit for tat” vengeance (Ταῦτα μὲν δὴ ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα σοι γενέσθαι, 1.2.1), Rood is right to observe that retribution does not in fact achieve equilibrium in any sense in the proem.<sup>29</sup> Key to this observation is the notion that Cretans were perhaps responsible for Europa’s abduction (εἶησαν δ’ ἂν οὗτοι Κρηῆτες, 1.2.1) and not “the Greeks” as in 1.1. If the two groups were in fact distinct as the passage intimates,

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<sup>25</sup> Dewald (1999) 225 (*contra* Arieti (1995) 8-11, who sees instead national biases on the part of the Phoenicians and Persians). See also Dewald (1999) 224 n. 4 for a bibliography of focalization in narratology.

<sup>26</sup> On the role of primacy in the proem, see n. 60 below.

<sup>27</sup> Περὶ δὲ τῆς Ἰοῦς οὐκ ὁμολογέουσι Πέρσησι οὕτω Φοίνικες· οὐ γὰρ ἀρπαγῆ σφέας χρησαμένους λέγουσι ἀγαγεῖν αὐτήν ἐς Αἴγυπτον, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐν τῷ Ἄργεϊ ἐμίσητο τῷ ναυκλήρῳ τῆς νεός· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔμαθε ἔγκυος ἐοῦσα, αἰδεομένη τοὺς τοκέας, οὕτω δὴ ἐθελοντὴν αὐτήν τοῖσι Φοίνιξι συνεκπλῶσαι, ὡς ἂν μὴ κατάδηλος γένηται (1.5.2).

<sup>28</sup> Recall Gould (1989) 65 and Lateiner (1989) 208 (see Introduction).

<sup>29</sup> Rood (2010) 55-62.

it would therefore be unreasonable to posit that the Cretans (who had a reputation for thievery and deceitful practices in general throughout antiquity)<sup>30</sup> were actually retaliating for Io by abducting Europa.<sup>31</sup>

This disparity provides an early indication of the inability of revenge to explain the source of the enmities between Greeks and barbarians by itself.<sup>32</sup> While reciprocity (or the lack thereof) does play a decisive role in the denouement of the proem,<sup>33</sup> there is more behind the actions of the protagonists than the desire to demand and receive satisfaction alone.<sup>34</sup> For instance, after the Greeks initiate the second round of women-stealing by abducting Medea from Colchis (1.2.2-3), Paris proceeds to abduct Helen from the Greeks, not because he wants to avenge the kidnapping of Medea, but precisely because he thinks that he will *not* have to pay the penalty for stealing a woman to be his wife, since nobody before him had (ἐπιστάμενον πάντως ὅτι οὐ δώσει δίκας· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐκείνους διδόναι, 1.3.1). Although Paris turns out to be mistaken in this assumption, the remainder of the narrative suggests that the Greeks' motivation to retaliate is also predicated on more than just vengeance:

(4.) Μέχρι μὲν ὧν τούτου ἀρπαγὰς μούνας εἶναι παρ' ἀλλήλων, τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου Ἕλληνας δὴ μεγάλως αἰτίους γενέσθαι· προτέρους γὰρ ἄρξαι στρατεύεσθαι ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην ἢ σφέας ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην. [2] Τὸ μὲν νυν ἀρπάζειν γυναῖκας ἀνδρῶν

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<sup>30</sup> See e.g. Callim. *Hymn* 1.6-9 (modelled after Hes. *Theog.* 26): Ζεῦ, σὲ μὲν Ἰδαίοισιν ἐν οὐρεσὶ φασι γενέσθαι, // Ζεῦ, σὲ δ' ἐν Ἀρκαδίῃ· πότεροι, πάτερ, ἐψεύσαντο; // Ἐκρητες αἰεὶ ψεύσται· καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἄνα, σεῖο // Κρητες ἐτεκτήναντο. This echoes the proverbial sentiment of the Presocratic Epimenides paraphrased in *Titus* 1.12: εἶπέν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης, Κρητες αἰεὶ ψεύσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.

<sup>31</sup> Rood (2010) 56, with bibliography at 56 n. 34.

<sup>32</sup> "...even in those initial exchanges the rhetoric of revenge becomes a matter of excuse and opportunity as much as motivation" (Pelling (2000) 287 n. 51).

<sup>33</sup> See discussion of 1.4-1.5.1 immediately below.

<sup>34</sup> On the concept of δικάς/δικήν δίδοναι in the *Histories* at large, see e.g. Lateiner (1980).

ἀδίκων νομίζειν ἔργον εἶναι, τὸ δὲ ἀρπασθεισέων σπουδὴν ποιήσασθαι τιμωρέειν ἀνοήτων, τὸ δὲ μηδεμίαν ὄρην ἔχειν ἀρπασθεισέων σωφρόνων· δῆλα γὰρ δὴ ὅτι, εἰ μὴ αὐταὶ ἐβούλοντο, οὐκ ἂν ἠρπάζοντο. [3] Σφέας μὲν δὴ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίης λέγουσι Πέρσαι ἀρπαζομένων τῶν γυναικῶν λόγον οὐδένα ποιήσασθαι, Ἕλληνας δὲ Λακεδαιμονίης εἵνεκεν γυναικὸς στόλον μέγαν συναγεῖραι καὶ ἔπειτα ἐλθόντας ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην τὴν Πριάμου δύναμιν κατελεῖν. [4] Ἀπὸ τούτου αἰεὶ ἠγήσασθαι τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν σφίσι εἶναι πολέμιον. Τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίην καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνεα βάρβαρα οικηιοῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἡγνεται κευωρίσθαι. (5.) Οὕτω μὲν Πέρσαι λέγουσι γενέσθαι, καὶ διὰ τὴν Ἰλίου ἄλωσιν εὐρίσκουσι σφίσι ἐοῦσαν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἐχθρῆς τῆς ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας (1.4-1.5.1).

(4.) Up until this point, the Persian *logioi* say that there had only been abductions from each other, but from that point on, the Greeks became greatly to blame, for they invaded Asia before the Persians invaded Europe. [2] Now they consider the act of stealing women to be the work of unjust men, but once women have been stolen, they consider it the mark of senseless people to be eager to exact retribution for their theft and the mark of sensible people not to pay it any mind, for it is clear that if these women had not wanted it, they would not have been abducted. [3] The Persians say that they for their part took no account of the abductions of their women from Asia, but the Greeks amassed a huge army for the sake of a Spartan woman and then invaded Asia and destroyed Priam's power. [4] From this time on, they have always considered the Greeks to be their enemy, for the Persians claim Asia and the barbarian nations that live there as their own, but they consider Europe and the Greeks to be separate. (5.) This is what the Persians say happened, and in the sack of Troy they find the beginning of their hostility towards the Greeks.

In making their case that the Greek response to the rape of Helen was excessive, the Persian *λόγιοι* show reciprocity to be dependent on cultural norms that are only spelled out once they have been violated irrevocably.<sup>35</sup> And yet, even if their expectations had been stated more clearly before Troy was sacked, the fact that the Greeks seek to

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<sup>35</sup> Note 1.3.2, which shows that all parties need to be on the same page for reciprocity to work: Οὕτω δὴ ἀρπάσαντος αὐτοῦ Ἑλένην, τοῖσι Ἕλλησι δόξαί πρωτον πέμψαντας ἀγγέλους ἀπαιτέειν τε Ἑλένην καὶ δίκας τῆς ἀρπαγῆς αἰτέειν. Τοὺς δὲ προῖσχομένων ταῦτα προφέρειν σφι Μηδείης τὴν ἀρπαγὴν, ὡς οὐ δόντες αὐτοὶ δίκας οὐδὲ ἐκδόντες ἀπαιτεόντων βουλοιάτῳ σφι παρ' ἄλλων δίκας γίνεσθαι. In this vein, see Braund (1998) for a fascinating look at reciprocity in the *Histories* when construed broadly as “the exchange of goods and services in any sense” (159). See also Gould (2001) 283-303 on the principles of “give and take” in the *Histories*.

destroy Priam’s power (δύναμιν, 1.4.4) in the process of requiting the loss of Helen implies an additional, *Realpolitik* motive in the invasion of Asia.<sup>36</sup> The Persians seem to recognize this when they respond by claiming Asia and all of the peoples who live there for themselves (οἰκηιοῦνται, 1.4.4).<sup>37</sup> But while Braund’s point is well taken, that “the failure to understand fully the nature of reciprocity provides the impetus to imperialism, in the Persian Wars as in general”,<sup>38</sup> what originally created this impetus remains ambiguous by the end of the exemplum of the ἄρπαγαί, in no small part because the motivation of the respective parties is beholden to what the λόγοι say. Narrative, then, becomes inextricable from aetiology. But what role does Herodotus have to play in this?

### ***1.3 Reconciling the Difference***

It should be noted that nowhere in the preceding accounts of the Persians and the Phoenicians (and by proxy, the Greeks as well)<sup>39</sup> has Herodotus offered any overt authorial interjection to support or refute the many possible reasons why the Greeks and barbarians came to war with one another. This may seem incongruous in light of the subordination of aetiology to “the display of the inquiry of Herodotus” which we saw in our discussion of the *Einleitungssatz* (1.1.0). However, by the time Herodotus does step

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<sup>36</sup> On the force of δύναμις in the *Histories*, see e.g. Immerwahr (1966) 206-208, who argues that Herodotus anticipates Thucydides in using the term as a byword for empire (see Chapter Six below).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. 9.116.3 (discussed below in Chapter 6.2). Saïd (2012) 104 posits that οἰκηιοῦνται “metaphorically assimilates this land [i.e. Asia] to a ‘house’ (oikos) and is elsewhere used for claiming kinship. It reinforces the suggestion that ‘empire will be for the nation what rape is to the individual, the lust that leads to violence’ [*pace* Ayo (1984) 36]”. This is but one of many examples Saïd cites throughout the *Histories* in which the Trojan War “serves as a backdrop to deepen the understanding of the cycle of history and to highlight universal laws” (105).

<sup>38</sup> Braund (1998) 180.

<sup>39</sup> See Dewald (1999) 226 on the Greeks’ “presence through absence” in the account of the λόγοι.

out of the narrative to lend his perspective *in propria persona*, he ultimately shows that the authority behind the display of his forthcoming inquiry will not stem from absolutism of any kind:

Ταῦτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. Ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιῶν (1.5.3).

This is what the Persians and the Phoenicians say. But I am not going to talk about these matters, that they happened this way or some other way. Instead, having indicated the man I myself know to have been the first to undertake unjust deeds against the Greeks, I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small human settlements alike.

In analyzing this passage, several scholars have noted that the way in which Herodotus begins by juxtaposing the accounts of the Persians and the Phoenicians (Ταῦτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι) with his own knowledge (Ἐγὼ δὲ..., τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς...) finds much in common with the priamel,<sup>40</sup> a rhetorical device designed to “single out one point of interest by contrast and comparison”,<sup>41</sup> as deployed famously by the lyric poet Sappho in the opening of her ode to Anactoria:<sup>42</sup>

οἴ μὲν ἱππήων στρότον οἱ δὲ πέσδων  
οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖς' ἐπ[ὶ] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν  
ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὄτ-  
τω τις ἔραται· (Fr. 16.1-4)

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<sup>40</sup> See esp. Race (1982) 111, Herington (1991b) 6, 9, Pelliccia (1992), and most recently, Chiasson (2012a) 129-137.

<sup>41</sup> Race (1982) x.

<sup>42</sup> If Watkins is correct in his interpretation of the so-called “Nestor’s cup” (i.e. *SEG XIV*, 604), we may even find a similar priamel-like contrast ingrained in what is arguably the oldest Greek inscription yet discovered: “Nestor’s cup is good to drink from; but he who drinks from *this* cup (*hos δ' α<v> τοδε πιεσι ποτεριω*) forthwith him will seize desire of fair-garlanded Aphrodite” (see Watkins (1976) 39-40).

Some say a troop of horsemen is the finest thing on the dark earth,  
others a troop of soldiers or a fleet,  
but I say whatever one loves.

This paradigmatic example of the priamel is significant in that Sappho's authorial interjection does not amount to a *tout court* rejection of what precedes it.<sup>43</sup> As Race proposes, Sappho's first person remark in the climax about what she thinks is κάλλιστον (ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὅττω τις ἔραται) is not to the exclusion of what others say in the foil (οἱ μὲν..., οἱ δὲ...). On the contrary, "rather than dispute with them which στρότον is most beautiful, Sappho shifts the argument to another level by stating a principle which embraces their choices as well as her own."<sup>44</sup>

If we look carefully at the analogous priamel in the end of the proem to the *Histories*, we find that Herodotus' climax (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς κ.τ.λ., 1.5.3) denies categorical claims much as Sappho does. Though scholars often view Herodotus' decision to change direction and follow up on the first person he himself knows to have perpetrated unjust deeds against the Greeks (i.e. the Lydian king Croesus)<sup>45</sup> as an indictment of the veracity of the account of the λόγοι, Herodotus indicates no such intention. Instead of signaling that the *cherchez la femme* explanation for the difference

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<sup>43</sup> On the distinction between a priamel and a recusatio, see e.g. Pelliccia (1992) (see also n. 46 below).

<sup>44</sup> Race (1982) 64.

<sup>45</sup> The beginning of the next section (Κροῖσος ἦν Λυδὸς..., 1.6.1) appears to confirm that Croesus is the object of Herodotus' knowledge in the priamel (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς, 1.5.3). See, however, Shimron (1973) on traditional objections to this assignment.

between Greeks and barbarians offered in the foil is a “false-start”,<sup>46</sup> a joke,<sup>47</sup> or a wholesale fabrication,<sup>48</sup> Herodotus’ expression of personal knowledge in the climax seems rather to suggest that we cannot be certain about the distant past in the same way that we can about events closer to our own time.<sup>49</sup> This is not to say, however, that the mythological exemplum set out above is without considerable merit for what it can tell us about human inquiry as it relates to epistemology<sup>50</sup> (or, for that matter, that οἶδα is without limitations of its own).<sup>51</sup> We have already seen, for instance, how the λόγοι showed through their account of the abductions of Io, Europa, Medea, and Helen that narrative tends to be self-interested, a point which demonstrated that the *Histories* is likely to be concerned with more than showing one particular outcome as it “actually” happened. For this and other reasons we will see in later chapters of this dissertation,

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<sup>46</sup> i.e. Pelliccia (1992), who believes that proem “has the purpose of rejecting [Hecataean] ἠρωολογία” (76). While Herodotus’ rationalizing take on the abductions of Io, Europa, Medea, and Helen does imply a contrast with mythical genealogy, it is excessive to write 1.5.2 off as a “false-start recusatio.” Pelliccia himself suggests as much when he acknowledges that “what Herodotus does...is demote, not expel, eros as a force in world events” (79).

<sup>47</sup> As with Cobet (1986) 4, Fowler (1996) 83, Moles (1993) 96, and Saïd (2012) 101-102, I see the account of the λόγοι as more than just a tongue-in-cheek parody (*contra* Drews (1973) 88-90, Lateiner (1989) 41-42, Thomas (2000) 268, and Węcowski (2004) 151-152), but as a serious guide to the forthcoming inquiry.

<sup>48</sup> i.e. Fehling (1989) 50-59, who understands the source citations in 1.1-5 to be an invention of the author. For an excellent critique of this now mostly marginal position of the “Liar School”, see e.g. Fowler (1996) 80-86, who argues that the account of the λόγοι in the proem “is not ‘fictive’ in any helpful sense, but an intelligent putting together of all the information available to him” (86). In this vein, see also West (2002a), who shows (albeit more circuitously than Fowler) that the events related by the Persians in the proem are not spun out of whole cloth nor are they lifted directly from Stesichorus, Hecataeus, et al.

<sup>49</sup> Shimron (1973).

<sup>50</sup> Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012) 27.

<sup>51</sup> See below.



Herodotus straddles the *spatium mythicum* and the *spatium historicum* without privileging either one categorically, just as the priamel in 1.5.3 suggests.<sup>52</sup>

The notion that Herodotus is to occupy an intermediary place in aetiological discussions according to this programmatic statement coheres with his being likened by scholars to a ἵστωρ, a kind of arbitrator or witness whose duties varied throughout the Greek world depending on time and place.<sup>53</sup> Though Herodotus does not use this term to describe himself,<sup>54</sup> several studies conducted on authorial self-presentation in the *Histories* have convincingly shown that “the patterns of arbitration associated with the word ἵστωρ provide a powerful metaphor for [Herodotus’] intellectual activities including the rigorous examination of evidence, choosing between conflicting claims and versions, assessing responsibility, and the consequent building of a consensus within a community.”<sup>55</sup> But while these activities do require Herodotus to assume a position of authority, such a stance is not predicated on omniscience.<sup>56</sup> According to Dewald, this is because the ἵστωρ is concerned with defining the boundaries of knowledge as much as he is with moving past them.<sup>57</sup> In calling attention to the former through his many struggles

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<sup>52</sup> In the context of the Trojan War narratives (see also 2.112-120), Saïd (2012) 88 makes the telling observation that the word μῦθος is never used. On the exemplarity of these narratives to the *Histories* at large, see n. 37 above.

<sup>53</sup> On Herodotus’ comparison to a ἵστωρ, see e.g. Dewald (1987), Nagy (1990) 250-273, Connor (1993), and Dewald (2002).

<sup>54</sup> See Evans (1990) 94-95 for this and other objections to the application of the term ἵστωρ to Herodotus.

<sup>55</sup> Connor (1993) 9.

<sup>56</sup> See e.g. Baragwanath (2008) 35-54.

<sup>57</sup> For a summary of this dichotomy explored throughout Dewald (1987) and Dewald (2002), see e.g. Dewald (1987) 163: “The *histōr* lays considerable stress upon the partiality and the ambiguities of the record that he can write. Much of his energy as a critic goes into emphasizing the serious limitations of his data. 2.123 and the forty other expressions of outright disbelief do not express the cynical irresponsibility of someone writing to please rather than to instruct, nor are they the crude formulations of an insufficiently

to master the λόγοι which make up his ἱστορίη,<sup>58</sup> Herodotus thereby urges us, the readers, to struggle with them, too.<sup>59</sup>

This dichotomy finds programmatic expression in Herodotus' arbitration of the aetiological accounts of the Persians and the Phoenicians in the remainder of the proem. On the one hand, the first person interjection in the climax of the priamel (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς..., 1.5.3) indicates that Herodotus will place his knowledge at the fore of the forthcoming inquiry. On the other hand, the fact that he can only vouch for the responsibility of *Croesus* in being the first of the barbarians to commit injustices against the Greeks reveals that his own knowledge will itself be circumscribed. But even when Herodotus points to his limitations, he does not succumb to ἀπορία. And yet, by showing us what he *does* know, Herodotus does not rule out the potential for other parties to have contributed to the development of the conflict at an earlier point in time.<sup>60</sup> He thereby prompts us to consider a range of possibilities in elucidating origins and so to look past the way things may appear *prima facie*.

The author's invitation to the reader to see beyond a given explanation or expectation is extended in the last section of the proem, after he promises to "go through

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sophisticated historian. They rather express the *histōr's* working experience of the fact that knowledge of the world is difficult to get, and partial and provisional at best."

<sup>58</sup> On the possible shared etymology of ἱστορίη and ἵστωρ, see Bakker (2002) 14-16.

<sup>59</sup> Dewald (1987) 167.

<sup>60</sup> On the notion that primacy is not altogether primal, see e.g. 2.2-3 and 4.1 (discussed in Chapters 2.1 and 4.1 respectively). Cf. 1.2.1 (see above).

great and small human settlements alike” (ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστυα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιώων, 1.5.3).<sup>61</sup>

Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ’ ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. Τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ὧν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.4).

For many of those settlements that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that human prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.

Herodotus’ remarkable statement about contingency and mutability as they pertain not to ethnicity but to humanity in general (ἀνθρωπίνην) is indicative of a cosmopolitan mindset that will be shown to inform the *Histories* as a whole. This broad frame of reference is augmented further by the way in which Herodotus integrates the present (γέγονε, ἐπιστάμενος), the past (ἦν), and the future (ἐπιμνήσομαι), suggesting that his work will be a timeless one.<sup>62</sup> But as Grethlein notes in comparing 1.5.4 to an inscribed memorial, which is endowed not only with the task of commemorating the past but also with creating a dialogue with future viewers, timelessness does not presuppose a fixedness of meaning or interpretation.<sup>63</sup> Rather, by projecting into the realm of what once was and what could be, Herodotus “...anticipates future vantage points which...will bestow new significance on the narrative of the *Histories*.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, “in reading the

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. Hom. *Od.* 1.3: πολλῶν δ’ ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστυα καὶ νόον ἔγνω. On this Homeric analogue, see esp. Marincola (2007), who hypothesizes that “some symmetry may...be at work here: as the closing of this preface echoes the *Odyssey*, so the opening had made reference to the κλέος of the great deeds of Greeks and barbarians and in this way to the *Iliad*” (14).

<sup>62</sup> Rösler (2002) 92-93.

<sup>63</sup> Grethlein (2013) 222, with special reference to the inscription in honor of those from Phyle who restored the democracy at Athens following the rule of the Thirty (see Aeschin. 3.190).

<sup>64</sup> Grethlein (2013) 222.

inscription on his monument”, as Bakker posits, “we not only become, implicitly, speakers who acknowledge Herodotus' achievement; we are also cast in Herodotus' own role. Standing not before the publication or presentation of the Inquiry, but before the Inquiry *itself*, its enactment, we are asked to do what Herodotus did himself: to listen critically, to question, and to judge.”<sup>65</sup> In doing so, we become “the *origo* of a deictic act that will be performed as long as the monument is standing, and read.”<sup>66</sup>

To sum up, the preceding chapter has made the case for seeing aetiology and narrative presentation as an inextricable whole, beginning in the very first sentence of the *Histories*.<sup>67</sup> But whereas the study of causes and origins in the paradigmatic example of the proem has been shown to be dependent upon the authority of Herodotus, the knowledge behind this authority is not total. Though Herodotus takes measures to show what he *does* know (in a manner befitting his unique and innovative ἀπόδειξις), his unwillingness to posit one single explanation or source for the difference between Greeks and barbarians betokens the fundamental multiplicity of aetiology in the *Histories*, which belies an “either...or” distinction. However, this is not simply the result of ignorance or an unwillingness to commit to one version of an account. As the finale of the proem affirms, we the readers are directed to see beyond the aetiological question at hand as more than just a monologic discourse founded on certainty, but as a window into a world

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<sup>65</sup> Bakker (2002) 32. On the monumental, inscriptional qualities of the proem, see also Myres (1953) 67, Svenbro (1993) 149-150, and Moles (1999) 44-53. For a discussion of epigraphy in the *Histories*, see esp. Chapter 3.1 below.

<sup>66</sup> Bakker (2002) 30.

<sup>67</sup> Recall Gould (1989) 85 (see Introduction).

of possibilities. So that we may begin to understand how this pattern manifests itself throughout the *Histories* in even the most disparate places, let us now turn to the Egyptian λόγος, which will be shown to speak intimately to the aetiological principles established in the opening to Herodotus' work.

## 2. Exemplifying the Egyptian *Logos*: the Inquiries of Herodotus and Psammetichus

In *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*, Paul Cartledge characterizes

Herodotus' account of Egypt (Αἰγύπτιος λόγος) as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Book 2 on Egypt is a conspicuous anomaly in Herodotus' work, raising in a particularly acute way all the most awkward questions about the author's literary project as a whole. Father of History—or lies? Critical student of scrupulously collated oral traditions—or credulous tourist retailing mere travellers' tales? Historical geographer belatedly converted to history proper—or geographical historian with a special interest in Egypt? Father of comparative ethnography and cross-cultural history—or mere narrative artist in prose? I begin with a consideration of the book as such, which in its present form and location constitutes a kind of giant excursus from his main project of 'the Median things.'<sup>2</sup>

Here, then, is a paradox: the Egyptian λόγος is at once an outlier *and* the very standard of Herodotean methodology.

Scholars have often viewed the Egyptian λόγος as an anomaly, since it is exceptionally long and is populated by an unusually large number of first person interjections.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, its tendency to scientific investigation in the context of autopsy and argumentation contrasts with "the wise but riddling authorities" that make up some of the most memorable episodes of Book One (e.g. the interaction of Solon and

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<sup>1</sup> It ought to be noted that Book Two and the Egyptian λόγος are not (or at least *should* not be) interchangeable, as the initial 38 chapters of Book Three may be said to correspond to the Egyptian λόγος as well (see Johnson (1994) 247, Spiegelberg (1927) 3, Asheri et al. (2007) 397 ad Hdt. 3.1). Since the division of the *Histories* into books probably took place after Herodotus' lifetime (Cagnazzi (1975) 386), I refer to Hdt. 2.1-3.38 as the Egyptian λόγος, in keeping with Herodotus' conceptualization of his own narrative framework according to λόγοι.

<sup>2</sup> Cartledge (2002) 71-72.

<sup>3</sup> Marincola (1987) 121 counts an average of two such remarks per OCT page. See also Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 185 and Benardete (1969) 36 (including n. 15).

Croesus, the oracles, etc.).<sup>4</sup> To top it off, the separation of the Egyptian λόγος from the Persian Wars which Book One first anticipates distinguishes this part of the *Histories* as a digression in the eyes of many scholars.<sup>5</sup> Some have even argued that it was originally designed to be a stand-alone monograph before Herodotus ultimately decided to incorporate it into the *Histories*.<sup>6</sup>

Scholars on Herodotean methodology, however, have seen the Egyptian λόγος as representative of the work as a whole. We find this especially in discussions of Herodotus' use of autopsy and argumentation as far as they concern historical methodology. For instance, Marincola's efforts to locate Herodotus' presence as a narrator in the *Histories* holistically confines itself almost exclusively to the Egyptian λόγος.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, Thomas devotes an entire chapter of *Herodotus in Context* to the role of inductive and deductive reasoning in the *Histories* at large, but draws nearly all of her support from Book Two.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Johnson (2009) 13. I thank Professor Johnson for sharing this unpublished work with me.

<sup>5</sup> See Jacoby (1913) col. 381 for the genesis of this influential idea (see also n. 6 below).

<sup>6</sup> This view was first put forward by Bauer (1878) and was later popularized by Jacoby (1913): "Es ist wohl anerkannt, daß wir im zweiten Buche ein vollkommen selbständiges Werk über Ägypten besitzen usw." (col. 331). The most influential proponent of this belief in recent times has been Fornara (1971): "Book II was written to instruct and entertain. It reveals Herodotus' basic interest in history and his natural inclination to research, the making of inquiries. But it is the work of a younger man not yet in control of the techniques or in possession of the mental attitudes of the author of Book I. The change in Herodotus' technique from such a book as II to the immeasurably more complex portions of his history as, especially, I and VII-IX, is the mark of an increasingly mature and practised style. More especially, however, it denotes also a shift in intentions and a new conception of his role" (21). In this vein, see also De Sanctis (1926), Powell (1939) 39-62, and von Fritz (1967) 158 ff. (as cogently summarized by Drews (1973) 63-69).

<sup>7</sup> Marincola (1987).

<sup>8</sup> i.e. "Argument and the language of proof" (Thomas (2000) 168-212). Even Dewald (1987), whose study is considered one of the most sensitive discussions of narratology and historical methodology in Herodotus, is similarly limited where eyewitness statements are concerned (Johnson (2009) 9).

In some respects, it is understandable why this contradiction has come about. Book Two does allude often to the process of historical inquiry, most notably with terms like ὄψις (“autopsy”), ἀκοή (“hearsay”), and γνώμη (“judgment”).<sup>9</sup> But these markers of what Nino Luraghi calls “meta-*historiē*”<sup>10</sup> are not relegated solely to Book Two and cannot encompass the totality of Herodotean inquiry on their own.<sup>11</sup> Instead, when taken together, such markers may be said to constitute “an *apodexis* in the fullest sense, an exhibition to the audience that superior method has resulted in a significantly fuller and more accurate account.”<sup>12</sup>

As far as our discussion of aetiology and historical methodology is concerned, it is significant that the markers of historical inquiry in the Egyptian λόγος have been interpreted collectively as an ἀπόδειξις, not only because this requires us to look back to this word’s programmatic use in the proem (and thus to see the elements of what ostensibly distinguishes the Egyptian λόγος already at work at the outset of Book One),<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For an overview of ὄψις, ἀκοή, and γνώμη, see Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 84-101, 184-89. For numerical comparisons of these sorts of citations with other books in the *Histories*, see e.g. Shrimpton and Gillis (1997) and Marincola (1987) 137 and 122 n. 5. For a detailed discussion of these and other terms of inquiry in the context of Book Two, see especially Lloyd (1975) 77-140.

<sup>10</sup> “Taken together, first-person statements on the process of collecting and assessing information and ‘they say’ references form a sort of meta-discourse, running parallel to the narrative surface of the *Histories* and commenting on its nature and origin. Since Herodotus in his proem calls the activity he is engaging in *historiē* the statements about such activity could be called meta-*historiē*; they form the core of modern reconstructions of Herodotus’ historical method” (Luraghi (2006) 77).

<sup>11</sup> On the latter point, see especially Verdin (1971): “A classification of the sources, however, is unknown to him [i.e. Herodotus]. Still, his opposition of various ways of obtaining information, such as ὄψις, ἱστορίη, ἀκοή, γνώμη indicates that he did not regard the materials of history as an amorphous mass” (224). See also Dewald (2002), who reminds us that “there is an enormous additional amount of metanarrative comment spread throughout all nine books that is not explicitly added by the first-person narrator *per se*” (275).

<sup>12</sup> Marincola (1987) 128.

<sup>13</sup> The conclusion to Lloyd’s (1975) exhaustive discussion of source criticism in the Egyptian λόγος is particularly telling in this regard: “Finally, let it be emphatically reiterated that Herodotus’ relationship to



but also because this requires us to consider the extent to which “narrative and explanation are one.”<sup>14</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, Herodotus’ expansive understanding of αἰτία (“reason why”, “alleged reason”, “charge”, “fault”, “blame”, etc.)<sup>15</sup> embraces “variety and multiplicity”<sup>16</sup> from the very beginning of the *Histories*. Rather than limit himself to just one answer to the question “why Greeks and barbarians came to war with each other” (δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι, 1.1.0), Herodotus broaches the topic of aetiology in such a way that defies singular explanations and expectations, signaling the complexities and ambiguities inherent in the discernment of origins. Although Herodotus ultimately leaves the bulk of this task to the reader, the manner in which he steps out of the narrative underscores the programmatic importance of the display of his inquiry (ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις, 1.1.0). Herodotus thereby shows the reader not only the breadth, circumspection, and novelty of the inquiry presented, but also the extent to which an integrative approach to the complex study of origins can better approximate accuracy where “the truth” is a scarce to non-existent monolith. Thus, it is no exaggeration to state that for Herodotus, “*historie* makes the *apodexis* an *aitie*”,<sup>17</sup> that is, inquiry makes its display a “reason why.”

Building on these arguments made in the previous chapter, we shall illustrate how Herodotus’ understanding of aetiology in the Egyptian λόγος may be viewed within the

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his predecessors involved a high degree of autonomy. He takes, tests, then uses and the synthesis is his own: Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνασσεύος ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἥδε” (140).

<sup>14</sup> Gould (1989) 85.

<sup>15</sup> See Powell (1960) ad loc.

<sup>16</sup> Gould (1989) 65.

<sup>17</sup> Cook (1976) 64.

wider methodological framework of the *Histories*. Instead of relying upon a genetic approach<sup>18</sup> to make this connection, the exploits of the pharaoh Psammetichus as recounted in Book Two will be examined in a series of case studies together with what we have already concluded from our initial investigation of the proem in Book One. This will be done in such a way as to refute the notion that the Egyptian λόγος is altogether aberrant from the grand scheme of Herodotus' work. Because the aetiological inquiries of Psammetichus are reflective of many of the same concerns voiced by Herodotus *in propria persona*, these case studies will distill broad issues, much in the way Herodotus himself does, in order to reassess some of the most persistent and acute controversies in the *Histories*.

## ***2.1 The Bekos Experiment***

The Egyptian λόγος begins simply enough. In 2.1.1 we are reminded of the death of the Persian king Cyrus at the hands of the Massagetae a few chapters earlier (1.214.3) and we learn of the succession of his son Cambyses. We expect to see Cambyses'

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<sup>18</sup> This approach (also known as the “developmental hypothesis” as set forth in Jacoby (1913) cols. 333-392) assumes that we can chart Herodotus' intellectual development on the basis of a close reading of the *Histories* and thereby deduce when the constituent λόγοι were originally composed. However, this is infeasible both from practical and abstract standpoints. The little we do know about composition and “publication” in the classical period suggests a degree of flexibility that cannot be detected without a fifth century exemplar of the *Histories*. For example, advances in papyrology (see e.g. Johnson (1994) 229 n. 4) have all but silenced Lattimore's classic lament, that Herodotus “could not, if he found something objectionable on page 8, take it out and write a new page, number it 8, and put it in the stack where it belonged” (Lattimore (1958) 9). Furthermore, the presence of many narrative personae which Herodotus dons and doffs throughout the *Histories* makes a genetic approach appear equally fruitless (see Drews (1973) 69). Thus, as far as the Egyptian λόγος is concerned, the most sensible (albeit guarded) conclusion is the one drawn by Dewald (1987) 157 n. 25: “The inclusion of book 2 in the *Histories* shows that whenever Herodotus conceived of the work as a whole, he had not renounced the authorial attitudes there displayed.” See also n. 6 above.

proposed expedition against Egypt commence immediately, but we must wait more than 180 chapters after the plan is first announced to see it come to fruition in 3.1.1.

It may come as a surprise to those who view the Egyptian λόγος as a complete incongruity relative to other λόγοι that it takes Herodotus so long to close the ring.<sup>19</sup> However, given what we have learned in our discussion of the proem about Herodotus' penchant for challenging initial impressions and directing us to look past the status quo, we should be trained to expect the unexpected by now.<sup>20</sup> Then again, what follows is not entirely unexpected if we are cognizant of what has come before the Egyptian λόγος. With this in mind, let us start by considering the famous linguistic experiment of the pharaoh Psammetichus (the so-called *bekos* experiment) which first preempts Cambyses' campaign and establishes itself as the “frontispiece”<sup>21</sup> and “keynote”<sup>22</sup> to the Egyptian λόγος:

Οἱ δὲ Αἰγύπτιοι, πρὶν μὲν ἢ Ψαμμήτιχον σφέων βασιλεῦσαι, ἐνόμιζον ἑωυτοὺς πρῶτους γενέσθαι πάντων ἀνθρώπων. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ Ψαμμήτιχος βασιλεύσας ἠθέλησε εἶδέναι οἵτινες γενοῖατο πρῶτοι, ἀπὸ τούτου νομίζουσι Φρύγας προτέρους γενέσθαι ἑωυτῶν, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ἑωυτοῦς. [2] Ψαμμήτιχος δὲ ὡς οὐκ ἐδύνατο πυνθανόμενος πόρον οὐδένα τούτου ἀνευρεῖν οἱ γενοῖατο πρῶτοι ἀνθρώπων, ἐπιτεχνᾶται τοιόνδε. Παιδιά δύο νεογνὰ ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἐπιτυχόντων διδοῖ ποιμένι τρέφειν ἐς τὰ ποιμνία τροφήν τινα τοιήνδε, ἐντειλάμενος μηδένα ἀντίον αὐτῶν μηδεμίαν φωνὴν ἰέναι, ἐν στέγῃ δὲ ἐρήμῃ ἐπ' ἑωυτῶν κεῖσθαι αὐτὰ καὶ τὴν ὄρην ἐπαγινέειν σφι αἶγας, πλήσαντα δὲ τοῦ γάλακτος τᾶλλα διαπρήσσεσθαι. [3] Ταῦτα δὲ ἐποίηέ τε καὶ ἐνετέλλετο [ὁ] Ψαμμήτιχος θέλων ἀκοῦσαι τῶν παιδίων, ἀπαλλαχθέντων τῶν ἀσήμεων

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<sup>19</sup> As Herington (1991a) has demonstrated, this is not excessive by Herodotean standards, as the conclusion of the *Histories* (9.108-122) may be said to exhibit signs of triple ring composition, harkening as far back as the proem (see Chapter Six below).

<sup>20</sup> On this all-important theme in the *Histories*, see e.g. van der Veen (1996).

<sup>21</sup> Benardete (1969) 32.

<sup>22</sup> West (1991) 153 n. 52.

κνυζημάτων, ἦντινα φωνὴν ῥήξουσι πρώτην. Τὰ περ ὧν καὶ ἐγένετο. Ὡς γὰρ διέτης χρόνος ἐγεγόνεε ταῦτα τῷ ποιμένι πρήσσοντι, ἀνοίγοντι τὴν θύρην καὶ ἐσιόντι τὰ παιδιά ἀμφοτέρα προσπίπτοντα «βεκός» ἐφώνεον ὀρέγοντα τὰς χεῖρας. [4] Τὰ μὲν δὴ πρῶτα ἀκούσας ἤσυχος ἦν ὁ ποιμὴν· ὡς δὲ πολλάκις φοιτῶντι καὶ ἐπιμελομένῳ πολλὸν ἦν τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος, οὕτω δὴ σημήνας τῷ δεσπότῃ ἤγαγε τὰ παιδιά κελεύσαντος ἐς ὄψιν τὴν ἐκείνου. Ἀκούσας δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ψαμμήτιχος ἐπυθάνετο οἵτινες ἀνθρώπων «βεκός» τι καλέουσι, πυνθανόμενος δὲ εὗρισκε Φρύγας καλέοντας τὸν ἄρτον. [5] Οὕτω συνεχώρησαν Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ τοιοῦτῳ σταθμωσάμενοι πρήγματι τοὺς Φρύγας πρεσβυτέρους εἶναι ἐωυτῶν. Ἰδε μὲν γενέσθαι τῶν ἱρέων τοῦ Ἡφαίστου [τοῦ] ἐν Μέμφι ἤκουον· Ἕλληνες δὲ λέγουσι ἄλλα τε μάταια πολλὰ καὶ ὡς γυναικῶν τὰς γλώσσας ὁ Ψαμμήτιχος ἐκταμὼν τὴν δίαιταν οὕτως ἐποίησατο τῶν παιδίων παρὰ ταύτησι τῆσι γυναιξί (2.2).

Before Psammetichus became their king, the Egyptians used to consider themselves the first of all humans. But after Psammetichus became king and desired to know who actually came first, ever since then they have considered the Phrygians to be older than themselves, and themselves older than the rest. [2] But when Psammetichus was unable to discover any means of learning which people came first, he contrived the following. He gave two newborn children belonging to random people to a shepherd to raise among his flocks according to such an upbringing, commanding that no one should utter a word in the children's presence, but that they should remain by themselves in an isolated hut, and that the shepherd at the appointed time should bring them goats and then go about his other tasks after giving them their fill of milk. [3] Psammetichus did these things and issued these commands out of a desire to hear which word the children uttered first, once they were past the age of unintelligible cries. And this actually came to pass, for after the shepherd had done these things for two years, both children fell upon him as he opened the door and went inside, and they began to shout "bekos", stretching out their hands. [4] When the shepherd first heard this, he kept it to himself, but when he kept hearing this word in coming often and paying close attention, he finally indicated this to his master and brought the children before him as he had commanded. And when Psammetichus himself heard them, he inquired as to which people call something "bekos" and discovered in the course of his investigation that this was what the Phrygians called "bread." [5] Thus, judging from this, the Egyptians conceded that the Phrygians were older than themselves. This is what I heard happened from the priests of Hephaestus in Memphis, but the Greeks say lots of other ridiculous things, like how Psammetichus cut out the tongues of some women and made the children live with them.

In one paragraph, Herodotus leaps about a hundred years without notice from

Cambyses' invasion of Egypt (525 BCE) to the time of the pharaoh Psammetichus I (664-

610 BCE). This is initially striking, inasmuch as Psammetichus' reign in the Late Period is far removed from where someone as deeply concerned with origins as Herodotus might ordinarily start his account.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, because Psammetichus is eventually discussed in his proper chronological place relative to a host of other Egyptian rulers (2.152-154), from the earliest predynasts (i.e. Min) to the last of the Late Period pharaohs (i.e. Amasis), his proleptic appearance in 2.2 suggests his importance.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, for a fifth-century historian writing in Greek, the reign of Psammetichus was a watershed. The founder of the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty (Saite), Psammetichus sanctioned the first permanent settlements of Ionian and Carian mercenaries in Egypt (2.154). Though Greeks had experienced Egypt and engaged with its culture directly long before Psammetichus came to power,<sup>25</sup> this particular pharaoh institutionalized modes of cultural exchange that had a lasting impact on the interaction between Greeks and Egyptians. These policies were influential to the extent that Herodotus is able to claim

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<sup>23</sup> Compare for example Diodorus Siculus' account of Egypt in the first book of the Βιβλιοθήκη, which lays out the origins of Egypt *ab ovo*, beginning with the creation of the universe (1.6 ff.). For an outline of Herodotus' Egyptian chronology, see Lloyd (1975) 185-194.

<sup>24</sup> See Groten (1963) 82. In addition to the reasons I shall set out below, it is also possible that the pharaoh's conspicuous role at the front of the Egyptian λόγος may speak to contemporary geopolitical concerns over the role of empire in the wake of the Persian Wars, a subject which interested Herodotus not a little (see esp. Chapters Five and Six below on this kind of prolepsis). Not only would Herodotus' account of Egypt have resonated with a fifth-century audience in light of Athens' expedition of 445/4 BCE to Egypt in response to Inarus' rebellion (see Meiggs (1972) 101-108; Luraghi (2009) 443-444), but references to Psammetichus in particular may have struck some as well, since a Saite rebel king of the same name donated 40,000 medimnoi of wheat to the polis in a time of need (see Plut. *Per.* 37.4, Schol. Ar. *Vesp.* 718, Philoch. *FGrH* 328 F 119, and analysis at Meiggs (1972) 95, 268).

<sup>25</sup> For a concise summary of Greek interactions with Egypt before the seventh century BCE, see Lloyd (1975) 1-13.

accurate knowledge of Egyptian history starting from Psammetichus' reign,<sup>26</sup> thanks in large part to the creation of the class of Greek-speaking interpreters (ἑρμηνέες), which endured to Herodotus' day (2.154.2, 2.164) and furnished him with sources that expanded the scope of his inquiry.<sup>27</sup> On a more abstract level, the achievements of Psammetichus are perhaps most significant in that they are symbolic of what we might term a “global” view of the world and are in turn reflective of the diverse *Mischung* that is Herodotus' cultural and intellectual milieu. Given what we have already deduced from our likening of Herodotus to a ἵστωρ, it is not unreasonable, then, to posit that the Father of History might have identified with Psammetichus and his arbitrations between Greeks and barbarians, especially where they concerned issues as fundamental to the process of inquiry as language and its origins.<sup>28</sup>

Like other prominent rulers and statesmen in the *Histories*, Psammetichus may also be counted among the “inquisitive kings”<sup>29</sup> whom Herodotus has engage in inquiry much like his own.<sup>30</sup> Psammetichus' experiment with the two newborns is characterized by the sort of investigative language which Herodotus often uses of himself (e.g.

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<sup>26</sup> ...τὰ περὶ Αἴγυπτον γινόμενα ἀπὸ Ψαμμητίχου βασιλέως ἀρξάμενοι πάντα [καὶ] τὰ ὕστερον ἐπιστάμεθα ἀτρεκέως (2.154.4). On the historical significance of Psammetichus' reign from this standpoint, see Lloyd (1975) 14-17, 24-25 and Lloyd (1988) ad Hdt. 2.154.

<sup>27</sup> Herodotus tells us that he employed a ἑρμηνεύς to interpret the inscriptions on the Pyramid of Cheops (2.125.6, discussed in Chapter 3.1 below).

<sup>28</sup> As a Hellenized Carian exile who wrote in the Ionic dialect, Herodotus may have identified with Psammetichus on a personal level for having enlisted Ionian and Carian mercenaries to secure the throne following a period of exile (2.152). For a biographical discussion of the controversial (yet decidedly heterogeneous) origins of Herodotus (the historical figure), see Brown (1988a).

<sup>29</sup> Christ (1994) 167.

<sup>30</sup> See especially Christ (1994), who juxtaposes Herodotean inquiry with the inquiries of Solon, Cambyses, Darius, and Xerxes among others. See also Munson (2005) 19-23, who fittingly entitles her section on the *bekos* experiment, “Another *histōr*: Psammetichus and the origin of language.”

ἐνόμιζον, ἠθέλησε εἰδέναι, ἐπιτεχνᾶται, θέλων ἀκοῦσαι, ἐπυνθάνετο, εὔρισκε, σταθμωσάμενοι, κ.τ.λ.).<sup>31</sup> But while there certainly does exist a “dialectical relationship” between Herodotus and Psammetichus,<sup>32</sup> it is not as straightforward as one might initially perceive. As Gruen warns, “the historian does not engage here in straight and simplistic reportage.”<sup>33</sup>

Herodotus begins by stating that the *bekos* experiment was conducted because Psammetichus wanted to know which people came first (Ἐπειδὴ δὲ Ψαμμήτιχος βασιλεύσας ἠθέλησε εἰδέναι οἵτινες γενοῖατο πρῶτοι..., 2.2.1). As Bloomer has observed, superlatives like πρῶτοι (“first”)<sup>34</sup> often defy expectations in the *Histories* by casting into doubt the answers to seemingly obvious questions. This in turn can instigate a process he calls “superlative revision,”<sup>35</sup> whereby the reader is made to reassess the commonplaces inherent in a superlative claim in such a way that “animates and directs the story”<sup>36</sup> beyond preconceptions and clichés.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, however much this process may advance the course of ἱστορίη, it can only go so far. For this reason,

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<sup>31</sup> See Johnson (2009) 10. When set beside Psammetichus’ inquiry, Herodotus’ follow-up in 2.3 (discussed below) is uncannily similar in how it deploys the language of ἱστορίη (cf. ἤκουσα, ἐθέλων εἰδέναι, νομίζων).

<sup>32</sup> Vannicelli (1997) 215.

<sup>33</sup> Gruen (2011b) 80-81.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of how “πρῶτος ist auch Superlativ” where invention and discovery is concerned in Herodotus, see Kleingünther (1933) 40-65 (quotation at 47). On the connection between the introduction to the *bekos* experiment and proemial phrases of primacy in Homer (e.g. *Il* 1.6, 11.217, 16.113), see Nagy (1990) 221 n. 34.

<sup>35</sup> Bloomer (1993) 39 ff.

<sup>36</sup> Bloomer (1993) 44.

<sup>37</sup> The consequence of the *bekos* experiment is a good example, insofar as a dubious superlative claim of Egyptian primacy in 2.2 is followed by “a cluster of genuine [Egyptian] firsts (2.4): the discovery of the calendar year, of the twelve gods, of altars, images, and temples, of bas-relief” (Bloomer (1993) 41 n. 28). See also 1.30-33 for the paradigmatic exchange between Croesus and Solon over the identity of the “most blessed” (ὀλβιώτατος).

Herodotus is wont to “draw attention to the limits of human knowledge”<sup>38</sup> through superlative revision.

If we look back to the beginning of the *Histories*, we may find a paradigmatic example of superlative revision in the priamel which caps off the proem (Ταῦτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. Ἐγὼ δὲ κ.τ.λ., 1.5.3). As we argued in the previous chapter, Herodotus’ decision to follow up with Croesus, the first barbarian whom he himself knew to have perpetrated unjust deeds against the Greeks (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον..., 1.5.3), should not be understood as an indictment of the claims of primacy and responsibility offered by the Persians and the Phoenicians in the preceding accounts of 1.1-4, but rather as a delineation of what can and cannot be known based on historical inquiry about so distant a dispute as the ultimate origin of enmities between Greeks and barbarians. The result was such that even though Herodotus ultimately assigned Croesus the distinction of being πρῶτος in the *spatium historicum*, he did not discount the possibility that someone else might have been first in the *spatium mythicum*. Thus, through this circumscription of knowledge, Herodotus asked us to see beyond absolutes in conducting ἱστορίη.

Herodotus asks us to do much the same when he goes to verify the results of the *bekos* experiment:

Κατὰ μὲν δὴ τὴν τροφήν τῶν παιδίων τοσαῦτα ἔλεγον. Ἦκουσα δὲ καὶ ἄλλα ἐν Μέμφι, ἐλθὼν ἐς λόγους τοῖσι ἱρεῦσι τοῦ Ἡφαίστου· καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐς Θήβας τε καὶ ἐς Ἡλίου πόλιν αὐτῶν τούτων εἶνεκεν ἐτραπόμην, ἐθέλων εἰδέναι εἰ συμβήσονται τοῖσι λόγοισι τοῖσι ἐν Μέμφι· οἱ γὰρ Ἡλιοπολίται λέγονται Αἰγυπτίων εἶναι

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<sup>38</sup> Bloomer (1993) 39.



λογιώτατοι. [2] Τὰ μὲν νυν θεῖα τῶν ἀπηγημάτων οἷα ἤκουον, οὐκ εἰμι πρόθυμος ἐξηγέσθαι, ἔξω ἢ τὰ οὐνόματα αὐτῶν μοῦνον, νομίζων πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἴσον περὶ αὐτῶν ἐπίστασθαι· τὰ δ' ἂν ἐπιμνησθῆω αὐτῶν, ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου ἐξαναγκαζόμενος ἐπιμνησθήσομαι (2.3).

This is what they [i.e. the priests of Hephaestus] said concerning the children's upbringing. But I also heard other things in Memphis in the course of my conversations with the priests of Hephaestus. I also went to Thebes and Heliopolis specifically for this purpose, out of a desire to know whether they would agree with what was said in Memphis, for the Heliopolitans are said to be the most authoritative Egyptians. [2] Now I am not eager to relate the sort of stories I heard about the gods, except their names alone, because I think that all peoples have equal knowledge of them. But whatever mention I may make of them, I will do so when compelled by the *logos*.

In what amounts to a recapitulation of the opening priamel, Herodotus contrasts what he was able to learn from the priests of Hephaestus at Memphis, the Thebans, and the Heliopolitans (whose epithet *λογιώτατοι* immediately recalls the Persian *λόγιοι* of 1.1.1) with his own belief (*νομίζων*, 2.3.2), namely, that all peoples have equal knowledge of the gods (...*πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἴσον περὶ αὐτῶν ἐπίστασθαι*, 2.3.2). This personal interjection is important not only in that it closes the ring opened by the Egyptians at the outset of the experiment (*ἐνόμιζον ἑωυτοὺς πρώτους γενέσθαι πάντων ἀνθρώπων*, 2.2.1), but also because it climaxes with the same concern for *human* affairs which marked the conclusion of the proem:

Ταῦτα μὲν νυν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. Ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα **ἀνθρώπων** ἐπεξιών. [4] Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. Τὴν **ἀνθρωπιήν** ὧν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τούτῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.3-4).

This is what the Persians and the Phoenicians say. But I am not going to talk about these matters, that they happened this way or some other way. Instead,

having indicated the man I myself know to have been the first to undertake unjust deeds against the Greeks, I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small **human** settlements alike. For many of those settlements that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that **human** prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.

What's more, Herodotus' cosmopolitan belief about all peoples' equal knowledge of the gods is no more to the exclusion of what the Memphites, the Thebans, or the Heliopolitans say in 2.2-3 than it was to the exclusion of what the Persians or the Phoenicians said in 1.1-4. Rather, as in the case of the programmatic analogue of 1.5.3-4 set out above, Herodotus' decision to project into the realm of human affairs at the end of the *bekos* experiment instead of offering categorical support for one account over another directs us once again to consider a veritable world of narrative perspectives, none of whose methodological components can be privileged or written-off wholesale in the process of *ιστορίη*.<sup>39</sup>

The danger of allowing a part to speak for the whole is about the closest thing to a "moral" that we can glean from the *bekos* experiment, which, like the structurally and thematically analogous proem to the *Histories*, has precluded a consensus of interpretation since Herodotus' time.<sup>40</sup> This lack of agreement is understandable, though,

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<sup>39</sup> For a concise discussion of the variegated foundations of Herodotean knowledge and their holistic importance, see e.g. Verdin (1971) 223-234, esp. 224: "The survey of the sources mentioned by Herodotus (p. 2-35) mainly intends to demonstrate that this historian intuitively practiced what modern scientific theory preaches: anything that can furnish information on man's past must be regarded as historical evidence. The most diverse kinds of archaeological remains, inscriptions, literary testimony (the works of predecessors as well as poetry and collections of oracles), pieces of a more documentary nature, and finally, a large amount of oral testimony, all were employed by Herodotus as sources of information." See also n. 11 above.

<sup>40</sup> See Gera (2003) 68-111, who brilliantly demonstrates how the *bekos* experiment has attracted myriad interpretations, from Aristophanes (i.e. *Nub.* 398) to the present, by virtue of its being "both stimulating

because the outcome of the *bekos* experiment in 2.2 suggests that languages (however ancient) cannot be definitively traced back to a single *Ursprache* from which all other languages spring.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Herodotus' refusal to see language either as a purely cultural or purely natural phenomenon makes such variance all the more understandable.<sup>42</sup> However, Herodotus' follow-up in 2.3 should remind us that whatever biases<sup>43</sup> or logical fallacies<sup>44</sup> scholars may detect in the experiment are dependent upon accounts which make no claim to speak from first-hand knowledge about controversies in the distant past. This is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that Psammetichus' eye witness investigation (ἐξ ὄψιν, 2.2.4) is set within the oral account of the priests (ἔλεγον, 2.3.1) within the written account of Herodotus, all of which are stacked on top of one another like a Russian doll. Through this process of focalization,<sup>45</sup> aetiology and narrative thus become inextricable. For this reason, Herodotus makes a point of informing us of the

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and open to refutation" (100). Particularly noteworthy among these are the overlapping theories proposed by several Enlightenment thinkers to explain the word *bekos*: "A plea (Condillac), an onomatopoeic word (Vico), the awareness of an animal's existence (Herder), or perhaps a call for affection (Rousseau): all could have a place in Herodotus' tale" (87, discussed at 97-105).

<sup>41</sup> i.e. "The ἀρχαῖα are not the ἀρχαί" (Benardete (1969) 35).

<sup>42</sup> See e.g. Griffiths (2001) 164 for a consideration of how the *bekos* experiment belies a strict interpretation according to φύσις or νόμος alone. On this dichotomy, see 2.30 ff (discussed below).

<sup>43</sup> Salmon (1956) 329 argues that the priests of Hephaestus recounted the *bekos* story as they did because they were biased against Psammetichus' policies as pharaoh. On the other hand, Benardete (1969) 34 believes that the priests recounted the experiment according to their dogmatic understanding of mimesis in keeping with their role as servants of Hephaestus, "the author...of imitation."

<sup>44</sup> According to Benardete (1969), it is illogical for the Egyptians to think that "speaking is natural to men" (32). Though Benardete is right to point out that there is a distinction between λόγος and γλῶσσα which the Egyptians fail to notice (33), the notion that speaking would have been seen as natural is not altogether in keeping with fifth century linguistic theory or with what we are told about the experiment: "since the non-verbal act of supplication of the children, which we would regard as highly conventional, is certainly not learned from the goats but innate, the same could be said for their first word" (Munson (2005) 22, see also Gera (2003) 83-92 for a similar discussion of the importance of gestures).

<sup>45</sup> See Dewald (1999) on focalization (discussed in Chapter One above).

lengths to which he has gone to arbitrate multiple perspectives in order to adhere to the dictates of an expansive and panoptic λόγος and so guard against the vagaries of monology.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, no matter how circumspect Herodotus may strive to be in this regard, some ambiguity remains.

If we step back and look at these conclusions in light of what has come before the Egyptian λόγος, we may find a fitting comparison in Herodotus' treatment of the earliest Greek peoples in the so-called "Pelasgian controversy" (1.56-8). Here, as in the *bekos* experiment, Herodotus not only addresses the obscure origins of language, but also mitigates difference and complexity without rectifying them fully (in a manner which, one might add, anticipates the argumentative and scientific mannerisms characteristic of the Egyptian λόγος in the midst of the Lydian λόγος).<sup>47</sup> While Herodotus is unable to determine conclusively which language the Pelasgians spoke ("Ἦντινα δὲ γλῶσσαν ἴεσαν οἱ Πελασγοί, οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν, 1.57.1), he does say that the Pelasgians' intermingling with Greeks and other barbarians created a multitude of nations (αὐξήται ἐς

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<sup>46</sup> We can compare the phrase, "compelled by the λόγος" (ὕπὸ τοῦ λόγου ἐξαναγκάζομενος, 2.3.2), to the metaphor of the road of the λόγοι (λόγων ὁδός, 1.95.1), which often leads Herodotus, the quintessential traveler (see Pohlenz (1937) 43), beyond where he might otherwise be inclined to go, independent of time or place (see e.g. Immerwahr (1960) 276 and Wood (1972) 12). As Dewald (1987) has argued, the manner in which Herodotus makes himself subject to the λόγος casts him less in the light of "an authoritative tour guide" than as "a detached...observer like ourselves" (155). This process, which may be said to constitute a "re-enactment of his own modes of dealing with the λόγοι and an invitation to us, as readers, to wrestle with them too" (167), decentralizes knowledge in such a way that undermines the absolute power of any one party. It is not surprising, then, that Connor deduces that such a metaphor "coincides with ἴστωρ terminology" (Connor (1993) 12 n. 33). On the ἴστωρ, see esp. Chapter One above.

<sup>47</sup> Munson (2005) 9.

πληῖθος τῶν ἐθνέων, 1.58).<sup>48</sup> All the same, no amount of compromise can hide the fact that certain aspects of this controversy remain intractable for the ἴστωρ.<sup>49</sup>

Because Herodotus is concerned to show the limits of human inquiry throughout the *Histories*, it is unfair to conclude, then, that Psammetichus is merely a straw man, a methodological “*exemplum e contrario*.”<sup>50</sup> The fact that both Psammetichus’ and Herodotus’ inquiries are described with the same investigative language and are immediately juxtaposed should cast serious doubts upon this assertion.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, the fact that Herodotus disputes neither the methodology nor the “anthropological meaning”<sup>52</sup> of the experiment makes it even harder to believe that his intention was to expose the pharaoh’s naïveté.<sup>53</sup> Even if this were the case, Psammetichus’ creation of the class of bilingual interpreters later on (2.154.2) acknowledges diversity in a way that moves past the notion of linguistic primacy which caused the *bekos* experiment to be conducted in the first place.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, whatever fault Herodotus may have found with the pharaoh or the experiment itself, he does not make it explicit.

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<sup>48</sup> Herodotus deploys a similar strategy in elucidating the barbarian aetiology of the language spoken by the first oracle of Dodona (2.54-57). While Herodotus is more resolute in his opinion (γνώμη, 2.56.1) about its origins here than in the Pelasgian episode, his γνώμη is still founded on the reconciliation of two mutually-inclusive, dialogical traditions (see Benardete (1969) 50).

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. McNeal (1985), who makes a case for seeing the Pelasgian controversy as an innately difficult passage which no amount of textual criticism can amend.

<sup>50</sup> Vannicelli (1997) 216. See also Salmon (1956), Knobloch (1985), and Erbse (1992) 113-116, who argue that Herodotus has Psammetichus make leaps of logic concerning the origins of speech and language intentionally in order to make the pharaoh look ridiculous (and by extension, the Egyptian people as well).

<sup>51</sup> See n. 31 above.

<sup>52</sup> Munson (2005) 23.

<sup>53</sup> See n. 50 above.

<sup>54</sup> Gera (2003) 77.

In light of Herodotus' intellectual proclivities, it is understandable that he does not pronounce judgment against Psammetichus, as we may gather from sociologist A.

Sulek's illuminating defense of the science behind the *bekos* experiment:

Psammetichus abandoned a conviction so important to himself and the Egyptians under the influence of a single empirical counterargument [i.e. that *bekos* was a Phrygian word]. He could have resorted to various loopholes. In the infants' utterings he could have heard native words rather than the alien word *becos*. He could have invalidated the whole experiment by pointing out that *becos* was not a natural but an imitated sound [i.e. the bleating of the goats]. He could have also stated that one experiment was not sufficient to have drawn a verdict concerning the antecedence of the peoples of the earth. Present-day experimenters sometimes resort to such strategies... Thus the intellectual honesty of Psammetichus is astonishing. He could become the patron of present-day experimenters not only on the account of his inventiveness, but of his honesty as well. If any busts and statues of him have survived, they ought to stand in the rooms of social science laboratories.<sup>55</sup>

From this standpoint, the remarkable openness of Psammetichus makes it hard to imagine a more compelling case for the pharaoh to be considered a ἵστωρ and thus for Herodotus to want to emulate him in probing original claims. However, being a ἵστωρ does not presuppose the ability to discern truth in every instance. No matter how sound the process of ἱστορίη may be, there are always limits to what can be known. As Christ astutely points out, the manner in which Herodotus acknowledges this reality ultimately

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<sup>55</sup> Sulek (1989) 650-651. The soundness of the empirical foundations of the *bekos* experiment is supported by Lloyd (1976) 5 ff., who provides evidence for just how "very carefully controlled" the experiment is (5). See also Froidefond (1971) 140-144 and Campos Daroca (1992) 52-53, who discuss how Psammetichus' inquiry is a natural outgrowth of some of the most pressing questions of Ionian science. Such fundamental aetiological concerns prevailed independent of time and culture to the point that Frederick II, James IV, and Akbar the Great all conducted experiments in the vein of the *bekos* experiment (Sulek (1989) 647-648). For additional examples, see also Gera (2003) 68-111, esp. 92-106 (discussed in n. 40 above).

has major ramifications for the exegesis of the *Histories* far beyond the *bekos* experiment:

The historian distinguishes himself from kingly inquirers not only through the particular criticisms he levels against them, but also through the privileged position he assumes as an analyzer and arbiter of principles of inquiry whenever he treats regal investigation. This confers a special status on his *historie*—it is not only an inquiry itself, but also an investigation of inquiry—and lends a certain credibility to the inferences that the historian draws in the course of his investigations: the self-conscious critic of others’ inquiries may be thought to be less prone to error himself. To be sure, the critical attitude that Herodotus encourages through his analysis of kingly research is one that readers may in turn apply to his *historie*. When they do so, however, they pay tribute to the self-conscious inquirer who has inculcated in them a critical awareness of the pitfalls and possibilities of human investigation.<sup>56</sup>

As we have now seen in our analysis of the *bekos* experiment, the most dangerous investigative pitfalls encountered up to this point in the Egyptian λόγος have been situated around narrative—who is giving the account and to what end. While no area of historical inquiry is devoid of such hazards, they are especially prevalent in Egypt, a topsy-turvy land whose very name lent itself to the Greek expression “αἰγυπτιάζειν”, that is, “to be sly and crafty.”<sup>57</sup> Some proponents of the “Liar School” might contend that this is exactly what Herodotus does when he recounts the *bekos* experiment in the style of a folk tale,<sup>58</sup> an act which is wont to cast him more in the light of a fabulist (λογοποιός) like Aesop than a ἵστορ.<sup>59</sup> Though there are grounds for Herodotus to be considered

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<sup>56</sup> Christ (1994) 200.

<sup>57</sup> Cratin. fr. 378 (definition per LSJ). On the topos of Egypt as the locus of duplicity, see e.g. Ar. *Th.* 922, Aesch. fr. 373, Pl. *Leg.* 747c, Theocr. *Id.* 15.48, and Strab. 17.1.29.

<sup>58</sup> For some tentative remarks on the resonance of the *bekos* experiment with *Volksmärchen*, see Aly (1969) 62-63.

<sup>59</sup> For Herodotus’ own discussion of the life of Aesop the λογοποιός, see 2.134.

among the former,<sup>60</sup> the fact that he is wont to intermingle λογοποιία with ἱστορίη sets him more comfortably among the latter from a technical standpoint, inasmuch as he reconciles the two in such a way as to show that λόγοι can ultimately point to truth independent of the historicity of the events recounted therein (such as the omnipresence of bias in historical inquiry).<sup>61</sup> In a place as liminal as Egypt, at a time when the lines between Greek and barbarian and archaic and classical modes of thought were becoming increasingly blurred, truth was necessarily predicated on a variety of perspectives.<sup>62</sup> After all, the word λόγος in the *Histories* can denote a “fable” just as it can an “account.”<sup>63</sup>

This dichotomy lies at the heart of Cicero’s assessment of Herodotus in the opening of the *De legibus*: “Even in Herodotus, the Father of History, there are countless tall tales” (...*et apud Herodotum patrem historiae...sunt innumerabiles fabulae*, 1.5.1). As unflattering as this may sound, Cicero’s evaluation need not be taken as a dubious distinction, as Kurke argues:

Although by Cicero’s time, the opposed terms have become “history” versus “poetry,” neatly aligned in the opening dialogue of the *De Legibus* with “truth” (*veritatem*) versus “pleasure” (*delectationem*), we might see behind this the older opposition of *historiē* versus *logopoiia*, “science” versus tall tales. What Cicero acknowledges is that Herodotus’s strange text is compounded of both. But why should Herodotus take these risks and cast himself in this somehow discreditable

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<sup>60</sup> For evidence of the association of Herodotean style with that of Aesop in antiquity, see e.g. Plu. *Mor.* 871D = *De Herodoti malignitate* 40 (pace Nagy (1990) 322): οὐκέτι Σκύθαις οὐδὲ Πέρσαις οὐδ’ Αἰγυπτίοις τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ λόγους ἀνατίθησι πλάττων, ὥσπερ Αἴσωπος κόραξι καὶ πιθήκοις, ἀλλὰ τῷ τοῦ Πυθίου προσώπῳ χρώμενος ἀποθεῖ τῶν ἐν Σαλαμῖνι πρωτείων τὰς Ἀθήνας.

<sup>61</sup> See n. 43 above on bias and focalization.

<sup>62</sup> “We are perhaps at a point where ideas about knowledge and truth are on the move, different and competing conceptions coexist of how to get at the truth, the unknown, from the poets, from experience and evidence of experience, to schematic of abstract theories, all with their own plausibility, none quite satisfying or sufficient by itself to jettison all the rest” (Thomas (2000) 101).

<sup>63</sup> Murray (2001) 25. See n. 67 below ad Hdt. 1.141.



position? Presumably because he feels his message is an urgent one and this the most effective means of persuading the powerful.<sup>64</sup>

If the proliferation of investigative language which marks both Psammetichus' inquiry and that of Herodotus is indeed "indicative of an urgency of engagement with a readership who are in turn implicitly instructed—constructed—towards a similar activeness of far-ranging inquiry",<sup>65</sup> it is not surprising, then, that 2.2-3 embodies fabulistic traits according to Kurke's interpretation of Cicero's dichotomy. However, it would be a mistake to make λογοποιία define the essence of ἱστορίη by itself and so contradict the fundamental heterogeneity of Herodotean thought and methodology. It would be an even bigger mistake to equate λογοποιία with the purposeful distortion of the truth, a concept which, though a concern for Herodotus, was considerably more subjective and variable in his day than it was in subsequent ages, especially where it related to places like Egypt.<sup>66</sup> Ultimately, λογοποιία represents but one implement in Herodotus' sizeable toolkit, whose deployment in the keynote to the Egyptian λόγος may be viewed as a way of prompting the reader to question the very notion of what truth

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<sup>64</sup> Kurke (2011) 431. The main example Kurke marshals to this effect is Hdt. 1.27, in which a sage (ostensibly either Bias or Pittacus, who nevertheless exemplifies features that are redolent of Aesop) persuades Croesus not to invade the Ionian islanders by means of a fable (see also Kurke (2011) 126-136, 428-431). For similar perspectives on Cicero's reception of Herodotus, see Dunsch (2013) and Priestley (2014) 209-212.

<sup>65</sup> Johnson (2009) 20.

<sup>66</sup> Branscome (2013) 9 shrewdly observes that Herodotus does not make a programmatic claim to tell the truth in the proem, but when he does concern himself explicitly with ἡ ἀλήθεια/τὸ ἀληθές, "he comments not so much on his own truthfulness as on the relative truthfulness or certitude of a given source or detail" (9 n. 16). The objectivity of Herodotus' stance, which fits squarely within the model of the ἵστωρ advanced in this dissertation, was founded on the knowledge that "the truth" was a largely *subjective* concept in his intellectual milieu, distinct from what we might term "truthfulness" (see Marincola (2007), esp. 64-66). Fehling (1994) 9 terms this "verisimilitude", which need not always contrast with truth. See also Momigliano (1958a), Evans (1968), Moles (1993), Rhodes (1994), Murray (2001) 25, and Baragwanath (2008) 19.

looks like in historical inquiry and how it should be brought to bear on the range of investigative challenges that will have to be confronted in order to extricate original claims in the land of paradox and inversion.<sup>67</sup>

## 2.2 *The Nile*

The next time we see the pharaoh Psammetichus in the *Histories*, Herodotus shows him engaged in researching a topic no less mysterious, controversial, or important than the origins of language: the sources of the Nile:

Τοῦ δὲ Νείλου τὰς πηγὰς οὔτε Αἰγυπτίων οὔτε Λιβύων οὔτε Ἑλλήνων τῶν ἐμοὶ ἀπικομένων ἐς λόγους οὐδεὶς ὑπέσχετο εἰδέναι, εἰ μὴ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐν Σαΐ πόλι ὁ γραμματιστὴς τῶν ἱρῶν χρημάτων τῆς Ἀθηναίης. [2] Οὗτος δ' ἔμοιγε παίζειν ἐδόκεε, φάμενος εἰδέναι ἀτρεκέως. Ἔλεγε δὲ ὧδε, εἶναι δύο ὄρεα ἐς ὃξὺ τὰς κορυφὰς ἀπηγμένα, μεταξύ Σϋήνης τε πόλιος κείμενα τῆς Θηβαΐδος καὶ Ἐλεφαντίνης, οὐνόματα δὲ εἶναι τοῖσι ὄρεσι τῷ μὲν Κρῶφι, τῷ δὲ Μῶφι. [3] τὰς ὧν δὴ πηγὰς τοῦ Νείλου εἰούσας ἀβύσσους ἐκ τοῦ μέσου τῶν ὀρέων τούτων ῥέειν, καὶ τὸ μὲν ἤμισυ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου ῥέειν καὶ πρὸς βορρῆν ἄνεμον, τὸ δ' ἕτερον ἤμισυ ἐπ' Αἰθιοπίας τε καὶ νότου. [4] Ὡς δὲ ἄβυσσοὶ εἰσι αἱ πηγαί, ἐς διάπειραν ἔφη τούτου Ψαμμῆτιχον Αἰγύπτου βασιλέα ἀπικέσθαι· πολλέων γὰρ αὐτὸν χιλιάδων ὀργυιέων πλεξάμενον κάλον κατεῖναι ταύτη καὶ οὐκ ἐξικέσθαι ἐς βυσσόν. [5] Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ὁ γραμματιστὴς, εἰ ἄρα ταῦτα γενόμενα ἔλεγε, ἀπέφαινε, ὡς ἐμὲ κατανοέειν, δίνας τινὰς ταύτη εἰούσας ἰσχυρὰς καὶ παλιρροίην,

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<sup>67</sup> For another example of a fable which asks the reader to look closer at the larger framework of original claims, see 7.152 (discussed in Chapter 5.1 below). In the vein of *λογοποιία*, consider also the *αἶνος* (see e.g. Nagy (1990) 215-338, Payen (1997) 66-74, esp. 72-74, and Hollmann (2011) 132-142), “a code that carries the right message for those who are qualified and the wrong message or messages for those who are unqualified” (Nagy (1990) 148). Ceccarelli (1993) sees the workings of the *αἶνος* in the *λόγος* which Cyrus tells to the Ionians and the Aeolians about the flute-player and the fish (1.141). Ceccarelli’s shrewd take on Cyrus’ *λόγος* is important in that it evinces a multiplicity of intra- and extra-textual meanings and interpretations in 1.141, all of which prohibit the sharp division of history and mythology (see also van Dijk (1997) 272-274 on the open-endedness of 1.141). This comparison becomes all the more germane in light of Ceccarelli’s correlation of Cyrus’ *λόγος* with the portent of the fish witnessed by Artaχctes at the end of the *Histories* (see Ceccarelli (1993) 49-54 ad 9.120-22, discussed in Chapter 6.2 below). By juxtaposing 1.141 with 9.120-122, Ceccarelli in effect posits that “...the whole of Herodotus’s *Histories* becomes a fable with its deferred resolution writ large, ostensibly addressed to different internal audiences (Ionians and Aeolians, Artaχctes), while offered as an interpretive challenge to an external audience that understands the complex, indirect, multiple meanings encoded in this discursive form” (Kurke (2011) 404).

οἷα [δὲ] ἐμβάλλοντος τοῦ ὕδατος τοῖσι ὄρεσι, <ὥστε> μὴ δύνασθαι κατιεμένην καταπειρητήριον ἐς βυσσὸν ἰέναι (2.28).

No one with whom I spoke—Egyptian, Libyan, or Greek—professed to know the sources of the Nile, except the scribe of the sacred treasury of Athena at Sais in Egypt. [2] This man, however, seemed to me to be joking, though he alleged that he had accurate knowledge. This is what he said: there are two mountains with sharp peaks called Krophî and Mophî which lie halfway between Syene in the Thebaid and Elephantine. [3] The sources of the Nile, which are bottomless, flow from the midst of these mountains. One half of the water flows to Egypt towards the north, and the other half flows to Ethiopia towards the south. [4] The scribe said that Psammetichus, king of Egypt, tested the notion that the sources are bottomless, for having woven a rope of many thousands of fathoms, he let it down there and it did not reach bottom. [5] If this scribe was in fact telling the truth, he showed (as far as I understood) that there are some strong eddies there, such that a sounding line is not able to touch bottom when let down due to the crashing of the water against the mountains.

Psammetichus' attempt to locate and verify the sources of the Nile strongly evokes the *bekos* experiment in a way that reaffirms Herodotus' programmatic understanding of all that αἰτίη and its cognates stand for, as Benardete notes:

In both cases we can sense an attempt to go back to the beginnings; to discover the single source for what appears in fact as an infinite variety of phenomena: either the whole set of different languages or Egypt itself, with its great number of customs and monuments. Somehow all of the latter must be traced back to the river and the land, but to look for one origin of them all is as mistaken as to look for one language, from which all others would have sprung. The multiplicity of things cannot be reduced to one.<sup>68</sup>

Herodotus' objections to a *pars pro toto* conception of aetiology might convict Psammetichus in this instance of the same sort of naïveté that some scholars have seen in Herodotus' representation of the pharaoh's actions in the *bekos* experiment.<sup>69</sup> However, the manner in which Herodotus sets his own inquiry alongside that of Psammetichus in

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<sup>68</sup> Benardete (1969) 41.

<sup>69</sup> See n. 43 above.

the Nile episode once again makes this line of reasoning just as hard to accept in 2.28 as it was in 2.2-3, in no small part because Herodotus describes himself physically measuring the alluvial deposits of the Nile just a few chapters earlier.<sup>70</sup> What's more, in spite of conducting a circumspect inquiry employing manifold approaches, Herodotus is just as hard-pressed to determine the sources of the Nile as Psammetichus.<sup>71</sup>

As was the case in the *bekos* experiment, this is due in large part to narrative—who is giving the account and to what end. That the scribe (γραμματιστής) of the sacred treasury of Athena at Sais is said to be the narrative custodian of Psammetichus' experiment recounted at 2.28 has a significant bearing on the way in which Herodotus broaches the question of the sources of the Nile. If Evans is right to view this γραμματιστής as the forebear of the ιερογραμματεύς of the Ptolemaic period, such a figure would have been more than just a lowly sacristan or dragoman.<sup>72</sup> Consequently,

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<sup>70</sup> i.e. 2.5.2: Πρῶτα μὲν προσπλέων ἔτι καὶ ἡμέρης δρόμον ἀπέχων ἀπὸ γῆς, κατεῖς καταπειρητηρίην πηλόν τε ἀνοίσεις καὶ ἐν ἔνδεκα ὀργυῖσι ἔσσει· τοῦτο μὲν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτο δηλοῖ πρόχυσιν τῆς γῆς εὐδύσαν. On this point, see Christ (1994) 172. Herodotus' geographical measurements adhere to the egalitarian principles of the ἴστωρ, insofar as they provide equivalences that extend across national and socio-economic divisions. For example, in 2.6, before relating that the coastline of Egypt is 3600 stades in length (στάδιοι ἑξακόσιοι καὶ τρισχίλιοι), Herodotus provides the means to convert this Greek figure into schoeni and parasangs (Δύναται δὲ ὁ μὲν παρασάγγης τριήκοντα στάδια, ὁ δὲ σχοῖνος ἕκαστος, μέτρον ἔον αἰγύπτιον, ἐξήκοντα στάδια), units used respectively by Egyptians and Persians of varying means (οἱ δὲ πολλὴν ἔχουσι, παρασάγγησι· οἱ δὲ ἄφθονον λίην, σχοῖνοισι). The diversity of Herodotus' geographical nomenclature is also reflected in the way he organizes the liminal zones of the οἰκουμένη ("known world"), not just according to πείρατα ("limits") as in Homer, but according to a broader schema, comprising that which is ἀφανής ("unknown"), ἐρήμος ("desert"), μακρότατα ("furthest reaches"), etc. (see Romm (1992) 32-41, esp. 37-38, and Immerwahr (1966) 315).

<sup>71</sup> "Herodotus relates this tradition just at the very beginning of his discussion of the problem of the sources of the Nile (28–34), contrasting once more Psammetichus' ambitions and his own aim to circumscribe what is actually knowable and verifiable" (Vannicelli (2001) 238-239).

<sup>72</sup> See Evans (1991) 136-137 (*contra* Spiegelberg (1927) 17-18). Though Lloyd (1976) does not make a connection between γραμματιστής and ιερογραμματεύς, he does acknowledge that the former has "an official ring to it" (111).

his place within the temple hierarchy would have made it hard for Herodotus to deny his aetiology of the Nile's sources categorically, not just because of his elevated social standing,<sup>73</sup> but also because of the authority he would have commanded (φάμενος ειδέναι ἀτρεκέως, 2.28.2) thanks to his access to historical records of both the written and oral sort.<sup>74</sup> These are compelling reasons which may explain why Herodotus reports the account of the γραμματιστής in spite of voicing misgivings about the veracity of his narrative (Οὔτος δ' ἔμοιγε παίζειν ἐδόκεε κ.τ.λ., 2.28.2) and demarcating them with indirect speech (Ἐλεγε δὲ ὧδε; ἔφη, 2.28.2, 3) and other distancing statements (εἰ ἄρα ταῦτα γινόμενα ἔλεγε; ὡς ἐμὲ κατανοέειν, 2.28.5). Even more compelling, however, is Herodotus' adherence to one of the governing principles of the Egyptian λόγος expressed later on in Book Two:

Τοῖσι μὲν νυν ὑπ' Αἰγυπτίων λεγομένοισι χράσθω ὅτεω τὰ τοιαῦτα πιθανά ἐστι· ἐμοὶ δὲ παρὰ πάντα τὸν λόγον ὑπόκειται ὅτι τὰ λεγόμενα ὑπ' ἐκάστων ἀκοῆ γράφω (2.123.1).<sup>75</sup>

Now let whoever considers such things credible make use of what is said by the Egyptians. My task for the entire *logos* is to write what is said by everyone as I hear it [*akoe*].

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<sup>73</sup> Brown (1988b) 83 suggests that Herodotus acknowledges the account of the γραμματιστής perhaps in part for reasons of tact, because he “did not wish to call the priest a liar!”

<sup>74</sup> On priests as a source of information in the *Histories*, see Lloyd (1975) 89-113. Though the accuracy of such information would not have been of the caliber we might expect from a modern historian (Evans (1991) 137-139), this does not mean that the account of the γραμματιστής is altogether false or simply an invention *ex nihilo*, a point which even Fehling (1989) 89 is hard-pressed to defend. For evidence in light of Egyptian oral traditions that “Herodotus...surely had no need to invent the tales he relates of kingly inquiry” (Christ (1994) 197) in a case like 2.28, see Lloyd (1976) 114-115 and Moyer (2002) 87-88.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. 7.152.3 (discussed in Chapter 5.1 below), which in effect reiterates the dictates of 2.123.1 and applies them to the rest of the *Histories*, including 2.28 (see Lloyd (1975) 87): Ἐγὼ δὲ ὀφείλω λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα, πείθεσθαι γὰρ μὲν οὐ παντάπασιν ὀφείλω (καὶ μοι τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος ἐχέτω ἐς πάντα τὸν λόγον). On other such epistemological statements in Herodotus, see Dewald (1987) 151 ff.

With the μέν...δέ contrast, Herodotus casts himself unmistakably in the light of a ἴστωρ. However, this remark does not mean that he is styling himself here as an omniscient arbiter in possession of all the answers. Though a ἴστωρ, he, too, is beholden to the dictates of the “notoriously polyvalent” λόγος.<sup>76</sup> Since the λόγος must partake of more than oral sources (ἀκοή) alone in order to inform something as vast and varied as ἱστορίη, which we will recall entails “both bare narrative account (*apodexis*) and explanation of the bare facts (*aitie*),”<sup>77</sup> it is understandable that Herodotus moves past the account of the scribe into the realms of autopsy and conjecture in order to track down the sources of the Nile.<sup>78</sup> But even though Herodotus fails to locate the sources of the river in the end, he does not resign himself to ignorance<sup>79</sup> or even the status quo.<sup>80</sup> Much in the way he offers an explanation for the hypothesis of the scribe in 2.28.5 (even though he is wary of the premise *ipso facto*),<sup>81</sup> or in the way he reconciles the obscure origins of hostilities between Greeks and barbarians in the proem by naming Croesus as the first

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<sup>76</sup> Boedeker (2000) 108.

<sup>77</sup> Cook (1976) 35.

<sup>78</sup> Lateiner (1989) 191.

<sup>79</sup> The acknowledgement of ἀπορία in and of itself is not, however, disadvantageous for Herodotus, as Boedeker (2000) 111 posits: “Even in the freedom to admit ignorance, what Denniston called his “winning fallibility,” the narrator displays the superiority of his *logos*; as Thomas Rosenmeyer has noted, poetry presents itself as complete and authoritative, but history, based as it is on the human knowledge that can be gathered by the narrator, gets its authority from being less certain.”

<sup>80</sup> That Herodotus asks such an aetiological question in the first place is a step forward, seeing as the Egyptians he encounters seem content to attribute their country’s geological and geographical anomalies to the “gift of the river” (δῶρον τοῦ ποταμοῦ, 2.5.1) without explanation (2.19.1). While Herodotus’ curiosity (Πρόθυμος δὲ ἕα τὰδε...πυθέσθαι, 2.19.2) forces him to see beyond the topos that the Nile was indisputably central to Egyptian civilization (see Vasunia (2001) 106-108 and Wainwright (1953)), it is telling that he records this explanation at all.

<sup>81</sup> Marincola (2007) 57.

barbarian to his knowledge (τὸν δὲ οἶδα, 1.5.3) to have committed injustices against the Greeks,<sup>82</sup> Herodotus ultimately shows us what he *does* know about the unknown.

This may be discerned from the ensuing section (2.29-34) in which Herodotus pushes back against the epistemological limits imposed by the sources of the Nile:

Ἄλλου δὲ οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν ἐδυνάμην πυθέσθαι, ἀλλὰ τοσόνδε μὲν ἄλλο ἐπὶ μακρότατον ἐπυθόμην, μέχρι μὲν Ἐλεφαντίνης πόλιος αὐτόπτης ἐλθῶν, τὸ δ' ἀπὸ τούτου ἀκοῆ ἤδη ἱστορέων (2.29.1).

I was not able to learn anything [about the sources of the Nile] from anyone else, but I did learn as much as I could by travelling as far as the city of Elephantine and seeing it for myself [*autoptes*], but beyond this I investigated through hearsay [*akoe*].

Although the contrast between “seeing...for myself” (αὐτόπτης, a relative of ὄψις) and “hearsay” (ἀκοή) may imply the primacy of the former because of the proximity of eyewitness investigation, Herodotus undermines such a hierarchy in an elaborate account of the Libyan hinterlands just after tracing the course of the Nile as it is known in Egypt (2.29-30):

Τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦδε οὐδεὶς ἔχει σαφέως φράσαι· ἔρημος γάρ ἐστι ἡ χώρα αὕτη ὑπὸ καύματος. (32.) Ἀλλὰ τάδε μὲν ἤκουσα ἀνδρῶν Κυρηναίων φαμένων ἐλθεῖν τε ἐπὶ τὸ Ἄμμωνος χρηστήριον καὶ ἀπικέσθαι ἐς λόγους Ἐτεάρχῳ τῷ Ἀμμωνίων βασιλεῖ, καὶ κως ἐκ λόγων ἄλλων ἀπικέσθαι ἐς λέσχην περὶ τοῦ Νείλου, ὡς οὐδεὶς αὐτοῦ οἶδε τὰς πηγὰς. Καὶ τὸν Ἐτεάρχον φάναι ἐλθεῖν κοτε παρ' αὐτὸν Νασαμῶνας ἄνδρας· [2] (τὸ δὲ ἔθνος τοῦτο ἐστὶ μὲν Λιβυκόν, νέμεται δὲ τὴν

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<sup>82</sup> The relationship between 1.5.3 and 2.28 is striking (see Gianotti (1988) 54-55), inasmuch as Herodotus follows up on the disagreement or ignorance of several national authorities (i.e. Phoenicians and Persians in the former, and Egyptians, Libyans and Greeks in the latter) by deploying his own knowledge in the style of a priamel. Cf. 2.15-17 and 2.20-27, in which he also counters national authorities (i.e. Ionians and Greeks more generally) by proposing his own theories for the physical demarcation of Egypt and the causes of the Nile flood respectively. Curiously, both of these theories, like 2.28, are formulated in light of a three-fold division. In the former, Greeks think the world consists of three parts—Asia, Europe, and Libya—but Herodotus thinks that a fourth part should be added: the Egyptian Delta (2.16.2). In the latter, Greeks propose three reasons for why the Nile floods (2.20-23), but Herodotus advocates his own theories (2.24-27).

Σύρτιν τε καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἠῶ χώρην τῆς Σύρτιος οὐκ ἐπὶ πολλόν)· [3] ἀπικομένους δὲ τοὺς Νασαμῶνας καὶ εἰρωτωμένους εἴ τι ἔχουσι πλέον λέγειν περὶ τῶν ἐρήμων τῆς Λιβύης, φάναι παρὰ σφίσι γενέσθαι ἀνδρῶν δυναστῶν παῖδας ὕβριστάς, τοὺς ἄλλα τε μηχανᾶσθαι ἀνδρωθέντας περισσὰ καὶ δὴ καὶ ἀποκληρῶσαι πέντε ἑωυτῶν ὀψομένους τὰ ἔρημα τῆς Λιβύης καὶ εἴ τι πλέον ἴδοιεν τῶν τὰ μακρότατα ἰδομένων (2.31-2.32.3).

Beyond this, no one is able to speak reliably [about the trajectory of the Nile], for this land is uninhabited due to the heat. (32.) But I did hear the following from some men from Cyrene who alleged that they had come to the oracle of Ammon and had conversed with Etearchus, king of the Ammonians, and that after discussing various topics, they somehow came to the subject of the Nile, how no one knows its sources. And Etearchus said that some Nasamonian men had once come to see him. [2] These people are Libyan, who inhabit Syrtis and the land just east of it. [3] When the Nasamonians arrived and were asked if they had anything more to tell about the wilds of Libya, they said that there were some rowdy sons of chieftains among their people who concocted some harebrained schemes once they had come of age. Foremost among these schemes was that they selected five members of their group by lot to see the wilds of Libya and if they could see more than had ever been seen before.

It is perhaps ironic that this account of the Nasamonians, though replete with the language of sight and observation (ὀψομένους...ἴδοιεν...ἰδομένων, 2.32.3), fails to enhance Herodotus' understanding of the Nile by itself.<sup>83</sup> Given what we have now learned about Herodotus' opposition to *pars pro toto* exemplifications, however, the negation of sight as the end-all, be-all of historical methodology should come as little surprise. Indeed, as we may gather from the final climactic two chapters of the account of the Nile, Herodotus is only able to approach knowledge (however tentatively)<sup>84</sup> via

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<sup>83</sup> “While they [the Nasamonians] succeed in *seeing* more than those before them had seen...they fail to draw significant inferences from their observations” (Christ (1994) 176). Compare Psammetichus' direct, eyewitness contact with the children in the *bekos* experiment (ἐς ὄψιν, 2.2.4), which still leaves so much open to question.

<sup>84</sup> The fact that Herodotus relates the account of 2.29-34 fifth hand and conspicuously calls attention to its indirect transmission (φαμένων, φάναι (*bis*), ἔφασκε, ὡς οἱ Κυρηναῖοι ἔλεγον, etc.) may be said to reflect his reticence to accept the account altogether (Marincola (2007) 58). For a comprehensive discussion of



Etearchus' *conjecture* (συνεβάλλετο, 2.33.2) about observations made in the context of an oral narrative:<sup>85</sup>

(33.) Ὁ μὲν δὴ τοῦ Ἀμμωνίου Ἐτεάρχου λόγος ἐς τοσοῦτό μοι δεδηλώσθω, πλὴν ὅτι ἀπονοστήσαι τε ἔφασκε τοὺς Νασαμῶνας, ὡς οἱ Κυρηναῖοι ἔλεγον, καὶ ἐς τοὺς οὗτοι ἀπίκοντο ἀνθρώπους, γόητας εἶναι ἅπαντας. [2] Τὸν δὲ δὴ ποταμὸν τοῦτον τὸν παραρρέοντα καὶ Ἐτεάρχος συνεβάλλετο εἶναι Νεῖλον, καὶ δὴ καὶ ὁ λόγος οὕτω αἰρέει. Ῥέει γὰρ ἐκ Λιβύης ὁ Νεῖλος καὶ μέσσην τάμνων Λιβύην· καὶ ὡς ἐγὼ συμβάλλομαι τοῖσι ἐμφανέσι τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα τεκμαιρόμενος, τῷ Ἰστρῷ ἐκ τῶν ἴσων μέτρων ὀρμᾶται. [3] Ἰστρος τε γὰρ ποταμὸς ἀρξάμενος ἐκ Κελτῶν καὶ Πυρήνης πόλιος ῥέει μέσσην σχίζων τὴν Εὐρώπην (οἱ δὲ Κελτοὶ εἰσι ἔξω Ἡρακλέων Στηλέων, ὀμουρέουσι δὲ Κυνησίοισι, οἱ ἔσχατοι πρὸς δυσμέων οἰκέουσι τῶν ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ κατοικημένων)· [4] τελευτᾷ δὲ ὁ Ἰστρος ἐς θάλασσαν ῥέων τὴν τοῦ Εὐξείνου πόντου διὰ πάσης Εὐρώπης, τῇ Ἰστρίνῃ οἱ Μιλησίων οἰκέουσι ἄποικοι. (34.) Ὁ μὲν δὴ Ἰστρος, ῥέει γὰρ δι' οἰκεομένης, πρὸς πολλῶν γινώσκειται, περὶ δὲ τῶν τοῦ Νεῖλου πηγέων οὐδεὶς ἔχει λέγειν· ἀοίκητός τε γὰρ καὶ ἔρημός ἐστι ἡ Λιβύη δι' ἧς ῥέει. Περὶ δὲ τοῦ ῥεύματος αὐτοῦ, ἐπ' ὅσον μακρότατον ἱστορέοντα ἦν ἐξικέσθαι, εἴρηται. Ἐκδιδοῖ δὲ ἐς Αἴγυπτον, ἡ δὲ Αἴγυπτος τῆς ὀρεινῆς Κιλικίης μάλιστά κη ἀντίη κεῖται· [2] ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ ἐς Σινώπην τὴν ἐν τῷ Εὐξείνῳ πόντῳ πέντε ἡμερέων ἰθέα ὁδὸς εὐζώνῳ ἀνδρὶ· ἡ δὲ Σινώπη τῷ Ἰστρῷ ἐκδιδόντι ἐς θάλασσαν ἀντίον κεῖται. Οὕτω τὸν Νεῖλον δοκέω διὰ πάσης [τῆς] Λιβύης διεξιόντα ἐξισοῦσθαι τῷ Ἰστρῷ. Νεῖλου μὲν νυν πέρι τοσαῦτα εἰρήσθω (2.33-34).

(33.) So much for my account of what Ammonian Etearchus said. I will add, however, that he alleged that the Nasamonians had made it back home, according to the men from Cyrene, and they had reached people who were all magicians. [2] Etearchus conjectured that the river which flowed alongside them was the Nile, and this reasoning is, in fact, correct, for the Nile flows from Libya and cuts through the middle of it. And if I may conjecture about the unknown based on what is manifest, it is equal in length to the Ister. [3] For the Ister starts in the land of the Celts and the city of Pyrene and flows through the middle of Europe, splitting it. The Celts are outside the Pillars of Heracles and they share a border with the Cynesians, the people who live furthest to the west of those who make

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*oratio obliqua* as a distancing strategy in the *Histories*, see Cooper (1974) 23-76 (ad loc. p. 40). See also Scardino (2012). On focalization more generally, see Chapter One.

<sup>85</sup> Etearchus' account is a case in point for understanding Herodotean geography as a "complex of several different kinds of data" (Gould (1989) 92), which squares with the methodological statement of 2.99.1: Μέχρι μὲν τούτου ὄψις τε ἐμὴ καὶ γνώμη καὶ ἱστορίη ταῦτα λέγουσά ἐστι. When we recall that ἱστορίη can refer to both "oral inquiry" (ἀκοή) and "investigation" (Lloyd (1975) 82), we can see the trifecta of Herodotean inquiry (i.e. ἀκοή, ὄψις, and γνώμη) at work in 2.33-34 (see Luraghi (2006) 77 ff. and Hedrick (1993) 22-23). On the amalgamating tendencies of conjecture in particular, see Hohti (1977).

their home in Europe. [4] The Ister empties into the Black Sea, flowing through all of Europe, where the Milesian colonists inhabit Istria. (34.) Because the Ister flows through the inhabited world, it is known by many, but no one is able to speak about the sources of the Nile, for the part of Libya through which it flows is uninhabited and desert. But about its trajectory, I have said as much as I could learn through inquiry. It empties into Egypt, the part which lies just about opposite the mountainous area of Cilicia. [2] From there, a straight journey to Sinope for an unencumbered man takes five days. And Sinope lies opposite the place where the Ister empties into the sea. Thus, I think that the Nile, in traversing all of Libya, is equal in length to the Ister. So much, then, for matters pertaining to the Nile.

Once again, in spite of reaffirming his ignorance about the sources of the Nile (περὶ δὲ τῶν τοῦ Νείλου πηγέων οὐδεὶς ἔχει λέγειν, 2.34.1), Herodotus goes to great lengths to show as much as he can deduce from inquiry (ἐπ’ ὅσον μακρότατον ἱστορέοντα ἦν ἐξικέσθαι, 2.34.1). The result is an unparalleled conjecture (ὡς ἐγὼ συμβάλλομαι, 2.33.2),<sup>86</sup> not about the sources (πηγαί) of the Nile, but about its course (ῥεῦμα), which may be likened (ἐξισοῦσθαι) to that of the river Ister (i.e. Danube).<sup>87</sup> Scholars note that this analogy runs counter to statements Herodotus makes in other contexts, namely, that the Nile goes against nature (τὰ ἔμπαλιν πεφυκέναι τῶν ἄλλων ποταμῶν, 2.19.3) and so should defy comparison (συμβάλλειν).<sup>88</sup> But while Herodotus acknowledges this contradiction (and later in the Scythian λόγος even the extent to which

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<sup>86</sup> Hohti (1977) 5 observes that Herodotus’ use of συμβάλλεσθαι in the middle voice to mean “conjecture” is unique in Greek historiography.

<sup>87</sup> See also 2.26, in which Herodotus first offers such a comparison (albeit more tentatively): ... διεξιόντα δ’ ἄν μιν διὰ πάσης Εὐρώπης ἔλπομαι ποιέειν ἂν τὸν Ἴστρον τὰ περὶ νῦν ἐργάζεται τὸν Νεῖλον.

<sup>88</sup> See e.g. Corcella (1984) 79: “Insomma, Erodoto vuole che un problema scientifico sia spiegato per mezzo di cause generali, che siano valide per tutto il campo del reale, ma che d’altra parte siano anche empiricamente falsificabili o verificabili, e non puri postulate.” See also Thomas (2000) 175 ff. and Munson (2001) 83-85 for fine discussions of this paradox.

the Ister and Nile are *not* analogous),<sup>89</sup> he does so in way that still allows him to display his intellectual capabilities and liken the Nile to other rivers. Rhetorically speaking, then, Herodotus can have his cake and eat it too:

Ταύτης ὧν τῆς χώρας τῆς εἰρημένης ἢ πολλή, κατὰ περ οἱ ἱεεὺς ἔλεγον, ἐδόκεε καὶ αὐτῷ μοι εἶναι ἐπίκτητος Αἰγυπτίοισι. Τῶν γὰρ ὀρέων τῶν εἰρημένων τῶν ὑπὲρ Μέμφιν πόλιν κειμένων τὸ μεταξὺ ἐφαίνεται μοι εἶναι κοτε κόλπος θαλάσσης, ὥσπερ τὰ περὶ Ἴλιον καὶ Τευθρανίην καὶ Ἐφεσόν τε καὶ Μαιάνδρου πεδίων, ὡς γε εἶναι σμικρὰ ταῦτα μέγαλοισι συμβαλεῖν· [2] τῶν γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ χωρία προσχωσάντων ποταμῶν ἐνὶ τῶν στομάτων τοῦ Νείλου, ἐόντος πενταστόμου, οὐδεὶς αὐτῶν πλήθεος πέρι ἄξιος συμβληθῆναι ἐστι. [3] Εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι ποταμοί, οὐ κατὰ τὸν Νεῖλον ἐόντες μεγάθεα, οἵτινες ἔργα ἀποδεξάμενοι μεγάλα εἰσὶ· τῶν ἐγὼ φράσαι ἔχω οὐνόματα καὶ ἄλλων καὶ οὐκ ἤκιστα Ἀχελφού, ὃς ῥέων δι' Ἀκαρνανίης καὶ ἐξιεὶς ἐς θάλασσαν τῶν Ἐχινάδων νήσων τὰς ἡμισέας ἤδη ἤπειρον πεποίηκε (2.10).<sup>90</sup>

Like the priests, I also came to the conclusion that most of the aforementioned land has been recently gained by the Egyptians; for the part of the land between the aforementioned mountains which lies south of the city of Memphis appeared to me to have once been a sea gulf, like the area around Ilium and Teuthania and Ephesus and the plain of the Maeander, so far as it is possible to compare small things with great things, [2] for of the rivers which form these lands, none of them is worthy to be compared in terms of size to one of the five mouths of the Nile. [3] But there are other rivers, too, which, though not as great as the Nile, have produced great changes. I can relate their names and others, too, not least of which is the Achelous, which, flowing through Acarnania and emptying into the sea, has already turned half the Echinades islands into mainland.

The paradoxical conclusion of 2.10 (i.e. that the Nile is at once unique and comparable to other geographical bodies) anticipates another paradox about the Nile that permits Herodotus to draw comparisons between this river and the Ister later on in 2.33-

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<sup>89</sup> Herodotus notes in 4.50 that the Ister is bigger than the Nile (when measured according to their tributaries) and exhibits a different flood pattern (see Lloyd (1966) 344 n. 1). For a comparison of the treatment of geography in the Egyptian and Scythian λόγοι, see e.g. Romm (1989) (discussed in Chapter 4.2 below).

<sup>90</sup> Cf. 2.29.3 (*pace* Munson (2001) 84 n. 119), in which Herodotus compares the part of the Nile just south of Elephantine to the Maeander.

34. As Thomas points out, it is significant that Herodotus conjectures in this instance about “the unknown” (τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα, 2.33.2) and not “the invisible” (τὸ ἀφανές) as he does in an earlier discussion about the aetiology of the Nile flood (2.23-24).<sup>91</sup> This distinction implies that “the source of the Nile is not strictly invisible in the same way that the causes for its flooding are: it is *potentially* visible, and susceptible to enquiry.”<sup>92</sup> Perhaps this is why Herodotus juxtaposes the Nile and the Ister in such a novel way. If the sources of the Nile were knowable and the Ister was already well-known (πρὸς πολλῶν γινώσκεται, 2.34.1), then the need to display his intellectual abilities and contribute an original argument to such a famous debate would have warranted an unprecedented (though guarded) speculation.

Given the emphasis Herodotus places on relating as much as he possibly can through inquiry (Περὶ δὲ τοῦ ῥεύματος αὐτοῦ, ἐπ’ ὅσον μακρότατον ἱστορέοντα ἦν ἐξικέσθαι, εἴρηται, 2.34.1), it is understandable that he juxtaposes the Nile and the Ister in this manner even while he signposts the problems of such an analogy. Although this act resonates with the model of the ἵστωρ that has been put forth in this dissertation, Herodotus’ investigation of the sources of the Nile in light of Psammetichus’ investigation should remind us that there is more to being a ἵστωρ than the reduction of difference alone. Not only does Herodotus repeatedly show us what can (and cannot) be known in the face of manifest doubt and ambiguity—he also shows us how such knowledge is new and unique to his own sort of ἱστορίη, in adherence to a programmatic

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<sup>91</sup> For a good discussion of the invisible in Herodotus, see Thomas (2000) 200 ff.

<sup>92</sup> Thomas (2000) 209 (emphasis my own).

standard established in the proem to the *Histories*: if “all history is revisionism, even the first historian’s first story”<sup>93</sup> and if Egypt was as well-worn a topic of discussion among Greeks of the fifth century as it appears, Herodotus would have endeavored to do more than simply collate what had already been said by his many forebears and contemporaries in composing the Egyptian λόγος.<sup>94</sup> Though this was innovative in and of itself,<sup>95</sup> the case studies considered in this chapter all demonstrate the extent to which Herodotus would have found it necessary to advance his own claims.<sup>96</sup> For Herodotus, this meant embracing a dichotomy as confounding as Egypt itself: “to make sense of things scientifically goes hand in hand with a fear of the ideological consequences of oversimplification.”<sup>97</sup>

As this chapter has argued, such an ethos should direct the analysis of the *Histories* as much as it does the work’s methodology, but oversimplification has historically posed a danger to Herodotean scholarship. For example, while it is reasonable to draw a connection between Herodotus’ understanding of the unknown in the discussion of the Nile with that of Anaxagoras according to the maxim, “appearances are

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<sup>93</sup> Lateiner (1989) 42.

<sup>94</sup> On the topic of Egypt (specifically its geography) as *de rigueur*, see Fornara (1971) 16. While Hecataeus was doubtlessly a major force against whom Herodotus saw himself contending directly in the process of composing the Egyptian λόγος (see e.g. 2.143-144 and discussion in West (1991) and Moyer (2002)), we should be mindful of how many other voices Herodotus would have had to contend with as well (see Fowler (1996)).

<sup>95</sup> See Fowler (1996), esp. 79: “...awareness of the disagreement or absence of sources as a general problem requiring theoretical attention and the development of critical tools is not found in either poets or early mythographers. It *is* found in Herodotus.”

<sup>96</sup> van Paassen (1957) 133. See also n. 13 above.

<sup>97</sup> Munson (2001) 84.

the sight of things unclear” (ὄψις τῶν ἀδήλων τὰ φαινόμενα),<sup>98</sup> it is unreasonable to assume that Herodotus was primarily influenced by this aspect of Presocratic thought in circumscribing τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα.<sup>99</sup> Not only does Herodotus show himself to be doing something different from the Ionian scientists in even the most scientific parts of the *Histories*—he also shows that this is but one tree in a vast forest of knowledge and influence from which he draws the timber to build his own unique λόγοι.<sup>100</sup> As we have now demonstrated in our discussions of the *bekos* experiment and the Nile, the Egyptian *people*—those with whom Herodotus interacts directly—are just as indispensable to his inquiry as his Greek scholarly forebears.<sup>101</sup> Together they provide the foundations upon which Herodotus fashions his own thoughts and conjectures that make the *Histories* exceptional. For our final case study in this chapter, let us now consider how Herodotus’

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<sup>98</sup> DK 59, B 21a = Sex. Emp. 7.140.

<sup>99</sup> i.e. Diller (1932) 16-17. As Hedrick (1993) 19 reminds, “when the principles of Quellenforschung are applied brutally, there is no recognition that the event, even for the contemporary observer, is itself a kind of multivalent text that cannot be seen without being read and interpreted differently by different observers.”

<sup>100</sup> See e.g. Lloyd (1966) 344, with reference to the Nile-Ister analogue: “Compared with Empedocles and other Presocratic philosophers (in so far as we can judge their use of analogy from the extant evidence) Herodotus is, in this passage, both more explicit in his formulation of his argument, and more reserved in the claims which he makes for his conclusions.” See also Thomas (2000) 206 ff. for similar critiques of this comparandum and its application to Hippocratic thought. In looking macroscopically at the influence of science on the understanding of causality in fifth century historiography, Pelling (2000) 83-85 rightly notes that the expectations of technical genres from which a figure like Herodotus sometimes draws do not always square with the results of his inquiry. In particular, Herodotus’ acknowledgment of ambiguity and his admission of ignorance belies the notion that his was an altogether specialist discourse: “No forensic pleader will end by saying ‘so I don’t think I’m to blame, but of course you may well think differently’. And it would be a rare philosopher or scientist who would leave the choice of cosmological explanations to his audience. Those are the worlds where monology rules. Doctors strike the same confident note; few people, after all, have ever admired their doctor for lacking assurance” (Pelling (2000) 84).

<sup>101</sup> See Bakker (2002) 14, who takes Thomas (2000) to task because she “obscures the fact that the direct object of Herodotus’ *historiē* of Egypt, both grammatically and notionally, is not the land or its mysterious river, but people interrogated, informants: it is the Egyptians themselves who tell Herodotus about the wonders of their land.”

depiction of Psammetichus' relationship with his people complements and enriches this plurality.

### 2.3 Custom

In the midst of Herodotus' discussion of the trajectory (and by extension the origins) of the Nile, we find Psammetichus mired in another controversy about origins, this time as it relates to something even more elusive than the genesis of language or the sources of a river:

Ἀπὸ δὲ ταύτης τῆς πόλιος πλέων ἐν ἴσῳ χρόνῳ ἄλλῳ ἤξεις ἐς τοὺς αὐτομόλους ἐν ὅσῳ περ ἐξ Ἐλεφαντίνης ἦλθες ἐς τὴν μητρόπολιν τὴν Αἰθιοπῶν. Τοῖσι δὲ αὐτομόλοισι τούτοις οὐνομά ἐστι Ἀσμάχ, δύναται δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος κατὰ τὴν Ἑλλήνων γλῶσσαν «οἱ ἐξ ἀριστερῆς χειρὸς παριστάμενοι βασιλεῖ». [2] Ἀπέστησαν δὲ αὐταὶ τέσσερες καὶ εἴκοσι μυριάδες Αἰγυπτίων τῶν μαχίμων ἐς τοὺς Αἰθίοπας τούτους δι' αἰτίην τοιήνδε. Ἐπὶ Ψαμμητίχου βασιλέος φυλακαὶ κατέστασαν ἐν τε Ἐλεφαντίνῃ πόλει πρὸς Αἰθιοπῶν καὶ ἐν Δάφνησι τῆσι Πηλουσίησι ἄλλῃ [δὲ] πρὸς Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων καὶ ἐν Μαρῆῃ πρὸς Λιβύης ἄλλῃ. [3] ἔτι δὲ ἐπ' ἐμέο καὶ Περσέων κατὰ ταῦτα αἱ φυλακαὶ ἔχουσι ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ Ψαμμητίχου ἦσαν· καὶ γὰρ ἐν Ἐλεφαντίνῃ Πέρσαι φρουρέουσι καὶ ἐν Δάφνησι. Τοὺς ὧν δὴ Αἰγυπτίους τρία ἔτεα φρουρήσαντας ἀπέλυε οὐδεὶς τῆς φρουρῆς· οἱ δὲ βουλευσάμενοι καὶ κοινῶ λόγῳ χρησάμενοι πάντες ἀπὸ τοῦ Ψαμμητίχου ἀποστάντες ἦσαν ἐς Αἰθιοπίην. [4] Ψαμμήτιχος δὲ πυθόμενος ἐδίωκε· ὡς δὲ κατέλαβε, ἐδέετο πολλὰ λέγων καὶ σφεας θεοὺς πατρώιους ἀπολιπεῖν οὐκ ἔα καὶ τέκνα καὶ γυναῖκας· τῶν δὲ τινα λέγεται δεῖξαντα τὸ αἰδοῖον εἰπεῖν, ἐνθα ἂν τοῦτο ἦ, ἔσεσθαι αὐτοῖσι ἐνθαῦτα καὶ τέκνα καὶ γυναῖκας. [5] Οὗτοι ἐπεῖτε ἐς Αἰθιοπίην ἀπίκοντο, διδοῦσι σφέας αὐτοὺς τῷ Αἰθιοπῶν βασιλεῖ. Ὁ δὲ σφεας τῷδε ἀντιδωρέεται· ἦσαν οἱ διάφοροί τινες γεγονότες τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν· τούτους ἐκέλευε ἐξελόντας τὴν ἐκείνων γῆν οἰκέειν. Τούτων δὲ ἐσοικισθέντων ἐς τοὺς Αἰθίοπας, ἡμερώτεροι γεγόνασι Αἰθίοπες, ἤθεα μαθόντες αἰγύπτια (2.30).

Sailing from this city [i.e. Meroë], you will reach the Deserters in the same amount of time it took you to go from Elephantine to the capital city of the Ethiopians. These Deserters are called “Asmach”, which translates in Greek as “those who stand at the left hand of the king.” [2] These men, comprising 240,000 Egyptians of the warrior class, went over to the Ethiopians for the following reason. When Psammetichus was king, garrisons were posted in the city of Elephantine against the Ethiopians and another in Pelusian Daphnae against the Arabians and Assyrians and another in Marea against Libya. [3] And still in my

time the Persian garrisons hold the same positions as they did in Psammetichus' time, for the Persians keep guard in both Elephantine and Daphnae. Now no one had relieved the Egyptian guards from garrison duty for three years. After they had deliberated and formed a plan together, they all deserted Psammetichus for Ethiopia. [4] Once Psammetichus learned of this, he gave chase, and when he caught up with them, he begged them at length not to abandon their ancestral gods, their wives, and their children. One of these men is reported to have pointed to his genitals and said that wherever this was, they would have wives and children. [5] These men then reached Ethiopia and gave themselves to the Ethiopian king, and he gave them this in return. He ordered the Deserters to drive out some Ethiopians with whom he was quarreling and to inhabit their land. Once they had settled among the Ethiopians, the latter became more civilized, having learned Egyptian customs [*ethea*].

In deciding to leave Egypt for Ethiopia, it is striking—even shocking—that the Deserters appear to pay no heed to the ancestral gods (θεοὺς πατρώιους, 2.30.4), at least the ones invoked by Psammetichus. Ward posits that this may be because the Deserters see in themselves the ability to become ancestral gods through their own generative powers,<sup>102</sup> as evidenced by one soldier's gesture to his genitals. On the other hand, Keith takes this gesture to be emblematic of Herodotus' response to Psammetichus' other aetiological inquiries in the Egyptian λόγος, namely, that “we cannot know the origin of the human species itself or the world, but we do know the origin of the most relevant beings to us, ourselves and our children. This is the natural power of reproduction, which nature has left us free to organize in any way we choose.”<sup>103</sup> While the Deserters themselves would likely agree with this last statement, the final section of 2.30 complicates this interpretation somewhat. Though the Deserters may be free to do as they choose, they are not entirely free from all constraints. Like any society, they are still the

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<sup>102</sup> Ward (2008) 35-36. See also Benardete (1969) 41.

<sup>103</sup> Keith (1989) 97.



products of their ἥθεα (2.30.5),<sup>104</sup> one of several words Herodotus uses to refer to custom (along with νόμος, νόμιμα, νόμια, τρόπος, δίαίτα et al.) throughout the *Histories*.<sup>105</sup>

On the surface of 2.30, it may seem strange that Herodotus concludes the story of the Deserters with a remark about custom and then immediately jumps back to his discussion of the Nile in 2.31. Given Herodotus' fondness for juxtaposition, this is not in itself remarkable. However, the manner in which he sets custom alongside nature in 2.30 and 2.31 is noteworthy, inasmuch as this pairing may be said to evoke the νόμος/φύσις debate which raged among many of Herodotus' contemporaries.<sup>106</sup> Yet instead of debating one side over another, Herodotus here (as in the *bekos* experiment) subtly posits that both custom and nature need to be seen together as two sides of the same coin.<sup>107</sup>

Thus, immediately after concluding his discussion of the Nile, the great exemplum of Egyptian φύσις, Herodotus sets the river alongside Egyptian ἥθεα and νόμοι:

Αἰγύπτιοι ἅμα τῷ οὐρανῷ τῷ κατὰ σφέας ἐόντι ἑτεροίῳ καὶ τῷ ποταμῷ φύσιν ἀλλοίην παρεχομένῳ ἢ οἱ ἄλλοι ποταμοί, τὰ πολλὰ πάντα ἔμπαλιν τοῖσι ἄλλοισι ἀνθρώποισι ἐστήσαντο ἥθεά τε καὶ νόμους (2.35.2).

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<sup>104</sup> Consider Demaratus' reply to Xerxes when asked why free Spartans would fight against the Persians though impossibly outnumbered: Ἐλεύθεροι γὰρ ἐόντες οὐ πάντα ἐλεύθεροί εἰσι· ἔπεστι γὰρ σφι δεσπότης νόμος κ.τ.λ. (7.104.4). For a good discussion on how this passage relates to custom as it is understood throughout the *Histories*, see Humphreys (1987).

<sup>105</sup> While there are slight differences in meaning between these words, they all describe culture in way that coheres with what we might term "custom" (Redfield (1985) 98-99). Furthermore, the fact that Herodotus frequently juxtaposes these terms (e.g. ἥθεά τε καὶ νόμους (2.35.2), discussed below) suggests that they are not fundamentally divergent from this meaning (Wendell (1989) 349).

<sup>106</sup> For an overview of the νόμος/φύσις antithesis, see Guthrie (1969) 55-134. For additional bibliography, see Thomas (2000) 124 n. 48.

<sup>107</sup> "...we can see no sign in the *Histories* of the extreme antithesis of *nomos* and *physis* in which the writer takes sides, offers moral judgement for one in order to dismiss the other. This 'judgemental, antithetical' approach is visible, for instance, in the extreme espousal of nature as in some way 'true' as against the mere conventions and falsities of *nomos* [in e.g. Antiphon and Hippias]" (Thomas (2000) 124). On the resonance of this stance with the *bekos* experiment, see n. 42 and the accompanying discussion above.

Together with their climate, which is unique to them, and their river, which has a nature [*physis*] different from other rivers, the Egyptians have established customs [*ethea*] and practices [*nomoi*] which are almost entirely opposite those of other people.

This transition is likely motivated by several factors. Firstly, the decision to throw custom into the mix with nature not only reinforces Herodotus' general opposition to *pars pro toto* exemplifications, but also moves past the monolithic stance of his contemporaries and forebears, for whom Egypt appears to have been little more than a place on a map—a geographical construct devoid of people.<sup>108</sup> As Herodotus submits at the close of the Egyptian λόγος, to privilege a land above its inhabitants is tantamount to the brazen conduct of the Persian king Cambyses, whose contempt for Egyptian customs contributes to his demise.<sup>109</sup> And yet, in spite of the undeniable importance of custom to Herodotus, νόμοι and other such cultural markers can only *explain* so much by themselves.<sup>110</sup> Much in the way Herodotus indicates in the story of the Deserters that we may discern the basis of Egyptian ἥθηα (i.e. the ancestors) but not their ultimate source (gods? humans?),<sup>111</sup> he suggests in 2.35.2 that the “peculiarity [of Egyptian customs] has

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<sup>108</sup> See e.g. 2.17-18 and discussion in Immerwahr (1956) 260 n. 38.

<sup>109</sup> On Cambyses' flagrant disregard for Egyptian custom and law, see 3.28-38, especially 3.29, in which he commits the outrageous sacrilege of stabbing the sacred Apis bull in the thigh. Though Herodotus is skeptical in one instance that this act precipitated Cambyses' downfall by itself (3.33), his relation of the fact that the Persian king was fatally wounded in the same place where he stabbed the Apis bull (3.64.3) suggests otherwise. Characteristically, Herodotus does not express a preference for one aetiology over another (εἶτε δὴ διὰ τὸν Ἄπιν εἶτε καὶ ἄλλως, 3.33), but his consideration of poetic retribution even in the face of bald, rationalizing criticism affirms that custom may have a causal force, whereby demonstrating yet again that in the *Histories*, “multiple aetiology is supplementary rather than contradictory” (Lateiner (1989) 208).

<sup>110</sup> Humphreys (1987) 219-220.

<sup>111</sup> Benardete (1969) 41.

its origin, if not its full explanation, in the peculiarity of their land.”<sup>112</sup> φύσις, then, can provide a check, but not a catchall solution.<sup>113</sup>

Given what we have already learned about aetiology in the *Histories*, it is not unusual that Herodotus brings custom and nature together in the manner of a ἵστωρ. As we will recall from our analyses of the *bekos* experiment and the discussion of the Nile, however, this entails more than just the facile reduction of difference. While Herodotus does not deny the complexity of this dichotomy, he does not succumb to it either. As is his programmatic inclination when failing to find one clear way to explain, Herodotus offers many possible ways of moving forward. The result in this instance is a sizeable catalogue of Egyptian ἥθηα and νόμοι provided as a follow-up to 2.35.2, which shows the reader how much he *does* know. However, as was the case in the proem, this will prove to be a paradoxical sort of knowledge, in that it complicates as much as it clarifies what can and cannot be known about something as varied and subjective as custom, the topic of the next section of the Egyptian λόγος (2.35-98):<sup>114</sup>

Ἐν τοῖσι αἰ μὲν γυναῖκες ἀγοράζουσι καὶ καπηλεύουσι, οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες κατ’ οἴκους ἐόντες ὑφαίνουσι. Ὑφαίνουσι δὲ οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ἄνω τὴν κρόκην ὠθέοντες, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ κάτω. [3] Τὰ ἄχθεια οἱ μὲν ἄνδρες ἐπὶ τῶν κεφαλέων φορέουσι, αἰ δὲ γυναῖκες ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων. Οὐρέουσι αἰ μὲν γυναῖκες ὀρθαί, οἱ δὲ ἄνδρες κατήμενοι.

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<sup>112</sup> Benardete (1969) 37. Compare Oedipus’ rebuke of his sons in a similar passage from Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus*: ὃ πάντ’ ἐκείνω τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ νόμοις // φύσιν κατεικασθέντε καὶ βίου τροφάς (*OC* 337-338). See also n. 116 below.

<sup>113</sup> For this reason, scholars have rightly shied away from granting pride of place to an argument from climatic or geographic determinism in 2.35-36 (see e.g. Lateiner (1985) 16, West (1998) 5, Thomas (2000) 112, and Chiasson (2001) 57-58). For general remarks on the inefficacy of these forms of determinism throughout the *Histories*, see e.g. Glacken (1967) 80-91 (esp. 88-91), Lachenaud (1979) 441-449. See also n. 20 in Chapter Six below.

<sup>114</sup> See e.g. Wiedemann (1890) 147 (*pace* West (1998) 3): “Die betreffenden Punkte sind für die Kritik Herodots sehr werthvoll; sie sind alle richtig und falsch zu gleicher Zeit.” See Lloyd (1976) ad loc. for a demonstration of how this also holds true for the historicity of the customs described in this passage.

Εὐμαρείη χρέωνται ἐν τοῖσι οἰκοῖσι, ἐσθίουσι δὲ ἔξω ἐν τῆσι ὁδοῖσι, ἐπιλέγοντες ὡς τὰ μὲν αἰσχροῦ ἀναγκαῖα δὲ ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ ἐστὶ ποιέειν χρεόν, τὰ δὲ μὴ αἰσχροῦ ἀναφανδόν. [4] Ἰρᾶται γυνὴ μὲν οὐδεμία οὔτε ἔρσηνος θεοῦ οὔτε θηλέης, ἄνδρες δὲ πάντων τε καὶ πασέων. Τρέφειν τοὺς τοκέας τοῖσι μὲν παισὶ οὐδεμία ἀνάγκη μὴ βουλομένοισι, τῆσι δὲ θυγατράσι πᾶσα ἀνάγκη καὶ μὴ βουλομένησι. (36.) Οἱ ἱεεὺς τῶν θεῶν τῆ μὲν ἄλλῃ κομῶσι, ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ δὲ ξυροῦνται. Τοῖσι ἄλλοισι ἀνθρώποισι νόμος ἅμα κήδεϊ κεκάρθαι τὰς κεφαλὰς τοὺς μάλιστα ἰκνέεται, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ὑπὸ τοὺς θανάτους ἀνιέεισι τὰς τρίχας αὐξέσθαι τὰς τε ἐν τῆ κεφαλῇ καὶ τῷ γενεῖῳ, τέως ἐξυρωμένοι. [2] Τοῖσι μὲν ἄλλοισι ἀνθρώποισι χωρὶς θηρίων <ἢ> δίαιτα ἀποκέκριται, Αἰγυπτίοισι δὲ ὁμοῦ θηρίοισι ἢ δίαιτᾶ ἐστὶ. Ἀπὸ πυρῶν καὶ κριθέων ἄλλοι ζώουσι, Αἰγυπτίων δὲ τῷ ποιευμένῳ ἀπὸ τούτων τὴν ζῶν ὄνειδος μέγιστόν ἐστι, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ ὀλυρέων ποιεῦνται σιτία, τὰς ζεῖας μετεξέτεροι καλέουσι. [3] Φυρῶσι τὸ μὲν σταῖς τοῖσι ποσί, τὸν δὲ πηλὸν τῆσι χερσί, καὶ τὴν κόπρον ἀναιρέονται. Τὰ αἰδοῖα ἄλλοι μὲν ἐῶσι ὡς ἐγένοντο, πλὴν ὅσοι ἀπὸ τούτων ἔμαθον, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ περιτάμνονται. Εἶματα τῶν μὲν ἀνδρῶν ἕκαστος ἔχει δύο, τῶν δὲ γυναικῶν ἐν ἑκάστη. [4] Τῶν ἰστίων τοὺς κρίκους καὶ τοὺς κάλους οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ἔξωθεν προσδέουσι, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ἔσωθεν. Γράμματα γράφουσι καὶ λογίζονται ψήφοισι Ἑλληνας μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀριστερῶν ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ φέροντες τὴν χεῖρα, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀριστερά· καὶ ποιεῦντες ταῦτα αὐτοὶ μὲν φασὶ ἐπιδέξια ποιέειν, Ἑλληνας δὲ ἐπαρίστερα. Διφασίοισι δὲ γράμμασι χρέωνται, καὶ τὰ μὲν αὐτῶν ἱρά, τὰ δὲ δημοτικὰ καλέεται (2.35.2-2.36.4).

For example, women do the shopping and trading, while men stay at home and weave. Other people weave by pushing the woof up, while the Egyptians push it down. [3] Men carry loads on their heads, while women carry them on their shoulders. Women urinate standing up, while men do so sitting down. They defecate inside their homes, but they eat outside in the streets, explaining that shameful necessities must be done in secret, while the opposite must be done in the open. [4] No woman serves a god or goddess as a priestess, while men serve every god and goddess. There is no compulsion for unwilling sons to take care of their parents, while there is every compulsion for daughters, even for those who are unwilling. (36.) Elsewhere, the priests of the gods wear their hair long, but in Egypt they shave their hair. Among other people, it is customary for those most concerned with the act of mourning to cut the hair on their heads, while Egyptians allow their hair to grow following a death, both on the head and the chin, being previously clean-shaven. [2] Other people live apart from animals, while Egyptians live together with them. Other people live off of wheat and barley, but there is the greatest reproach for the Egyptian who lives off of these. Rather, they make their bread from hulled wheat, which some people call “emmer.” [3] They knead dough with their feet, and clay with their hands, and they pick up dung. The Egyptians practice circumcision, while other people leave their genitals as they were to begin with, except for those who learned from them. Each man has two

garments, while each woman has one. [4] Other people attach the rings and reefing ropes outside the sail, while the Egyptians attach them inside. Greeks write and perform calculations by moving the hand from left to right, while Egyptians move from right to left. And in so doing, they say that they themselves do it right, while Greeks do it left-handed. They employ two kinds of writing, one of which is called “sacred”, while the other is called “demotic.”

This passage has the potential to be written off as a brusque critique of Egyptian otherness relative to Greek norms.<sup>115</sup> While Herodotus does set himself up repeatedly to make such an essentializing judgement (what with the litany of μέν...δέ contrasts), nowhere does he assert the primacy or normalcy of custom from his own point of view.<sup>116</sup> What’s more, only two of the seventeen contrasts in this section juxtapose Egyptian ἥθεα and νόμοι specifically with those of the Greeks (i.e. computation and writing, 2.36.4). Instead, the ἥθεα and νόμοι of other human beings (τοῖσι ἄλλοισι ἀνθρώποισι, ἄλλοι, etc.) are usually contrasted with those of the Egyptians.

In fashioning this “cultural ‘matrix’”<sup>117</sup> according to a universalizing framework, Herodotus undermines exceptionalism of all stripes and “confounds all expectations of how human beings should behave.”<sup>118</sup> On the surface, the Greeks appear to be the main target of this matrix, inasmuch as their practice of writing from left to right is the only custom to be criticized by the Egyptians, who assert that they themselves write “from the

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<sup>115</sup> Froidefond (1971) 133, for example, sees in 2.35-36 an awkward mix of “généralisations abusives” and “particularisations abusives.”

<sup>116</sup> Sophocles, on the other hand, has Oedipus rail against Egyptian customs as “abnormal and degenerate” (West (1998) 8) in a passage from *Oedipus at Colonus* (*OC* 337-345) which seems to criticize at least one of the customs described in Hdt. 2.35-36 (see also n. 112 above). That Herodotus does not comment on the moral or ethical validity of custom in 2.35-36 à la Oedipus squares more with a categorical reticence to judge ἥθεα, νόμοι, etc. (see esp. 2.3.2, 3.38, 7.152) and less with a reductive “virtuosité...sophistique” (Froidefond (1971) 133).

<sup>117</sup> Gould (1989) 97.

<sup>118</sup> Thomas (2000) 130.

right” (ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν, 2.36.4) and therefore “rightly” (ἐπιδέξια, 2.36.4).<sup>119</sup> Although this jibe on the part of the Egyptians does confute the notion that Greeks are unique in their customs and are “exclusive representatives of normalcy”,<sup>120</sup> Herodotus offers other comparanda in the *Histories* which suggest that the Egyptians are not unique either, as Harrison deftly observes:

The Babylonians indulge in laments for their dead which are very similar to the Egyptians’ (Herodotus 1.198); whereas the Egyptian priests kill no animal “except for sacrifice”, the Magi kill everything apart from dogs and men with their own hands (Herodotus 1.140); the Egyptians - in this example we see again the germ of the use of foreign peoples as a model of the just constitution (cf. Herodotus IV.26 for the “equal power” of Issedonian women) - are similar to the Spartans in the signs of respect which they offer to their elders (Herodotus II.80).<sup>121</sup>

This observation is a valuable reminder not only of how the ecumenical principles of 2.35-36 (and indeed those of the *bekos* experiment and the proem as well) extend far beyond their immediate narrative contexts, but also of how the Greek/barbarian dichotomy is limited in a way that Herodotus’ understanding of custom and aetiology is not. That barbarian ἔθνεα can disagree among themselves and a Greek ἔθνος can agree with a barbarian ἔθνος<sup>122</sup> demonstrates the extent to which “the *Histories* are not so much

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<sup>119</sup> On this pun, see Marincola’s note ad loc. in de Sélincourt (2003) 637 n. 24. Later on, Herodotus informs us that the Egyptians call everyone who does not speak Egyptian “barbarians” (βαρβάρους δὲ πάντας οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καλέουσι τοὺς μὴ σφίσι ὁμογλώσσους, 2.158.5). This turns out to be a major challenge to cultural primacy when we note that the remark at 2.158.5 is one of only two instances in the *Histories* (the other being—possibly—1.4.4) where βάρβαρος can refer to a Greek (Munson (2005) 65 n. 151).

<sup>120</sup> Munson (2001) 76.

<sup>121</sup> Harrison (2003) 151. See also van Wees (2002) 324-328 and Rood (2006) 302-303 for additional examples of how Herodotus often undermines Greek exceptionalism by locating the origins of Greek customs among non-Greeks, including Egyptians.

<sup>122</sup> “No gloss in the *Histories* proclaims the uniqueness of the Greeks, and only two passages attribute to all barbarians a *nomos* that the Greeks do not have [i.e. 8.105.2, 1.10.3]. In a rare instance where Herodotus attributes the same *nomos* to all barbarians, the statement highlights the similarity between the Spartans and

a mirror...but a hall of mirrors with multiple reflections.”<sup>123</sup> If Herodotus was as keen to connect “self” with “other” as these contexts intimate, it is not surprising, then, that “in stressing the arbitrary diversity of individual customs, [he] does not thereby deny the objective validity of Custom as such.”<sup>124</sup> As in every other case we have now examined in this chapter, the result here is such that even when Herodotus cannot elucidate how something came to be, he can still find ways to advance knowledge in a manner that defies singular explanations and expectations. We will return to this cosmopolitan understanding of τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων (1.1.0) many times over the course of this dissertation, but for the moment, let us now turn to the next chapter, where we will consider another one of Herodotus’ programmatic concerns as it relates to aetiology: “the great and wondrous works (ἔργα) manifested by Greeks and barbarians alike” (1.1.0).

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the barbarians [6.58.2]. The *Histories* both presuppose as a given and discourage the commonplace notion of a Greek/barbarian polarity” (Munson (2001) 76).

<sup>123</sup> Braund (1998) 178 (*contra* Hartog (1988)). For similar critiques of this structuralist dichotomy, see especially Chapter Four below.

<sup>124</sup> Immerwahr (1966) 320, with special reference to “custom is king” passage (3.38, discussed in detail in Selden (1999)). Cf. 2.3.2 (discussed above) and 7.152 (the “market of evils” passage, discussed in Chapter 5.1 below).

### 3. Bridging the Divide: *Ergon*, *Logos*, and Aetiology

Just before Herodotus juxtaposes nature (φύσις) and custom (ἤθηα and νόμοι) in the section of the Αἰγύπτιος λόγος we discussed in the conclusion of the previous chapter (2.35.2 ff.), he explains his reasons for lengthening his account of Egypt:

Ἔρχομαι δὲ περὶ Αἰγύπτου μηκυνέων τὸν λόγον, ὅτι πλεῖστα θωμάσια ἔχει [ἢ ἢ ἄλλη πᾶσα χώρα] καὶ ἔργα λόγου μέζω παρέχεται πρὸς πᾶσαν <ἄλλην> χώραν· τούτων εἵνεκα πλέω περὶ αὐτῆς εἰρήσεται (2.35.1).

I am going to extend my *logos* about Egypt because it has very many wonders and it offers more works [*erga*] that defy *logos* than every other land. For these reasons, more shall be said about it.

We would be remiss if we, too, did not extend our account of Egypt for the same reasons, as the emphasis on “works” (ἔργα, sg. ἔργον) reaffirms one of Herodotus’ programmatic aims in composing the *Histories*:

Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἱστορίας ἀποδέξις ἦδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλέα γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι (1.1.0).

This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Thuri, so that the things brought into being by humans may not grow faded in time, and so that great and wondrous works [*erga*], some manifested by Greeks and others by barbarians, may not be without glory, and in particular the reason why they came to war with one another.

In parsing the meaning of ἔργα here in the proem, scholars tend to fall into one of two camps: that of Stein, who argued that ἔργα represent physical monuments alone,<sup>1</sup> or

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<sup>1</sup> According to Stein (1962), ἔργα are “...die Werke, *opera*, die dauernden Denkmäler (*μνημόσυνα*) menschlicher Arbeit und Tüchtigkeit” (ad Hdt. 1.1.0).



that of Regenbogen, who saw ἔργα denoting both concrete and abstract “works.”<sup>2</sup> Though Stein’s position garnered significant support in the first half of the twentieth century,<sup>3</sup> most scholars now side with Regenbogen.<sup>4</sup> This is due in large part to Immerwahr’s influential article on ἔργα, in which he convincingly advanced Regenbogen’s thesis by construing ἔργα in the “widest possible sense as “achievements” or “works,” including both monuments and deeds”<sup>5</sup> and ultimately as “the finished product of an activity.”<sup>6</sup>

Our initial consideration of the proem in Chapter One has borne out this broad interpretation by accepting ἔργα in the sense of “works” as one inherently multivalent part of an inherently multivalent first sentence. While some scholars dispute such a semantically-open reading of ἔργα in the context of the proem, there can be no denying that in the *Histories* at large, ἔργα 1) accommodate both monuments and deeds of abstract and concrete varieties throughout and 2) constitute a driving force behind the work as a whole. Even a cursory look at Herodotus’ inquiry shows these two points to be correct. For example, in the case of 1), ἔργα can describe works as far-ranging as the brave actions of the Tegeans and the Athenians recounted prior to the battle of Plataea (9.26-27), the construction of river embankments on the Euphrates (1.86), and the killing

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<sup>2</sup> “Der Finalsatz endlich mit seiner zunächst befremdlichen Zweiteilung scheidet zwischen den generell bedingten 'Geschehnissen', auf deren Urheber, abgesehen davon, daß es Menschen waren, nichts ankommt, — sie sollen nicht der Vergessenheit anheimfallen — und den individuell verursachten '**Werken**', die sowohl Taten, wie etwa auch Bau- und Kunstwerke, technische Leistungen und alles dergleichen sein können, von denen man meist die Namen der Urheber kennt und die, Taten sowohl wie Täter, ihres Ruhmes nicht beraubt werden sollen — so wie das Lied des epischen Sängers die κλέα ἀνδρῶν, den Ruhm der Männer, erhält” (Regenbogen (1930) 246).

<sup>3</sup> See Jacoby (1913) col. 334 ff.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. Erbse (1956) 212-213, Cobet (1971) 30 n. 205, Grant (1983) 294-296, and Lateiner (1989) 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> Immerwahr (1960) 264.

<sup>6</sup> Immerwahr (1960) 269.

of winged serpents by ibises in Arabia (2.75).<sup>7</sup> In the case of 2), Herodotus acknowledges on several occasions that his interest in ἔργα is so great that it affects the course of his narrative, most notably in his accounts of Samos (3.60) and Egypt (2.35).

Although the more than 140 uses of the word ἔργον found throughout the *Histories* make it clear that these markers of both tangible and intangible works are of great importance to Herodotus, the ramifications of ἔργα for the development of Herodotean methodology have not yet been studied to the extent that they deserve. David's unpublished dissertation, the only comprehensive treatment to date on the subject, puts forth the idea that ἔργα (when taken to mean "objects") operate primarily as "mnemotechnic devices" according to the framework of anthropologist J. Vansina's research on oral tradition and memory.<sup>8</sup> While David breaks new ground in some important respects,<sup>9</sup> his emphasis on the mnemonic function of ἔργα downplays their role as windows into Herodotean epistemology and narratology. As we will see, Herodotus' engagement with ἔργα is predicated on more than the desire to know, "Who built that *mega ergon*? For what else is he or she famous?"<sup>10</sup>

Rather than dispute David's basic thesis (which he acknowledges represents a first foray into a complex topic with many avenues of approach),<sup>11</sup> the following chapter

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<sup>7</sup> For a representative list of ἔργα according to abstract and concrete categories, see Powell (1960) ad loc.

<sup>8</sup> David (2006) defines "mnemotechnic devices" (*pace* Vansina (1985) 44-48) as "physical cues used to recall a memory" (3 n. 4).

<sup>9</sup> See especially pp. 69-89, which offers the most extensive follow-up to Immerwahr (1960) to date, and pp. 287-296, which contains a very useful reference index of all objects mentioned in the *Histories*. Cf. Lateiner (1987) 95-100, 115-116.

<sup>10</sup> David (2006) 33.

<sup>11</sup> David (2006) 41.

will offer some novel insights into the workings of ἔργα from the standpoint of aetiology. In addition to building upon the commonplace that an ἔργον can create a cause for an explanatory narrative,<sup>12</sup> this chapter will also explore some representative examples both within and without the Egyptian λόγος where an ἔργον creates a cause for Herodotus to grapple with matters fundamental to his methodology. These cases will demonstrate that ἔργα, like all components of Herodotean aetiology and methodology we consider in this dissertation, cannot be privileged absolutely or taken as a part to represent the whole. Instead, when seen within the context of the *Histories* as a cohesive entity, ἔργα can offer further evidence that aetiology constitutes a nexus of mutually inclusive factors which confound homogeneity of explanation and direct the reader to look past the matter at hand. To illustrate this, let us start by returning to the section of the Egyptian λόγος we first considered at the opening of this chapter.

### ***3.1 Ergon and Logos***

On a superficial level, the motivation behind Herodotus' self-proclaimed interest in extending his account of Egypt because of its ἔργα (2.35) appears straightforward. Since ἔργα are mentioned more in the Egyptian λόγος than in any other λόγος when taken to mean “monuments and votive offering groups”, and since they are correlated with Egyptian rulers on an almost one to one ratio, it is not far-fetched to conclude in line with

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<sup>12</sup> Vansina's neologism “iconatroph” (discussed below) has been used by several scholars to describe “etiologically commentaries on existing objects” (Vansina (1985) 7) that are seen throughout the *Histories* (see e.g. Flower (1991) 69, Keesling (2005) 43-46, and David (2006), esp. 24-68). For a list of narratives in the *Histories* which may be considered iconatrophic (including those not discussed below), see David (2006) 36 n. 24.

David that ἔργα serve primarily to recall past greatness in their role as mnemotechnic devices.<sup>13</sup> This is indeed suggested by the proem, in which Herodotus proclaims that he will relate both events and works so that they may not grow faded or be without glory (ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα... ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα... ἀκλέα γένηται, 1.1.0).

However, there is more at stake here than the preservation and glorification of memory alone.

As Hedrick remarks, the very idea that mute ἔργα need realization in λόγος is something of a paradox, but a paradox that makes sense in the realm of the *Histories*:

The oxymoron, however, accurately represents the necessarily ambivalent relationship between verbal and material sources. The thing is conceived as more real than the word, but it also must be supplemented by the word to have meaning.<sup>14</sup>

This dichotomy is precisely what we see in 2.35 when Herodotus pairs works with words in the phrase ἔργα λόγου μέζω. While the immediate proximity of ἔργα and λόγου presupposes a symbiotic relationship between works and their ability to be depicted in narrative, a careful look at this passage shows that such a relationship is not as clear-cut as it may seem at first glance. Far from meaning simply “storied works”,<sup>15</sup> the phrase ἔργα λόγου is dependent upon the comparative μέζω, which most translators render as something like “works beyond description.” If read in isolation, this passage may suggest that works actually do defy narration because they are somehow more “real” than words. Parry takes this stance when he argues that Herodotus’ understanding of the

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<sup>13</sup> David (2006) 202.

<sup>14</sup> Hedrick (1993) 26. In a similar vein, see also Hedrick (1995) 57-64, esp. 60-61.

<sup>15</sup> David (2006) 77, 202, 204.

λόγος/ ἔργον dichotomy conforms to a “popular distinction” (i.e. “*logos* is false, but *ergon* is real”).<sup>16</sup> Though Parry is right to call attention to the fact that Herodotus “uses the opposition of λόγος and ἔργον much as Homer did, as two sides of the same coin”,<sup>17</sup> he is wrong to deduce solely on the basis of the two examples he cites (where λόγος refers exclusively to the speech of the inscribed interlocutors and not to narrative *qua* narrative) that Herodotus is “heedless of the implications” of this dichotomy.<sup>18</sup> The essence of Parry’s criticism is at least as old as Thucydides, who seems to chafe against what he takes to be Herodotus’ disproportionate use of ἔργα to measure historical outcomes.<sup>19</sup> As David points out, however, Thucydides was only able to react this way against ἔργα because Herodotus had already shown their shortcomings (albeit “inadvertently”).<sup>20</sup> While this thesis is basically sound, the following chapter will offer some examples to show that Herodotus is largely aware of the limitations of ἔργα and often distinguishes them as such.

We find that this is much the case if we look, for instance, at Herodotus’ famous discussion of the Labyrinth near Lake Moeris:

Καὶ δὴ σφι μνημόσυνα ἔδοξε λιπέσθαι κοινῆ· δόξαν δέ σφι ἐποιήσαντο λαβύρινθον, ὀλίγον ὑπὲρ τῆς λίμνης τῆς Μοίριος κατὰ Κροκοδείλων καλομένην πόλιν μάλιστά κη κείμενον. Τὸν ἐγὼ ἤδη εἶδον λόγου μέζω. [2] Εἰ γὰρ τις τὰ ἐξ Ἑλλήνων τείχεά τε καὶ ἔργων ἀπόδεξιν συλλογίσαιτο, ἐλάσσονος πόνου τε ἂν καὶ δαπάνης φανείη ἔόντα τοῦ λαβυρίνθου τούτου· καίτοι ἀξιόλογός γε καὶ ὁ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἐστὶ νηὸς καὶ ὁ ἐν Σάμῳ. [3] Ἦσαν μὲν νυν καὶ αἱ πυραμίδες λόγου

<sup>16</sup> i.e. Parry (1981) 48, who sees this as the outgrowth of a Solonic paradigm: ἐς γὰρ γλῶσσαν ὀρᾶτε καὶ εἰς ἔπη αἰμύλου ἀνδρός, // εἰς ἔργον δ’ οὐδὲν γιγνόμενον βλέπετε (Fr. 11.7-8 in West (1972)).

<sup>17</sup> Parry (1981) 49. Cf. *Il.* 9.442-443.

<sup>18</sup> Parry (1981) 49, ad Hdt. 3.135 and 9.90-92.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Thuc. 1.10, 1.22, and 2.41.2 (discussed in Hornblower (1987) 30-33).

<sup>20</sup> David (2006) 9 (see also pp. 69-89).

μέζονες καὶ πολλῶν ἐκάστη αὐτέων ἑλληνικῶν ἔργων καὶ μεγάλων ἀνταξίη· ὁ δὲ δὴ λαβύρινθος καὶ τὰς πυραμίδας ὑπερβάλλει. [4] Τοῦ γὰρ δωδέκα μὲν εἰσι αὐλαὶ κατάστεγοι, ἀντίτυλοι ἀλλήλησι, ἕξ μὲν πρὸς βορέω, ἕξ δὲ πρὸς νότον τετραμμένοι συνεχέες· τοῖχος δὲ ἕξωθεν ὁ αὐτός σφεας περιέργει. Οἰκήματα δ' ἔνεστι διπλά, τὰ μὲν ὑπόγαια, τὰ δὲ μετέωρα ἐπ' ἐκείνοισι, τρισχίλια ἀριθμόν, πεντακοσίων καὶ χιλίων ἐκάτερα. [5] Τὰ μὲν νυν μετέωρα τῶν οἰκημάτων αὐτοὶ τε ὠρῶμεν διεξιόντες καὶ αὐτοὶ θεησάμενοι λέγομεν, τὰ δὲ αὐτῶν ὑπόγαια λόγοισι ἐπυνθανόμεθα· οἱ γὰρ ἐπεστεῶτες τῶν Αἰγυπτίων δεικνύναι αὐτὰ οὐδαμῶς ἤθελον, φάμενοι θήκας αὐτόθι εἶναι τῶν τε ἀρχὴν τὸν λαβύρινθον τοῦτον οἰκοδομησαμένων βασιλέων καὶ τῶν ἱρῶν κροκοδείλων. [6] Οὕτω τῶν μὲν κάτω περὶ οἰκημάτων ἀκοῆ παραλαβόντες λέγομεν, τὰ δὲ ἄνω μέζονα ἀνθρωπηίων ἔργων αὐτοὶ ὠρῶμεν. Αἱ τε γὰρ ἕξοδοι διὰ τῶν στεγῶν καὶ οἱ εἰλιγμοὶ διὰ τῶν ἀυλέων ἐόντες ποικιλώτατοι θῶμα μυρίον παρείχοντο ἕξ αὐλῆς τε ἕς τὰ οἰκήματα διεξιούσι καὶ ἐκ τῶν οἰκημάτων ἕς παστάδας, ἕς στέγας τε ἄλλας ἐκ τῶν παστάδων καὶ ἕς αὐλὰς ἄλλας ἐκ τῶν οἰκημάτων. [7] Ὅροφὴ δὲ πάντων τούτων λιθίνη κατὰ περὶ οἱ τοῖχοι, οἱ δὲ τοῖχοι τύπων ἐγγεγλυμμένων πλέοι, αὐλὴ δὲ ἐκάστη περίστυλος λίθου λευκοῦ ἀρμοσμένου τὰ μάλιστα. Τῆς δὲ γωνίης τελευτῶντος τοῦ λαβυρίνθου ἔχεται πυραμὶς τεσσαρακοντόργυιος, ἐν τῇ ζῶα μεγάλα ἐγγέγλυπται· ὁδὸς δ' ἕς αὐτὴν ὑπὸ γῆν πεποιήται (2.148).

The dodecharchs resolved to leave behind a common memorial, and once they had reached this decision, they built a labyrinth just south of Lake Moeris very close to the place called Crocodilopolis. Now I have seen it myself and it defies description [*logou mezo*], [2] for if one were to gather all the walls and public works of the Greeks, the labor and cost would be shown to be less than what was expended on this labyrinth (though the temples at Ephesus and Samos are noteworthy in their own right). [3] The pyramids also defy description [*logou mezones*] and each of them is equal to many great Greek works, but the labyrinth, in fact, surpasses even the pyramids, [4] for it has twelve covered courtyards with gates opposite one another, six facing north and six facing south in one continuous row. A single wall encloses them from the outside. Within are two sets of chambers, some underground, others above ground, totaling 3,000 with 1,500 on each level. [5] Now we ourselves saw the chambers above ground in the process of going through them, so we talk about them based on observation, but we learned about the underground chambers from the accounts of others, for the Egyptians in charge were in no way willing to show them to us, because they said the tombs of the kings who first built the labyrinth and those of the sacred crocodiles were there. [6] Thus, as far as the underground chambers are concerned, we speak from hearsay. But we ourselves saw that the chambers above ground were superhuman works, for the corridors leading through the rooms and the incredibly intricate passages winding through the courtyards offered countless wonders as we went from a courtyard to chambers, from chambers to colonnades, from colonnades to other chambers, and from chambers to other courtyards. [7]

The roof covering the entire labyrinth is made of stone like the walls, and the walls are full of carved figures, and each colonnaded courtyard is made out of fitted blocks of white stone. By the corner where the labyrinth ends, there is a pyramid forty fathoms high, on which are carved huge animals. A passage to it has been built underground.

What should strike us immediately about the Labyrinth is how Herodotus introduces it as a work that defies description (λόγου μέζω, 2.148.1), but then goes on to describe it in lavish detail. Though this may seem like a curious incongruity, we will recall from previous chapters how Herodotus consistently and repeatedly strives to move beyond ἀπορία and advance knowledge in innovative ways. One of these distinctively Herodotean innovations is the deployment of terms expressing grandeur to convey what subsequent generations have termed “the sublime”, as Porter notes:

From Homer and the poets, the tradition of the material sublime drew on images of poetic grandeur and ephrastic possibilities of elaborate material description. From the Presocratics, it acquired a conceptual vocabulary and an array of cosmic and natural imagery. From the visual arts came other impulses, typically incorporating influences from adjacent art forms (as in the sepulchral tradition, which combined poetry with architecture and statuary or relief sculpture). From Herodotus, who was aware of all these tendencies, the sublime tradition could draw on a vocabulary for an enlarged sense of space and time, one that was secular and of this world, which is to say, neither mythological nor cosmological, but rather empirical and anthropological.<sup>21</sup>

Herodotus’ unique understanding of the sublime applies as much to the proem as it does to the description of the Labyrinth, both of which have at their core the display of great and wondrous works (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, 1.1.0).<sup>22</sup> That the Labyrinth is

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<sup>21</sup> Porter (2010) 472-473. This shrewd observation is based on remarks made as early as the Roman period on the uniqueness of Herodotean aesthetics (see e.g. [Longinus] *Subl.* 18.2, Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 4.3, and esp. Dion. Hal. *Thuc* 5 (pace Porter (2010) 472 n. 66)).

<sup>22</sup> On the sublime as it relates to the proem, see Porter (2010) 472.

both great (more so than even the pyramids) and a wonder (θῶμα, 2.148.6) makes this plain, but Herodotus does not leave these labels to qualify such an ἔργον by themselves. Like other wonders of both abstract and concrete varieties in the *Histories* (i.e. θώματα, θωμαστά, θωμάσια, etc.), the Labyrinth induces Herodotus to continue his survey in spite of the monument's overwhelming power, in this case, by moving from qualification to *quantification*.<sup>23</sup> While there may exist a precedent in epic poetry for Herodotus to offer numbers to describe an ἔργον like the Labyrinth,<sup>24</sup> the *manner* in which he offers them is in fact without precedent.<sup>25</sup> By showing himself physically engaged (διεξιόντες, διεξιούσι) in reckoning the number of courtyards and chambers of the Labyrinth and including us in its display<sup>26</sup> with the use of the first person plural (ὠρῶμεν, λέγομεν, ἐπυθθανόμεθα),<sup>27</sup> Herodotus explains to us *how* the Labyrinth is a great and wondrous

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<sup>23</sup> For other examples of how wonder can function as a springboard for further inquiry, see also e.g. 1.23-24, 1.194, 2.21 (discussed above in Chapter 2.2), 4.30, 4.129, 7.187, and esp. 9.122 (discussed below in Chapter 6.2). This is in keeping with Aristotle's assessment of wonder as the beginning of philosophy (διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν, *Metaph.* 982b; cf. Pl. *Th.* 155c-d), whence wise men may be led from ἀπορία (περὶ τῶν μειζόνων διαπορήσαντες, *Metaph.* 982b) to "theorize the cause" (ἄρχονται μὲν γὰρ ... ἀπὸ τοῦ θαυμάζειν πάντες εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, καθάπερ περὶ τῶν θαυμάτων ταυτόματα τοῖς μήπω τεθεωρηκόσι τὴν αἰτίαν κ.τ.λ., *Metaph.* 983a). Other effects of wonders in the *Histories* have been well-studied, so no dedicated treatment of θώματα etc. will be offered here. For good overviews, however, see e.g. Barth (1968), Hartog (1988) 230-237, Hunzinger (1995), Thomas (2000) 135-167, and Munson (2001) 232-265.

<sup>24</sup> Armayor (1977-1978) 68-70 offers several Homeric analogues to Herodotus' description of the Labyrinth, namely the palaces of Priam (*Il.* 6.242 ff.) and Odysseus (*Od.* 22.126 ff.).

<sup>25</sup> For a general overview of the novelty of Herodotus' aestheticism relative to his archaic forebears, see Philipp (1968) 28-31.

<sup>26</sup> The "display of works" (ἔργων ἀπόδειξις, 2.148.2) is an important collocation in other contexts as well (cf. 1.1.0, 1.208, 2.101, 6.15, 7.23, and 8.90). As Kirk (2014) 33 argues, Herodotean ἀπόδειξις "...from an initial physical showing...takes on a specialized meaning, still with the sense of a visual display, but involving words." That ἀπόδειξις may therefore entail a kind of "multimedia inventory" (35) or "simulcast" (38) squares with the symbiotic relationship between λόγος and ἔργον as well as the larger integrative approach to historical methodology advocated throughout this dissertation.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. 2.5.2 and 2.28 (discussed in Chapter 2.2 above). On the first person plural, see especially Chamberlain (2001), who argues that Herodotus adapts this convention from poetry to be "a genuine shifter, a deictic term whose essential ambiguity is ready to be exploited" (14) depending on how "we"



work and thereby distinguishes the empirical and anthropological basis of his interpretation of space.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, however much he may surpass the limits imposed on his inquiry and advance the course of knowledge in original ways, certain aspects of this ἔργον remain out of reach.

Herodotus acknowledges this in 2.148.5-6 when he makes a distinction between what he was able to learn about the Labyrinth based on what he saw (εἶδον, ὠρῶμεν, θεησάμενοι) versus what he gleaned from informants (λόγοισι ἐπυνθανόμεθα, ἀκοῆ παραλαβόντες λέγομεν). In spite of the proliferation of the language of autopsy, however, Herodotus does not discount what he hears, as he describes the layout and the number of the lower chambers of the Labyrinth even though he was not allowed to see them for himself. This amalgamating approach offers further evidence for Herodotus' heterogeneous and integrative methodology as seen throughout this dissertation. And yet, even when the findings of ὄψις and ἀκοή are combined, the account of the Labyrinth suggests that ἔργα have the potential to pose questions that are beyond the ken of even the most wary historical inquirer.<sup>29</sup> Sometimes, then, ἔργα do in fact remain λόγου μέζω.

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happen to construe it, so that he “can establish an interpretive distance between himself as a knower and what he knows, and take up the position of a judge of others rather than that of a competitive individual subject to judgment” (21). For the resonance of this thesis with the practices of the ἵστωρ, see Dewald (1987) 155. This perspective is further validated by Keyser's work on Herodotean counting and arithmetic (i.e. Keyser (1986) and Keyser (2006), esp. 346-349), a phenomenon very similar to the sort of numerical reckoning we see in the Labyrinth episode: “Herodotos wants his readers to learn with him, while Thucydides wants us to *believe* his research (cp. 6.55.i). Herodotos candidly shares his reasoning and evidence, while Thucydides explicitly states conclusions. Thucydides asks us to *trust* his results (1.22.3-4), while Herodotos provides the *source* of his accounts so that we can form our own opinions” (Keyser (2006) 349).

<sup>28</sup> See Porter (2010) 472-473 (above).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. e.g. the *bekos* experiment and Herodotus' discussion of the Nile (both discussed in Chapter Two vis-à-vis the poem to the *Histories*).

These sorts of limitations are further amplified by another great work which also “defies description”.<sup>30</sup> the pyramid of Cheops. After providing its dimensions (like the Labyrinth) and relating two possible methods of its construction (in classic ἴστωρ fashion),<sup>31</sup> Herodotus recounts a moment in the course of his visit to the pyramid when he is at odds to explain its origins:

Σεσήμανται δὲ διὰ γραμμάτων αἰγυπτίων ἐν τῇ πυραμίδι ὅσα ἕξ τε συρμαίην καὶ κρόμμου καὶ σκόροδα ἀναισιμώθη τοῖσι ἐργαζομένοισι· καὶ ὡς ἐμὲ εὖ μεμνήσθαι τὰ ὁ ἑρμηνεύς μοι ἐπιλεγόμενος τὰ γράμματα ἔφη, ἑξακόσια καὶ χίλια τάλαντα ἀργυρίου τετελέσθαι. [7] Εἰ δ’ ἔστι οὕτως ἔχοντα ταῦτα, κόσα οἰκὸς ἄλλα δεδαπανῆσθαι ἔστι ἕξ τε σίδηρον τῷ ἐργάζοντο καὶ σιτία καὶ ἐσθῆτα τοῖσι ἐργαζομένοισι, ὁκότε χρόνον μὲν οἰκοδόμεον τὰ ἔργα τὸν εἰρημένον, ἄλλον δέ, ὡς ἐγὼ δοκέω, ἐν τῷ τοὺς λίθους ἔταμνον καὶ ἦγον καὶ τὸ ὑπὸ γῆν ὄρυγμα ἐργάζοντο, οὐκ ὀλίγον χρόνον; (2.125.6-7)

The amount of radishes, onions, and garlic consumed by the workers is indicated in Egyptian script on the pyramid of Cheops. As I well remember, my interpreter, in reading the writing for me, said that 1,600 talents had been spent. [7] If this is correct, how much more is likely to have been expended on iron with which they worked and food and clothing for the workers for as long as I have mentioned it took them to build the works, including the time it took (no small amount, I should think) to quarry and haul the stones, and to dig underground?

Most of the attention this passage has received has been concerned with the veracity of the inscription. While scholars are sharply divided in this matter,<sup>32</sup> Herodotus himself appears more ambivalent. Though he may accept what the interpreter tells him, he does

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<sup>30</sup> i.e. Ἦσαν μὲν νυν καὶ αἱ πυραμίδες λόγου μέζονες κ.τ.λ. (2.148.3, see above). For other uses of this paradoxical phrase, see e.g. 9.37.2, where Hegesistratus of Elis’ remarkable escape from Spartan captivity is recounted in considerable detail (even though it is “a deed beyond recounting” (ἔργον ἐργάσατο μέζον λόγου)), and 7.147.1, where Xerxes spares the lives of Greek spies so that they may report the “unspeakable” power of the Persian expedition (...τὰ ἐωυτοῦ πρήγματα...ἑόντα λόγου μέζω), which Herodotus nevertheless numbers and describes exhaustively (7.61-100).

<sup>31</sup> See 2.124.4-5 and 2.125.1-4 respectively.

<sup>32</sup> See Pritchett (1993) 182-183 for a summary of the controversies regarding this inscription. On epigraphic evidence in the *Histories* at large, see e.g. West (1985), Pritchett (1993) 144-191 (*contra* West (1985)), David (2006) 222-228, and Livingstone and Nisbet (2010) 31-39.

not do so without qualification (Εἰ δ' ἔστι οὕτως ἔχοντα ταῦτα, ...οἰκὸς...ἔστι, 2.125.7).<sup>33</sup> Even if this hypothetical argument could be taken to indicate a categorical approval on Herodotus' part,<sup>34</sup> he nevertheless shows that inscriptions cannot always “speak for themselves”,<sup>35</sup> as it were, or be taken at face value. Like other successful inquirers in the *Histories*, Herodotus must interpret the interpretation and so project into the realm of conjecture and possibility in order to discern the genesis of this ἔργον (i.e. what *else* would inevitably have been required by the laborers to build the pyramids apart from radishes, onions, and leeks).<sup>36</sup> In this way, we can see the trifecta of ὄψις, ἀκοή, and γνῶμη at work in 2.125.6-7.<sup>37</sup> But even when all of the self-professed components of Herodotean inquiry are brought together, much about the inscription remains opaque.

These shortcomings are underlined by the interrogative which abruptly concludes the discussion of the inscription. This question not only emphasizes the inability of historical inquiry to achieve absolute, unambiguous knowledge, but also provides an

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<sup>33</sup> On likelihood (οἰκός, εἰκός), see e.g. Lateiner (1989) 97-98, Romm (1989) 100 n. 12, Thomas (2000) 168 n. 1.

<sup>34</sup> David's failure to consider 2.125.7 in his analysis of 2.125.6 is what likely leads him to the indefensible conclusion that Herodotus “accepted this [inscription] without question” (David (2006) 222).

<sup>35</sup> I use the clever turn of phrase of Livingstone and Nisbet (2010) 37, which they apply to Herodotus' circumspect interpretation of the manifold dedications to the fallen at Thermopylae, including several inscriptions (7.225-228).

<sup>36</sup> A good example of the need to interpret an interpretation comes towards the end of the Lydian λόγος, where Cyrus must read beyond the words of his ἐρμηνέες to discover the true (i.e. human) significance of Croesus' mournful utterances delivered from the pyre (1.86). For a discussion of this and other examples of the gaps between language, culture, and comprehension which ἐρμηνέες signal, see Munson (2005) 74-77 and Hollmann (2011) 142, 245-248. For good overviews of how this relates specifically to the interpretation of objects in the *Histories*, see Dewald (1993) and Hollmann (2011) 176-207 (both discussed in the next section of this chapter).

<sup>37</sup> See 2.99.1 (discussed in Chapter Two, n. 85).

opportunity for the reader to reflect in an open-ended way<sup>38</sup> on the origin and function of an ἔργον as great as the pyramid of Cheops “through the travail of the ages.”<sup>39</sup> While Herodotus characteristically does not pose one single question here, his interest in the huge amounts of time and resources that would have been required to create the pyramid independent of the amounts specified on the inscription invites a meditation on grandeur.<sup>40</sup> Ironically (but not unexpectedly), this in turn evokes Herodotus’ programmatic interest in greatness as an expression of transience and vicissitude across time and space, as laid out early on:

...προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιόν. [4] Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ’ ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. Τὴν ἀνθρωπηίην ὄν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τούτῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.3-4).

...I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small human settlements alike, [4] for many of those that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that human prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> When interpreted as an inscription, the inscription in 2.125.6-7 functions much as the first sentence of the proem does (see Chapter 1.3 above). By reading Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε κ.τ.λ. as if it were affixed to a monument, we are made “the *origo* of a deitic act that will be performed as long as the monument is standing, and read” (Bakker (2002) 30). In amalgamating λόγος and ἔργον in this way, we “not only become, implicitly, speakers who acknowledge Herodotus’ achievement; we are also cast in Herodotus’ own role. Standing not before the publication or presentation of the Inquiry, but before the Inquiry *itself*, its enactment, we are asked to do what Herodotus did himself: to listen critically, to question, and to judge” (Bakker (2002) 32).

<sup>39</sup> I cite as a comparandum the incipit of G. S. Patton, Jr.’s 1922 poem “Through a Glass, Darkly” (reprinted and discussed in Prioli (1991) 118-122), whose reflections on the “changeless changing shape” (ln. 14) of warfare across the millennia echo Herodotus’ fascination with much the same dichotomy of vicissitude and constancy (see also n. 41 below).

<sup>40</sup> See e.g. Hornblower (1987) 31-32, who asserts that the discussions of ἔργα such as the pyramids occupy a central place in the grand scheme of the *Histories*, in that they serve “to introduce us to the scale of the problem which Cambyses was taking on when he invaded Egypt” (32).

<sup>41</sup> For reverberations of the reversal of fortune motif and other similar themes across the *Histories*, cf. e.g. the Croesus λόγος (1.26-91.6, esp. 1.29-33), Croesus’ advice to Cyrus (1.207.2), the change of the Egyptian

As the remainder of this chapter will show, Herodotus' emphasis on mutability as one of the leitmotifs of the *Histories* has a significant bearing on the way ἔργα are examined and portrayed. Through them we may discern even more instances in which aetiological discussions allow Herodotus to refute superficial impressions and direct the course of his inquiry in challenging new ways.

### 3.2 *Iconatrophie*

Immediately following the discussion of the inscription of the pyramid of Cheops and its open-ended prompt, Herodotus offers another challenge to orthodoxy and expectation in the form of an “iconatrophic”<sup>42</sup> narrative, that is, a story triggered by an ἔργον which purports to explain its origin:

Ἐς τοῦτο δὲ ἐλθεῖν Χέοπα κακότητος ὥστε χρημάτων δεόμενον τὴν θυγατέρα τὴν ἑωυτοῦ κατίσαντα ἐπ' οἰκήματος προστάζει πρήσσεσθαι ἀργύριον ὀκόσον δὴ τι· οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοῦτό γε ἔλεγον. Τὴν δὲ τὰ τε ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ταχθέντα πρήσσεσθαι, ἰδίη δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν διανοηθῆναι μνημῆιον καταλιπέσθαι, καὶ τοῦ ἐσιόντος πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐκάστου δέεσθαι ὄκως ἂν αὐτῇ ἓνα λίθον [ἐν τοῖσι ἔργοισι] δωρέοιτο· [2] ἐκ τούτων δὲ τῶν λίθων ἔφασαν τὴν πυραμίδα οἰκοδομηθῆναι τὴν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν τριῶν ἐστηκυῖαν, ἔμπροσθε τῆς μεγάλης πυραμίδος, τῆς ἐστὶ τὸ κῶλον ἕκαστον ὄλου καὶ ἡμίσεος πλέθρου (2.126).

Cheops stooped to such wickedness that, needing money, he put his own daughter in a brothel and instructed her to charge a certain sum (how much they did not say). She did as she had been told by her father, but she was minded to leave behind her own memorial as well, so she asked everyone who came to her to give her one block of stone. [2] From these stones, they said that the pyramid was constructed, the one in the middle of the three in front of the great pyramid, whose sides are one and a half plethra long.

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landscape in the vastness of time (2.11-13), Xerxes' tearful survey of his massive army (7.44-46), the Athenians' rebuttal to the Tegeans before the battle of Plataea (9.27.4), and Artañctes' governorship and execution (9.114-122). The ways in which Herodotus integrates the past with the future in 1.5.3 and then makes these points indeterminate (see Chapter 1.3 above) speaks to the inextricability of aetiology from teleology in the *Histories*, a paradox we will return to in the final chapter of this dissertation.

<sup>42</sup> See n. 12 above.

While Flory is right to call attention here to the ironic juxtaposition between great and small (which further substantiates the interpretation of the inscription advanced above), it is difficult to accept his position that this pyramid (one of the so-called “subsidiary” pyramids)<sup>43</sup> constitutes “proof” for Cheops having prostituted his daughter.<sup>44</sup> Herodotus himself seems to suggest otherwise, not only by framing the entire narrative obliquely with verbs of reported speech (ἔλεγον, ἔφασαν),<sup>45</sup> but also by relating an alternate Egyptian tradition which attributed the authorship of the pyramids (including, as it seems, the subsidiary pyramid described above) not to Cheops or his brother Chephren, but to Philitis, a local shepherd.<sup>46</sup> That so lofty a monument could be ascribed to so lowly a figure becomes all the more ironic when we recall that the pyramid described in 2.126 was supposedly built as a memorial (μνημῆιον, 2.126.1) to Cheops’ daughter and not to any pharaoh.

The aetiologies presented by this iconatrophic narrative bear witness to the fluidity of coexisting traditions, which can make it impossible to locate and verify a

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<sup>43</sup> For an overview of the “subsidiary” pyramids, see e.g. Edwards (1986) 123 ff.

<sup>44</sup> Flory (1987) 41.

<sup>45</sup> See Cooper (1974). The use of δῆ here to intensify an indefinite construction (ἀργύριον ὀκόσον δῆ τι, 2.126.1) may also betray a sense of doubt or irony, as the particle is wont to do (see Denniston (1954) 203-240, esp. 229-234). As Professor Johnson points out to me, these verbs of reported speech are not of the generalizing sort (i.e. “the Egyptians say...”), but the particular (i.e. “they told (me)”), which may further emphasize the restricted nature of the source.

<sup>46</sup> Herodotus is not explicit in identifying *which* pyramids were alternately ascribed to Philitis (...καὶ τὰς πυραμίδας καλέουσι ποιμένος Φιλίτιος, 2.128). Most translators render the definite article in a general sense as “the pyramids” (see e.g. Godley (1920), Grene (1987), Waterfield (1998), and de Sélincourt (2003) ad loc.), which I also interpret collectively in this context.

single, unanimous origin for any given ἔργον.<sup>47</sup> The failure of the subsidiary pyramid to preserve memory unequivocally in spite of its role as memorial is a stark reminder of this, but Herodotus does not stand aside to gloat over such an ironic point and further precipitate the lapse of this ἔργον into oblivion. As much as he may acknowledge the inevitable degeneration of memory and the limitations of narrative to describe works,<sup>48</sup> he cannot divorce λόγοι from ἔργα because their very integration in the act of writing perpetuates memory<sup>49</sup> regardless of how accurate it may be.<sup>50</sup> By allowing memory to exist in layers like the palimpsest that any ἔργον is intrinsically, Herodotus permits the multivalence of historical works to live on in all of their richness and complexity for future generations to study and engage with, thereby perpetuating memory even further.

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<sup>47</sup> Lloyd's likening of the shepherd aetiology (2.128) to a "rags-to-riches story of a common wish fulfillment type" (Lloyd (1988) ad loc.) points to the possibility that Philitis could have been both a shepherd and a king at different points in his life. Indeed, as How and Wells (1912) observe (ad loc.), this story may have its antecedent among the Hyksos or "Shepherd Kings" of the Second Intermediate Period. While this theory is not without controversy (see Lloyd (1988) ad loc.), both commentators recognize in separate ways that the multiple origins of the pyramids related by Herodotus are not necessarily contradictory (recall Lateiner (1989) 208, Gould (1989) 65, and Pelling (2000) 86).

<sup>48</sup> I accept Porter's interpretation (*contra* Immerwahr (1960) 271) that "Herodotus does not emphasize the preservation of monuments more than he does their destruction. Indeed, the marvel with which he beholds the survival of historical monuments—which is to say, memorials of history—is strictly commensurate with and contingent on their possible non-survival" (Porter (2010) 474). This is perhaps most strongly suggested by the piquant use of ἐξίτηλα ("evanescent") in the proem (1.1.0), a word whose association with organic processes of fading (see Nagy (1987) 182-183) presupposes the inevitability of the decay of ἔργα as a fact of nature.

<sup>49</sup> On writing as a protection against oblivion in the *Histories*, see e.g. Johnson (1994) 251-252 (with additional bibliography at 252 n. 58) and Rösler (2002) 94.

<sup>50</sup> A programmatic example of Herodotus' ambivalence towards the accuracy of memory may be found in 2.77.2, where the superlative memory of the Egyptians (μνήμην ἀνθρώπων πάντων ἐπασκέοντες μάλιστα λογιώτατοί εἰσι μακροῖ) is observed in passing with anthropological detachment (Lidov (2002) 207-208). This is yet another indication that memory, though of unquestionable importance to Herodotus and worthy of preservation in and of itself, is but one aspect of his inquiry and so must be considered in tandem with other components of ἱστορίη. For a demonstration of how this applies to the Egyptian λόγος according to the major epistemological and methodological statements made therein (i.e. 2.99, 2.142, 2.147, 2.154—discussed in Chapter Two), see e.g. Murray (2001) 26.

When taken together, then, the heterogeneity of ἔργα provides a fitting model for the heterogeneity of the λόγοι that describe them.

This multiplicity extends across time, space, and culture to other ἔργα outside the Egyptian λόγος. One of the most famous of these ἔργα is the tomb of Alyattes in Lydia, a monument which finds ready comparison with the works we have already considered above:

Θώματα δὲ γῆ <ῆ> Λυδία ἐς συγγραφὴν οὐ μάλα ἔχει, οἷά τε καὶ ἄλλη χώρα, πάρεξ τοῦ ἐκ τοῦ Τμώλου καταφερομένου ψήγματος. [2] Ἐν δὲ ἔργον πολλὸν μέγιστον παρέχεται χωρὶς τῶν τε Αἰγυπτίων ἔργων καὶ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων· ἔστι αὐτόθι Ἀλυάττεω τοῦ Κροίσου πατρὸς σῆμα, τοῦ ἠ κρηπὶς μὲν ἐστὶ λίθων μεγάλων, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο σῆμα χῶμα γῆς. Ἐξεργάσαντο δὲ μιν οἱ ἀγοραῖοι ἄνθρωποι καὶ οἱ χειρώνακτες καὶ αἱ ἐνεργαζόμεναι παιδίσκαι. [3] Οὗροι δὲ πέντε ἐόντες ἔτι καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ ἦσαν ἐπὶ τοῦ σήματος ἄνω, καὶ σφι γράμματα ἐνεκεκόλαπτο τὰ ἕκαστοι ἐξεργάσαντο· καὶ ἐφαίνετο μετρεόμενον τὸ τῶν παιδισκῶν ἔργον ἐὼν μέγιστον. [4] Τοῦ γὰρ δὴ Λυδῶν δήμου αἱ θυγατέρες πορνεύονται πᾶσαι, συλλέγουσαι σφίσι φερνάς, ἐς ὃ ἂν συνοικήσωσι τοῦτο ποιεῦσαι· ἐκδιδούσαι δὲ αὐταὶ ἐωυτάς. [5] Ἡ μὲν δὴ περίοδος τοῦ σήματος εἰσι στάδιοι ἕξ καὶ δύο πλέθρα, τὸ δὲ εὐρὸς ἐστὶ πλέθρα τρία καὶ δέκα· λίμνη δὲ ἔχεται τοῦ σήματος μεγάλη, τὴν λέγουσι Λυδοὶ αἰεΐναον εἶναι· καλέεται δὲ αὕτη Γυγαίη. Τοῦτο μὲν δὴ τοιοῦτό ἐστι (1.93).

Lydia does not have as many wonders to record as other lands, except for the gold dust that is brought down from Mount Tmolus. [2] But it does offer one work [*ergon*] which is much the greatest, except for those of the Egyptians and Babylonians. In that place is the tomb of Alyattes, son of Croesus, whose foundation is made of great stones, but the rest of the tomb is made of heaped earth. It was built by the traders, the craftsmen, and the working girls. [3] And even in my day there were still five markers on top of the tomb, and letters had been carved into them, indicating what each group of people had contributed. Once it had been measured, the work of the working girls appeared to be the greatest, [4] for all the daughters of the Lydian people, in fact, prostitute themselves to collect their dowries. They do this until they get married, and they pick their own husbands. [5] The circumference of the tomb is six stades and two plethra, and the width is thirteen plethra. There is a great lake near the tomb which the Lydians say is ever-flowing. This is called the Lake of Gyges. That, then, is what the tomb is like.



The tomb of Alyattes is important in that it establishes several continuities for the viewing and interpretation of ἔργα across the constituent λόγοι of the *Histories*. These continuities would be apparent even if Herodotus did not make a point of connecting the tomb explicitly with the ἔργα of other peoples (“Ἐν δὲ ἔργον πολλὸν μέγιστον παρέχεται **χωρὶς τῶν τε Αἰγυπτίων ἔργων καὶ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων**, 1.93.2). That he uses empirical measurements to convey the tomb’s grandeur (as in the case of both the Labyrinth and the pyramids) and then calls that greatness into question with the mention of the tomb’s lowly builders (as in the case of the attribution of the pyramids variously to slaves, a prostitute, and a shepherd) should resonate across geographical and cultural divides with the ironic presentation of ἔργα we have already considered above.<sup>51</sup> But Herodotus’ deployment of aetiology in this instance should speak to these continuities, too.

As David argues, this iconatrophic narrative is fundamentally syncretic in that it relies on (at least) two traditions to explain the origin of the tomb, one deriving from the

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<sup>51</sup> While West (1985) 296 is probably right to see in 1.93 a warning “not to be overawed” by the tomb, it seems misguided to view this strictly as a caution against “the pomp and circumstance of an *Oriental* monarchy” (emphasis my own). Even if the stress of 1.93 were placed on a moralizing critique of Lydian culture (Kurke (1999) 169-171), and not on broader anthropological desires to show the objective validity of sexual practices across cultures (Arieti (1995) 114-115) and “to go over great and small alike” (just as in the analogous example of the pyramids), the overarching conclusions ought to be much the same. This may be deduced from the section which immediately follows the discussion of the tomb, where Herodotus notes that Lydian customs are practically the same as those used by Greeks (Λυδοὶ δὲ νόμοισι μὲν παραπλησίοισι χρέωνται καὶ Ἕλληνες, 1.94.1). Though the former differ in that they prostitute their daughters (... χωρὶς ἢ ὅτι τὰ θήγεια τέκνα καταπορνέουσιν, 1.94.1), both Greeks and Lydians build and esteem ἔργα. As Lydians represent a midway point between barbarian and non-barbarian ἔθνεα in the *Histories* (see e.g. Cook (1976) 54 and Pelling (1997) 56), the account of 1.93-94 may then speak to the universality of ἔργα as fundamentally *human* constructs (cf. 2.35-36 (discussed above in Chapter 2.3) for a similarly egalitarian perspective on νόμοι). From this standpoint, Herodotus seems to undermine greatness itself rather than the notion that humble folk can have no part in greatness as an aristocratic ideal (*contra* How and Wells (1912) ad. 1.93.4, who see a class distinction at play in the manifestation of this Lydian custom as indicated by the word δήμου).

association of the ἔργον with prostitutes and the other from the Lydian king Alyattes.<sup>52</sup> What remains to be emphasized is that the traditions Herodotus integrates here are no more to the exclusion of one another than the traditions surrounding the pyramids.<sup>53</sup> As he intimates in his analysis of the five markers on top of the tomb (οὐροί, 1.93.3), the prostitutes who undertook the bulk of the work (αἱ ἐνεργαζόμεναι παιδίσκει, 1.93.2) should be considered authors of the ἔργον just as much as Alyattes himself.<sup>54</sup> Though Herodotus may emphasize the contributions of certain agents over others, the fact that he acknowledges the additional influence of yet other tradespeople (οἱ ἀγοραῖοι ἄνθρωποι καὶ οἱ χειρῶνακτες, 1.93.2) speaks eloquently to the innate multiformity of the tomb's agency and memory. Herodotus' account of the tomb thus comes to reflect the physical stratification of the ἔργον, all of whose layers show that its construction was a collective enterprise. From this perspective, then, multiple aetiology shows itself more than just a rhetorical tactic born out of an unwillingness to commit to one origin or another because of the difficulty of historical inquiry. For someone as committed as Herodotus to relating

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<sup>52</sup> David (2006) 37-40. In elucidating the iconatrophic associations of the tomb with prostitutes, David offers a useful parallel in the Δειπνοσοφισταί (13.31). Here Athenaeus relates (via Clearchus the peripatetic) that Gyges gathered all the Lydians to build a tomb for his lover, which was still known in Clearchus' day as the "Courtesan's Memorial" (τὸ νῦν ἔτι καλούμενον τῆς Ἐταίρας μνήμα). For a discussion of other analogues which speak against the idea that Herodotus' description of the tomb of Alyattes is an ahistorical "wild Greek surmise" (West (1985) 296), see e.g. Pritchett (1993) 167-170.

<sup>53</sup> See n. 47 above.

<sup>54</sup> Even though the verbal derivatives of ἔργον appear several times in 1.93 (i.e. ἐξεργάσαντο (*bis*), ἐνεργαζόμεναι), it is not clear whether they refer to the physical act of building the tomb or financing its construction. Regardless of their meaning in this context, the vagueness of these terms suggests that the work of the prostitutes and tradespeople is indivisible from that of Alyattes and so further substantiates the tomb's multiple agency.

λόγοι and ἔργα across the spectrum of great and small, multiple aetiology becomes a given.

This is not to say, however, that Herodotus is undiscerning when it comes to profiling the layers that make up ἔργα. On the contrary, Herodotus frequently shows himself a shrewd critic of the power of ἔργα to mask their origins. We may see this clearly in the paradigmatic account of Croesus' contributions to Delphi (1.50-51). For instance, after describing the first batch of Croesus' sumptuous offerings (including couches, cups, ingots, and a golden statue of a lion weighing ten talents),<sup>55</sup> Herodotus concludes with a consideration of the questionable provenance of several other ἔργα:

Ἐπιτελέσας δὲ ὁ Κροῖσος ταῦτα ἀπέπεμπε ἐς Δελφοὺς καὶ τάδε ἄλλα ἅμα τοῖσι κρητῆρας δύο μεγάθει μεγάλους, χρύσειον καὶ ἀργύρεον, τῶν ὁ μὲν χρύσειος ἔκειτο ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ ἐσιόντι ἐς τὸν νηόν, ὁ δὲ ἀργύρεος ἐπ' ἀριστερά· [2] μετεκινήθησαν δὲ καὶ οὗτοι ὑπὸ τὸν νηὸν κατακαέντα, καὶ ὁ μὲν χρύσειος κεῖται ἐν τῷ Κλαζομενίων θησαυρῷ, ἔλκων σταθμὸν εἵνατον ἡμιτάλαντον καὶ ἔτι δωδέκα μνέας, ὁ δὲ ἀργύρεος ἐπὶ τοῦ προνηίου τῆς γωνίης, χωρέων ἀμφορέας ἑξακοσίους· ἐπικίρνεται γὰρ ὑπὸ Δελφῶν Θεοφανίοισι· [3] φασὶ δὲ μιν Δελφοὶ Θεοδώρου τοῦ Σαμίου ἔργον εἶναι, καὶ ἐγὼ δοκέω· οὐ γὰρ τὸ συντυχὸν φαίνεται μοι ἔργον εἶναι. Καὶ πίθους τε ἀργυρέους τέσσερας ἀπέπεμψε, οἱ ἐν τῷ Κορινθίων θησαυρῷ ἐστᾶσι, καὶ περιρραντήρια δύο ἀνέθηκε, χρύσειόν τε καὶ ἀργύρεον, τῶν τῷ χρυσεῷ ἐπιγράφεται Λακεδαιμονίων φάμενον εἶναι ἀνάθημα, οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγον· [4] ἔστι γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο Κροίσου, ἐπέγραψε δὲ τῶν τις Δελφῶν Λακεδαιμονίοισι βουλόμενος χαρίζεσθαι, τοῦ ἐπιστάμενος τὸ οὔνομα οὐκ ἐπιμνήσομαι· ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν παῖς, δι' οὗ τῆς χειρὸς ῥέει τὸ ὕδωρ, Λακεδαιμονίων ἐστί, οὐ μέντοι τῶν γε περιρραντηρίων οὐδέτερον. [5] Ἄλλα τε ἀναθήματα οὐκ ἐπίσημα πολλὰ ἀπέπεμψε ἅμα τούτοις ὁ Κροῖσος καὶ χεύματα ἀργύρεα κυκλοτερέα, καὶ δὴ καὶ γυναικὸς εἰδῶλον χρύσειον τρίπηχον, τὸ Δελφοὶ τῆς ἀρτοκόπου τῆς Κροίσου εἰκόνα λέγουσι εἶναι. Πρὸς δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐωυτοῦ γυναικὸς τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς δειρῆς ἀνέθηκε ὁ Κροῖσος καὶ τὰς ζώνας (1.51).

Once he had finished these, Croesus sent them to Delphi along with other offerings including the following: two immensely great kraters, one of gold and

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<sup>55</sup> i.e. 1.50.

the other of silver. The former lies on the right when you walk into the temple, the latter on the left. [2] These were also relocated when the temple burned down. The gold krater lies in the treasury of the Clazomenians and it weighs eight half talents and twelve minae. The silver krater lies in the corner of the vestibule and it holds six hundred amphorae, for it is used to mix wine by the Delphians during the festival of the Theophania. [3] The Delphians say that this is the work of Theodorus of Samos, and I think that is right, for it does not appear to me to be just any old work. Croesus also sent four silver jars, which stand in the treasury of the Corinthians, and dedicated two *perirrhantēria* for lustral water, one of gold and the other of silver. An inscription on the gold *perirrhantērion* claims that it is an offering of the Spartans, but they are wrong, [4] for this comes from Croesus, too. Some Delphian inscribed it because he wanted to ingratiate himself with the Spartans. Though I know his name, I will not mention it. But the statue of the boy through whose hand water flows *does* come from the Spartans, though neither of the *perirrhantēria* does. [5] Croesus sent many other uninscribed offerings along with them, including round silver bowls as well as the image of a woman measuring three cubits, which the Delphians say is a likeness of Croesus' baker. In addition, Croesus also dedicated his own wife's necklaces and girdles.

As Pritchett notes, this passage is as much an indicator of the mutability of ἔργα as it is of Herodotus' "critical faculty."<sup>56</sup> Herodotus' refusal, for example, to recall the name of the Delphian who falsely inscribed one of Croesus' περιρραντήρια on behalf of the Spartans (τοῦ ἐπιστάμενος τὸ οὖνομα οὐκ ἐπιμνήσομαι, 1.51.4) provides fitting insights into both of these issues. On one level, Herodotus' omission of the name demonstrates his knowledge of the competing traditions surrounding the περιρραντήριον and thus his control over the narrative and the aetiologies given therein.<sup>57</sup> On another level, the fact that he memorializes a spurious tradition at all shows that while this ἔργον may ultimately have one true verifiable origin, it cannot tell the whole story by itself.<sup>58</sup> It

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<sup>56</sup> Pritchett (1993) 145.

<sup>57</sup> Lateiner (1989) 69. See also Flory (1987) 65 for other types of omissions in addition to the withholding of names.

<sup>58</sup> To this end, compare the mixing bowl in 1.51.2, which is given by Croesus, but is the "work of Theodorus of Samos" (Θεοδώρου τοῦ Σαμίου ἔργον εἶναι, 1.51.3). While this presupposes a distinction

requires not only the discerning gaze of the ἵστωρ to see past the apparently straightforward attribution, but also the simultaneous consideration of other original claims from other sources, which, though false, can themselves furnish truths that have ramifications beyond ἔργα alone.<sup>59</sup> S. West, for example, sees in the story of the forged περιρραντήριον “a warning against undue confidence in epigraphic evidence.”<sup>60</sup>

Alternatively, Arieti sees tacit critiques both of the relationship between the Spartans and the Delphians and of the questionable reputation of the Delphians, the latter of which may serve as a warning “to be wary even when it comes to the oracle at Delphi.”<sup>61</sup>

Though Herodotus leaves it to us to make up our own minds about these possible meanings, the broader context of 1.51 nevertheless signals the unquestionable polyvalence of ἔργα.

This is perhaps best indicated by the lengthy—even leisurely—manner in which Herodotus profiles the contributions of Croesus. On one level, the length of the account grants Herodotus many opportunities to display his acumen in order to explain these ἔργα and thus to transcend the conventions of the inventory.<sup>62</sup> On another level, the sheer

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between dedicator and manufacturer, both could be said to be in their own ways the originators of the ἔργον (cf. the agency of the pyramids and the tomb of Alyattes discussed above).

<sup>59</sup> As Dewald (1987) 160 notes, this contrast is characteristic of Herodotean methodology, in that “most...statements of knowledge or certitude concern a specific and often rather trivial detail - a piece of supporting information in a larger, complex problem that the *histor* does not guarantee in toto”, which nevertheless demonstrates the extent of his inquiry.

<sup>60</sup> West (1985) 280.

<sup>61</sup> Arieti (1995) 70-71. On oracles, see esp. Chapter Five.

<sup>62</sup> On novelty as a driving force behind the account of 1.50-51, see e.g. Parke (1984) 209 ff.: “Everything points to the conclusion that no one had previously described these objects in writing nor recorded their story. So it was appropriate for Herodotus to undertake the task and make them the climax of his account of the kings of Lydia.” Even if Herodotus did borrow from a previously-written source for the Delphic contributions (see Flower (1991) 65 and n. 53), it is unlikely to have evinced any criticism of the ἔργα

number of ἔργα related in 1.51 offers a tangible picture of just how much Croesus had and therefore how much he had to lose.<sup>63</sup> In light of this paradox, it makes sense, then, that Herodotus runs the gamut of criticism in going over great and small alike according to the principle set out at 1.5.3.<sup>64</sup> What's more, because Delphi constitutes one of the largest multi-national repositories for objects in the *Histories*, Herodotus' assessment of the mutability of ἔργα in the case of Croesus' contributions turns out to have major significance beyond the Lydian λόγος.

Indeed, even when Herodotus does not depict himself in the act of observing or interpreting objects, the ability of ἔργα to morph and conceal their original identities may be discerned throughout the narrative of the *Histories* at large. One of the most vivid and memorable examples comes towards the end of the Egyptian λόγος, where the pharaoh Amasis employs a golden footbath to make a point not only about his own origins, but also of origins in general:

Ἀπρίεω δὲ [ᾧδε] καταραιομένην ἐβασίλευσε Ἄμασις, νομοῦ μὲν Σαΐτεω ἐόν, ἐκ τῆς δὲ ἦν πόλιος, οὐνομά οἱ ἐστὶ Σιούφ. [2] Τὰ μὲν δὴ πρῶτα κατόννοντο τὸν Ἄμασιν Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ μοίρῃ μεγάλη ἦγον, ἅτε δὴ δημότην τὸ πρὶν ἐόντα καὶ οἰκίης οὐκ ἐπιφανέος· μετὰ δὲ σοφίῃ αὐτοῦς ὁ Ἄμασις, οὐκ ἀγνωμοσύνη, προσηγάγετο. [3] Ἦν οἱ ἄλλα τε ἀγαθὰ μυρία, ἐν δὲ καὶ ποδανιπτῆρ χρύσεος, ἐν τῷ αὐτὸς τε ὁ Ἄμασις καὶ οἱ δαιτυμόνες οἱ πάντες τοὺς πόδας ἐκάστοτε ἐναπενίζοντο· τοῦτον κατ' ὄν κόψας ἄγαλμα δαίμονος ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐποίησατο καὶ ἴδρυσεν τῆς πόλιος ὅκου ἦν ἐπιτηδεότατον. Οἱ δὲ Αἰγύπτιοι φοιτῶντες πρὸς τῷγαλμα ἐσέβοντο μεγάλως. [4] Μαθὼν δὲ ὁ Ἄμασις τὸ ἐκ τῶν ἀστῶν ποιούμενον, συγκαλέσας Αἰγυπτίους ἐξέφηνε φὰς ἐκ τοῦ ποδανιπτῆρος τῷγαλμα γεγονέναι, ἐς τὸν πρότερον μὲν τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους ἐνεμέειν τε καὶ

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mentioned therein, if the “generally formulaic and predictable” inventories of the Parthenon and other classical sites on the Athenian acropolis are any indicator (see Harris (1995), quotation at p. 22).

<sup>63</sup> Flower (1991) 68. See also Bassi (2014) 184-193 on the ephemerality of Croesus' tangible remains.

<sup>64</sup> Discussed above. Compare Herodotus' detailed account of the Delphic offerings of Croesus' ancestor, Gyges, in 1.14.

ἐνουρέειν καὶ πόδας ἐναπονίζεσθαι, τότε δὲ μεγάλως σέβεσθαι. [5] Ἦδη ὧν ἔφη λέγων ὁμοίως αὐτὸς τῷ ποδανιπτῆρι περηγένοι· εἰ γὰρ πρότερον εἶναι δημότης, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ παρεόντι εἶναι αὐτῶν βασιλεύς· καὶ τιμᾶν τε καὶ προμηθέεσθαι ἑωυτὸν ἐκέλευε. Τοιούτῳ μὲν τρόπῳ προσηγάγετο τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους ὥστε δικαιοῦν δουλεύειν (2.172).

After Apries had been deposed, Amasis became king. He came from the province of Sais from the city called Siouph. [2] At first, the Egyptians despised him and held him in no great esteem because he used to be a commoner and was not from a distinguished family. But later, Amasis won them over not by harshness, but by craft. [3] Among his countless possessions, there was a golden footbath, which Amasis himself and all of his drinking buddies sometimes used to wash their feet in. Now, having broken down this footbath, he made a statue of a god out of it and erected it in the most ideal part of the city, and the Egyptians began to frequent the statue and revere it greatly. [4] When Amasis learned what the people were doing, he gathered the Egyptians together and revealed to them that the statue had been made out of a footbath, in which the Egyptians once used to vomit and piss and wash their feet, but which they now revered greatly. [5] He then went on to say that he himself had fared much as the footbath had, for even if he had been formerly a commoner, he was now their king, so he ordered them to honor and respect him. In this way, he prevailed upon the Egyptians to agree to serve him.

In likening his elevation in power and stature to the elevation of the footbath (ποδανιπτῆρ) from object of scorn to object of veneration (ἄγαλμα), Amasis upends hierarchy, tradition, and expectation in such a way that speaks to the continued relevance of the reversal of fortune motif to the interpretation of ἔργα across the *Histories*.<sup>65</sup> Though it scarcely need be mentioned that Amasis ends up echoing many of the same concerns over great and small which Herodotus himself voices *in propria persona*,<sup>66</sup> the

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<sup>65</sup> For a list of motifs employed in this passage, see e.g. Lloyd (1988) ad loc. Dewald's reading of Amasis as a "deconstructionist" (Dewald (1993) 70, analysis at 59-60) is a major influence on Kurke's largely sociological reading, the most comprehensive discussion of 2.172 (and of Amasis as literary figure) to date (see Kurke (1999) 90-100 (following Kurke (1995) 57-64), esp. 92-95 ad 2.172).

<sup>66</sup> In light of Amasis' reliance on σοφίη to win over his subjects (2.172.2), it is not unlikely that Herodotus would have identified to some extent with this "philosopher king" (Flory (1987) 140), since σοφός, more than any other name, is "what any admiring Greek would have called him [i.e. Herodotus]" (Fowler (1996) 87, see also Thomas (2000) 283-285). That Amasis uses σοφίη much as various "wise-advisers" do throughout the *Histories* (cf. Solon (1.30.2), Artabanus (7.10γ), Demaratus (7.102.1), and Themistocles

precise manner in which Amasis goes about making these known to his people also resonates with such a comparison, but has largely escaped the notice of scholars. For instance, it is significant that the subjects of Amasis could not have had any idea their cherished ἄγαλμα was once a filthy ποδανιπτήρ until the pharaoh gathered them together and brought the fact to light (ἐξέφηνε, 2.172.4).<sup>67</sup> This detail offers additional evidence to support the thesis advocated throughout this chapter that objects require explanation and that λόγοι therefore become inextricable from ἔργα.<sup>68</sup> However, explanation does not entail the judgment of *meaning*, because, as Dewald reminds us, “the meaning of things is very likely to be multiple.”<sup>69</sup> While the footbath of Amasis is an extreme case, we will recall from all of the examples we have considered above that Herodotus declines to judge explicitly the meaning of objects. In this regard, we can see the extent to which all ἔργα are in fact λόγου μέζω for Herodotus. Thus, as much as he succeeds in advancing the course of his inquiry in innovative ways through his interpretations of the origins of ἔργα, Herodotus demonstrates time and again that there is always something beyond what can be known absolutely and definitively. In order to show the extent to which these principles reverberate beyond the Egyptian and Lydian λόγοι, let us conclude by looking

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(8.124.2)) makes this connection all the more salient, inasmuch as wise advisers have been shown to reflect and inscribe Herodotus’ own methodology (see esp. Chapter Six below).

<sup>67</sup> Hollmann (2011) 177.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. 3.43, where Amasis explains (correctly) the symbolism of the ring of Polycrates. On this episode, see e.g. van der Veen (1996) 6-22. Cf. also 2.131, where Herodotus explains the loss of the hands of the statues of Mycerinus’ attendants not as an indication of their purported punishment (according to one tradition), but as a consequence of decay over the ages.

<sup>69</sup> Dewald (1993) 70.



at a formative ἔργον from Book Four as a way of prefacing our upcoming chapter on the Scythian λόγος:

Πλήθος δὲ τὸ Σκυθέων οὐκ οἶός τε ἐγενόμην ἀτρεκέως πυθέσθαι, ἀλλὰ διαφόρους λόγους περὶ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ ἤκουον· καὶ γὰρ κάρτα πολλοὺς εἶναι σφεας καὶ ὀλίγους ὡς Σκύθας εἶναι. [2] Τοσόνδε μέντοι ἀπέφαινον μοι ἐς ὄψιν. Ἔστι μεταξὺ Βορυσθένεός τε ποταμοῦ καὶ Ὑπάνιος χῶρος, οὖνομα δὲ οἷ ἐστι Ἐξαμπαῖος, τοῦ καὶ ὀλίγω τι πρότερον τούτων μνήμην εἶχον, φάμενος ἐν αὐτῷ κρήνην ὕδατος πικροῦ εἶναι ἀπ’ ἧς τὸ ὕδωρ ἀπορρέον τὸν Ὑπανιν ἄποτον ποιεῖν. [3] Ἐν τούτῳ τῷ χώρῳ κεῖται χαλκήιον, μεγάθει καὶ ἐξαπλήσιον τοῦ ἐπὶ στόματι τοῦ Πόντου κρητῆρος, τὸν Πausανίης ὁ Κλεομβρότου ἀνέθηκε· ὃς δὲ μὴ εἶδέ κω τοῦτον, ὧδε δηλώσω· [4] ἑξακοσίους ἀμφορέας εὐπετέως χωρεῖ τὸ ἐν Σκύθησι χαλκήιον, πάχος δὲ τὸ Σκυθικὸν τοῦτο χαλκήιον ἐστὶ δακτύλων ἕξ. Τοῦτο ὧν ἔλεγον οἱ ἐπιχώριοι ἀπὸ ἀρδίων γενέσθαι. [5] Βουλόμενον γὰρ τὸν σφέτερον βασιλέα, τῷ οὖνομα εἶναι Ἀριάνταν, <βουλόμενον> τοῦτον εἰδέναι τὸ πλήθος τὸ Σκυθέων κελεύειν μὲν πάντας Σκύθας ἄρδιον ἕκαστον μίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴστοῦ κομίσει· ὃς δ’ ἂν μὴ κομίση, θάνατον ἀπέειλε. [6] Κομισθῆναι τε δὴ χρῆμα πολλὸν ἀρδίων καὶ οἱ δόξαι ἐξ αὐτέων μνημόσυνον ποιήσαντι λιπέσθαι· ἐκ τουτέων δὲ μιν τὸ χαλκήιον ποιῆσαι τοῦτο καὶ ἀναθεῖναι ἐς τὸν Ἐξαμπαῖον τοῦτον. Ταῦτα δὴ περὶ τοῦ πλήθεος τοῦ Σκυθέων ἤκουον (4.81).

I was not able to reckon the population of the Scythians accurately, but I kept hearing differing accounts of their numbers, for some say that the Scythians—that is, those who are actually Scythians—are very numerous and others that they are few. [2] They did, however, show me the following. Between the Borysthenes and Hypanis rivers there is a place called Exampaeus, which I mentioned just a little while ago when I said that there was a salt spring from which water flows and makes the Hypanis undrinkable.<sup>70</sup> [3] In this place there is a bronze cauldron six times as big as the krater at the mouth of the Black Sea which Pausanias son of Cleombrotus dedicated. For anyone who has not seen it, I will show how this is the case. [4] The cauldron in Scythia easily holds six hundred amphorae and is six fingers thick. The local inhabitants told me that this was made out of arrowheads, [5] for their king, Ariantas, desiring to know the population of the Scythians, ordered all of the Scythians to bring one arrowhead from each of their quivers. Whoever failed to do so was sentenced to death. [6] A great quantity of arrowheads was brought and Ariantas resolved to make a memorial out of them and leave it to posterity. And from these he made this cauldron and dedicated it at this place, Exampaeus. This, then, is what I heard about the population of the

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<sup>70</sup> i.e. 4.52.

Scythians.

One of the most remarkable things about Herodotus' examination of the krater of Ariantas is the way in which he shows the inability of such a grandiose ἔργον to lay out its origins accurately and unequivocally. Though Herodotus acknowledges this from the start (οὐκ οἶός τε ἐγενόμην ἀτρεκέως πυθέσθαι, 4.81.1), he still shows us (ὥδε δηλώσω, 4.81.3) what he *was* able to learn about the krater. By providing its enormous dimensions just as he did in the case of the Labyrinth, the pyramids, and the tomb of Alyattes,<sup>71</sup> Herodotus ends up answering his own question (i.e. whether the Scythians are many or few), having reframed it after coming to a dead end in 4.81.1. Nevertheless, what he sees (Τοσόνδε μέντοι ἀπέφαινόν μοι ἐς ὄψιν, 4.81.2)<sup>72</sup> does not allow him to discern the krater's original function as a physical manifestation of the number of Scythians under Ariantas' rule; rather, the reports (λόγους, 4.81.1) of local informants (Τοῦτο ὧν ἔλεγον οἱ ἐπιχώριοι κ.τ.λ., 4.81.4) must perform this task.<sup>73</sup>

In this respect, Hedrick is right to note the inextricability of sight from sound and thus the inextricability of ἔργον from λόγος in Herodotus' investigation of the krater:

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<sup>71</sup> See 2.148, 2.124-125, and 1.93 respectively (discussed above).

<sup>72</sup> West (2000) 22 advances the minority interpretation (following a hesitant suggestion by Macan (1895) ad loc.) that ἀπέφαινόν μοι ἐς ὄψιν means “they were for showing” (i.e. “they offered to show me”) and thus that Herodotus did not actually see the krater. This is not only a tortured and tendentious reading of the imperfect (ἀπέφαινον), but it is also incompatible with the following section, in which Herodotus implies that he did in fact see the krater (ὅς δὲ μὴ εἶδέ κω τοῦτον κ.τ.λ. (see Pritchett (1993) 136)). Nevertheless, whether Herodotus is actually speaking from autopsy here is immaterial to the larger argument advanced below, that the krater's very appearance, whether seen firsthand or imagined, can only indicate so much by itself.

<sup>73</sup> On local knowledge in the *Histories*, see e.g. Luraghi (2001), who concludes that “through such statements Herodotus is clearly, if implicitly, defining the limits of possible knowledge in time and space” (145) in order “to make explicit what today's oral historians would call its [i.e. local knowledge's] ‘social surface’—that is, the group to which it belongs, the group which holds it to be true” (158-159).

“This same object, then, must serve simultaneously as a reminder and as a verification for oral tradition.”<sup>74</sup> But what it verifies turns out to be just as paradoxical as the methodological dichotomy of λόγος and ἔργον itself. While Herodotus appears to accept that the krater is in fact composed of arrowheads representing all of Ariantas’ subjects,<sup>75</sup> it is impossible for him to learn from it *how many* subjects the Scythian king actually had due to the monument’s plasticity.<sup>76</sup> This ought to defeat the whole purpose behind Ariantas’ desire to commemorate (μνημόσυνον...λιπέσθαι, 4.81.6)<sup>77</sup> the *number* of Scythians in his realm (Βουλόμενον ... τοῦτον εἰδέναι τὸ πλῆθος τὸ Σκυθέων, 4.81.5), but Herodotus does not despair at the inefficacy of ἔργα to preserve memory, as memory, like aetiology, is innately variform. Though Ariantas may stake a claim to this great krater, its composition, based on countless small contributions, indicates how this ἔργον could be considered as much a memorial to the king as to his lowly subjects. In light of the examples we have examined throughout this chapter, it is not surprising, then, that Herodotus distinguishes the layers of the krater as he does even while he points to the

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<sup>74</sup> Hedrick (1995) 63. “It is not simply...that objects are dependent for their meaning on oral accounts. They also play an important role in fixing the tradition. They may be regarded as reminders, prompts which trigger stories which are already known, and as verifications, which demonstrate the truth of the tale. Monuments, for Herodotus, preserve and guarantee oral tradition even as they are dependent on it” (Hedrick (1995) 60). See also n. 14 and accompanying discussion above.

<sup>75</sup> Note again how the introduction of indirect speech immediately before the iconatrophic narrative (ἔλεγον, 4.81.4) implicitly calls the veracity of the whole account into question *ipso facto* (see n. 45). Cf. 2.126 above.

<sup>76</sup> Dewald (1993) 70. We can compare Herodotus’ description of the spits (ὄβελοί) offered as a memorial (μνημῆιον) by the ἑταίρη Rhodopis. Though the spits are supposed to represent a tenth of Rhodopis’ wealth accumulated through prostitution, they can give no numerical indication of *how* wealthy she actually was (2.135.3-4). Kurke (1999) 224 takes this to mean that Herodotus “resolutely *remonetarizes* her offering, dragging it back from the symbolic domain of sacrifice to real money.” This seems excessive, however, in light of Herodotus’ desire to quantify ἔργα as many ways as he can in order to translate greatness empirically and thus objectively (see above, especially the discussion of the Labyrinth).

<sup>77</sup> Cf. 2.126 (discussed above).

shortcomings of this ἔργον. With this contrast in mind, let us now turn to some other episodes from the Scythian λόγος which will speak to the continuities we have already established in earlier chapters with regard to aetiology.

## 4. Same Difference: the Scythian *Logos*

Beginning in the very first paragraph of the Scythian λόγος, we should find ourselves on familiar ground:

Μετὰ δὲ τὴν Βαβυλῶνος αἴρεσιν ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Σκύθας αὐτοῦ Δαρείου ἔλασις. Ἀνθεούσης γὰρ τῆς Ἀσίας ἀνδράσι καὶ χρημάτων μεγάλων συνιόντων ἐπεθύμησε ὁ Δαρεῖος τεῖσασθαι Σκύθας, ὅτι ἐκεῖνοι πρότεροι ἐσβαλόντες ἐς τὴν Μηδικὴν καὶ νικήσαντες μάχῃ τοὺς ἀντιουμένους ὑπῆρξαν ἀδικίης. [2] Τῆς γὰρ ἄνω Ἀσίας ἤρξαν, ὡς καὶ πρότερόν μοι εἴρηται, Σκύθαι ἔτεα δυῶν δέοντα τριήκοντα. Κιμμερίου γὰρ ἐπιδιώκοντες ἐσέβαλον ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην, καταπαύοντες τῆς ἀρχῆς Μήδους· οὗτοι γὰρ πρὶν ἢ Σκύθας ἀπικέσθαι ἤρχον τῆς Ἀσίας (4.1.1-2).

After the capture of Babylon, Darius himself launched an expedition against the Scythians, for he was eager to exact retribution against the Scythians when Asia was full of man-power and large amounts of resources were coming in, since they were the first to commit injustice by invading Media and conquering those who opposed them in battle. [2] As I have said earlier,<sup>1</sup> the Scythians had ruled upper Asia for twenty-eight years, for in their pursuit of the Cimmerians, they invaded Asia and stripped the Medes of their empire, who used to rule Asia before the Scythians arrived.

That Darius' expedition against the Scythians is predicated on avenging (τεῖσασθαι, 4.1.1) a primal injustice (ὑπῆρξαν ἀδικίης, 4.1.1) ought to immediately recall the series of tit for tat retributions which first set Greeks and barbarians against one another according to the proem to the *Histories*.<sup>2</sup> However, just as Herodotus limited the causal force of vengeance in the proem,<sup>3</sup> so too does he suggest in the introduction to the Scythian λόγος that vengeance is not the sole explanation in this case either. Herodotus indicates as much

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. 1.104-106.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. esp. 1.2.1: Οὕτω μὲν Ἴουδν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπικέσθαι λέγουσι Πέρσαι, οὐκ ὡς Ἕλληνας, **καὶ τῶν ἀδικημάτων πρῶτον τοῦτο ἄρξαι**. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Ἕλλήνων τινάς (οὐ γὰρ ἔχουσι τοῦνομα ἀπηγγήσασθαι) φασι τῆς Φοινίκης ἐς Τύρον προσσχόντας ἀρπάσαι τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν θυγατέρα Εὐρώπην· εἶψαν δ' ἂν οὗτοι Κρήτες. Ταῦτα μὲν διή ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα σφι γενέσθαι· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Ἕλληνας αἰτίους τῆς δευτέρας ἀδικίης γενέσθαι.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter One above.

when he relates in the same breath that Darius embarked on a retributive campaign against the Scythians when Asia was at the height of its power and was flush with resources (Ἀνθεούσης γὰρ τῆς Ἀσίας ἀνδράσι καὶ χρημάτων μεγάλων συνιόντων ἐπεθύμησε ὁ Δαρεῖος τείσασθαι Σκύθας, 4.1.1).<sup>4</sup> Though it is difficult to determine whether vengeance here amounts to a pretext for expansionism or whether it may itself be considered “an immediate cause”,<sup>5</sup> there can be no denying that the aetiology of the Persian invasion of Scythia is fundamentally multiple.<sup>6</sup> So, while it is not unreasonable to attribute Darius’ desire for retribution to Herodotus’ own fondness for explanations based on reciprocity,<sup>7</sup> the juxtaposition noted above in 4.1.1 implies that vengeance is but one part of a much larger causal complex.

The Scythian λόγος thus challenges us from the start to look past surface impressions and to engage broadly and mindfully with the forthcoming narrative as it relates to the *Histories* as a whole. In this regard, Herodotus’ integrative yet open-ended approach to the origins of the Persian invasion of Scythia may already be seen to echo programmatic patterns we have brought to the fore of discussion in previous chapters. Far from being an isolated case, though, the introduction to the Scythian λόγος will be shown

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<sup>4</sup> Hunter (1982) 188-190 and Evans (1991) 17-19. See also Immerwahr (1966) 107-109.

<sup>5</sup> Hunter (1982) 202. Hunter (1982) 188 also notes that while the Scythians themselves recognize vengeance as a viable motive for Darius’ campaign, they cannot rule out an expansionist motive either, because the Persians had previously conducted campaigns against other peoples (e.g. the Thracians) with whom they had no pre-existing grievances (see 4.118.4; cf. 3.134 and 7.20.2). The historical record also points to a multiplicity of reasons for a Persian incursion (including just such an explanation from *Realpolitik*), though none has won universal approval among modern scholars (see Gardiner-Garden (1987) 342-345). For a general overview of the historicity of Herodotus’ account of Darius’ campaign, see e.g. Georges (1987).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. esp. 1.4 (discussed in Chapter 1.2 above).

<sup>7</sup> i.e. West (2002b) 437-439, after Gould (1989) 42-85. On reciprocity, see Chapter One above.

to prefigure Herodotus' presentation and understanding of aetiology throughout the *λόγος* at large. From this perspective, the following chapter will ultimately demonstrate that the Scythian *λόγος* is not the anomaly it is often made out to be, but that it occupies a rightful place in the methodological framework of the *Histories*.<sup>8</sup>

#### ***4.1 The Origins of the Scythians***

After closing the ring opened in 4.1.1 by relating how Darius was now marshaling an army to exact retribution against the Scythians (Τῶν δὲ εἵνεκα ὁ Δαρεῖος τεῖσασθαι βουλόμενος συνήγειρε ἐπ' αὐτοὺς στράτευμα, 4.4),<sup>9</sup> we expect the Persian invasion to proceed forthwith. However, we must wait nearly eighty chapters before the expedition can ultimately commence. This deferral finds immediate comparison with the opening of the Egyptian *λόγος*, which also anticipates a Persian invasion that takes many chapters to manifest.<sup>10</sup> This is not mere happenstance, however. As the intervening accounts of the origins, the land, and the customs of the Scythians unfold, we are asked time and again to look back to the Egyptian *λόγος* and by extension to the proem as well, since they offer many of the same keys to unlocking the riddles posed by the Scythian *λόγος*. And yet, few have ever sought to connect the Scythian *λόγος* with these analogues in any substantive way.<sup>11</sup> However, to ignore their influence would be to disregard the essence

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<sup>8</sup> See e.g. West (2004a) 86, echoing much the same sentiments of Jacoby (1913) et al. about publication and completeness that have been used to portray the Egyptian *λόγος* as an outlier among the constituent *λόγοι* of the *Histories* (see notes 6 and 18 in Chapter Two above).

<sup>9</sup> On ring composition in the opening of the Scythian *λόγος*, see Asheri et al. (2007) ad 4.4 (following Corcella (1993) ad loc).

<sup>10</sup> i.e. 3.1, following up on 2.1.2 (see Chapter 2.1 above).

<sup>11</sup> One of Dewald's main criticisms of Hartog (1988), which is still the most comprehensive study of the Scythian *λόγος* to date, is the structuralist's failure to consider more evidence external to Book Four in

of the Scythian λόγος itself. Some comparanda will therefore be offered to make a case for reading this λόγος as an integral part of Herodotus' work as a whole.

The extent to which the proem to the *Histories* and the *bekos* experiment resonate with the Scythian λόγος becomes clear in the first of a series of three aetiological narratives which portend the importance of multiplicity to Herodotus' accounts of the Scythians later on in Book Four:

(5.) Ὡς δὲ Σκύθαι λέγουσι, νεώτατον ἀπάντων ἐθνέων εἶναι τὸ σφέτερον, τοῦτο δὲ γενέσθαι ὧδε. Ἄνδρα γενέσθαι πρῶτον ἐν τῇ γῆ ταύτῃ εὐρύση ἐρήμῳ τῷ οὐνομα εἶναι Ταργίταιον· τοῦ δὲ Ταργιτάου τούτου τοὺς τοκέας λέγουσι εἶναι, ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες, λέγουσι δ' ὧν, Δία τε καὶ Βορυσθένης τοῦ ποταμοῦ θυγατέρα. [2] Γένεος μὲν τοιοῦτου δὴ τινος γενέσθαι τὸν Ταργίταιον, τούτου δὲ γενέσθαι παῖδας τρεῖς, Λιπόξαιν καὶ Ἀρπόξαιν καὶ νεώτατον Κολάξαιν. [3] Ἐπὶ τούτων ἀρχόντων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ φερόμενα χρύσεια ποιήματα, ἄροτρον τε καὶ ζυγὸν καὶ σάγαριν καὶ φιάλην, πεσεῖν ἐς τὴν Σκυθικήν, καὶ τῶν ἰδόντα πρῶτον τὸν πρεσβύτατον ἄσπον ἰέναι βουλόμενον αὐτὰ λαβεῖν, τὸν δὲ χρυσὸν ἐπιόντος καίεσθαι. [4] Ἀπαλλαχθέντος δὲ τούτου προσιέναι τὸν δεύτερον, καὶ τὸν αὐτὶς ταῦτα ποιέειν. Τοὺς μὲν δὴ καιόμενον τὸν χρυσὸν ἀπόσασθαι, τρίτῳ δὲ τῷ νεωτάτῳ ἐπελθόντι κατασβῆναι, καὶ μιν ἐκεῖνον κομίσει ἐς ἐωυτοῦ· καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ἀδελφεοὺς πρὸς ταῦτα συγγνόντας τὴν βασιληίην πᾶσαν παραδοῦναι τῷ νεωτάτῳ. (6.) Ἀπὸ μὲν δὴ Λιποξάϊος γεγονέναι τούτους τῶν Σκυθέων οἱ Αὐχάται γένος καλέονται, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ μέσου Ἀρποξάϊος οἱ Κατίαροί τε καὶ Τράσπιες καλέονται, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ νεωτάτου αὐτῶν τοῦ βασιλέως οἱ καλέονται Παραλάται. [2] Σύμπασι δὲ εἶναι οὐνομα Σκολότους· Σκύθας δὲ Ἑλληνες ὠνόμασαν, τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπωνυμίην. (7.) Γεγονέναι μὲν νυν σφέας ὧδε λέγουσι οἱ Σκύθαι, ἔτεα δὲ σφίσι ἐπέιτε γεγονάσι τὰ σύμπαντα λέγουσι εἶναι ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου βασιλέως Ταργιτάου ἐς τὴν Δαρείου διάβασιν τὴν ἐπὶ σφέας χιλίων οὐ πλέω ἀλλὰ τῶσαυτα. Τὸν δὲ χρυσὸν τοῦτον τὸν ἱρὸν φυλάσσουσι οἱ βασιλέες ἐς τὰ μάλιστα καὶ θυσίησι μεγάλῃσι ἱλασκόμενοι μετέρχονται ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος. (4.5-4.7.1).

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reading the *Histories* as “one sustained interpretive movement”, especially from Book Two (Dewald (1990) 219-220, quotation at 219). Benardete (1969) 99-132 is one of only a handful of scholars to deal substantively with the relationship between the Scythian and Egyptian λόγοι, but his insightful and thought-provoking discussion too often gets sidetracked by anachronistic notions of a kind of Platonic mimesis. Cf. Ward (2008) 43-63.



(5.) The Scythians say that theirs is the youngest of all nations and that it came about in this way. The first man to be born in this land when it was uninhabited was named Targitaüs. They say (though they do not seem to me to be trustworthy, but they say it all the same) that the parents of this Targitaüs were Zeus and a daughter of the river Borysthenes. [2] In any case, they say that Targitaüs was the product of some such union, and that he had three sons: Lipaxaïs, Arpoxaïs, and the youngest, Colaxaïs. [3] In the reign of these men, golden objects came from the sky and fell upon Scythian territory: a plow, a yoke, an ax, and a bowl. Seeing these objects first, the eldest son drew near out of a desire to take hold of them, but the gold burned when he approached. [4] When he left, the second went forward and the same thing happened to him. The burning gold drove both of them back, but the gold stopped burning when the youngest of the three went up to it, and he took the golden objects with him. In light of this, the elder brothers then agreed to give the kingdom to the youngest. (6.) From Lipaxaïs, those Scythians of the class called Auchatae were born, from Arpoxaïs (the middle son), those Scythians called Catiaroi and Traspies, and from the youngest (their king), those called Paralatae. [2] Together, they are called Scolotoi, but the Greeks gave them the name “Scythians” after the king. (7.) Now the Scythians say that they came about in this way, and that all the years that have passed since the time of the first king Targitaüs up until Darius’ crossing into their territory amount to a thousand—no more, no less. And the kings guard this sacred gold jealously and they approach it with great sacrifices in propitiation every year.

What should strike us straightaway about the opening of this account is how the Scythians begin their aetiological narrative with a superlative like the Egyptians before them. Though the Scythians consider themselves to be “the youngest of all nations” (νεώτατον ἀπάντων ἐθνέων, 4.5.1) instead of the “first of all peoples” (πρώτους...πάντων ἀνθρώπων, 2.2.1), this distinction should cause us to be just as wary as we were at the start of the *bekos* experiment, since superlative claims have already been shown to rebuff expectations and to circumscribe knowledge throughout the *Histories*.<sup>12</sup> Another note of caution is indicated by the framing of the superlative claim within the verb λέγουσι

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<sup>12</sup> See especially the discussion of 2.2-3 in Chapter 2.1 above (following Bloomer (1993)). Bloomer, however, makes no connection between the superlative claims in 4.5.1 and 2.2.1, but then again, neither do most scholars (see however Benardete (1969) 101-103).

(4.5.1) as a way of introducing an elaborate chain of indirect statements that will extend to all three aetiological tales and so implicitly call into question the *Märchen*-like narrative that ensues.<sup>13</sup> And yet, while we are directed by the *oratio obliqua* to evaluate the veracity of what follows, it is telling that Herodotus himself never questions the truth of the account, but only disputes the trustworthiness of one aspect of it (ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες, 4.5.1), namely, the assertion that Targitaüs possessed a divine lineage.<sup>14</sup>

The lack of any categorical distinction based on truth in this first aetiological tale may stem from several factors. One possibility, for instance, may be owed to the fact that the ritual of the sacred gold described in 4.7.1 substantiates the story told in 4.5 because it is still performed, as it seems, in Herodotus' day.<sup>15</sup> Another possibility (and one I will advocate here) is that Herodotus recognizes that this narrative is just one piece of the puzzle and so must preclude a consensus of interpretation until additional perspectives

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. 4.8.1 (discussed below): Σκύθαι μὲν ὄδε...λέγουσι, Ἑλλήνων δὲ...ὄδε. On the ambiguous role of *oratio obliqua* in this passage, which mirrors Herodotus' own place between poetry and science, see e.g. Aly (1969) 114-115. See also Cooper (1974) 42 (ad loc.) and the nuanced follow-up of Harrison (2000) 250.

<sup>14</sup> *Contra* Bickerman (1952) 69 and Hartog (1988) 22, who see this statement indicating the overall falsehood of the narrative (cf. 4.11.1, discussed below). This sort of targeted claim is a tactic employed by the ἵστωρ to show the breadth of his critical acumen as well as its limitations (Dewald (1987) 160-161). However, the reliability of one aspect of a set of traditions is not an insurmountable obstacle to a greater truth. To this end, see e.g. Chiasson (2012b), who argues that Herodotus' recounting of the rise and fall of Cyrus manages to capture "a fundamental truth about the strength and weakness of humanity that Greeks are accustomed to discern in the experience of their own native heroes" (232), based on sources which exhibit varying degrees of trustworthiness (see 1.95 and 1.214.5 for these acknowledgements *in propria persona*).

<sup>15</sup> Compare the Scythian belt-clasps (4.10.1, 4.10.3) and the Scythian tombs (4.11.4) in the following two aetiologies, whose survival up until Herodotus' own day also serves to substantiate the stories told about them (see Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012) 32-33). In light of the conclusions reached in Chapter Three about the λόγος/ ἔργον dichotomy, it makes sense that Herodotus acknowledges both tangible and intangible components of these aetiologies in tandem without accepting or denying either one completely. This even-handedness may also be a result of Herodotus' pious "discretion" in dealing with aetiologies of rituals (see Harrison (2000) 188-189).

have been weighed.<sup>16</sup> This would be in keeping not only with Herodotus' persistent objections to taking a part to represent the whole, but also with what the passage itself says about parts and their whole. As Lincoln notes, for example, each of the golden objects that falls from the sky corresponds with a different Scythian class (γένος, 4.6.1), all of which collectively betoken the diversity of the Scythian *peoples* (Σύμψασι δὲ εἶναι οὖνομα Σκολότους κ.τ.λ, 4.6.2).<sup>17</sup> Though Hartog wants to read this episode as a means of privileging the aristocratic class because the son of Targitaüs who is destined to rule (i.e. Colaxaïs) is the only one able to collect the gold,<sup>18</sup> his interpretation falls short, since Colaxaïs is only able to become king once he has received *all* of the golden objects representing *all* of the Scythian classes (4.5.4).<sup>19</sup> Truly, then, “the multiplicity of things cannot be reduced to one.”<sup>20</sup>

It thus stands to reason that Herodotus exemplifies multivalence here as a result not only of the fundamental heterogeneity of his aetiology and methodology, but also as a result of where this account falls in relation to the analogous *bekos* experiment. Just as Herodotus predicates his inquiry in the case of the latter not only what the Memphites say

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. 3.9, where Herodotus offers two accounts for how Cambyses watered his army on the march to Egypt. In spite of his misgivings about the reliability one of these accounts, Herodotus is obliged to recount the less credible version because it is still a part of the tradition (Οὗτος μὲν ὁ πιθανώτερος τῶν λόγων εἶρηται, δεῖ δὲ καὶ τὸν ἥσσον πιθανόν, ἐπεὶ γε δὴ λέγεται, ῥηθῆναι, 3.9.2).

<sup>17</sup> Lincoln (1986) 157-158, following Christensen (1914) 137-138, Dumézil (1930) 119-121, Benveniste (1938) 534-537, et al. See also Lincoln (1991) 192 for additional bibliography.

<sup>18</sup> Hartog (1988) 21, 195.

<sup>19</sup> Lincoln (1986) 158. Further evidence to support the thesis that the golden objects collected by Colaxaïs symbolize different Scythian classes is found in comparing 4.5-6 with a passage in Curtius Rufus (7.8.17-18, quoted at Lincoln (1986) 158 n. 41), in which Scythian ambassadors inform Alexander the Great that they use what appears to be the same golden bowl cited by Herodotus for ritual libations.

<sup>20</sup> Benardete (1969) 41, ad. 2.28 and 2.2-3 (see Chapter 2.2 above).

(2.2) but also on what the Thebans and the Heliopolitans relate (2.3), his decision to follow up on the first account of the origins of Scythians (4.6-8) with a second accords with a pattern established early in the Egyptian λόγος: like 2.2-3, the sequel to 4.6-8 will signal a range of themes and interpretations that belie an “either...or” understanding of who the Scythians are:

(8.) Σκύθαι μὲν ὧδε ὑπὲρ σφέων τε αὐτῶν καὶ τῆς χώρας τῆς κατύπερθε λέγουσι, Ἑλλήνων δὲ οἱ τὸν Πόντον οἰκέοντες ὧδε. Ἡρακλέα ἐλαύνοντα τὰς Γηρυόνας βοῦς ἀπικέσθαι ἐς γῆν ταύτην ἐοῦσαν ἐρήμην, ἦντινα νῦν Σκύθαι νέμονται. [2] Γηρυόνην δὲ οἰκέειν ἔξω τοῦ Πόντου, κατοικημένον τὴν Ἑλληνες λέγουσι Ἐρύθειαν νῆσον, τὴν πρὸς Γηδείροισι τοῖσι ἔξω Ἡρακλέων στηλέων ἐπὶ τῷ Ὠκεανῷ· τὸν δὲ Ὠκεανὸν λόγῳ μὲν λέγουσι ἀπὸ ἡλίου ἀνατολέων ἀρξάμενον γῆν περὶ πᾶσαν ῥέειν, ἔργῳ δὲ οὐκ ἀποδεικνύουσι. [3] Ἐνθεῦτεν τὸν Ἡρακλέα ὡς ἀπικέσθαι ἐς τὴν νῦν Σκυθικὴν χώραν καλεομένην, —καταλαβεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν χειμῶνά τε καὶ κρυμὸν, —ἐπειρυσάμενον [δὲ] τὴν λεοντέην κατυπνῶσαι, τὰς δὲ οἱ ἵππους τὰς ὑπὸ τοῦ ἄρματος νεμομένας ἐν τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ ἀφανισθῆναι θεῖη τύχη. (9.) Ὡς δ’ ἐγερθῆναι τὸν Ἡρακλέα, δίξισθαι, πάντα δὲ τῆς χώρας ἐπεξελθόντα τέλος ἀπικέσθαι ἐς τὴν Ὑλαίην καλεομένην γῆν· ἐνθαῦτα δὲ αὐτὸν εὔρειν ἐν ἄντρῳ μίξοπάρθενόν τινα ἔχιδναν διφυέα, τῆς τὰ μὲν ἄνω ἀπὸ τῶν γλουτῶν εἶναι γυναικός, τὰ δὲ ἔνερθε ὄφις. [2] Ἰδόντα δὲ καὶ θαμάσαντα ἐπειρέσθαι μιν εἴ κου εἶδεν ἵππους πλανωμένας. Τὴν δὲ φάναι ἐωυτὴν ἔχειν καὶ οὐκ ἀποδώσειν ἐκείνῳ πρὶν ἢ οἱ μίχθῃ· τὸν δὲ Ἡρακλέα μίχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ μισθῷ τούτῳ. [3] Κεῖνην τε δὴ ὑπερβάλλεσθαι τὴν ἀπόδοσιν τῶν ἵππων, βουλομένην ὡς πλεῖστον χρόνον συνεῖναι τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ, καὶ τὸν κομισάμενον ἐθέλειν ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι. Τέλος δὲ ἀποδιδούσαν αὐτὴν εἰπεῖν· «Ἴππους μὲν δὴ ταύτας ἀπικομένας ἐνθάδε ἔσωσά τοι ἐγώ, σῶστρα δὲ σὺ παρέσχε· ἔχω γὰρ ἐκ σέο παῖδας τρεῖς. [4] Τούτους, ἐπεὰν γένωνται τρόφιες, ὅ τι χρεὶ ποιέειν ἐξηγέο σύ, εἴτε αὐτοῦ κατοικίζω (χώρας γὰρ τῆσδε ἔχω τὸ κράτος αὐτή) εἴτε ἀποπέμπω παρὰ σέ.» Τὴν μὲν δὴ ταῦτα ἐπειρωτᾶν, τὸν δὲ λέγουσι πρὸς ταῦτα εἰπεῖν· [5] «Ἐπεὰν ἀνδρωθέντας ἴδῃαι τοὺς παῖδας, τάδε ποιέουσα οὐκ ἂν ἀμαρτάνοις· τὸν μὲν ἂν ὄρᾳς αὐτῶν τότε [τὸ] τόξον ὧδε διατεινόμενον καὶ τῷ ζωστῆρι τῷδε κατὰ τάδε ζωννύμενον, τοῦτον μὲν τῆσδε τῆς χώρας οἰκίτορα ποιεῦ· ὅς δ’ ἂν τούτων τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἐντέλλομαι λείπηται, ἔκπεμπε ἐκ τῆς χώρας. Καὶ ταῦτα ποιέουσα αὐτὴ τε εὐφρανεαὶ καὶ τὰ ἐντεταλμένα ποιήσεις.» (10.) Τὸν μὲν δὴ εἰρύσαντα τῶν τόξων τὸ ἕτερον (δύο γὰρ δὴ φορέειν τέως Ἡρακλέα) καὶ τὸν ζωστῆρα προδέξαντα παραδοῦναι τὸ τόξον τε καὶ τὸν ζωστῆρα ἔχοντα ἐπ’ ἄκρης τῆς συμβολῆς φιάλην χρυσέην, δόντα δὲ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι. Τὴν δ’, ἐπεὶ οἱ γενομένους τοὺς παῖδας ἀνδρωθῆναι, τοῦτο μὲν σφι οὐνόματα θέσθαι, τῷ μὲν Ἀγάθουρσον αὐτῶν, τῷ δ’ ἐπομένῳ Γελωνόν, Σκύθην δὲ τῷ νεωτάτῳ· τοῦτο δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς

μεμνημένην αὐτὴν ποιῆσαι τὰ ἐντεταλμένα. [2] Καὶ δὴ δύο μὲν οἱ τῶν παίδων, τὸν τε Ἀγάθυρσον καὶ τὸν Γελωνόν, οὐκ οἴους τε γενομένους ἐξικέσθαι πρὸς τὸν προκείμενον ἄεθλον, οἷχεσθαι ἐκ τῆς χώρας ἐκβληθέντας ὑπὸ τῆς γειναμένης, τὸν δὲ νεώτατον αὐτῶν Σκύθην ἐπιτελέσαντα καταμεῖναι ἐν τῇ χώρῃ. [3] Καὶ ἀπὸ μὲν Σκύθειο τοῦ Ἡρακλέος γενέσθαι τοὺς αἰεὶ βασιλέας γινομένους Σκυθέων, ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς φιάλης ἔτι καὶ ἐς τότε φιάλας ἐκ τῶν ζωστήρων φορέειν Σκύθας. Τὸ δὲ μεῖναι μηχανήσασθαι τὴν μητέρα Σκύθη. Ταῦτα δὲ Ἑλλήνων οἱ τὸν Πόντον οἰκέοντες λέγουσι (4.8-10).

(8.) This is what the Scythians say about themselves and the land to the north, but the Greeks who live around the Black Sea say the following, that Heracles, in driving Geryon's cattle, reached this land which the Scythians now inhabit but was then uninhabited. [2] Geryon lived outside the region surrounding the Black Sea, having settled on the island which the Greeks call Erytheia near Gadeira, outside the Pillars of Heracles on the shores of Ocean. They say that Ocean begins where the sun rises and flows around the whole world, but they do not show this to be so in point of fact. [3] From there, they say that when Heracles reached the land now called Scythia, he pulled his lion skin over himself and fell fast asleep, for bad weather and bitter cold had overtaken him. At this time, his mares disappeared by divine fortune while they were yoked to his chariot. (9.) When Heracles awoke, he began to look for them, and having searched all over, he finally came to the land called Hylaea. There in a cave he found a half-viper/half-maiden, who from the buttocks up was a woman, and from the buttocks down was a snake. [2] After seeing her and being amazed, he asked if she had seen his mares wandering about somewhere. She replied that she herself had them and would not give them back until he had sex with her, and Heracles did have sex with her according to these terms. [3] However, she kept postponing the return of the mares out of a desire to be with Heracles as long as possible, though he wanted to take them and go. Finally, after giving them back, she said, "I kept these mares safe for you here when they arrived, and you gave me a thank-offering in return, for I have three sons by you. [4] When they have come of age, tell me what to do with them. Should I settle them here (for I myself have power over this land) or should I send them to you?" This is what she asked, and they say that he gave this reply. [5] "When you see that the boys have become men, you would not be mistaken to do the following. Whichever one of them you see stringing this bow like this and putting on this belt like so, make *that* one settler of this land. Whoever fails in these tasks which I enjoin, expel him from this land. And if you do these things, you will gladden yourself and do what I have commanded." (10.) Then, having strung one of his bows (for Heracles used to carry two up until then) and having showed her how to put on the belt, he gave her both the bow and the belt, which had a golden cup on the tip of the buckle, and then left. Once the boys had grown into men, she gave them names: Agathyrsos to the eldest, Gelonus to the next, and Scythes to the youngest. Then, remembering her instructions, she

did as she had been commanded. [2] Two of her sons, Agathysus and Gelonus, were unable to pass the test that lay before them, so they went away, having been thrown out of the land by their mother. The youngest of them, however, passed the test and stayed in the land. [3] And from Scythes, son of Heracles, came those Scythians who are always kings, and because of his cup, the Scythians still carry golden cups on their belts to this day. This is the only thing Scythes' mother did for him. This, then, is what the Greeks who live around the Black Sea say.

Apart from the general bizarreness of this second aetiology (which Herodotus only questions implicitly with indirect speech, but in no way refutes),<sup>21</sup> one of the most striking aspects of the account of the Greeks who live around the Black Sea is how jumbled the lineage of Scythes, Agathysus and Gelonus turns out to be. That they are the offspring of an indigenous half-viper/half-human (μιξοπάρθενόν τινα ἔχιδναν διφυέα, 4.9.1) and of a Greek demigod (i.e. Heracles) should cause us to take note of how remarkably heterogeneous the Scythians are and thus how difficult they will be to classify later on, standing astride the facile categories of beast, barbarian, “other”, or even “Scythian” as they already do here.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, the amalgam that the Scythians represent collectively should also prompt us to think about the many pieces that constitute the whole of their origins. When we do, we find that the account of the Greeks in 4.8-10, like that of the Scythians before them in 4.5-7, is ultimately unable to stand on its own, but must work together with the other accounts.

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<sup>21</sup> On *oratio obliqua*, see n. 13 above and the corresponding discussion. Vandiver (1991) 172-181 is right to point out that Herodotus never in fact marks out the *spatium mythicum* from the *spatium historicum* anywhere in this episode in spite of its outlandishness.

<sup>22</sup> In a typical contradiction, Hartog emphasizes such polar extremes (including “distantness”) even while noting how the Scythians embody many of the same ambiguities innate in their mythical progenitors (see Hartog (1988) 23-27). Skinner (2012) 170-172 takes these contrasts to be indicative of the hybridity of Greco-Scythian society, as evidenced by remains from material culture.

On one level, this may be due to the fact that the respective accounts contradict one another<sup>23</sup> in spite of exhibiting a few common motifs (e.g. three sons, trials based upon the use of objects still used in Herodotus' time,<sup>24</sup> etc.).<sup>25</sup> On another level, the failure of either account to take precedence may also be owed to the fact that the two narratives are mostly concerned with two different aetiological questions: in the former, how the Scythians came to be organized as a society, and in the latter, how the Scythians came to exist in the first place. Though these questions are not mutually exclusive, the progression from a sociological to a biological line of inquiry asks the reader to dig deeper and so seek the ultimate source of the Scythians. It is natural, then, that Herodotus continues his search and comes to offer a third aetiological account according to a now familiar pattern:

(11.) Ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἄλλος λόγος ἔχων ὧδε, τῷ μάλιστα λεγομένῳ αὐτὸς πρόσκειμαι. Σκύθας τοὺς νομάδας οἰκέοντας ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ, πολέμῳ πεισθέντας ὑπὸ Μασσαγετέων, οἴχεσθαι διαβάντας ποταμὸν Ἀράξην ἐπὶ γῆν τὴν Κιμμερίην· τὴν γὰρ νῦν νέμονται Σκύθαι, αὕτη λέγεται τὸ παλαιὸν εἶναι Κιμμερίων. [2] Τοὺς δὲ Κιμμερίου ἐπιόντων Σκυθέων βουλευέσθαι ὡς στρατοῦ ἐπιόντος μεγάλου· καὶ δὴ τὰς γνώμας σφέων κεχωρισμένας, ἐντόνους μὲν ἀμφοτέρας, ἀμείνω δὲ τὴν τῶν βασιλέων· τὴν μὲν γὰρ [δὴ] τοῦ δήμου φέρειν γνώμην ὡς ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι πρῆγμα εἴη μηδὲ πρὸς πολλοὺς δέοι μένοντας κινδυνεύειν, τὴν δὲ τῶν βασιλέων διαμάχεσθαι περὶ τῆς χώρας τοῖσι ἐπιούσι. [3] Οὐκ ὦν δὴ ἐθέλειν πείθεσθαι οὔτε τοῖσι βασιλεῦσι τὸν δῆμον οὔτε τῷ δήμῳ τοὺς βασιλέας. Τοὺς μὲν δὲ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι βουλευέσθαι ἀμαχητὶ τὴν χώραν παραδιδόντας τοῖσι ἐπιούσι, τοῖσι δὲ βασιλεῦσι δόξαι ἐν τῇ ἐωυτῶν κείσθαι ἀποθανόντας μηδὲ συμφεύγειν τῷ δήμῳ, λογισαμένους ὅσα τε ἀγαθὰ πεπόνθασιν καὶ ὅσα φεύγοντας ἐκ τῆς πατρίδος κακὰ ἐπίδοξα καταλαμβάνειν. [4] Ὡς δὲ δόξαι σφὶ ταῦτα,

<sup>23</sup> On difference and agreement in these narratives, see 4.12.3 (discussed below).

<sup>24</sup> On the significance of objects in the Scythian aetiologies, see n. 15 above.

<sup>25</sup> Though Fehling (1989) 45-46 considers this account to be the product of Greek literature alone (particularly of Hesiodic epic), the role of indigenous influence in fixing traditions which appear to have existed independent of 4.8-10 cannot be denied (see e.g. Asheri et al. (2007) 577-578 for evidence external to the *Histories* for the Greco-Scythian syncretism of Heracles).

διαστάντας καὶ ἀριθμὸν ἴσους γενομένους μάχεσθαι πρὸς ἀλλήλους· καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἀποθανόντας πάντας ὑπ' ἑαυτῶν θάψαι τὸν δῆμον τῶν Κιμμερίων· παρὰ ποταμὸν Τύρην (καὶ σφεων ἔτι δῆλός ἐστι ὁ τάφος), θάψαντας δὲ οὕτω τὴν ἔξοδον ἐκ τῆς χώρας ποιέεσθαι. Σκύθας δὲ ἐπελθόντας λαβεῖν τὴν χώραν ἐρήμην. (12.) Καὶ νῦν ἔστι μὲν ἐν τῇ Σκυθικῇ Κιμμέρια τεῖχεα, ἔστι δὲ πορθμῆια Κιμμέρια, ἔστι δὲ καὶ χώρα οὖνομα Κιμμερίη, ἔστι δὲ Βόσπορος Κιμμέριος καλεόμενος. [2] Φαίνονται δὲ οἱ Κιμμέριοι φυγόντες ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην τοὺς Σκύθας καὶ τὴν χερσόνησον κτίσαντες ἐν τῇ νῦν Σινώπῃ πόλις Ἑλλάς οἴκηται· φανεροὶ δὲ εἰσι καὶ οἱ Σκύθαι διώξαντες αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐσβαλόντες ἐς γῆν τὴν Μηδικήν, ἀμαρτόντες τῆς ὁδοῦ· [3] οἱ μὲν γὰρ Κιμμέριοι αἰεὶ τὴν παρὰ θάλασσαν ἔφευγον, οἱ δὲ Σκύθαι ἐν δεξιῇ τὸν Καύκασιν ἔχοντες ἐδίωκον ἐς οὗ ἐσέβαλον ἐς γῆν τὴν Μηδικήν, ἐς μεσόγαιαν τῆς ὁδοῦ τραφθέντες. Οὗτος δὲ ἄλλος ξυνοδὸς Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ Βαρβάρων λεγόμενος λόγος εἴρηται (4.11-12).

(11.) There is yet another story, to which I myself am particularly inclined, that goes like this. Having been pressured in war by the Massagetae, the nomadic Scythian tribes living in Asia left and crossed the river Araxes into Cimmerian territory, for the land which the Scythians now inhabit is said to have belonged to the Cimmerians long ago. [2] When the Scythians were marching against them, the Cimmerians debated what to do in light of the invasion of a great army. Opinion was split—both sides were firmly entrenched, but the judgment of the princes was better, for the judgment of the common people held that it was advantageous to leave and that there was no need to risk sticking it out against so many invaders, while the judgment of the princes held that they should do their utmost to defend their land from the invaders. [3] Each side refused to be persuaded by the other. The common people decided to leave their land without a fight and hand it over to the invaders, while the princes resolved to lie in their own land once they were dead and not to flee with the common people, having recalled all the good things they had enjoyed and all the terrible things that would likely overtake them if they fled their homeland. [4] Since these were their decisions, the princes split into two equal groups and fought against each other. They all died at one another's hands and the Cimmerian commoners buried them by the river Tyras, where their tombs can still be seen. Having buried them in this way, they made their way out of the land, and the Scythians invaded and took an uninhabited land. (12.) Even now in Scythian territory there are Cimmerian walls, Cimmerian ferry crossings, a piece of land called Cimmeria, and a Cimmerian Bosphorus. [2] It is clear that the Cimmerians fled from the Scythians into Asia and settled the peninsula where the Greek city of Sinope now stands. It is also clear that the Scythians chased after them and invaded Median territory because they lost their way, [3] for the Cimmerians always fled along the coast, while the Scythians kept the Caucasus on their right in their pursuit up until the point when they invaded Median territory, where they turned inland. This, then, is another



account that is told by Greeks and barbarians alike.

By placing his own aetiological account immediately after those of the Scythians (4.5-7) and the Greeks (4.8-10), Herodotus in effect echoes the priamels found at the end of the proem (1.5.3) and at the end of the *bekos* experiment (2.2-3). Even if these two precedents were not apparent,<sup>26</sup> the conspicuous tripartite divisions (i.e. three brothers, three lands) as voiced by two national authorities (Σκύθαι μὲν ᾧδε...λέγουσι, Ἑλλήνων δὲ...ᾧδε, 4.8.1) still ought to anticipate a third account as well as a priamel. However, as we have now seen in our analysis of both of these programmatic examples above, the foils offered (i.e. a says x, b says y, **but I say z**) do not represent categorical repudiations. While they do allow Herodotus to display what he knows, his knowledge in these instances is neither total nor absolute, as he acknowledges himself. This proves to be the case in 4.11-12 as well when Herodotus notes that the account he gives is the one to which he is particularly *inclined* (τῷ μάλιστα λεγομένῳ αὐτὸς **πρόσκειμαι**, 4.10.1). Though some scholars take this to be a rejection of the two preceding accounts,<sup>27</sup> nowhere in the text does Herodotus' inclination lead him to deny the veracity of what has already been recounted.<sup>28</sup> As Flory argues, this is because the third account, like the first and second before it, only purports to explain one aspect of the origins of the Scythians, namely, how they came to inhabit the land they now possess.<sup>29</sup> Thus, while such an aetiology based on patterns of historical migration may correspond with a

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<sup>26</sup> See Chapters One and Two respectively.

<sup>27</sup> e.g. Hunter (1982) 272 and Braund (2004) 27.

<sup>28</sup> See n. 14 above.

<sup>29</sup> Flory (1987) 71.

characteristically Herodotean predilection for rational explanation, it is excessive to conclude that this secular account is simply “a way out”<sup>30</sup> of the *spatium mythicum*, as 4.11-12 represents but one perspective in an intricate series of accounts, none of which are privileged or excluded outright.<sup>31</sup>

Although Herodotus desires to reconcile these diverse perspectives in the conclusion of his own account (Οὗτος δὲ ἄλλος ξυνὸς Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ Βαρβάρων λεγόμενος λόγος εἴρηται, 4.12.3),<sup>32</sup> we would do well to remember that agreement does not entail the reduction of difference on Herodotus’ part. As we have seen many times now, this is because the ἵστωρ is concerned with demarcating the limits of knowledge as much as he is with surpassing them. In either case, however, this is rarely made explicit because Herodotus wants us to struggle with the narratives as he does and ultimately come to our own conclusions.<sup>33</sup> In the context of 4.5-12, then, it seems shortsighted to

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<sup>30</sup> Benardete (1969) 106.

<sup>31</sup> *Contra* Fehling (1989) 46-47. We may find a fitting comparandum for the aetiologies of the Scythians (4.5-12) in Herodotus’ discussion of the origins of Cyrene later on in the Libyan λόγος. After relating the accounts of the Theraeans and the Cyreneans (4.151-153) and showing the extent to which they agree (Ταῦτα δὲ Θηραῖοι λέγουσι, τὰ δ’ ἐπίλοιπα τοῦ λόγου συμφέρονται ἤδη Θηραῖοι Κυρηναῖοι, 4.154.1), Herodotus demonstrates in the following section the extent to which they *disagree* (οὐδαμῶς ὁμολογέουσι, 4.154.1), namely, in their traditions regarding their founder, Battus (4.154-156). Though there is much Herodotus could find to quibble over in the largely mythological accounts of the Theraeans and the Cyreneans (e.g. the oracular impetus for the expedition), the only criticism he offers concerns the origin of Battus’ name (4.155). Thus, while Herodotus’ response does show what he knows, it is hardly the foil that the priamel construction might otherwise anticipate (i.e. Theraeans say x, Cyreneans say y, but I say z), since his claim can only support the veracity of one aspect of two complex traditions, neither of which can be reconciled with or divorced from one another completely. For a demonstration of how inextricable these traditions have proved to be for modern scholars, see e.g. Giangulio (1981) 4 n. 7 (following Jacoby (1913) cols. 435-436, against Graham (1960) 96 ff.). Cf. the Pelasgian controversy (1.56-58, discussed in Chapter 2.1 above). For a general discussion of aetiology in the Libyan λόγος at large, see Baragwanath’s contribution to *The Shaping of the Past: Greek Historiography, Mythography, and Epigraphic Memory* (forthcoming, *BICS*).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the egalitarian premise of the *Histories*: ...μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλέα γένηται κ.τ.λ. (1.1.0).

<sup>33</sup> See Dewald (1987) 167 (discussed in Chapter Two).

attribute Herodotus' integrative treatment of the three aetiologies to a "difficulty in mastering his sources."<sup>34</sup> As this section has argued, the plurality of sources rather seems to be owed to the plurality of *possibilities* that exist to explain the origins of the Scythians in their many forms, from the origins of their social structure (4.5-7), to their biological origins (4.8-10), and to their geographical origins (4.11-12).<sup>35</sup> In leaving the question of their validity effectively open, Herodotus prompts us the readers to examine the bigger picture beyond singular explanations and superficial impressions, thereby reinforcing the same programmatic message delivered in the corresponding *bekos* experiment: look closer—aetiology is never as black and white as it may appear at first glance.

## 4.2 Geography

Given this close association between the openings of the Scythian and Egyptian λόγοι, it makes sense that Herodotus subsequently extends his account of the origins of the Scythians into the domain of geography just as he does in his account of the Egyptians.<sup>36</sup> Though other λόγοι in the *Histories* are ordered according to this general sequence as well,<sup>37</sup> the link between the Egyptian and Scythian λόγοι is particularly strong in that the epistemological and methodological underpinnings of the respective geographical inquiries turn out to be virtually the same. This becomes clear shortly after

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<sup>34</sup> West (2002b) 441. See also West (2004a) 83 for a similar critique.

<sup>35</sup> Recall Christ (1994) 200 (discussed in Chapter 2.1 in the context of the *bekos* experiment).

<sup>36</sup> i.e. 2.5-2.34.

<sup>37</sup> Jacoby was the first to call attention to how Herodotus is wont to order his ethnographic λόγοι (including the Lydian, Babylonian, Ethiopian, and other smaller λόγοι) according to this basic schema: 1) land, 2) peoples (i.e. their history and customs), and 3) wonders (see Jacoby (1913) cols. 330-333, following Jacoby (1909)). See also Trüdinger (1918) 14-37 for an elaboration of this schema.

Herodotus introduces the problem of the geographical origins of the Hyperboreans via Aristeas, whose poem, the Ἀριμάσπεια, incites Herodotus to probe the edges of the far north (4.13-15):<sup>38</sup>

Τῆς δὲ γῆς τῆς περὶ ὅδε ὁ λόγος ὄρηται λέγεσθαι, οὐδεὶς οἶδε ἀτρεκέως ὅ τι τὸ κατύπερθε ἐστὶ. Οὐδενὸς γὰρ δὴ αὐτόπτεω εἰδέναι φαμένον δύναμαι πυθέσθαι· οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ Ἀριστέης, τοῦ περ ὀλίγω πρότερον τούτων μνήμην ἐποιεύμην, οὐδὲ οὗτος προσωτέρω Ἴσσηδόνων αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖσι ἔπεσι ποιέων ἔφησε ἀπικέσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὰ κατύπερθε ἔλεγε ἀκοῆ, φὰς Ἴσσηδόνας εἶναι τοὺς ταῦτα λέγοντας. [2] Ἄλλ' ὅσον μὲν ἡμεῖς ἀτρεκέως ἐπὶ μακρότατον οἰοί τε ἐγενόμεθα ἀκοῆ ἔξικέσθαι, πᾶν εἰρήσεται (4.16).

No one knows exactly what lies north of the land which this account has set out to describe, for I have been unable to learn from anyone who claims to know firsthand. Not even Aristeas himself (whom I mentioned just a little while ago) claimed in his verses to have made it past the land of Issedones, but he described the regions beyond based on the accounts of others, alleging that the Issedones were the ones who told him these things. [2] Nevertheless, I will recount as much as I could accurately learn from the accounts of others.

This passage is important for our purposes not only in that it provides further evidence for Herodotus' desire to move past ἀπορία and to advance knowledge through his inquiry, but also because it makes a major case for the parallelism of the Scythian and Egyptian λόγοι. For instance, Herodotus' emphasis on relating as much as he could possibly learn about the regions beyond the Issedones (Ἄλλ' ὅσον μὲν ἡμεῖς ἀτρεκέως ἐπὶ μακρότατον οἰοί τε ἐγενόμεθα ἀκοῆ ἔξικέσθαι, πᾶν εἰρήσεται, 4.16.2) bears an uncanny resemblance to his discussion of the origins of the Nile we have already considered in Chapter Two:

Ὁ μὲν δὴ Ἴστρος, ῥέει γὰρ δι' οἰκειομένης, πρὸς πολλῶν γινώσκειται, περὶ δὲ τῶν τοῦ Νείλου πηγέων οὐδεὶς ἔχει λέγειν· αὐοίκητός τε γὰρ καὶ ἔρημός ἐστι ἢ Λιβύη

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<sup>38</sup> For an overview of Aristeas and his work, see e.g. West (2004b).

δι' ἧς ῥέει. Περὶ δὲ τοῦ ῥεύματος αὐτοῦ, ἐπ' ὅσον μακρότατον ἱστορέοντα ἦν ἐξικέσθαι, εἴρηται (2.34.1).

Because the Ister flows through the inhabited world, it is known by many, but no one is able to speak about the sources of the Nile, for the part of Libya through which it flows is uninhabited and desert. But about its trajectory, **I have said as much as I could learn through inquiry.**

The similarities between 4.16.2 and 2.34.1 do not stop at the philological. As Romm observes in a comparison of these two passages, Herodotus ends up engaging in much the same discussion over limits in Scythia as he did in Egypt, in spite of standing physically opposite where he stood earlier in Book Two.<sup>39</sup> Just as he began his investigation of the sources of the Nile with the account of the scribe of the sacred treasury of Athena at Sais (2.28) before moving into the realm of autopsy at Elephantine (2.29), so, too, does he begin his investigation of the farthest reaches of Scythia with a consideration of Aristeas' poem on the subject (4.13-15) before venturing out to see them for himself, starting with the trading station at the mouth of the Borysthenes (i.e. Dniepr, 4.17.1).<sup>40</sup> Though Romm is right to point out how this move from ἀκοή to ὄψις in the Scythian λόγος amounts to

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<sup>39</sup> Romm (1989) 111-112. See 4.36.2 on sameness (and difference) on opposite sides of the world (discussed below).

<sup>40</sup> Though Herodotus does not explicitly say whether he is engaging in eyewitness inquiry following 4.17.1, the implication is that he began his geographical survey based on autopsy. This is suggested by a remark he makes in 4.24 regarding his interaction with those Scythians and Greeks who frequented the Black Sea trading post (ἐμπόριον) now commonly identified with Olbia (see Braund (2007) 38-62), the same one mentioned in 4.17.1 at the start of the account of the Hyperboreans (see, however, West (2007) 80 ff. on the problems associated with this identification). Apart from the description of the krater of Ariantas later on (4.81.2, discussed above in Chapter 3.2), Herodotus does not in fact claim to rely specifically on ὄψις anywhere in the Scythian λόγος. However, even the most unabashed proponents of the Liar School will not deny that it was Herodotus' intention to at least give the *impression* of autopsy in Scythia (see e.g. Armayor (1978) on 2.104 and 4.86.4). While the historicity of Herodotus' claims to autopsy will be all but inconsequential to the forthcoming discussion on epistemology and methodology, this should not be taken as an indictment of the overall accuracy of such claims, which Pritchett (1993) defends convincingly (see esp. pp. 132-138 and 191-226).

the same methodological progression exhibited in the discussion of the Nile,<sup>41</sup> it remains to be emphasized that Herodotus' drive towards knowledge in both cases complicates as much as it elucidates.

The narrative framework of the geographical section of the Scythian λόγος anticipates this paradox even before Herodotus sets out to locate the Hyperboreans. By nesting his inquiry within Aristeas' own work (4.16) and revealing the work to be the outgrowth of the poet's bizarre supernatural exploits (namely, his supposed resurrection and his divine apparition to the Metapontines),<sup>42</sup> Herodotus raises doubts about what follows the programmatic statement of 4.16.2 up until the time the ring is closed a few chapters later (Ταῦτα μὲν νῦν τὰ λέγεται **μακρότατα** εἴρηται, 4.32.1). But while Aristeas' place in Herodotus' account does direct us to question the veracity of what follows, Herodotus himself reveals no such purpose.<sup>43</sup> If the accounts which focalize the parallel discussion of the sources of the Nile are any indicator (i.e. the tales of the scribe of the sacred treasury of Athena at Sais and Etearchus the Ammonian king),<sup>44</sup> Herodotus seems more concerned to warn the reader not to neglect prudent consideration of context or to take a part to represent the whole.

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<sup>41</sup> Romm (1989) 111-112.

<sup>42</sup> See 4.14 and 4.15 respectively.

<sup>43</sup> As in the case of the first aetiology of the Scythians (see 4.5.1 above, including n. 14), Herodotus only challenges the trustworthiness (not the truth) of one aspect of the account of 4.16.2-4.32.1, that is, the reports of a goat-footed people living beyond the Argippaei (Οἱ δὲ φαλακροὶ οὗτοι λέγουσι, **ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες**, οἰκέειν τὰ ὄρεα αἰγίποδας ἄνδρας κ.τ.λ., 4.25.1).

<sup>44</sup> See 2.28 and 2.31-2.33.1 respectively (discussed in Chapter 2.2 above).

This message rings true in 4.16-4.32 when we look carefully at how Herodotus profiles the peoples who inhabit the land between the shores of the Black Sea in the south and the land of the Hyperboreans in the north. As Thomas observes in this section, it is noteworthy that “Scythia is meticulously described and subdivided” according to a variety of peoples.<sup>45</sup> On the one hand, the litany of ἔθνεα which Herodotus presents (i.e. Callipidae, Alizones, Neuri, Borysthenites/Olbiopolites, Androphagi, Melanchlaeni, Sauromatae, Budini, Thyssagetæ, Argippæi, Issedones, Arimaspians, Sindi, Hyperboreans, etc.)<sup>46</sup> indicates how much he knows about the inhabitants of Scythia and where they live. On the other hand, the fact that Herodotus notes the existence of agricultural Scythians (4.17.1), nomadic Scythians (4.19), royal Scythians (4.20.1), and even Greek-Scythians (i.e. the Callipidae, 4.17.1) both within and without the territory formally designated as “Scythia” implies that it is impossible to lump that which is Scythian into a single ethnic or geographic category.<sup>47</sup> This is further suggested by the

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas (2000) 64.

<sup>46</sup> Respectively given (see 4.17-32). For a helpful visualization of how these peoples are organized in relation to the land, see Cole (2010) 208 (adapted from Shaw (1982-1983) 10).

<sup>47</sup> See e.g. Erbse (1992) 161-165, quotation at 161: “...ein Volk der Skythen...im schlichten Sinne des Wortes gar nicht gibt.” The only major challenge to this thesis in the Scythian λόγος is Herodotus’ statement at 4.2.2, that the Scythians are not agricultural, but nomadic (Σκύθαι...οὐ γὰρ ἀρόται εἰσι ἀλλὰ νομάδες). However, this passage, along with 4.2 as a whole, is fraught with problems. Though Bravo (2000) 59-64 cannot be faulted for wanting to explain them as marks of interpolation on the basis of source criticism and syntax, it seems excessive to write this passage off as a specious imitation. Instead, as Zuev (1995) and Griffiths (2001) 168-173 suggest, Herodotean parataxis is more likely responsible for these issues (however intractable they may be). Even if the question of Scythian nomadism did not appear to be firmly anchored to the context of this particular passage (as the γὰρ in 4.2.2 intimates), nomadism itself is not a monolith in the *Histories*, but is a system that “accommodates many different rules of life” (Hartog (1988) 195). See also Braund (2004) 28, who argues that the nomadism of the Scythians is not incompatible with their attachment to their land. Cf. 4.46 (discussed below), where the question of nomadism (φερέοικοι ἐόντες πάντες, 4.46.3) also appears to be anchored to the context of this particular passage, which has at its core the explanation of the Scythians’ ability to resist the upcoming Persian invasion and not a blanket characterization of all Scythians. For a different perspective, see Corcella

fact that the Thyssagetae (4.22.1), who are counted among other Scythian tribes (Ἵπὲρ δὲ τούτων τὸ πρὸς τὴν ἠὼ ἀποκλίνοντι οἰκέουσι **Σκύθαι ἄλλοι** κ.τ.λ., 4.22.3), and the tribe of the “bald men” (φαλακροί), who dress like Scythians (ἐσθῆτι δὲ χρεώμενοι Σκυθικῇ, 4.23.2), are both said to live beyond the river Tanaïs where Scythia proper ends (Τάναϊν δὲ ποταμὸν διαβάντι οὐκέτι Σκυθική, ἀλλ’ ἢ μὲν πρώτη τῶν λαξίων Σαυροματέων ἐστὶ κ.τ.λ., 4.21). Conversely, the Androphagi, who are totally distinct from the Scythians (...μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἔρημον Ἀνδροφάγοι οἰκέουσι, ἔθνος ἐὼν ἴδιον καὶ οὐδαμῶς Σκυθικόν, 4.18.3), inhabit Scythian territory.<sup>48</sup> In light of this evidence, Herodotus’ refusal to pigeonhole the Scythians is sensible (not to mention unique in the history of Greek literature).<sup>49</sup> However, what truly distinguishes the historian is that he builds the entire account of 4.16-32 around the *peoples* who populate the land and so underscores the identification of geography with ethnography as in the Egyptian λόγος.

This foundation is reinforced in characteristically Herodotean fashion immediately after the conclusion of the survey of the region. Though Herodotus in the end is unable to trace the geographical origins of the Hyperboreans as he first set out to

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(1992), who hypothesizes that Herodotus inherited a set of mutually-inclusive (albeit confused) terms to describe both agricultural and nomadic Scythians.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. 4.45.2 for further demonstration of the inefficacy of Scythia’s borders to encompass Scythians.

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. Hall (1989) 110-112, who cites Hecataeus (*FGrH* F 184-194), Sophocles (fr. 707), and others to demonstrate that “...in the fifth century as throughout antiquity the term *Skuthai* often embraced all peoples to the north of the Danube. It was Herodotus who argued for a stricter classification of the northern tribes” (quotation at 110; cf. Strab. 11.6.2, whose description of Scythia presupposes just such a classification). On this point, see also Finley (1962) 56-57, who notes that even in the Christian period, a figure as well-educated as the neoplatonist Synesius of Cyrene could use the term “Scythians” to refer to Goths in the *De regno*.



do in 4.16, the knowledge he does convey about this elusive northern people entails much more than knowing where to locate them on a map:

(32.) Ταῦτα μὲν νῦν τὰ λέγεται μακρότατα εἴρηται. Ὑπερβορέων δὲ περὶ ἀνθρώπων οὔτε τι Σκύθαι λέγουσι οὐδὲν οὔτε τινὲς ἄλλοι τῶν ταύτη οικημένων, εἰ μὴ ἄρα Ἴσσηδόνες· ὡς δ' ἐγὼ δοκέω, οὐδ' οὔτοι λέγουσι οὐδέν· ἔλεγον γὰρ ἂν καὶ Σκύθαι, ὡς περὶ τῶν μονοφθάλμων λέγουσι. Ἄλλ' Ἡσιόδῳ μὲν ἐστὶ περὶ Ὑπερβορέων εἰρημένα, ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ὀμήρῳ ἐν Ἐπιγόνοισι, εἰ δὴ τῷ ἔοντι γε Ὅμηρος ταῦτα τὰ ἔπεα ἐποίησε. (33.) Πολλῶ δὲ τι πλεῖστα περὶ αὐτῶν Δῆλιοι λέγουσι, φάμενοι ἱρὰ ἐνδεδεμένα ἐν καλάμῃ πυρῶν ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων φερόμενα ἀπικνέεσθαι ἐς Σκύθας, ἀπὸ δὲ Σκυθέων ἤδη δεκομένους αἰεὶ τοὺς πλησιοχώρους ἐκάστους κομίζειν αὐτὰ τὸ πρὸς ἐσπέρης ἐκαστάτῳ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀδρίην, [2] ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ πρὸς μεσαμβρίην προπεμπόμενα πρώτους Δωδωναίους Ἑλλήνων δέκεσθαι, ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων καταβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὸν Μηλιέα κόλπον καὶ διαπορεύεσθαι ἐς Εὐβοίαν, πόλιν τε ἐς πόλιν πέμπειν μέχρι Καρύστου, τὸ δ' ἀπὸ ταύτης ἐκλείπειν Ἄνδρον· Καρυστίους γὰρ εἶναι τοὺς κομίζοντας ἐς Τήνον, Τηνίους δὲ ἐς Δῆλον. [3] Ἀπικνέεσθαι μὲν νῦν οὕτω ταῦτα τὰ ἱρὰ λέγουσι ἐς Δῆλον, πρῶτον δὲ τοὺς Ὑπερβορέους πέμψαι φερούσας τὰ ἱρὰ δύο κόρας, τὰς ὀνομάζουσι Δῆλιοι εἶναι Ὑπερόχην τε καὶ Λαοδίκην· ἅμα δὲ αὐτῆσι ἀσφαλείης εἵνεκεν πέμψαι τοὺς Ὑπερβορέους τῶν ἀστῶν ἄνδρας πέντε πομπούς, τούτους οἱ νῦν Περφερέες καλέονται, τιμὰς μεγάλας ἐν Δήλῳ ἔχοντες· [4] ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῖσι Ὑπερβορέοισι τοὺς ἀποπεμφθέντας ὀπίσω οὐκ ἀπονοστέειν, δεινὰ ποιευμένους εἴ σφεας αἰεὶ καταλάμπεται ἀποστέλλοντας μὴ ἀποδέκεσθαι, οὕτω δὴ φέροντας ἐς τοὺς οὐρούς τὰ ἱρὰ ἐνδεδεμένα ἐν πυρῶν καλάμῃ τοῖσι πλησιοχώροισι ἐπισκῆπτειν κελεύοντας προπέμπειν σφέα ἀπὸ ἐωυτῶν ἐς ἄλλο ἔθνος. [5] Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν οὕτω προπεμπόμενα ἀπικνέεσθαι λέγουσι ἐς Δῆλον. Οἶδα δὲ αὐτὸς τούτοισι τοῖσι ἱροῖσι τότε ποιούμενον προσφερές, τὰς Θρηϊσσας καὶ τὰς Παιονίδας γυναῖκας, ἐπεὰν θύωσι τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι τῇ Βασιλίῃ, οὐκ ἄνευ πυρῶν καλάμης ἐχούσας τὰ ἱρὰ (4.32-4.33).

(32.) I have now said as much as can be said about these regions. But concerning the Hyperboreans, neither the Scythians nor any of the other people who live there have anything at all to say about them, except, perhaps, the Issedones. In my view, however, these people don't have anything to say about them either, for if they did, the Scythians would have something to say about them, too, just as they do about the one-eyed people. But there is mention of the Hyperboreans in Hesiod as well as in the *Epigonoι* of Homer (that is, if Homer did in fact write this poem). (33.) The Delians say much more about them, claiming that sacred offerings wrapped in wheat-straw are brought from the land of the Hyperboreans and reach Scythia. Receiving these offerings from the Scythians, each of their neighbors takes them in succession as far west as the Adriatic. [2] From there, the Dodonans are the first Greeks to receive the offerings sent south. From these people they

make their way down to the Melian Gulf and pass through to Euboea, and they are sent from city to city up to Carystos, but skip Andros, for Carystians take the offerings to Tenos, and Tenians to Delos. [3] This is how these sacred offerings reach Delos now, but the Hyperboreans initially sent two girls to carry the sacred offerings, whom the Delians say were called Hyperoche and Laodice. For their protection, the Hyperboreans sent five of their men as escorts, who are now called “Perpherees” and are held in high esteem by the Delians. [4] When those dispatched by the Hyperboreans did not come back home, they feared that it would always be their lot not to get back the ones they sent out. For this reason, then, they carry the sacred offerings wrapped in wheat-straw to their borders and entrust them to their neighbors, commanding them to relay the offerings from one nation to another. [5] And in this way they say that these offerings reach Delos. I myself know of something similar to this. Whenever the women of Thrace and Paeonia sacrifice to Queen Artemis, they always have wheat-straw with their offerings.

In examining how the Hyperboreans’ offerings are relayed to the Delians via a chain of intermediaries, scholars are wont to emphasize the distance between these two peoples.<sup>50</sup> While the intricate nesting of the Delians’ own aetiological narrative (Δήλιοι λέγουσι κ.τ.λ., 4.33.1) within the accounts of the Issedones, Hesiod, and Homer (4.32) does seem to belie the Hyperboreans’ proximity on some level (and thus the truth of their existence), Herodotus himself never refutes what the Delians say, but in fact seems to support their claims with repeated interjections of personal knowledge (Οἶδα δὲ αὐτοὺς κ.τ.λ.; Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ ταύτας οἶδα ποιεύσας, 4.33.5).<sup>51</sup> However, he does not declare absolute allegiance to one account or tradition alone. Nevertheless, his unwillingness to deny a connection (however remote) between a Greek people in the heart of the Aegean and a barbarian people at the ends of the earth makes a powerful statement about the human basis of geography: ἔθνεα, no matter how distant, are not islands unto themselves.

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<sup>50</sup> e.g. Benardete (1969) 108-109 and Romm (1989) 103.

<sup>51</sup> Romm (1989) 104.

We will return to the ecumenical implications of this conclusion shortly, but for the moment, it is enough to note that this passage reaffirms that the study of geography in the *Histories* constitutes a holistic union of peoples and places, comprising more than cartography alone.<sup>52</sup>

By situating an expansive array of ἔθνεα at the center of his inquiry into the origins of the Hyperboreans after exhausting the possibilities of ὄψις and ἀκοή, Herodotus thus closes his discussion of the farthest reaches of Scythia almost exactly as he does his discussion of the farthest reaches of the Nile.<sup>53</sup> All that remains to make this connection unassailable is to round out the trifecta of ἱστορίη and extend into the realm of judgement (γνώμη), which is precisely what we discover following the Delians' account of the Hyperboreans:

Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν Ὑπερβορέων περὶ εἰρήσθω. Τὸν γὰρ περὶ Ἀβάριος λόγον τοῦ λεγομένου εἶναι Ὑπερβορέου οὐ λέγω, λέγοντα ὡς τὸν οἰστὸν περιέφερε κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν οὐδὲν σιτεόμενος. Εἰ δὲ εἰσι ὑπερβόρειοί τινες ἄνθρωποι, εἰσὶ καὶ ὑπερνότιοι ἄλλοι. [2] Γελῶ δὲ ὀρέων γῆς περιόδους γράψαντας πολλοὺς ἤδη καὶ οὐδένα νόον ἐχόντως ἐξηγησάμενον, οἱ Ὠκεανὸν τε ῥέοντα γράφουσι πέριξ τὴν γῆν, εὐῶσαν κυκλωτέρεια ὡς ἀπὸ τόρνου, καὶ τὴν Ἀσίην τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ποιεῦνται ἴσην. Ἐν ὀλίγοισι γὰρ ἐγὼ δηλώσω μέγαθός τε ἐκάστης αὐτέων καὶ οἷη τίς ἐστι ἐς γραφὴν ἐκάστη (4.36).

Let this suffice about the Hyperboreans, for I will not tell the story about Abaris (who is said to have been Hyperborean), which relates how he carried his arrow around the world without eating anything. But if there are Hyperboreans, there are also Hypernotians. I laugh at the large number of people who draw maps (none of them reasonably) and draw Ocean flowing around a circular earth, as if it were traced by a compass, and make Asia equal to Europe. For this reason, I will in a few words show the size of each of these continents and how each ought to be drawn.

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. 4.45 (discussed below).

<sup>53</sup> Recall 2.28-2.35 (discussed below).

What is perhaps most noteworthy about the closure of the Hyperborean λόγος is the manner in which Herodotus visibly exerts his authority *in propria persona*. Since there are many people (πολλούς, 4.36.2) who have failed to reasonably explain (οὐδένα νόον ἔχόντως ἐξηγησάμενον, 4.36.2) why they apply symmetrical principles to map-making as they do, it should come as little surprise by now that Herodotus steps out of the narrative with two forceful exclamations (Γελῶ and δηλώσω, 4.36.2) in order to challenge conventional thinking by means of his own explanation and so distinguish himself from his peers and forebears in 4.36.<sup>54</sup> In what amounts to a uniquely Herodotean ἀπόδειξις,<sup>55</sup> we can see how the Scythian λόγος evinces the same sort of argumentative language which scholars have often used to make the Egyptian λόγος out to be an anomaly in the grand scheme of the *Histories*.<sup>56</sup> But what undermines the supposed disparity between these two λόγοι even further is the fact that Herodotus' innovative display of knowledge turns out to be just as much of a paradox as it was in the case of the Nile.

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<sup>54</sup> Though the wry use of Γελῶ (4.36.2) may suggest that Herodotus is basing what follows on Hecataeus' work alone (cf. οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἔμοι φαίνονται, εἰσὶν, *FGrH* 1a,1,F), he is not simply cribbing his Ionian predecessor (see Asheri et al (2007) 568, *contra* Jacoby (1957) 371). As we are now coming to recognize, there were in fact many people (πολλούς, 4.36.2) whose work was influential upon Herodotus in this setting (see e.g. Thomas (2000) 215-216 on the "faint echo" of the Heraclitean language of proof and Branscome (2010) 5-10 on Anaximandrian cartography), yet none can be singled out as the dominant archetype that dictated the intellectual trajectory of the *Histories* on its own (see the discussion on custom below for other examples of Herodotean innovation in the Scythian λόγος).

<sup>55</sup> The conspicuous use of δηλώσω (4.36.2) exemplifies the principles of ἀπόδειξις as the showcase for a uniquely Herodotean kind of knowledge (cf. the discussion of the Labyrinth (2.148) in Chapter 3.1 for a good demonstration of the explanatory force of such a display).

<sup>56</sup> See Chapter Two.

An epistemological contradiction may be detected from a close reading of what Herodotus says about polarity in the conclusion of the Hyperborean λόγος, but not the one that most usually cite. Though scholars are often inclined to convict Herodotus of inconsistency in accepting the symmetrical principles espoused in 4.36.1 and then refuting them in 4.36.2,<sup>57</sup> there appear to be two different premises latent in these two sections: in the former, the issue of north-south symmetry (exemplifying the regions beyond Scythia and Egypt respectively), and in the latter, the issue of east-west symmetry. As Romm argues, it is not incompatible with Herodotus' methodology that he can support the first premise based on climate and repudiate the second based on an excessive application of geometry<sup>58</sup> (i.e. the circle of Ocean drawn by compasses).<sup>59</sup> And yet, if we look carefully, we find that Herodotus' support for the former never reaches beyond the tentative and the hypothetical (Εἰ δὲ εἰσι ὑπερβόρειοί τινες ἄνθρωποι κ.τ.λ.). This may be because climatology has already been shown to be ineffective as a causal principle in the *Histories* because it cannot explain (least of all) *why* things happen the

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<sup>57</sup> See e.g. How and Wells (1912) ad loc.: "It is curious to see H. appealing to the very symmetry which three lines later he denounces." See also Legrand (1945) 69 n. 3 for an attempt to go against the grain and see this statement purely as a parody (*pace* Romm (1989) 108).

<sup>58</sup> See Romm (1989) 110 (following Lachenaud (1980) 49-52): "Herodotus relies heavily on climate as the organizing principle of world structure, so that North-South correspondences appeal to him as naturally οἰκότα. East and West, however, defined by the risings and settings of the sun rather than by winds and temperatures, do not mirror one another to nearly the same degree; therefore the geometry of the circle improperly extends that of the latitudinal line in that nothing about it conforms with τὸ οἰκός. Thus, although the symmetrical constructs of 4.36.1 and 4.36.2 have seemed to modern readers to be closely akin if not identical, Herodotus actually has intelligible reasons for embracing the first while rejecting the second."

<sup>59</sup> On Ocean, see also 2.21, 2.23, and 4.8.2. Scholars often use the remark about Ocean in 4.36.2 to support the claim that Herodotus despised maps altogether (see e.g. Dilke (1985) 57), but as Branscome (2010) argues in comparing 4.36.2 with Aristagoras' map (5.49), it is not the map itself, but the way it is *used* that can cause Herodotus consternation (see esp. pp. 9-10).

way they do at an historical level.<sup>60</sup> In any case, regardless of the interpretation of this passage, Herodotus' understanding of polarity is hardly polar.

It may come as a shock that Herodotus can bring us to the point where the Egyptian and Scythian λόγοι are found to mirror each other so closely and then appear to pull the rug out from under us. However, given Herodotus' interests and the place where this equivocal conclusion about binarism falls in relation to what has come before, we should not be taken aback. This is because the very suggestion that the north/south and east/west poles are not altogether analogous serves to problematize the *cultural* polarity at the core of such a geographical schema, namely the Greek/barbarian dichotomy,<sup>61</sup> which Herodotus has already subverted on many occasions so as to “construct the subordinate discourse, in which the dichotomy was qualified—helping articulate the barbarian as both other and significantly comparable to the self.”<sup>62</sup> As we shall see, in light of Herodotus' continuous drive to elucidate origins in the Scythian λόγος and to explore the Scythians' connections with other peoples, it makes sense that he continues his inquiry in the next section just as he did in the Egyptian λόγος by seeking out custom, the root of geography. However, just as every other component of Herodotean inquiry

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<sup>60</sup> This is in keeping with Herodotus' ambivalent views regarding environmental determinism (see n. 113 in Chapter Two above, ad 2.35.2), which contrast with the more schematic views of the author of *Airs, Waters, Places* (cf. esp. chapters 18-22 on the Scythians, discussed in Thomas (2000) 80-91 and Chiasson (2001) 45 ff.).

<sup>61</sup> See Lloyd (1990) 243-244.

<sup>62</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 144, with special reference to the Pelasgian controversy (1.56-58, see Chapter 2.1 above). On this dichotomy of sameness and difference where it concerns culture, see also Pelling (1997) 53 and Braund (2004) 39-40. For a helpful list of parallels between Herodotus' descriptions of Egypt and Scythia that exemplify this dichotomy, see Vasunia (2001) 96-98. On the notion of imperfect symmetry as it relates to the νόμοι of women and a variety of ἔθνεα across the *Histories*, see Rosellini and Saïd (1978).

has been shown to be lacking on its own, so too will custom be shown to be insufficient unless viewed in tandem with other principles.

### 4.3 Custom

Shortly after setting out to correct the way the world has traditionally been drawn (Ἐν ὀλίγοισι γὰρ ἐγὼ δηλώσω μέγαθός τε ἐκάστης αὐτέων καὶ οἷη τίς ἐστι ἐς γραφὴν ἐκάστη, 4.36.2), Herodotus runs into a problem:

Οὐδ' ἔχω συμβαλέσθαι ἐπ' ὅτεο μῆ εὐούση γῆ οὐνόματα τριφάσια κεῖται, ἐπωνυμίας ἔχοντα γυναικῶν, καὶ οὐρίσματα αὐτῇ Νεῖλός τε ὁ Αἰγύπτιος ποταμὸς ἐτέθη καὶ Φᾶσις ὁ Κόλχος (οἱ δὲ Τάναϊν ποταμὸν τὸν Μαιήτην καὶ Πορθμῖα τὰ Κιμμέρια λέγουσι), οὐδὲ τῶν διουρισάντων τὰ οὐνόματα πυθέσθαι, καὶ ὅθεν ἔθεντο τὰς ἐπωνυμίας. [3] Ἦδη γὰρ Λιβύη μὲν ἐπὶ Λιβύης λέγεται ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν Ἑλλήνων ἔχειν τὸ οὐνομα γυναικὸς αὐτόχθονος, ἡ δὲ Ἀσίη ἐπὶ τῆς Προμηθέος γυναικὸς τὴν ἐπωνυμίην· καὶ τούτου μὲν μεταλαμβάνονται τοῦ οὐνόματος Λυδοί, φάμενοι ἐπὶ Ἀσίῳ τοῦ Κότυος τοῦ Μάνεω κεκλήσθαι τὴν Ἀσίην, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τῆς Προμηθέος Ἀσίας· ἐπ' ὅτεο καὶ τὴν ἐν Σάρδισι φυλὴν κεκλήσθαι Ἀσιάδα. [4] Ἡ δὲ δὴ Εὐρώπη οὔτε εἰ περίρρυτός ἐστι γινώσκεται πρὸς οὐδαμῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὔτε ὁκόθεν τὸ οὐνομα ἔλαβε τοῦτο, οὔτε ὅστις οἱ ἦν ὁ θέμενος φαίνεται, εἰ μὴ ἀπὸ τῆς Τυρίας φήσομεν Εὐρώπης λαβεῖν τὸ οὐνομα τὴν χώραν· πρότερον δὲ ἦν ἄρα ἀνώνυμος ὥσπερ αἱ ἕτεραι. [5] Ἀλλ' αὕτη γε ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας τε φαίνεται εὐούσα καὶ οὐκ ἀπικομένη ἐς τὴν γῆν ταύτην ἥτις ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων Εὐρώπη καλεῖται, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἐκ Φοινίκης ἐς Κρήτην, ἐκ Κρήτης δὲ ἐς Λυκίην. Ταῦτα μὲν νυν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτο εἰρήσθω· τοῖσι γὰρ νομιζομένοισι αὐτῶν χρῆσόμεθα (4.45.2-5).

I cannot guess why the earth, which is a single mass, has three names, all deriving from women, or why its boundaries were set at the Egyptian river Nile and the Colchian river Phasis (or, as some say, at the Maeetian river Tanaïs and the Cimmerian Ferries). I am also unable to learn the names of those who fixed these boundaries or where they got the names from. [3] For example, Libya is said by many Greeks to derive its name from Libya, an indigenous woman, and Asia is said to be named after Prometheus' wife. The Lydians stake a claim to this name as well, since they allege that Asia is called after Asies, son of Cotys, son of Manes, and not after Prometheus' Asia, after whom the tribe of the Asiads in Sardis is named. [4] But as for Europe, no one in the world knows if it is surrounded by water, or where it got its name from, or the person who actually gave it its name, unless we say the land took its name from Tyrian Europa, which in earlier times was nameless just like the others. [5] But this woman clearly came

from Asia and did not reach this land which is now called Europe by the Greeks, but only made her way to Crete from Phoenicia and to Lycia from Crete. Let these things now suffice for this matter, for we shall employ the customary names for these lands.

On the surface, it is curious that Herodotus can express so much doubt about the conventional names of the continents and still decide to use them in the end (τοῖσι γὰρ νομιζομένοισι αὐτῶν χρῆσόμεθα, 4.45.5). This paradox encapsulates the tension between φύσις and νόμος which the conclusion of the Hyperborean λόγος suggested with its contrast between climate and the conventions of map-making.<sup>63</sup> And yet, as much as Herodotus may desire to ascribe natural origins to the names of the continents instead of arbitrary ones,<sup>64</sup> the force of custom in establishing these names cannot be discounted. To do so would not only go against Herodotus' essentially integrative approach to aetiology, but also against some of the formative patterns we have already noted throughout this dissertation. For instance, Herodotus' individual statements of ἀπορία in this passage (Οὐδ' ἔχω συμβαλέσθαι... οὐδὲ... πῦθέσθαι κ.τ.λ., 4.45.2; ... γινώσκειται πρὸς οὐδαμῶν ἀνθρώπων, 4.45.4) should not lead us to believe that he will resign himself to ignorance about the issue as a whole. On the contrary, even if Herodotus cannot know how the customary names of the continents came to exist, what he *does* know about custom can advance the course of the Scythian λόγος in challenging and innovative ways, as the following paragraph deftly displays:

Ὁ δὲ Πόντος ὁ Εὐξείνιος, ἐπ' ὃν ἐστρατεύετο ὁ Δαρεῖος, χωρέων πασέων παρέχεται ἕξω τοῦ Σκυθικοῦ ἔθνεα ἀμαθέστατα· οὔτε γὰρ ἔθνος τῶν ἐντὸς τοῦ

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<sup>63</sup> See 4.36.1 and 4.36.2 respectively (discussed above).

<sup>64</sup> Harrison (2000) 256 sees in 4.45 an underlying desire to pinpoint the sort of “natural appropriateness of names” set forth in Plato’s *Cratylus* (ὀρθότητά τινα τῶν ὀνομάτων πεφυκέναι κ.τ.λ., 383a-b).



Πόντου οὐδὲν ἔχομεν προβαλέσθαι σοφίης περί οὔτε ἄνδρα λόγιον οἶδαμεν γενόμενον, παρέξ τοῦ Σκυθικοῦ ἔθνεος καὶ Ἀναχάρσιος. [2] Τῷ δὲ Σκυθικῷ γένει ἐν μὲν τὸ μέγιστον τῶν ἀνθρωπῶν πρηγμάτων σοφώτατα πάντων ἐξεύρηται τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, τὰ μέντοι ἄλλα οὐκ ἄγαμαι. Τὸ δὲ μέγιστον οὕτω σφι ἀνεύρηται ὥστε ἀποφυγεῖν τε μηδένα ἐπελθόντα ἐπὶ σφέας, μὴ βουλομένους τε ἐξευρεθῆναι καταλαβεῖν μὴ οἶόν τε εἶναι. [3] Τοῖσι γὰρ μήτε ἄστεα μήτε τείχεα ἢ ἐκτισμένα, ἀλλὰ φερέοικοι ἐόντες πάντες ἕωσι ἵπποτοξόται, ζῶντες μὴ ἀπ' ἀρότου ἀλλ' ἀπὸ κτηνέων, οἰκήματά τε σφι ἢ ἐπὶ ζευγέων, κῶς οὐκ ἂν εἶψαν οὔτοι ἄμαχοί τε καὶ ἄποροι προσμίσγειν; (4.46)

The region around the Black Sea, against which Darius made an expedition, contains—apart from the Scythians—the most ignorant nations on earth. For we cannot single out any nation in this region for their cleverness nor do we know of the existence of any learned man, excluding the Scythians and Anacharsis. [2] For the Scythians have discovered the single greatest thing in human affairs and the cleverest of all those we know (though in other respects I do not admire them), namely, that no one who comes against them can escape or overtake them if they do not wish to be found. [3] This is because they possess neither cities nor walls, but they all carry their dwellings around with them and shoot bows on horseback; they do not live off of tilling, but off of their flocks, and their homes are on their wagons. How, then, could these people not be impossible to do battle with and engage with?

As Braund observes, Herodotus' admiration for the Scythians is predicated first and foremost on their decision to make their nomadic customs agree with their land.<sup>65</sup>

The harmonious amalgamation of νόμος and φύσις which makes the Scythians famous for being impossible to pin down (ἄποροι, 4.46.3) has an analogous precedent in the closing of the geographical discussion of the Egyptian λόγος which we first considered in Chapter Two:

Αἰγύπτιοι ἅμα τῷ οὐρανῷ τῷ κατὰ σφέας ἐόντι ἑτεροίῳ καὶ τῷ ποταμῷ φύσιν ἀλλοίην παρεχομένῳ ἢ οἱ ἄλλοι ποταμοί, τὰ πολλὰ πάντα ἔμπαλιν τοῖσι ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποισι ἐστήσαντο ἥθεά τε καὶ νόμους (2.35.2).

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<sup>65</sup> In addition to the grassy plains and rivers which help to fix Scythian customs (see 4.47-59), Braund locates other examples of the symbiosis of νόμος and φύσις among the Scythians, such as the use of bones in cooking as a substitute for wood and animal stomachs for cauldrons (4.61, see Braund (2004) 30).

Together with their climate, which is unique to them, and their river, which has a nature [*physis*] different from other rivers, the Egyptians have established customs [*ethea*] and practices [*nomoi*] which are almost entirely opposite those of other people.

I would like to propose that the message of 4.46 turns out to be much the same as it was in 2.35.2: even when individual schemata (e.g. nature, custom, etc.) cannot explain the origins of a given people, they must still be considered together. If we accept this invitation to integrate what we find in the forthcoming section on the customs of the Scythians and to view the results in the context of the universalizing framework which the Scythian *λόγος* has already begun to build,<sup>66</sup> we will achieve a more comprehensive understanding of who the Scythians are fundamentally, beyond reductive impressions based on piecemeal considerations. We will thereby discover that the Scythians do not epitomize “the other” nearly as much as some critics would have us believe.

The extent to which the Scythians in fact defy alterity can be measured by Herodotus’ use of the word σοφίη (“wisdom”, “skill”, “cleverness”, etc.) and its derivative, σοφώτατα, to describe Scythian cultural practices in 4.46. As Munson notes, it is significant that the Scythians exemplify the same kind of practical cunning which distinguishes other ἔθνεα in the *Histories*.<sup>67</sup> For instance, while the Athenians are perhaps best known for their σοφίη,<sup>68</sup> the Egyptians are at one point considered “the wisest of all

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<sup>66</sup> For signs of the eventual push towards an ecumenical understanding of the Scythians, see esp. 4.8-10 and 4.32-33 (discussed above).

<sup>67</sup> Munson (2001) 117-118.

<sup>68</sup> The wisdom of Solon (see 1.29-33, specifically 1.30.2) is usually taken to be metonymic of Athenian wisdom, but even this gold standard of σοφίη is not unimpeachable (see esp. 1.60.3, when the Athenians, contrary to their sterling reputation for cleverness among Greeks and barbarians alike, are duped by Megacles and Pisistratus into thinking that the latter’s restoration to the tyranny has been sanctioned by Athena herself (see Munson (2001) 210 for this and other examples)). Lévy (1981) 64 does not think the

peoples” (τοὺς σοφωτάτους ἀνθρώπων, 2.160.1) according to the Eleans. On the other hand, the fact that a similarly superlative distinction of σοφίη is awarded to the Scythians (Τῷ δὲ Σκυθικῷ γένει ἔν μὲν τὸ μέγιστον **τῶν ἀνθρωπιῶν πρηγμάτων σοφώτατα πάντων** ἐξεύρηται τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, 4.46.2) because of their disregard for fixed settlements and their mobility in battle allows them to be compared with the Spartans in turn, whose opposition to verbosity, foreign customs, and outside intervention at the expense of their autonomy offers additional points of correspondence with these northerners.<sup>69</sup>

From a certain point of view, Herodotus’ praise for Scythian σοφίη might convict the historian of the sort of idealizing “philobarbarism” for which he was sometimes criticized in antiquity.<sup>70</sup> Although Herodotus’ admiration for the Scythians appears to be genuine in this case, it cannot rightly be called philobarbarism. This is because our consideration of σοφίη within the broader context of the *Histories* has indicated that the very typology of barbarism is nebulous at best,<sup>71</sup> if both the Athenians and the Spartans

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σοφίη of the Scythians can refer to the sort of “sagesse... universelle” exemplified by Solon, but as Dewald (1985) 52-53 shows, there is a fine line between practical and abstract wisdom in the *Histories* which many of the figures who are paradigmatic of σοφίη are wont to blur, including Solon (cf. Thales, Bias of Priene, Pittacus of Mytilene, Hecataeus, etc.). On Herodotus’ general admiration for those who possess σοφίη regardless of ethnicity, see n. 66 in Chapter Three above.

<sup>69</sup> See Braund (2004) 30-40 on the Scythians’ and the Spartans’ shared laconism (4.77, 4.127), their hostility towards other peoples’ νόμοι (as exemplified by the accounts of Anacharis and Scyles (4.76-80) and the Spartans’ reference to all βάρβαροι as ξένοι (9.11.2, 9.55.2)), and the need to preserve their freedom (cf. 4.128 and 7.104). See also Munson (2001) 117, who postulates that the Scythians may also be seen to resemble the Spartans “in their social war ethics and spare way of life.”

<sup>70</sup> See e.g. Plu. *Mor.* 857A = *De Herodoti malignitate* 12. For an overview of Plutarch’s engagement with Herodotus in this treatise, see e.g. Baragwanath (2008) 1-34.

<sup>71</sup> Herodotus’ own mixed Greco-Carian lineage is a case in point, which Lavelle (1991) 314 notes is conspicuously absent from Hartog (1988). On the potential importance of Herodotus’ ancestry as it relates to the Egyptian λόγος, recall n. 28 in Chapter Two above.

can be shown to embody what makes the Scythians appear exceptional. What's more, the agreement of two distinctive (and often disparate) Greek ἔθνεα with both Egyptian and Scythian ἔθνεα (who themselves are dead-set against foreign ways)<sup>72</sup> makes the construct of Hellenism appear just as nebulous in turn (not to mention the sort of one-to-one ethnic analogues favored by structuralists).<sup>73</sup> In light of the inextricability of difference and sameness in 4.46, then, the discussion of custom in the Scythian λόγος is designed from the start “objectively to represent the foreignness of the Scythians and at the same time to overcome it by promoting the audience’s discovery of their affinity with them.”<sup>74</sup> As the remark about the Scythians’ skills in the realm of “**human** affairs” suggests (τῶν **ἀνθρωπιῶν** πρηγμάτων σοφώτατα πάντων, 4.46.2), Herodotus will achieve this goal by shifting from an ethnographical to an anthropological framework.

Herodotus’ move to transcend the barbarian typology of the Scythians in human terms may also be observed throughout the section on custom that follows the introduction at 4.46.<sup>75</sup> Given Herodotus’ persistent desire to look past superficial impressions and to seek out the fundamentals of the issue at hand, it is not unexpected that he should proceed to further destabilize the paradigm of “the Scythian” which he first

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. 2.79 and 4.76-80.

<sup>73</sup> See e.g. Hartog (1988) 44-57, who understands the Persians to be fulfilling the role of Greek hoplites in their invasion of Scythia. Pelling (1997) 51 puts his finger on the problem of this reductive framework when he notes that “...only one polarity can be used at a time. The Persian mirror reflects the Scythian Other, just as in its turn it will become the Other itself when contrasted with Greek normality.” See also Dewald (1990) 222 for additional critiques of this analogue. For a detailed discussion of the instability of the typology of Hellenism vis-à-vis barbarism as it concerns the last few all-important chapters of the *Histories*, see Chapter 6.2 below.

<sup>74</sup> Munson (2001) 109. See also Pelling (1997) and Ward (2006) for similar conclusions.

<sup>75</sup> i.e. 4.59-80.

undermined by means of his collective consideration of individual Scythian ἔθνεα in the Hyperborean λόγος.<sup>76</sup> However, some of the larger effects of Herodotus' rejection of a blanket categorization in his search for the identity and the origins of the Scythians according to their νόμοι have been understated heretofore. For instance, it is remarkable that Herodotus spares no detail (however gruesome) in relating Scythian customs that would have jarred Greek sensibilities, but does not comment on their moral or ethical validity from the audience's standpoint,<sup>77</sup> as in the case of the human sacrifices performed on behalf of Ares:<sup>78</sup>

ὄσους [δ'] ἂν τῶν πολεμίων ζωγήσωσι, ἀπὸ τῶν ἑκατὸν ἀνδρῶν ἄνδρα ἕνα θύουσι τρόπῳ οὐ τῷ αὐτῷ [ῶ] καὶ τὰ πρόβατα, ἀλλ' ἑτεροίῳ. Ἐπεὰν γὰρ οἶνον ἐπισπείσωσι κατὰ τῶν κεφαλῶν, ἀποσφάζουσι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐς ἄγγος καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνενεύκοντες ἄνω ἐπὶ τὸν ὄγκον τῶν φρυγάνων καταχέουσι τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀκινάκεω. [4] Ἄνω μὲν δὴ φορέουσι τοῦτο, κάτω δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἱρὸν ποιεῦσι τάδε· τῶν ἀποσφαγέντων ἀνδρῶν τοὺς δεξιούς ὤμους πάντας ἀποταμόντες σὺν τῆσι χερσὶ ἐς τὸν ἥερα ἰεῖσι καὶ ἔπειτα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἀπέρξαντες ἱρήια ἀπαλλάσσονται· χεὶρ δὲ τῆ ἂν πέση κεῖται καὶ χωρὶς ὁ νεκρὸς (4.62.3-4).

As many of the enemy they take prisoner, they sacrifice one man out of a hundred, not in the same way as sheep, but differently. Once they pour wine on the men's heads, they cut their throats over a bowl and then, bringing the blood up to a pile of sticks, they pour it down a straight sword. [4] While they carry the blood up above, they do the following down below by the sacred pile: having cut off all the right shoulders of the men who have been slain, they hurl these into the air along with their arms and then they go away after they have sacrificed the other victims. An arm lies wherever it falls and the body apart from it.

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<sup>76</sup> i.e. 4.17-32 (discussed above). Cf. 4.8-10.

<sup>77</sup> Recall Immerwahr (1966) 320 ad 2.35-36 (discussed in Chapter 2.3 above).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. 4.71-72 (discussed below), 4.94, and 4.103. On the practice of human sacrifice as "abnormal and deviant" among Greeks, see e.g. Henrichs (1981) 195-235 (quotation at 232). It is no wonder, then, that authors from Ephorus (*pace* Strabo) to Aristotle to Tertullian denigrate the related custom of cannibalism among the Scythians and other peoples living around the Black Sea (see Strab. 7.3.9, *Pol.* 1338b & *Eth. Nic.* 1148b, and *Adversus Marcionem* 1.1 respectively), which Herodotus records, but does not consider to be abhorrent (see 4.26; cf. 1.216 and 3.38.3-4). On the historicity of cannibalism in the *Histories*, see e.g. Murphy and Mallory (2000).

That Herodotus does not explicitly judge these or any other cultural practices of the Scythians to be reprehensible (including scalping (4.64), the use of human skulls as drinking cups (4.65-66), and the ritual slaughter of the deceased king's entourage for burial with the monarch (4.72)) sets him apart from his peers and successors, by whom the Scythians were frequently demonized to the point of being dehumanized.<sup>79</sup> But what truly distinguishes Herodotus in his innovative depiction of the Scythians is that he allows their νόμοι to exist as they are without any patent bias regarding ethnicity, and so reveals custom to be an essentially *human* phenomenon, just as our examination of the νόμοι and ἥθεα of the Egyptians in Chapter Two has already demonstrated.<sup>80</sup> So that we may understand just how important this point is to our study of aetiology and historical methodology in the *Histories* at large, let us now consider one final example from the Scythian λόγος that will make an even stronger case for cohesion at all levels of the text.

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<sup>79</sup> In their compendium of primary sources for the Scythians, Lovejoy and Boas (1965) 315-344 catalog many degrading portrayals among both Greek and Roman authors, such as Clearchus' scathing indictment of the Scythians as "the most wretched of all mortals" (πάντων ἀθλιώτατοι βροτῶν, *pace* Ath. 524c, cited in full on pp. 322-324). In addition to cannibalism (see n. 78 above), scalping (4.64) was also considered savage (see Soph. Fr. 429 (Nauck ed.), cited at Lovejoy and Boas (1965) 316). For a general survey of the topos of Scythian savagery as it was construed by Aeschylus, Aristophanes, and other fifth century authors contemporary with Herodotus, see e.g. Hartog (1988) 12-13. Though it should almost go without saying, it is remarkable that Herodotus nowhere reduces the Scythians (or any other barbarian people for that matter) to the borderline sub-human categories championed by Aristotle (see e.g. *Pol.* 1252b ff. and *Eth.* 1145a), which were to have a tremendous impact beyond antiquity (see e.g. Pagden (1982) 15-56 on the influence of Aristotelian thought on the question of natural slavery in the Age of Discovery (esp. pp. 16-18, 41-50)).

<sup>80</sup> Recall especially the emphasis on human beings (τοῖσι ἄλλοισι ἀνθρώποισι, ἄλλοι, etc.) in Herodotus' catalogue of Egyptian νόμοι and ἥθεα (2.35-36). Cf. the anthropological basis of the "custom is king" passage (discussed above in Chapter 2.3): Εἰ γὰρ τις προθεῖη **πᾶσι ἀνθρώποισι** ἐκλέξασθαι κελεύων νόμους τοὺς καλλίστους ἐκ τῶν πάντων νόμων, διασκεψάμενοι ἂν ἐλοίατο ἕκαστοι τοὺς ἐαυτῶν· οὕτω νομίζουσι πολλόν τι καλλίστους τοὺς ἐαυτῶν νόμους ἕκαστοι εἶναι... Ὡς δὲ οὕτω νενομίκασι τὰ περὶ τοὺς νόμους **οἱ πάντες ἄνθρωποι**, πολλοῖσι τε καὶ ἄλλοισι τεκμηρίοισι πάρεστι σταθμώσασθαι κ.τ.λ. (3.38.1-2). See immediately below on the programmatic underpinnings of this cosmopolitan mentality.

#### 4.4 Seeing the Bigger Picture: the Exemplarity of the Sauromatae

After describing the foundational stories, the land, and the customs of the Scythians as a way of setting the stage for the Persian invasion in the latter half of the Scythian λόγος, Herodotus turns his attention to the peoples who are invited to form an alliance against Darius' forces (4.102-119). Conspicuous among them are the Sauromatae, a Scythian people, whose origins are the subject of a substantial aetiological narrative (4.110-117). Ostensibly, the point of this narrative is to explain how the Sauromatae came to inhabit the land they now possess and to adopt their present customs (4.116-117). However, as with every other major aetiology we have dealt with, the story of the Sauromatae elucidates more than the origins it sets out to explain. In this case, it also reveals how the source of the identity of the Sauromatae is not a question of ethnicity alone.<sup>81</sup> In order to discern this, we will have to pay close attention to context, as the oblique frame should signal from the start (ὧδε λέγεται; τότε λόγος..., 4.110.1):

Σαυροματέων δὲ περὶ ὧδε λέγεται. Ὅτε Ἕλληνες Ἀμαζόσι ἐμαχέσαντο (τὰς δὲ Ἀμαζόνας καλέουσι [οἱ] Σκύθαι Οἰόρπατα, δύναται δὲ τὸ οὖνομα τοῦτο κατὰ Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ἀνδροκτόνοι· οἶορ γὰρ καλέουσι ἄνδρα, τὸ δὲ πατὰ κτείνειν), τότε λόγος τοὺς Ἕλληνας νικήσαντας τῇ ἐπὶ Θερμώδοντι μάχῃ ἀποπλέειν ἄγοντας τρισὶ πλοίοισι τῶν Ἀμαζόνων ὅσας ἐδυνάετο ζωγρῆσαι· τὰς δὲ ἐν τῷ πελάγει ἐπιθεμένας ἐκκόψαι τοὺς ἄνδρας. [2] Πλοῖα δὲ οὐ γινώσκειν αὐτὰς οὐδὲ πηδαλίοισι χρᾶσθαι οὐδὲ ἰστίοισι οὐδὲ εἰρεσίῃ· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐξέκοψαν τοὺς ἄνδρας, ἐφέροντο κατὰ κῦμα καὶ ἄνεμον. Καὶ ἀπικνέονται τῆς λίμνης τῆς Μαιήτιδος ἐπὶ Κρημνούς· οἱ δὲ Κρημνοὶ εἰσι γῆς τῆς Σκυθέων τῶν ἐλευθέρων. Ἐνθαῦτα

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<sup>81</sup> In her monograph on the Amazons, Blok (1995) expresses disappointment that the Sauromatae “do not explain who the Amazons are” in the account at 4.110-118, but rather that “the traditional Amazons appear as an explanation [aition] for what the Greeks perceive. The story as such reverses the argument at the narrative level: it begins with this [aition] and ends with the unusual situation which it is supposed to explain” (88). While this is not an unfair criticism, it assumes that Herodotus is only interested in explaining the Sauromatae according to typologies as they presently exist and not in pushing past them to discover who they are *ab ovo*, as the discussion will argue below.

ἀποβᾶσαι ἀπὸ τῶν πλοίων αἱ Ἀμαζόνες ὁδοιπόρεον ἐς τὴν οἰκεομένην.  
Ἐντυχοῦσαι δὲ πρώτῳ ἵπποφορβίῳ τοῦτο διήρπασαν καὶ ἐπὶ τούτων ἱπαζόμεναι  
ἐλίζοντο τὰ τῶν Σκυθέων (4.110).

The following story is told about the Sauromatae. When the Greeks were at war against the Amazons (whom the Scythians call *Oiorpata*, meaning “mankillers” in Greek, for their word for “man” is *oior* and “kill” *pata*), the story goes that after the Greeks had won victory at the battle of Thermodon, they sailed away on three ships, taking with them as many of the Amazons as they could capture. While on the open sea, the women attacked the men and killed them. However, they did not know ships or how to use rudders or sails or oars, so once they had killed the men, they were carried by wind and wave, and they reached Cremni on Lake Maeotis, belonging to the territory of the free Scythians. Then the Amazons disembarked and began to make their way to inhabited land. They seized the first herd of horses they came across, and riding off on them, they began to pillage the land of the Scythians.

On the surface, the violent introduction to the account of the origins of the Sauromatae presupposes a series of rigid binary oppositions, chiefly, the dichotomy of Scythian and Amazon and, by extension, the dichotomy of man and woman.<sup>82</sup> Though the presence of these polarities is undeniable here, it would be misguided to predict that Herodotus would advocate a slavishly dualistic interpretation even at the start of this episode in light of all of the nuanced discussions that have come before it. Indeed, if we look carefully at the sequel to 4.110, we will find that no single binary ever overrides the other fully. Rather, like every other component of aetiology, the binaries are to be understood as an insoluble entity.

The need to integrate presents itself in the first close encounter between the Scythians and the Amazons in the following section of the account. Initially, the

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<sup>82</sup> Though the Scythians do not yet know that the Amazons are women, the fact that the latter are known by the epithet “manslayers” (ἀνδροκτόνοι, 4.110.1) insinuates a distinction based on gender from the start of the narrative. See also n. 85 below on the dichotomy of war and marriage.



Scythians' failure to understand the Amazons' way of life (let alone their speech, their dress, or their nationality)<sup>83</sup> suggests a polarizing otherness that might preclude the possibility of fruitful interaction and exchange between the two groups. However, as Pelling notes, the fact that the Scythians themselves are the ones to make this normative assessment in spite of their supposed status as the archetypical "other" effectively removes the distinction of otherness that scholars have often used to set them apart from other ἔθνεα in the *Histories*.<sup>84</sup> In other words, though the Amazons may seem strange to the Scythians, they are not altogether different. This message is hammered home when the Scythians set out to learn the identity of the Amazons and discover that they are not in fact men, but women (4.111.1). Rather than being put off by this, though, a group of Scythian men prevail upon the Amazons to come together and procreate with them (4.111.2-113), thereby producing the first generation of Sauromatae.

This aetiology is significant not only in that it further weakens the monolith of "the Scythian" as a homogenous cultural category, but also because it pushes beyond ethnicity altogether. As Dewald observes in her analysis of the new Sauromatian society created by the Amazons and the Scythians in the next section of the narrative (4.114-115), the interaction between these groups is overwhelmingly egalitarian.<sup>85</sup> Though the

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<sup>83</sup> Οἱ δὲ Σκύθαι οὐκ εἶχον συμβαλέσθαι τὸ πρῆγμα· οὔτε γὰρ φωνὴν οὔτε ἐσθῆτα οὔτε τὸ ἔθνος ἐγίνωσκον κ.τ.λ. (4.111.1).

<sup>84</sup> Pelling (1997) 52-53, *contra* Hartog (1988), esp. 216-224. See also Flory (1987) 108-113 for a similar (albeit more schematic) take on the inversion of otherness in this episode.

<sup>85</sup> Dewald (1981) 100-101. See also Dewald (1990) 222-223, where she refutes Hartog's thesis that the Scythians are fulfilling the binary opposition between war and marriage in coupling with the Amazons (Hartog (1988) 219). Cf. Munson (2001) 127-130, who stands with Dewald in advocating for such a reading based on gender and sexual parity in this episode (*contra* Brown and Tyrrell (1985)). In this vein,

women must take the initiative in making their living arrangements because the men do not know the Amazons' language, neither gender nor ethnicity nor custom<sup>86</sup> stand in the way of them forming what turns out to be an incredibly equitable and peaceful synoecism,<sup>87</sup> devoid of the savage marauding stereotypical of both groups. What's more, the fact that the Scythians and the Amazons come together in spite of all odds to reproduce shows that in the end, biology trumps all other differences. In this regard, it is hard to imagine a better example of how Herodotus' treatment of the Scythians first and foremost as human beings is "subordinated to his comprehensive world-concept and the general history of the οἰκουμένη."<sup>88</sup> a notion that is fully in keeping with his programmatic commitment to preserve τὰ γινόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων (1.1.0) and to expand our worldview by projecting into the realm of ἀνθρωπιήν...εὐδαιμονίην (1.5.4).<sup>89</sup> But what truly makes the ecumenical basis of the depiction of the Scythians unassailable is the way the account of the Sauromatae ultimately concludes.

Despite the harmony achieved by the Scythians and the Amazons, it soon becomes clear that their society cannot continue to exist where it was first born, due to differences between their neighbors and the impossibility of blotting out the stain of past injustices committed against them (4.114.2-3). Thus, the Scythians and the Amazons

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see also Mayor (2014) 52-59, esp. 55-59. Recall from 4.5.4 how Colaxais' mandate to rule the Scythians is also predicated on the sharing of responsibilities among the classes (see above).

<sup>86</sup> The criteria for the Amazons' otherness in 4.111.1 (i.e. clothes and language) are signifiers of custom throughout the *Histories* (see e.g. 2.35-36, 4.78, 4.106, 4.168).

<sup>87</sup> Dewald (1981) 100.

<sup>88</sup> Harmatta (1990) 121. In defense of this thesis, Harmatta cites many references within and without the Scythian λόγος to demonstrate the pervasive influence of the Scythians across seven of the nine books of the *Histories* (see pp. 121-123).

<sup>89</sup> See Chapter 1.3 above.

decide to go off and live by themselves (ἔπειτα ἐλθόντες οἰκέωμεν ἐπ’ ἡμέων αὐτῶν, 4.114.4) beyond the river Tanaïs, where the Sauromatae reside in Herodotus’ time (...ἐν τῷ νῦν κατοίκηνται, 4.116.2). As Munson observes, the denouement of this account is uncannily similar to the final chapter of the *Histories* in which a group of Persians petitions their ruler, Cyrus, to relocate, in order to seek out a better life in a better land than the one they possess<sup>90</sup> and so perpetuate a pattern of human migration that knows no bounds in a world that is truly one for Herodotus (μῆ ἐούση γῆ, 4.45.2).<sup>91</sup> As we shall see in the conclusion to the dissertation, this is a tremendously significant comparandum, since Herodotus’ drive to obtain ever greater knowledge about origins and their manifold meanings beyond the scope of the here and now will lead us to an inexorable conclusion in the final chapters of the *Histories* about aetiology, historical methodology, and unity as they relate to the work as a whole. Before turning to the end of Book Nine, however, let us first consider how this same tendency to expand the scope of our inquiry in human terms manifests itself in the build-up to the second Persian invasion of Greece.

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<sup>90</sup> Munson (2001) 130. See especially 9.122.2: «Ἐπεὶ Ζεὺς ... Πέρσησι ἡγεμονίην διδοῖ, ἀνδρῶν δὲ σοί, Κῦρε, κατελῶν Ἀστυάγεια, φέρε, γῆν γὰρ ἐκτίμεθα ὀλίγην καὶ ταύτην τρηχέαν, **μεταναστάντες ἐκ ταύτης ἄλλην σχῶμεν ἀμείνω.**

<sup>91</sup> See Demand (1988) for additional examples of the cross-cultural phenomenon of μετοίκησης in the *Histories* (1.162-170, 5.12-15).

## 5. “Let this statement hold for my entire narrative”: the Medizing *Logos*

By the time Herodotus shifts his focus to the Persian invasions of Greece in the λόγοι corresponding with Books Six through Nine of the *Histories*, his voice appears to shift as well. From then on, we are less likely to encounter Herodotus the intrepid eyewitness, the polemical scientist, or the inquisitive ethnographer than we were in Books One through Five where his critical faculties were so prominently displayed, especially in the accounts of Egypt and Scythia that we have now considered at length in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.<sup>1</sup> Marincola attributes this apparent about-face to the fact that the Persian Wars were not as temporally, spatially, or culturally removed from the experiences of Herodotus’ fifth-century Greek audience as the words and deeds of barbarians from far-off lands.<sup>2</sup> But while distance may help to explain the supposed division between the “ethnographic” and “historical” λόγοι corresponding with Books One through Five and Six through Nine respectively,<sup>3</sup> the methodological underpinnings of the latter are not altogether distinct from the former. One need only consult Shrimpton

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<sup>1</sup> Noteworthy exceptions not treated below include Herodotus’ description of the origins of Thessaly as a geological phenomenon (7.129), the Pelasgians and the nations of the Peloponnese (8.44 & 8.73), and perhaps most importantly, Demaratus’ series of exchanges with Xerxes about custom (see especially Branscome (2013) 54-104 ad 7.101-105, 7.209, and 7.234-237). All of these examples could be marshalled to substantiate the claim of de Jong (2001) 108, that Xerxes’ expedition against Europe constitutes a kind of reverse ethnography of Greece, situated at the core of the military campaigns of the “historical” λόγοι. See also Christ (1994) for other potential evidence to this effect.

<sup>2</sup> Marincola (1987) 132.

<sup>3</sup> At the heart of this division is the “genetic” or “developmental” hypothesis promulgated by Jacoby (1913) cols. 333-392, that Herodotus, an erstwhile ethnographer, became an historian in the process of composing the *Histories*. For an overview of the pervasive influence of this belief on Herodotean scholarship during the last hundred years, see e.g. Skinner (2012) 30-34 and 243-244. See also Chapter Two (esp. notes 6 and 19) on the shortcomings of this hypothesis.

and Gillis' appendix of source citations collated from the entirety of the *Histories*<sup>4</sup> to refute Marincola's remark, that "in the books other than II, Herodotus is still present but no longer participant."<sup>5</sup> However, as Dewald reminds, even in cases where Herodotus does not claim to rely on ὄψις ("autopsy"), ἀκοή ("hearsay"), or γνώμη ("judgment") in the first person, it is still possible to detect his authorial presence across the *Histories*.<sup>6</sup>

The following chapter will explore this dichotomy of meta-narrative as it relates to the origins of how and why the Greeks did (or did not) come to consort with the Persians (i.e. medize) during the Persian Wars. Though the focus of this discussion will be Herodotus' salient treatment *in propria persona* of the Argives' alleged overtures to the Persians prior to the battle of Thermopylae (7.148-152), some less overt interjections will also be considered. In any case, we will demonstrate how these aetiologies recapitulate programmatic patterns isolated in previous chapters and thereby extend the methodological continuum of the *Histories* beyond the "ethnographic" λόγοι to some of the most representative "historical" λόγοι of Herodotus' work.

## ***5.1 The Argives***

After laying out Xerxes' designs on capturing not just Athens, but all of Greece,<sup>7</sup> Herodotus tells of a gathering of like-minded Greeks in 481/480 BCE who have assembled to counter the Great King's invasion of Europe (7.145). Having given pledges

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<sup>4</sup> Shrimpton and Gillis (1997) 249 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Marincola (1987) 133.

<sup>6</sup> Dewald (2002) 275.

<sup>7</sup> Ἡ δὲ στρατηλασίη ἢ βασιλέος οὐνομα μὲν εἶχε ὡς ἐπ' Ἀθήνας ἐλαύνει, κατίετο δὲ ἐς πᾶσαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα (7.138.1). Cf. 7.157.1.

and having agreed to break off hostilities among one another, they resolve to send spies to Sardis to gauge the Persians' strength and to dispatch messengers to several polities to form a coalition (i.e. the Hellenic League),<sup>8</sup> knowing that their survival will depend on “putting their heads together” (συγκύψαντες) and unifying as a single Greek force (τὸ Ἑλληνικόν).<sup>9</sup> The first people to whom they appeal are the Argives, who are still reeling from their defeat by the Spartans at the battle of Sepeia more than a decade earlier in 494 BCE.<sup>10</sup>

For our purposes of showing the resonance of programmatic patterns of aetiology beyond the first half of the *Histories*, it is significant that the representatives from the newly-formed Hellenic League approach this particular group before consulting Gelon of Syracuse (7.153-162), the Corcyreans (7.168), and the Cretans (7.169-171), inasmuch as the theft of the Argive princess, Io, was what originally set off hostilities between Greeks and barbarians in the proem (1.1). That the Argives will continue to play an important role as the Hellenic League takes shape is further indicated by the priestess of Apollo at Delphi, who prophesies that Argos will be the “head that protects the body” (κάρη δὲ τὸ σῶμα σαώσει, 7.148.3). Our analysis will show this to be the case in more ways than one. However, before Herodotus can make this known, he must first relate what the Argives say about their encounter with the Hellenic League when representatives for the coalition attempt to enlist their aid against the Persians.

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<sup>8</sup> For an historical overview of the Hellenic League, see e.g. Brunt (1993) 47-83.

<sup>9</sup> See 7.145.2.

<sup>10</sup> See 7.148.2. On the battle of Sepeia, see 6.77-82. On Argos' prior enmities with Sparta and other Greek states, see also 1.82 and 5.61.

In addition to the reference to the primacy of Argos cited in the prophesy above, Herodotus also evokes the proem to the *Histories* by framing the Argives' account obliquely (Ἀργεῖοι δὲ λέγουσι τὰ κατ' ἑωυτοῦς γενέσθαι ὧδε κ.τ.λ., 7.148.2) and deferring judgment until the two competing accounts have also been relayed via indirect speech (Ἔστι δὲ ἄλλος λόγος λεγόμενος ἀνὰ τὴν Ἑλλάδα κ.τ.λ., 7.150.1; Συμπεσεῖν δὲ τούτοισι καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον λέγουσί τινες Ἑλλήνων κ.τ.λ., 7.151.1). As we have now come to expect from the proem and a host of related examples discussed in earlier chapters, the juxtaposition of several sources in the aetiology of the Argives' purported medism will stem from more than just an aversion to *pars pro toto* arguments on the part of the ἴστωρ (and certainly not from an ineptitude at selecting and managing his sources).<sup>11</sup> Rather, the series of shifting focalizations<sup>12</sup> will signal fundamentally human biases innate in historical inquiry. Consequently, this framework will prompt the reader not only to see the inextricability of aetiology from narrative, but also to consider a range of possibilities posed by original questions, which in no way admit monologic explanations or interpretations.

We can begin to glimpse this multiplicity once the Argives issue their demands for allying themselves with the Hellenic League, namely, a thirty-year peace treaty with Sparta to recoup their losses from the battle of Sepeia and a half-share in the allied ἡγεμονίη:<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See Vannicelli (2004) on this common critique of Herodotus' use of sources in 7.131-178.

<sup>12</sup> Dewald (2002) 225 (see discussion of 1.1-5 in Chapter One above).

<sup>13</sup> See 7.148.4.

Ταῦτα μὲν λέγουσι τὴν βουλὴν ὑποκρίνασθαι, καίπερ ἀπαγορευόντός σφι τοῦ χρηστηρίου μὴ ποιέεσθαι τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνας συμμαχίην· σπουδὴν δὲ ἔχειν σπονδὰς γενέσθαι τριηκοντοετίδας, καίπερ τὸ χρηστήριον φοβεόμενοι, ἵνα δὴ σφι οἱ παῖδες ἀνδρωθῶσι ἐν τούτοις τοῖσι ἔτεσι· μὴ δὲ σπονδῶν ἐουσέων ἐπιλέγεσθαι, ἣν ἄρα σφέας καταλάβη πρὸς τῷ γεγονότι κακῷ ἄλλο πταῖσμα πρὸς τὸν Πέρσην, μὴ τὸ λοιπὸν ἕωσι Λακεδαιμονίων ὑπήκοοι. [2] Τῶν δὲ ἀγγέλων τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς Σπάρτης πρὸς τὰ ρηθέντα ἐκ τῆς βουλῆς ἀμείψασθαι τοῖσδε· περὶ μὲν σπονδῶν ἀνοίσειν ἐς τοὺς πλέονας· περὶ δὲ ἡγεμονίης αὐτοῖσι ἐντετάλθαι ὑποκρίνασθαι, καὶ δὴ λέγειν σφίσι μὲν εἶναι δύο βασιλέας, Ἀργεῖοισι δὲ ἓνα· οὐκ ὦν δυνατὸν εἶναι τῶν ἐκ Σπάρτης οὐδέτερον παῦσαι τῆς ἡγεμονίης, μετὰ δὲ δύο τῶν σφετέρων ὁμόψηφον τὸν Ἀργεῖον εἶναι κωλύειν οὐδέν. [3] Οὕτω δὴ οἱ Ἀργεῖοί φασι οὐκ ἀνασχέσθαι τῶν Σπαρτητέων τὴν πλεονεξίην, ἀλλ' ἐλέσθαι μᾶλλον ὑπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων ἄρχεσθαι ἢ τι ὑπεῖξαι Λακεδαιμονίοισι· προειπεῖν τε τοῖσι ἀγγέλοισι πρὸ δύντος ἡλίου ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἐκ τῆς Ἀργείων χώρας, εἰ δὲ μὴ, περιέψεσθαι ὡς πολεμίους (7.149).

The Argives say that this is the reply the council gave, although the oracle forbade them from making the alliance with the Greeks. However, in spite of their fear of the oracle, they were eager to make a thirty-year treaty, so that their sons might actually grow to adulthood during these years. But they were concerned that if there were no treaty, they would be the Spartans' subjects indefinitely if another disaster befell them at the hands of the Persians in addition to the evil they had already suffered. [2] Those messengers from Sparta gave the following reply to the pronouncements of the council, that they would refer the question of a treaty to a majority of their citizens, but that they had been instructed to reply to the question of leadership and to tell them that they had two kings while the Argives had one, so it was not possible for either of the Spartan kings to yield his leadership, but that there was nothing to prevent the Argive king from having an equal vote with their two kings. [3] For this reason, then, the Argives say that the Spartans' greed was intolerable, but that they preferred to be ruled by the barbarians than to give an inch to the Spartans, and they told the messengers to leave Argive territory by sundown or else be considered enemies.

As Baragwanath submits, the Argives' dilemma set out in 7.149.1 represents one of the first instances in the *Histories* where the opposition between idealism and pragmatism “comes gradually to be eclipsed by the different opposition of *motives* versus



*necessity.*”<sup>14</sup> In light of Sparta’s burgeoning imperial ambitions<sup>15</sup> and the crippling losses Argos had already sustained at her hands at the battle of Sepeia (which were so catastrophic that slaves had to administer the affairs of state until the children of citizen males who had fallen in battle came of age),<sup>16</sup> it is understandable that the Argives end up spurning the common good of the Greeks at the expense of their own interests. But while their motivation for rejecting the offer of the Hellenic League may seem cut and dried, we must bear in mind the fact that this entire passage is situated around what the Argives themselves say about their own predicament (Ταῦτα μὲν λέγουσι κ.τ.λ., 7.149.1). When the question of the origins of the Argives’ decision to rebuff the envoys is reframed in the following two chapters, it will not be so easy to pinpoint a single αἰτία for their actions:

Αὐτοὶ μὲν Ἀργεῖοι τοσαῦτα τούτων περὶ λέγουσι. Ἔστι δὲ ἄλλος λόγος λεγόμενος ἀνὰ τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ὡς Ξέρξης ἔπεμψε κήρυκα ἐς Ἄργος πρότερον ἢ περ ὀρμηῆσαι στρατεύεσθαι ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα· ἐλθόντα δὲ τούτον λέγεται εἰπεῖν· [2] «Ἄνδρες Ἀργεῖοι, βασιλεὺς Ξέρξης τάδε ὑμῖν λέγει· Ἡμεῖς νομίζομεν Πέρσῃν εἶναι ἀπ’ οὗ ἡμεῖς γεγόναμεν, παῖδα Περσέος τοῦ Δανάης, γεγονότα ἐκ τῆς Κηφέος θυγατρὸς Ἄνδρομέδης. Οὕτω ἂν ὧν εἶημεν ὑμέτεροι ἀπόγονοι. Οὔτε ὧν ἡμέας οἶκος ἐπὶ τοὺς ἡμετέρους προγόνους ἐκστρατεύεσθαι, οὔτε ὑμέας ἄλλοισι τιμωρέοντας ἡμῖν ἀντιξόους γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ παρ’ ὑμῖν αὐτοῖσι ἡσυχίην ἔχοντας κατῆσθαι· ἢ γὰρ ἐμοὶ γένηται κατὰ νόον, οὐδαμοὺς μέζονας ὑμέων ἄξω.» [3] Ταῦτα ἀκούσαντας Ἀργεῖους λέγεται πρῆγμα ποιήσασθαι, καὶ παραχρῆμα μὲν οὐδὲν ἐπαγγελλομένους μεταίτειν, ἐπεὶ δὲ σφεας παραλαμβάνειν τοὺς Ἑλληνας, οὕτω δὲ ἐπισταμένους ὅτι οὐ μεταδώσουσι τῆς ἀρχῆς Λακεδαιμόνιοι μεταίτειν, ἵνα ἐπὶ προφάσιος ἡσυχίην ἄγωσι (7.150).

This is what the Argives themselves say about these things, but there is another story told throughout Greece, that Xerxes sent a herald to Argos before he set out to make war on Greece. This herald is said to have arrived and spoken thus: [2]

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<sup>14</sup> See Baragwanath (2008) 203-239, esp. 211-217 ad loc. (quotation at 205).

<sup>15</sup> On greed (expressed at 7.149.3 as πλεονεξία) as an impetus to empire for Greeks and barbarians alike across the *Histories*, see Balot (2001) 99-135 (see 108-111 ad loc.).

<sup>16</sup> Ἄργος δὲ ἀνδρῶν ἐχηρώθη οὕτω ὥστε οἱ δοῦλοι αὐτῶν ἔσχον πάντα τὰ πρήγματα ἄρχοντες τε καὶ διέποντες, ἐς ὃ ἐπήβησαν οἱ τῶν ἀπολομένων παῖδες (6.83.1).

“Argive men, King Xerxes offers the following words to you. ‘We believe that it is Perses from whom we are descended, son of Perseus, son of Danaë, offspring of Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus. That would make us your descendants, so it is improper for us to march out against our own progenitors and for you to oppose us by helping others, but you should live by yourselves in peace, for if all goes according to plan, I shall lead none better than you.’” [3] When they heard this, the Argives are said to have made much of it, but made no promises or demands straightaway. However, when the Greeks approached them for help, they demanded a share of the command so that they might have a pretext to be at peace because they knew that the Spartans would not grant them a share.

On the surface, it may seem incredible that the emissary dispatched by Xerxes can not only connect the Persians’ lineage with the Argives’, but also persuade them of its veracity. However, as Georges has adduced from a host of evidence internal and external to the *Histories*, “the Argives could seriously entertain the view that their own Perseus had founded the line of Persian kings, and not merely because it flattered them to believe that an Argive hero was ancestral to the world monarchy on their horizon.”<sup>17</sup> But even if the Argives only use the Persians’ appeal to kinship as a pretext to avoid taking part in the Hellenic League (ἵνα ἐπὶ προφάσιος ἡσυχίην ἄγωσι, 7.150.3), it is important to note that this ulterior motive is dependent upon the potentially self-serving explanation of the source which frames this second account (Ἔστι δὲ ἄλλος λόγος λεγόμενος, 7.150.1), just as it is in the proem when the Persian λόγοι imply a *Realpolitik* motivation in the Greeks’ invasion of Troy independent of their motivation to requite the rape of Io and

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<sup>17</sup> Georges (1994) 66-71 (quotation at 70). The most compelling testimonia outside of the *Histories* which Georges cites to this effect are found in Aeschylus (i.e. *Pers.* 79-80, 185-187) and the fragments of the Argive mythographer Acusilaus. See also Jones (1999) 28-29 and Vannicelli (2012).

Helen.<sup>18</sup> As the denouement of the third account will indicate, neither the Argives nor the Greeks as a whole will be alone in their desire to protect and preserve their own interests:

Συμπεσεῖν δὲ τούτοισι καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον λέγουσὶ τινες Ἑλλήνων,  
πολλοῖσι [τε] ἔτεσι ὕστερον γενόμενον τούτων· τυχεῖν ἐν Σούσοισι τοῖσι  
Μεμνονίοισι ἐόντας ἐτέρου πρήγματος εἴνεκα ἀγγέλους Ἀθηναίων, Καλλίην τε  
τὸν Ἴππονίκου καὶ τοὺς μετὰ τούτου ἀναβάντας, Ἀργεῖους δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον  
χρόνον πέμψαντας καὶ τούτους ἐς Σοῦσα ἀγγέλους εἰρωτᾶν Ἄρτοξέρξην τὸν  
Ξέρξεω εἴ σφι ἔτι ἐμμένει ἐθέλουσι τὴν πρὸς Ξέρξην φιλίην συνεκεράσαντο ἢ  
νομιζοῖατο πρὸς αὐτοῦ εἶναι πολέμιοι· βασιλέα δὲ Ἄρτοξέρξην μάλιστα ἐμμένειν  
φάναι καὶ οὐδεμίαν νομίζειν πόλιν Ἄργεος φιλιωτέραν (7.151).

Some Greeks say that this squares with the following account which happened many years later, when some Athenian messengers happened to be in Memnonian Susa on some other business, including Callias son of Hipponicus and those who had gone up with him. The Argives had also sent messengers to Susa at the same time to ask Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, if the friendship they had made with Xerxes still held good, as they desired, or if they were considered enemies by him. King Artaxerxes said that their friendship did indeed hold good and that he considered no city friendlier than Argos.

Here, the latent reference to an Athenian peace treaty with Persia, which is thought to have been brokered by Callias about thirty years after the Argives' negotiations with the Hellenic League,<sup>19</sup> is proleptic in more than just a chronological sense. In prompting the reader to look past the temporal limits of the Argives' negotiations *per se*, this account also urges the reader to see beyond stereotypes of certain groups' proclivities towards medism. The very suggestion that the Athenians would approach Artaxerxes to secure their own imperial holdings after reproaching those who made such overtures in the Persian Wars and after "saving" Greece from the fleet of

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<sup>18</sup> See especially the discussion of 1.4 in Chapter 1.2.

<sup>19</sup> The date for the Peace of Callias is usually set at 449 BCE (*pace* Diod. Sic. 12.3-4). For an overview of this Peace, see e.g. Badian (1987). See also e.g. Cawkwell (1997) and Samons (1998) for critiques of this standard treatment.

Artaxerxes' father at the battle of Salamis a generation earlier shows that even the most high-minded ἔθνος can pursue what it considers to be expedient to its own ends in the *longue durée*.<sup>20</sup> But rather than decry such a move as morally contemptible, Herodotus interprets this matter from a wider perspective by the time he actually weighs in on the question of the origins of the Argives' allegiances. Before we examine the conclusions he himself draws from 7.148-151, however, let us first consider another piquant reference to Artaxerxes in Book Six<sup>21</sup> that will elucidate Herodotus' eventual interjection about this matter:

Δαῖτις μὲν δὴ ταῦτα ποιήσας ἔπλεε ἅμα τῷ στρατῷ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐρέτριαν πρῶτα, ἅμα ἀγόμενος καὶ Ἴωνας καὶ Αἰολέας· μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον ἐνθεῦτεν ἐξαναχθέντα Δῆλος ἐκινήθη, ὡς ἔλεγον οἱ Δῆλιοι, καὶ πρῶτα καὶ ὕστατα μέχρι ἐμέο σεισθεῖσα. Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν κου τέρας ἀνθρώποισι τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι κακῶν ἔφηνε ὁ θεός· [2] ἐπὶ γὰρ Δαρείου τοῦ Ὑστάσπεος καὶ Ξέρξεω τοῦ Δαρείου καὶ Ἀρτοξέρξεω τοῦ Ξέρξεω, τριῶν τουτέων ἐπεξῆς γενέων, ἐγένετο πλέω κακὰ τῇ Ἑλλάδι ἢ ἐπὶ εἴκοσι ἄλλας γενεὰς τὰς πρὸ Δαρείου γενομένας, τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν Περσέων αὐτῇ γερόμενα, τὰ δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν κορυφαίων περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς πολεμεόντων. [3] Οὕτω οὐδὲν ἦν ἀεικὲς κινήθηναι Δῆλον τὸ πρὶν εὐῶσαν ἀκίνητον. [Καὶ ἐν χρησμῷ ἦν γεγραμμένον περὶ αὐτῆς ὧδε· κινήσω καὶ Δῆλον ἀκίνητόν περ εὐῶσαν.] Δύναται δὲ κατὰ Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ταῦτα τὰ σὺνόματα, Δαρείος ἐρξίης, Ξέρξης ἀρήιος, Ἀρτοξέρξης μέγας ἀρήιος. Τούτους μὲν δὴ τοὺς βασιλέας ὧδε ἂν ὀρθῶς κατὰ γλῶσσαν τὴν σφετέρην Ἑλληνας καλέοιεν (6.98).

After doing these things (i.e. making sacrifices at Delos), Datis first set sail for Eretria with his army, taking Ionians and Aeolians with him. Once Datis had put to sea from here, Delos was shaken by an earthquake for the first and last time up until my day. God revealed this to mankind, I suppose, as a portent of the evils to

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. 9.11, where the Athenians themselves threaten to make a deal with Xerxes. On Athens' avowed intolerance of medizers, see 8.140-144 and 9.4-5. The fact that Herodotus' expresses the widely-reviled opinion (Ἐνθαῦτα ἀναγκαίη ἐξέργομαι γνώμην ἀποδέξασθαι ἐπίφθονον μὲν πρὸς τῶν πλεόνων ἀνθρώπων, 7.139.1) that the Athenians became the saviors of Greece through their victory at Salamis (Ἀθηναίους ...σωτήρας γενέσθαι τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 7.139.5) implies that their role changed following the Persian Wars when the *Histories* were composed. On the programmatic notion of Athens' reversal, see Chapter 6.2 below.

<sup>21</sup> Outside of 7.151, the follow-up in 7.152 (discussed below), and 6.98 (discussed below), Artaxerxes is only mentioned once in the *Histories* (i.e. 7.106.1).

come, [2] for during the three successive generations when Darius son of Hystaspes and Xerxes the son of Darius and Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes sat on the throne, more bad things happened to Greece than in the other twenty generations prior to Darius, some of which happened to it as a result of the Persians, others as a result of the chieftains when they were warring over rule. [3] For this reason, it is not at all strange that Delos was shaken, though it had never moved before [And the following was written in an oracle about it: “I shall move Delos, too, though it had never moved before.”] In the Greek tongue, Darius means “doer”, Xerxes means “warrior”, and Artaxerxes means “great warrior.” The Greeks would be correct in calling these kings by such names in their own tongue.

The reference to the three successive generations of rulers is significant not only in that it helps to fix a *terminus post quem* for the publication of the *Histories*,<sup>22</sup> but also because it establishes a continuum for the events of the Persian Wars and beyond.<sup>23</sup> As Munson notes, the immediate juxtaposition of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes (Δαρειός ἐρξίης, Ξέρξης ἀρήιος, Ἀρτοξέρξης μέγας ἀρήιος, 6.98.3) “define what is, from the point of view of the Greeks, a unitary period in history”,<sup>24</sup> which will encompass a century of evils (κακά, 6.98.2) and extend from the Persians Wars down to the Pentecontaetia and even the Peloponnesian War. Though the violent epithets of the Persian rulers which Herodotus translates may suggest that these men alone will be responsible for inflicting such evils, suffering will not be a one way street in the three generations to come.

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<sup>22</sup> The regnal years of Artaxerxes I (ca. 464-424 BCE) have been used variously to establish such a date, but scholars have yet to reach a consensus on when the *Histories* were published. However, none to my knowledge has proposed a date before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431 BCE, which Herodotus appears to reference when he mentions the Theban capture of Plataea (see 7.233; cf. Thuc. 2.2-6). For a summary of this controversy as it was discussed in the previous century, see e.g. Nenci (1998) ad 6.98. For a recent attempt to extend the date of the composition of the *Histories* into the Peloponnesian War and past 413 BCE (against the traditional interpretation of 9.73, that Herodotus’ failure to mention the Spartan occupation of Decelea in that year provides a *terminus ante quem* for the work), see Irwin (2013).

<sup>23</sup> Fornara (1971) 82 n. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Munson (2005) 50. See also Munson (2001) 201-205 for a full discussion of this passage.

Instead, mankind as a whole (ἄνθρωποισι, 6.98.1) will face these κακά irrespective of ethnicity,<sup>25</sup> both in the wars themselves and the ensuing power struggles (τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν Περσέων αὐτῇ γενόμενα, τὰ δὲ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τῶν κορυφαίων περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς πολυμεόντων, 6.98.2).<sup>26</sup> But what these struggles will be exactly (and who or what will initiate them) is not clearly defined.<sup>27</sup>

In light of Herodotus’ expansive yet elliptical interpretation of the Delian earthquake and its ramifications for a variety of unnamed conflicts in the fifth century,<sup>28</sup> it makes sense that he ultimately gives his take on the Argives’ supposed medism as he does after hearing out the three λόγοι which we have now considered above (7.148-151). But while his forthcoming remarks on evils and their indiscriminate bearing on all of humanity have clear antecedents in 6.98, these will be shown in the end to hark back to the proem:

Εἰ μὲν νυν Ξέρξης τε ἀπέπεμψε ταῦτα λέγοντα κήρυκα ἐς Ἄργος καὶ Ἀργείων ἄγγελοι ἀναβάντες ἐς Σοῦσα ἐπειρώτων Ἀρτοξέρξην περὶ φιλίης, οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν, οὐδέ τινα γνώμην περὶ αὐτῶν ἀποφαίνομαι ἄλλην γε ἢ τὴν περ αὐτοὶ Ἀργεῖοι λέγουσι. [2] Ἐπίσταμαι δὲ τοσοῦτο, ὅτι, εἰ πάντες ἄνθρωποι τὰ οἰκία κακὰ ἐς μέσον συνενείκαιεν ἀλλάξασθαι βουλόμενοι τοῖσι πλησίοισι, ἐγκύψαντες ἂν ἐς τὰ τῶν πέλας κακὰ ἀσπασίως ἕκαστοι αὐτῶν ἀποφεροῖατο ὀπίσω τὰ ἐσηνείκαντο. [3] Οὕτω [δὴ] οὐδ’ Ἀργεῖοισι αἴσχιστα πεποίηται. Ἐγὼ δὲ

<sup>25</sup> Cf. 5.97.3, where the Athenian ships dispatched to assist the Ionians in their revolt against the Persians are called the “beginning of evils”, not just for these particular groups, but “for both Greeks and barbarians” (Αὐταὶ δὲ αἱ νέες ἀρχὴ κακῶν ἐγένοντο Ἑλλησὶ τε καὶ βαρβάροισι). Recall also the *Einleitungssatz* (1.1.0) and the proem’s egalitarian premise as a whole (discussed immediately below and in Chapter One).

<sup>26</sup> The use of the rare word κορυφαίων (“chieftains”) recalls the point during the Constitutional Debate at Susa when Darius rejects Megabyzus’ proposal for oligarchy on grounds that such men create factional strife and murder in vying with their opponents for virtue (3.82.3), a sentiment that is prophetic of the internecine struggles that will follow the Persian Wars.

<sup>27</sup> Munson (2001) 205.

<sup>28</sup> For a recent discussion of how the Delian earthquake “is less a seismic event, than a semiotic one” for Herodotus, see e.g. Rusten (2013) (quotation at 142).

ὀφείλω λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα, πείθεσθαι γε μὲν οὐ παντάπασι ὀφείλω (καί μοι τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος ἐχέτω ἐς πάντα τὸν λόγον)· ἐπεὶ καὶ ταῦτα λέγεται, ὡς ἄρα Ἀργεῖοι ἦσαν οἱ ἐπικαλεσάμενοι τὸν Πέρσην ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ἐπειδὴ σφίσι πρὸς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους κακῶς ἡ αἰχμὴ ἐστήκεε, πᾶν δὴ βουλόμενοι σφίσι εἶναι πρὸ τῆς παρεούσης λύπης (7.152).

Now whether Xerxes dispatched a messenger to Argos who said these things or Argive messengers went up to Susa to ask Artaxerxes about friendship, I cannot say accurately, nor do I declare any judgement about these things other than the one the Argives themselves say. [2] However, I do know this, that, if all peoples brought their own evils along to market out of a desire to exchange them with their neighbors, each of them would gladly bring back what they had brought in after looking carefully at the evils of those next to them. [3] Thus, nothing absolutely shameful was done by the Argives. Though I am obliged to say what is said, I am not obliged to believe it altogether (and let this statement hold for my entire narrative), since it is also said that the Argives were the ones who summoned the Persians to Greece because their war against the Spartans had gone badly, desiring anything other than their present grievance.

What should strike us straightaway about this remarkable passage is how

Herodotus' decision to counter his lack of secure knowledge about the aetiologies of

7.148-151 with what he *does* know (οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν... Ἐπίσταμαι δὲ τοσοῦτο,

7.152.1-2)<sup>29</sup> effectively recapitulates the priamel that follows the accounts of the women-snatchings in the first four chapters of the *Histories*:

Ταῦτα μὲν νυν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. Ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. [4] Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. Τὴν ἀνθρωπήην ὣν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τούτῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.3-4).

This is what the Persians and the Phoenicians say. But I am not going to talk about these matters, saying that they happened this way or some other way. Instead, having indicated the man I myself know to have been the first to

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<sup>29</sup> For other uses of οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν et sim., cf. 1.57.1, 1.160.2, 2.103.2, 3.116.1, 4.187.2, 8.8.2, 8.87.1, and 9.18.2.

undertake unjust deeds against the Greeks, I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small human settlements alike. [4] For many of those settlements that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that human prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.

As was the case in the proem, Herodotus' decision to decline to comment on the veracity of the aetiological question at hand in favor of making a point of import to "all peoples" (πάντες ἄνθρωποι, 7.152.2) should not be taken as a lapse in critical judgment or as an indictment of the preceding accounts of 7.148-151.<sup>30</sup> Though Plutarch construes Herodotus' self-avowed obligation "to say what is said, but not to believe it absolutely" (Ἐγὼ δὲ ὀφείλω λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα, πείθεσθαί γε μὲν οὐ παντάπασιν ὀφείλω, 7.152.3) as a sign of his circuitous duplicity,<sup>31</sup> Herodotus does not appear to want to obfuscate the truth, but rather to induce his readers to think hard about the very notion of what truth is.<sup>32</sup>

Herodotus extends this invitation with his metaphor of the marketplace, where he postulates that everyone, regardless of their nationality, would ultimately bring home

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<sup>30</sup> Compare Herodotus' egalitarian commitment voiced in the conclusion to the proem to go through both great and small human settlements alike (μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστυα ἀνθρώπων, 1.5.3), in recognition of the mutable state of human fortune (τὴν ἀνθρωπικήν...εὐδαιμονίην, 1.5.4). See below for further discussion of these parallels. Cf. the similarly-phrased dictum of 3.38 (referenced in connection with 2.35 in Chapter 2.3 above).

<sup>31</sup> Ἄρ' οὐκ ὄπερ αὐτὸς τὸν Αἰθιοπία φησι πρὸς τὰ μύρα καὶ τὴν πορφύραν εἰπεῖν, ὡς δολερὰ μὲν τὰ χρίματα δολερὰ δὲ τὰ εἴματα τῶν Περσέων ἐστὶ, τοῦτ' ἂν τις εἴποι πρὸς αὐτόν, ὡς δολερὰ μὲν τὰ ῥήματα δολερὰ δὲ τὰ σχήματα τῶν Ἡροδότου λόγων, ἐλικτὰ κοῦδὲν ὑγιὲς ἀλλὰ πᾶν πέριξ, ὥσπερ οἱ ζωγράφοι τὰ λαμπρὰ τῆ σκιᾷ τρανότερα ποιοῦσιν, οὕτω ταῖς ἀρνήσεσι τὰς διαβολὰς ἐπιτείνοντος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς ὑπονοίας ταῖς ἀμφιβολίας βαθυτέρας ποιοῦντος; (*Mor.* 863E = *De Herodoti malignitate* 28) In this vein, see e.g. Flory (1987) 66 and to a lesser extent Benardete (1969) 201-203. As Pritchett (1993) 286 notes, it is strange that a major proponent of the "Liar School" like Fehling (1989) could fail to acknowledge such an important passage about truth and credibility as well as the similarly programmatic statement at 2.123.1 (discussed in Chapter 2.2 above).

<sup>32</sup> On this interpretation, see e.g. Munson (2001) 225-230, Baragwanath (2008) 217, and Branscome (2013) 10-11. See also Harrison (2000) 24-29 for a useful doxography on this passage.



their own evils (οικήτια κακά, 7.152.2) if given the opportunity to exchange them with other peoples. This metaphor, which bears an uncanny resemblance to the dichotomy of familiar and foreign κακά in Aesop’s “Two Packs” (Πῆραι δύο),<sup>33</sup> is a prime example of the deployment of the same sort of open-ended fable we have already seen in the *bekos* experiment which prefaced the Egyptian λόγος.<sup>34</sup> As was true in that case, the lack of an explicit meaning for the marketplace fable is likely to stem not only from Herodotus’ impartiality as a ἵστωρ *ipso facto*,<sup>35</sup> but also from his meta-narrative goal of instilling in the reader a desire to look more closely at the larger framework of original claims. This has already been prompted by the careful focalization of the three accounts of 7.148-151, which have now substantiated the implication of the marketplace fable, that all peoples prefer their own things as a matter of course, including historical explanations.<sup>36</sup> But even though Herodotus ultimately posits that cultural relativism cannot furnish an unequivocal, singular truth to untangle these competing aetiologies (and as much as he may empathize with the mitigating factors that might require there to be one such truth),<sup>37</sup> the kind of

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<sup>33</sup> See Nagy (1990) 315 ad Chambry 303/Perry 266: Προμηθεὺς πλάσας ἀνθρώπους δύο πήρας ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀπεκρέμασε, τὴν μὲν ἀλλοτρίων κακῶν, τὴν δὲ ἰδίων. καὶ τὴν μὲν τῶν ὀθνείων ἔμπροσθεν ἔταξε, τὴν δὲ ἐτέρων ὀπισθεν ἀπήρτησεν. ἐξ οὗ δὴ συνέβη τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τὰ μὲν ἀλλότρια κακὰ ἐξ ἀπόπτου κατοπτάζεσθαι, τὰ δὲ ἴδια μὴ προσορᾶσθαι. Recall also 6.98 above.

<sup>34</sup> Nagy (1990) 314-316. On the *bekos* experiment (2.2-3) and its resonance with fables, see Chapter 2.1.

<sup>35</sup> On how Herodotus’ commitment “to say what is said” (λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα) indicates that “technically, the **historia** of Herodotus corresponds to the process of arbitration, not to the actual outcome”, and thus is in keeping with documentary evidence for the practices of the ἵστωρ, see Nagy (1990) 316 ff. (quotation at 317).

<sup>36</sup> The idea that we need to look carefully in evaluating other peoples’ things may also be prompted in part by ἐγκύψαντες (7.152.2), a salient ἄπαξ λεγόμενον in the *Histories*.

<sup>37</sup> Herodotus’ declaration of the γνώμη of the Argives in 7.152.1 should not be understood as a validation of the truth of what actually transpired during negotiations with the Hellenic League, as the translation of Godley (1921) insinuates (ad loc.), but rather as an acknowledgment of their plight and concomitant motivations.

circumspect, cosmopolitan mentality which this metaphor asks us to adopt can set us on the path to expanding our own inquiries and so better the course of knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

The preceding analysis of the origins of the Argives' alleged medism should now lead us to several conclusions. For a start, Herodotus' engagement with the accounts of 7.148-152 has made it clear that he can apply his critical apparatus to the not-so-distant past just as he does to the extrication of aetiologies from exotic lands and mythical times. But more than just exemplifying a vague tendency to underscore the fundamental multiplicity of complex original narratives, his treatment of the question of the Argives' medism adheres to a paradigm whose roots lie firmly in the proem to the *Histories*. As was the case in this programmatic introduction, the priamel-like construction which caps off the accounts of 7.148-151 (οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν... Ἐπίσταμαι δὲ τοσοῦτο, 7.152.1-2) does not wallow in ἀπορία, but the answer it does provide looks far beyond the matter at hand in its consideration of what *might* have happened if another group had been substituted for the Argives under the same pressing circumstances. The pronounced anthropological language in both cases has already been shown to instigate this kind of broad thinking in a general sense,<sup>39</sup> but the analogous account of the portent of the Delian earthquake (6.98) should remind us that these episodes will also be proleptic of the events of the forthcoming narrative.<sup>40</sup> So, while our likening of Herodotus' conclusions in the

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<sup>38</sup> Munson (2001) 230.

<sup>39</sup> See n. 30 and the accompanying discussion above on the resonance between πάντες ἄνθρωποι (7.152.2) and the ecumenical parameters of 1.5.3-4.

<sup>40</sup> On Herodotus' conception of time in the proem, see Chapter 1.3 (with further discussion ad 7.169-171 below).

proem about universal self-interest to those he reaches in 7.152 does presuppose a methodological continuum across his entire work, just as he says (...καί μοι τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος ἐχέτω ἐς πάντα τὸν λόγον, 7.152.3), the reaffirmation of these principles in this particular context will have an especially important bearing on what follows.

## 5.2 *Gelon*

Even before he relates the next petition of the Hellenic League to Gelon and its effect on the question of the Sicilian tyrant's subsequent medism, Herodotus asks us to engage in circumspect thinking about the ensuing account. This is prompted by a discussion of how Gelon's ancestor, Telines, paved the way for his descendant's hegemony by restoring Geloan exiles to their native city of Gela through the use of objects sacred to the goddesses of the underworld:

ὄθεν δὲ αὐτὰ ἔλαβε ἢ <εἰ> αὐτὸς ἐκτήσατο, τοῦτο [δὲ] οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν· τούτοισι δ' ὦν πίσυνοσ ἐὼν κατήγαγε, ἐπ' ᾧ τε οἱ ἀπόγονοι αὐτοῦ ἱροφάνται τῶν Θεῶν ἔσονται. [4] Θῶμά μοι ὦν καὶ τοῦτο γέγονε πρὸς τὰ πυνθάνομαι, κατεργάσασθαι Τηλίην ἔργον τοσοῦτο· τὰ τοιαῦτα γὰρ ἔργα οὐ πρὸς [τοῦ] ἅπαντος ἀνδρὸς νενόμικα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ψυχῆσ τε ἀγαθῆσ καὶ ῥώμησ ἀνδρηίησ· ὁ δὲ λέγεται πρὸς τῆσ Σικελίησ τῶν οἰκητόρων τὰ ὑπεναντία τούτων πεφυκέναι θηλυδρίησ τε καὶ μαλακώτεροσ ἀνήρ (7.153.3-4).

Where he got these [sacred objects] from or whether he created them himself, I am unable to say, but by relying on them, he restored the exiles on condition that his descendants be hierophants of the gods. [4] According to my research, I am amazed that Telines accomplished such a deed, for I do not think that such deeds can come about from any man, but from one with a good heart and courageous strength. However, Telines is said by the inhabitants of Sicily to have been the opposite of these things as both an effeminate and rather soft man.

In a move typical of the ἴστωρ, Herodotus counters his ignorance about the origin of the sacred objects of Telines (ὄθεν δὲ αὐτὰ ἔλαβε ἢ <εἰ> αὐτὸς ἐκτήσατο, **τοῦτο [δὲ] οὐκ**

ἔχω εἰπεῖν, 7.153.3) with a piece of knowledge that is more secure,<sup>41</sup> namely, the fact that Telines' very reliance on the sacred objects helped to restore the Geloan exiles to Gela regardless of how Telines acquired them (τούτοισι δ' ὧν πίσυνοσ ἐὼν κατήγαγε..., 7.153.3). Nevertheless, Herodotus' expression of wonder in the face of such an unlikely achievement (Θῶμά μοι ὧν καὶ τοῦτο γέγονε πρὸς τὰ πυνθάνομαι..., 7.153.4) should incite us to inquire further, as his reaction to the wondrous Labyrinth in Egypt did,<sup>42</sup> and thus to project beyond the question under immediate investigation.

This open-ended aetiology invites just such an examination after the representatives of the Hellenic League arrive at Syracuse and beseech Gelon to aid the common Greek cause in repelling the imminent Persian invasion (7.157). Although Gelon is initially incensed at this request because the Greeks had refused to assist him in his war against the Carthaginians years earlier (7.158.2-3), he agrees to send a substantial force (including the means to feed the entire Greek army, 7.158.4) on the sole condition that he be made "commander and chief of the Greeks against the barbarian."<sup>43</sup> However, the Spartan representative, Syagros, trounces this offer with a retort that recalls a much more ancient conflict than the one currently under discussion:

«Ἦ κε μέγ' οἰμώξειε ὁ Πελοπίδης Ἀγαμέμνων πυθόμενος Σπαρτιήτας τὴν ἡγεμονίην ἀπαραιρῆσθαι ὑπὸ Γέλωνός τε καὶ Συρηκοσίων. Ἀλλὰ τούτου μὲν τοῦ λόγου μηκέτι μνησθῆς, ὅκως τὴν ἡγεμονίην τοι παραδώσομεν· ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν βούλει βοηθέειν τῇ Ἑλλάδι, ἴσθι ἀρξόμενος ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων· εἰ δ' ἄρα μὴ δικαιοῖς ἄρχεσθαι, σὺ δὲ μηδὲ βοήθεε.» (7.159)

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<sup>41</sup> See Dewald (1987) 160 on this tendency.

<sup>42</sup> See Chapter 3.1 above (ad 2.148).

<sup>43</sup> Ἐπὶ δὲ λόγῳ τοιῷδε τάδε ὑπίσχομαι, ἐπ' ᾧ τε στρατηγός τε καὶ ἡγεμὼν τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἔσομαι πρὸς τὸν βάρβαρον· ἐπ' ἄλλῳ δὲ λόγῳ οὔτ' ἂν αὐτὸς ἔλθοιμι οὔτ' ἂν ἄλλους πέμψαμι (7.158.5).

“Loudly indeed would Agamemnon son of Pelops wail if he learned that the Spartans had been robbed of their leadership by Gelon and the Syracusans. Rather, put this thought out of your mind that we will entrust the leadership to you. But if you wish to help Greece, know that you will be led by the Spartans. However, if you do not think it right to be led, do not help at all.”

As scholars have long observed, the notion that Agamemnon “would wail loudly indeed” (ἦ κε μέγ’ οἰμώξειε) at Gelon’s appropriation of Spartan hegemony to oppose the Persian incursion into Europe bears an uncanny resemblance to Nestor’s reproach of the Achaeans in the *Iliad* for not wanting to oppose Hector in a duel:<sup>44</sup>

ὦ πόποι ἦ μέγα πένθος Ἀχαιΐδα γαῖαν ἰκάνει.  
**ἦ κε μέγ’ οἰμώξειε** γέρων ἱππηλάτα Πηλεὺς 125  
 ἐσθλὸς Μυρμιδόνων βουλευφόρος ἠδ’ ἀγορητής,  
 ὅς ποτέ μ’ εἰρόμενος μέγ’ ἐγήθεεν ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ  
 πάντων Ἀργείων ἐρέων γενεήν τε τόκον τε.  
 τοὺς νῦν εἰ πτώσσοντας ὕφ’ Ἑκτορι πάντα ἀκούσαι,  
 πολλά κεν ἀθανάτοισι φίλας ἀνὰ χεῖρας ἀείραι 130  
 θυμὸν ἀπὸ μελέων δῦναι δόμον Ἄϊδος εἶσω (7.124-131).

Oh, for shame! Great sorrow comes upon the land of the Achaeans.  
**Loudly indeed would** the old horse-breaker Peleus **wail,** 125  
 good counselor and speaker of the Myrmidons,  
 who once, when questioning me in his house, rejoiced  
 in asking the generation and birth of all the Argives.  
 If he heard everyone shrinking from Hector now,  
 many times he would raise his dear hands up to the immortals 130  
 and the energy from his limbs would go down into the house of Hades.

The Athenian envoy appears to acknowledge this allusion to epic when he joins Syagros in bemoaning the prospect of Syracusan hegemony (even after Gelon offers to lead the

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<sup>44</sup> See e.g. Butler (1905), Smith and Laird (1908), and How and Wells (1912) ad 7.159. The most extensive and sensitive treatment of this passage to date is found in Grethlein (2006), whom I follow closely in the forthcoming analysis. See also Zali (2015) 203-217, who focuses on the rhetorical underpinnings of this important passage.

land army or the fleet alone, instead of the entire Hellenic force (7.160.2) as he originally demanded in 7.158.5) with support from Homer:

[2] Ὅσον μὲν νῦν παντὸς τοῦ Ἑλλήνων στρατοῦ ἐδέο ἡγήεσθαι, ἐξήρκεε ἡμῖν τοῖσι Ἀθηναίοισι ἡσυχίην ἄγειν, ἐπισταμένοισι ὡς ὁ Λάκων ἱκανός τοι ἔμελλε ἔσεσθαι καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρων ἀπολογεόμενος. Ἐπεῖτε δὲ ἀπάσης ἀπελαυνόμενος δέαι τῆς ναυτικῆς ἄρχειν, οὕτω ἔχει τοι· οὐδ' ἦν ὁ Λάκων ἐπὶ τοι ἄρχειν αὐτῆς, ἡμεῖς ἐπήσομεν. Ἡμετέρη γὰρ ἐστὶ αὕτη γε μὴ αὐτῶν βουλομένων Λακεδαιμονίων· τούτοισι μὲν ὧν ἡγήεσθαι βουλομένοισι οὐκ ἀντιτείνομεν, ἄλλω δὲ παρήσομεν οὐδενὶ ναυαρχέειν. [3] Μάτην γὰρ ἂν ὧδε πάραλον Ἑλλήνων στρατὸν πλεῖστον εἶημεν ἐκτημένοι, εἰ Συρηκοσίοισι ἐόντες Ἀθηναῖοι συγχωρήσομεν τῆς ἡγεμονίας, ἀρχαιότατον μὲν ἔθνος παρεχόμενοι, μοῦνοι δὲ ἐόντες οὐ μετανάσται Ἑλλήνων· τῶν καὶ Ὅμηρος ὁ ἐποποιὸς ἄνδρα ἄριστον ἔφησε ἐς Ἴλιον ἀπικέσθαι τάξαι τε καὶ διακοσμήσαι στρατὸν. Οὕτω οὐκ ὄνειδος οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἐστὶ λέγειν ταῦτα (7.161.2-3).

[2] As long as you were asking to lead the entire Greek force, we Athenians were content to keep quiet because we knew that the Spartan was quite capable of speaking on behalf of us both. But now that you have been excluded from the whole and you are asking to command the fleet, this is how matters stand: even if the Spartan does allow you to command the fleet, *we* will not, for this is ours, which the Spartans themselves do not want. We will not oppose them if they do desire to lead, but we will not permit any one else to be admiral, [3] for we would have obtained the largest navy of the Greeks in vain if we, being Athenians, were to yield our command to the Syracusans, since we can demonstrate that we are the most ancient nation of the Greeks and we alone have not moved from our original home. Even Homer the epic poet said that of those who came to Troy, the best man at ordering and arraying an army belonged to our ancestors.<sup>45</sup> For this reason, we can in no way be reproached for saying these things.

Because Syracuse is an ascendant power which did not exist in the time of Homer, it is understandable that Gelon ultimately parts company with the representatives from the Hellenic League by looking to the achievements not of time past, but of time to come:<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> This is usually taken to be a reference to the Athenian warrior, Menestheus, whom Homer mentions in the Catalogue of Ships (τῶν αὐθ' ἡγεμόνευ' υἱὸς Πεπεῶο Μενεσθεύς. // τῷ δ' οὐ πῶ τις ὁμοῖος ἐπιχθόνιος γένετ' ἀνήρ // κοσμήσαι ἵππους τε καὶ ἀνέρας ἀσπιδιώτας, *Il.* 2.552-554). However, Grethlein (2006) 497 thinks the antecedent may no longer be extant.

<sup>46</sup> Grethlein (2006) 499.

«Ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, ὑμεῖς εἰκόκατε τοὺς μὲν ἄρχοντας ἔχειν, τοὺς δὲ ἀρξομένους οὐκ ἔξειν. Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν οὐδὲν ὑπιέντες ἔχειν τὸ πᾶν ἐθέλετε, οὐκ ἂν φθάνοιτε τὴν ταχίστην ὀπίσω ἀπαλλασσόμενοι καὶ ἀγγέλλοντες τῇ Ἑλλάδι ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ τὸ ἔαρ αὐτῇ ἐξαραίρηται.» [2] Οὗτος δὲ ὁ νόος τοῦ ῥήματος, τὸ ἐθέλει λέγειν· δῆλα γάρ, ὡς ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ ἐστὶ τὸ ἔαρ δοκιμώτατον, τῆς δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων στρατιῆς τὴν ἐωυτοῦ στρατιήν· στερισκομένην ὦν τὴν Ἑλλάδα τῆς ἐωυτοῦ συμμαχίης εἴκαζε ὡς εἰ τὸ ἔαρ ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐξαραιρημένον εἴη (7.162)

“Athenian stranger, you seem to have many leaders, but you will have no followers. Now, since you wish to have everything without making any concessions, you could not go back soon enough and tell the Greeks that spring has been taken away from her year.” [2] The sense of this phrase is this: clearly, just as spring is the most excellent time of year, so too was Gelon’s army the most excellent of the Greeks’. And so he likened Greece deprived of his alliance to if spring had been taken away from the year.

As Kirchhoff noted more than a century ago, Gelon’s metaphor of spring being taken away from its year (ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ τὸ ἔαρ αὐτῇ ἐξαραίρηται, 7.162.1) bears a close resemblance to two comments Aristotle makes regarding a funeral oration delivered by Pericles on behalf of the departed heroes of the Samian War in 440/439 BCE, more than a generation after the embassy of the Hellenic League to Syracuse:<sup>47</sup>

...οἷον Περικλῆς τὸν ἐπιτάφιον λέγων, τὴν νεότητα ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἀνηρῆσθαι ὥσπερ τὸ ἔαρ ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ εἰ ἐξαιρεθείη (*Rhet.* 1365a31-33).

...as Pericles said in his funeral oration that the youth had been taken away from the city, just as if spring had been taken away from the year.

...ὥσπερ Περικλῆς ἔφη τὴν νεότητα τὴν ἀπολομένην ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ οὕτως ἠφανίσθαι ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ὥσπερ εἴ τις τὸ ἔαρ ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐξέλοι (*Rhet.* 1411a1-4).

...just as Pericles said that the youth killed in the war had been obliterated in this way, just as if someone had removed spring from the year.

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<sup>47</sup> Kirchhoff (1878) 19. On this comparandum, see also Treves (1941).

By juxtaposing this prolepsis in Gelon's speech with the epic analepses in the speeches of the Spartan and Athenian envoys much as he did in the accounts of the Argives' meeting with Hellenic League and the Peace of Callias discussed above, Herodotus implies an intimate relationship between what was and what will be as regards the contentious leadership of the Greeks, from the *spatium mythicum*, to the Persian Wars, and beyond.<sup>48</sup> But no matter how secure these references to Homer and Pericles may seem, we must be mindful of the fact that Herodotus does not provide any such attribution explicitly. Even if we were to regard the words that immediately follow Gelon's *mot* as a genuine authorial interjection (Οὗτος δὲ ὁ νόος τοῦ ῥήματος, τὸ ἐθέλει λέγειν κ.τ.λ, 7.162.2) and not as an interpolation as some editors have argued,<sup>49</sup> we would still find that the explanation offered by the ἵστωρ is essentially an interpretive gloss, which aids the reader in comprehending an obscure image at a basic level, but does not entail the judgment of meaning,<sup>50</sup> since meaning is fundamentally multiple and cannot be fixed absolutely or indefinitely.<sup>51</sup> Instead, to paraphrase Heraclitus' remarks about Apollo and his oracle at Delphi, Herodotus here neither reveals nor conceals, but rather points to past and future analogues for his readers to ponder and so leaves possibilities open.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> See Grethlein (2006), esp. p. 501, and Pelling (2006a) 92. Cf. Fornara (1971) 83-84.

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. Hude (1927), Stein (1962), and Rosén (1987) ad loc.

<sup>50</sup> See Munson (2001) 219 and Grethlein (2006) 499 n. 32.

<sup>51</sup> Recall Dewald (1993) 70 (discussed at length in Chapter 3.2). See also Grethlein (2006) 487 for a summary of how this point relates to his exploration of the literary precedents of the Hellenic League's embassy to Gelon: "...as recipients respond differently to texts, the understanding of intertextual relationships varies. Even if the parallels at the levels of language and content are strong, it cannot be claimed that every recipient will understand and follow the link."

<sup>52</sup> ὁ ἀναξ, οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει ἀλλὰ σημαίνει (Fr. 22 B93 DK). For a study of how oracles are "good to think with" (35) in the paradigmatic Croesus λόγος of the *Histories*, in



This concern for what might have been and what may yet be is further indicated by the account of Gelon's actions after the Hellenic League leaves Sicily without forging an alliance with the Syracusans:

Οἱ μὲν δὴ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἄγγελοι τοιαῦτα τῷ Γέλωνι χρηματισάμενοι ἀπέπλεον· Γέλων δὲ πρὸς ταῦτα δείσας μὲν περὶ τοῖσι Ἕλλησι μὴ οὐ δύνωνται τὸν βάρβαρον ὑπερβαλέσθαι, δεινὸν δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἀνασχετὸν ποιησάμενος ἐλθὼν ἐς Πελοπόννησον ἄρχεσθαι ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐὼν Σικελίης τύραννος, ταύτην μὲν τὴν ὁδὸν ἠμέλησε, ὁ δὲ ἄλλης εἶχετο. [2] Ἐπεῖτε γὰρ τάχιστα ἐπύθετο τὸν Πέρσην διαβεβηκότα τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον, πέμπει πεντηκοντέροισι τρισὶ Κάδμιον τὸν Σκύθεω ἄνδρα Κῶον ἐς Δελφοὺς, ἔχοντα χρήματα πολλὰ καὶ φιλίους λόγους, καταδοκῆσοντα τὴν μάχην τῇ πεσέεται, καὶ ἦν μὲν ὁ βάρβαρος νικᾷ, τά τε χρήματα αὐτῷ διδόναι καὶ γῆν τε καὶ ὕδωρ τῶν ἄρχει ὁ Γέλων, ἦν δὲ οἱ Ἕλληνες, ὀπίσω ἀπάγειν (7.163).

After these dealings with Gelon, the Greek messengers sailed back. But Gelon, fearing for the Greeks, that they would not be able to overcome the barbarian, and thinking it a terrible and intolerable thing if he, as tyrant of Sicily, were to come to the Peloponnese to be ruled by the Spartans, ignored this plan, but followed another, for as soon as he found out that the Persians had crossed the Hellespont, he sent a Coan man named Cadmus, son of Scythes, with fifty-three penteconters to Delphi with lots of money and friendly words to await the outcome of the battle, and if the barbarian won, to give him the money along with earth and water from the territories which Gelon ruled, but if the Greeks won, to bring them back.

Gelon's plan to act according to the outcome of the impending battle between the Greeks and the Persians may suggest purely selfish, even Machiavellian motivations on his part. But as understandable as it would be for the Syracusan tyrant to slight those who slighted him in their equally selfish refusal to accept his compromises over the leadership of the Hellenic League (7.160.2), the origins of Gelon's actions will not be so easily circumscribed once the rest of the narrative is taken into account.

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that they "demand interpretation, but at the same time they also prompt reflection on the process of interpretation" (44), see e.g. Kindt (2006). See also 7.169-171 (analyzed below).

This multivalence is anticipated by Gelon’s selection of one of two “roads” (ταύτην μὲν τὴν ὁδὸν ἠμέλησε, ὁ δὲ ἄλλης εἶχετο, 7.163.1), a favorite metaphor of the ἵστωρ which serves in part to prompt reflection on potentiality, both in terms of what actually happened and what might have occurred if the other road had been taken.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, even after we are informed that Gelon’s emissary, Cadmus, eventually returned to Sicily following the Greek victory at Salamis without submitting to Xerxes,<sup>54</sup> Herodotus relates via the “inhabitants of Sicily” (Λέγεται δὲ καὶ τάδε ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν τῇ Σικελίῃ οἰκημένων, 7.165) that Gelon *would* have helped the Greeks, even at the expense of his subordination to the Spartans (ὅμως καὶ μέλλον ἄρχεσθαι ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων ὁ Γέλων ἐβοήθησε ἂν τοῖσι Ἕλλησι, 7.165), had his battle against the Carthaginians and their three-hundred thousand allies at Himera not been fought on the exact same day as the battle of Salamis.<sup>55</sup> On the one hand, the fact that this explanation is endorsed by Gelon’s own countrymen may betray the same sort of national bias and self-interest which marked his engagement with the envoys from the Hellenic League.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, this same explanation reinforces the power of necessity to trump even (patently) altruistic desires, as we saw in the defining exemplum of the Argives.<sup>57</sup> In either case,

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<sup>53</sup> On counterfactuals in Herodotus (with special emphasis on the accounts of the battles of Marathon, Artemision, and Salamis), see Baragwanath (2013). For other proleptic functions of the metaphor of the road in the *Histories*, see n. 46 in Chapter Two.

<sup>54</sup> ...ἐπεὶ οἱ Ἕλληνας ἐπεκράτησαν τῇ ναυμαχίῃ καὶ Ξέρξης οἰχώκεε ἀπελαύνων, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐκεῖνος ἀπίκετο ἐς τὴν Σικελίην ἀπὸ πάντα τὰ χρήματα ἄγων (7.164.2).

<sup>55</sup> Πρὸς δὲ καὶ τάδε λέγουσι, ὡς συνέβη τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμέρης ἐν τε τῇ Σικελίῃ Γέλωνα καὶ Θήρωνα νικᾶν Ἀμίλκαν τὸν Καρχηδόνιον καὶ ἐν Σαλαμῖνι τοὺς Ἕλληνας τὸν Πέρσην (7.166).

<sup>56</sup> On the favorable ideological implications to Western Greeks of the synchronization of the battle of Salamis with the battle of Himera, see e.g. Feeney (2007) 44-47.

<sup>57</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 219-220, following the thesis of Baragwanath (2008) 205 (see n. 14 above).

however, Herodotus does not comment on the veracity of such motives, but leaves it to us to grapple with this dichotomy when he closes his account of what happened in Sicily with an inconclusive aetiology (much as he introduced it),<sup>58</sup> in this case, with the mysterious disappearance of the Carthaginian general, Hamilcar, after his defeat at the battle of Himera (7.166-167).

### *5.3 The Corcyreans*

In his next case study on medism, Herodotus invites further investigation beyond the matter at hand with his discussion of the actions of the Corcyreans during the second Persian invasion of Greece. The Corcyreans' agreement to help the Hellenic League after the appeal by the same representatives who supplicated Gelon should alert us to Herodotus' forthcoming distinction of possibility in his consideration of what might have been and what has yet to be:

Οἱ δὲ παραυτίκα μὲν ὑπίσχοντο πέμψειν τε καὶ ἀμυνέειν, φράζοντες ὡς οὐ σφι περιπτέη ἐστὶ ἡ Ἑλλάς ἀπολλυμένη· ἦν γὰρ σφαλῆ, σφεῖς γε οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ δουλεύσουσι τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν ἡμερέων· ἀλλὰ τιμωρητέον εἶη ἐς τὸ δυνατώτατον (7.168.1).

The Corcyreans promised straightaway to send aid and join the defense, declaring that they could not overlook the destruction of Greece. For if Greece fell, there would be nothing to stop them from being enslaved on the very first day, but they felt it necessary to provide as much assistance as possible.

The conditional demise of the Corcyreans along with the rest of the Greeks (ἦν γὰρ σφαλῆ κ.τ.λ.) prefigures several remarks in the account of 7.168 which emphasize the mutability of the forthcoming actions. These center around the Corcyreans' shift from

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. 7.153.3-4 (see above).

outward enthusiasm at the prospect of participating in the pan-Hellenic defense of Greece to equivocation once they actually decide to commit and send a fleet of sixty ships (Ὑπεκρίναντο μὲν οὕτω εὐπρόσωπα· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔδεε βοηθέειν, ἄλλα νοεῦντες ἐπλήρωσαν νέας ἐξήκοντα..., 7.168.2). Though the ensuing account leaves little doubt that the Corcyrean fleet remained moored off the Peloponnese without taking part in the battle of Salamis in order to hedge their bets and await the outcome of the war (προσέμειξαν τῇ Πελοποννήσῳ, καὶ περὶ Πύλον καὶ Ταίναρον γῆς τῆς Λακεδαιμονίων ἀνεκώχενον τὰς νέας, καταδοκέοντες καὶ οὗτοι τὸν πόλεμον τῇ πεσέεται, 7.168.2), the motivation behind this change of heart and how exactly it came to fruition is much more difficult to pin down.

Central to this question is whether the Corcyreans decided to leave the Greeks in the lurch before they even set sail or whether the specter of defeat forced them to wait in the wings once they realized the scale of what they were up against. On the one hand, Herodotus seems to support the former explanation when he notes the speciousness (εὐπρόσωπα, 7.168.2) of the Corcyreans' commitment. On the other hand, the abruptness of their transition from eagerness (Οἱ δὲ παραντίκα μὲν ὑπίσχοντο πέμψειν τε καὶ ἀμυνέειν κ.τ.λ., 7.168.1) to despair at the expectation of the Persians' total victory (ἀελπτέοντες μὲν τοὺς Ἕλληνας ὑπερβαλέεσθαι, δοκέοντες δὲ τὸν Πέρσῃν κατακρατήσαντα πολλὸν ἄρξειν πάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 7.168.2) suggests a shift in their initial motivation.<sup>59</sup> This is corroborated by Herodotus' striking remark *in propria*

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<sup>59</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 221-222.

*persona* that the Corcyreans *might* have achieved their hope of gaining favor with the Persians had they actually won (Τοιαῦτα λέγοντες ἤλπιζον πλέον τι τῶν ἄλλων οἴσεσθαι· τά περ ἂν καὶ ἐγένετο, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέει, 7.168.3), which implies a revision of their earlier, less-realistic expectations.<sup>60</sup> Apart from this one tenuous interjection based on a hypothetical event, however, Herodotus does not come down on either side of the argument, but instead concludes his account with the pretext the Corcyreans themselves offer:

Τοιαῦτα λέγοντες ἤλπιζον πλέον τι τῶν ἄλλων οἴσεσθαι· τά περ ἂν καὶ ἐγένετο, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέει. [4] Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς Ἑλληνας σφι σκῆψις ἐπεποίητο, τῆ περ δὴ καὶ ἐχρήσαντο· αἰτιωμένων γὰρ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὅτι οὐκ ἐβοήθεον, ἔφασαν πληρῶσαι μὲν ἐξήκοντα τριήρας, ὑπὸ δὲ ἐτησιέων ἀνέμων ὑπερβαλεῖν Μαλέην οὐκ οἴοι τε γενέσθαι· οὕτω οὐκ ἀπικέσθαι ἐς Σαλαμίνα καὶ οὐδεμιῇ κακότητι λειφθῆναι τῆς ναυμαχίης. Οὗτοι μὲν οὕτω διεκρούσαντο τοὺς Ἑλληνας (7.168.3-4).

In saying such things, they hoped that they would gain something over the others, and as it seems to me, these things would have actually happened. [4] But they had prepared a pretext to answer the Greeks, which they did in fact use, for when the Greeks were accusing them of not helping, the Corcyreans said that they had filled sixty triremes, but that they had been prevented from rounding Cape Malea by trade winds and were not able to come. For this reason they said that they did not reach Salamis and that they missed the naval battle on account of no cowardice. This is how they evaded the Greeks.

In the face of the Greeks' accusations that the Corcyreans shirked their duty to the Pan-Hellenic cause (αἰτιωμένων...τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὅτι οὐκ ἐβοήθεον, 7.168.4), it is perhaps not surprising that the Corcyreans attribute their absence at Salamis to a *force majeure* which they say exonerates them from any wrongdoing (οὐδεμιῇ κακότητι λειφθῆναι τῆς ναυμαχίης, 7.168.4). This statement calls to mind the conclusion of the paradigmatic

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<sup>60</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 221-222.

account of the Argives' medism, that all people prefer their own things as a matter of course,<sup>61</sup> including historical explanations. The fact that the Corcyreans are the ones to frame this point (ἔφρασαν, 7.168.4) may mark them out as being unique in their selfishness. However, the subordination of this remark to the "blaming Greeks" (αἰτιωμένων... τῶν Ἑλλήνων, 7.168.4) suggests that this group is no more immune to fundamentally human biases and the need for self-preservation than any other party we have considered above, from the Syracusans, to the Argives, and all the way back to the Persian λόγοι, whose allegations in the opening of the *Histories* focalized their own prejudices.<sup>62</sup> In light of the recapitulation of this cosmopolitan sentiment, then, it makes sense that Herodotus ultimately directs us beyond the matter at hand and invites us "to understand the Corcyreans' predicament, rather than simply sharing in making accusations."<sup>63</sup>

This humane perspective in turn furnishes a fascinating counterpoint for Thucydides' interpretation of the Corcyreans' isolationism at the start of the Epidamnus Affair later on in ca. 435-433 BCE.<sup>64</sup> But while Munson is right to find more than a bit of irony in the fact that "...the city that had been fence-sitting in the hour of need for Greece later came out of its famous neutrality only to contribute to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War",<sup>65</sup> this can hardly be considered the "point of Herodotus'

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<sup>61</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 222.

<sup>62</sup> On blame and responsibility in the proem, see esp. 1.1.1 (discussed in Chapter 1.2).

<sup>63</sup> Baragwanath (2008) 222.

<sup>64</sup> For the principal account of the Epidamnus Affair, see Thuc. 1.24-55. For an overview of this pivotal event in the history of the Peloponnesian War, see e.g. Wilson (1987) 25-64.

<sup>65</sup> Munson (2001) 221.

narrative.”<sup>66</sup> As we saw even in a case like Gelon’s exchange with the representatives from the Hellenic League, which alluded to many more specific textual comparanda than the ones offered in 7.168, Herodotus once again suggests a path for us to follow without obliging us to walk down it.

#### **5.4 The Cretans**

In the final case study of the medizing λόγος, Herodotus once again urges his reader to adopt a panoptic outlook through his account of how the Cretans come to reject the appeal of the Hellenic League:

Κρήτες δέ, ἐπεῖτε σφέας παρελάμβανον οἱ ἐπὶ τούτοισι ταχθέντες Ἑλλήνων, ἐποίησαν τοιόνδε· πέμψαντες κοινῇ θεοπρόπους ἐς Δελφοὺς τὸν θεὸν ἐπειρώτων εἴ σοι ἄμεινον τιμωρέουσι γίνεται τῇ Ἑλλάδι. [2] Ἡ δὲ Πυθίη ὑπεκρίνατο· «ἜΩ νήπιοι, ἐπιμέμφεσθε ὅσα ὑμῖν ἐκ τῶν Μενέλεω τιμωρημάτων Μίνως ἔπεμψε μηνίων δακρύματα; ὅτε οἱ μὲν οὐ συνεξεπρήξαντο αὐτῷ τὸν ἐν Καμικῷ θάνατον γενόμενον, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐκείνοισι τὴν ἐκ Σπάρτης ἀρπασθεῖσαν ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς βαρβάρου γυναῖκα.» Ταῦτα οἱ Κρήτες ὡς ἀπενειχθέντα ἤκουσαν, ἔσχοντο τῆς τιμωρίας (7.169).

But the Cretans, when those who had been commanded by the Greeks for this purpose were soliciting their aid, did the following: having sent emissaries jointly to Delphi, the Cretans asked the god whether it was in their best interest to help Greece, [2] and the Pythia replied, “You fools! Do you find fault with all the tears which Minos sent you in his rage for helping Menelaus because they [i.e. the Greeks] did not join in avenging his death at Camicus, but you joined them in avenging the woman abducted from Sparta by a barbarian?” When the Cretans heard these things that were brought back, they refrained from providing help.

In noting the oracle’s constraint on the Cretans, Herodotus recalls the prohibition which the oracle imposed on the Argives in forbidding their alliance with the Hellenic League. Although the Argives ultimately ignore this command, their failure to heed the

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<sup>66</sup> Munson (2001) 221

oracle (ostensibly so as to preserve their state from Spartan dominion)<sup>67</sup> does not set them apart entirely from the Cretans, whose obedience is unlikely to derive from religious scruples alone. Rather, as Herodotus later insinuates, the Cretans also act under compulsion in spite of their desire to assist the common cause of the Greeks (Ἡ μὲν δὴ Πυθίη ὑπομνήσασα ταῦτα ἔσχε βουλομένους τιμωρέειν τοῖσι Ἑλλησι, 7.171.2). But while this remark perfectly exemplifies the gap between motives and necessity which we have analyzed at length above,<sup>68</sup> Herodotus does not single out one motive in this account<sup>69</sup> any more than he does in the previous case studies of the medizing λόγος, but instead looks to the broader ramifications of the Cretans' deeds in his intervening elaboration of the Pythia's aetiology of 7.169.2:

(170.) Λέγεται γὰρ Μίνων κατὰ ζήτησιν Δαιδάλου ἀπικόμενον ἐς Σικανίην τὴν νῦν Σικελίην καλεομένην ἀποθανεῖν βιαίῳ θανάτῳ. Ἀνὰ δὲ χρόνον Κρήτας θεοῦ σφέας ἐποτρύναντος, πάντας πλὴν Πολιχνιτέων τε καὶ Πραισίων, ἀπικομένους στόλῳ μεγάλῳ ἐς Σικανίην πολιορκέειν ἐπ' ἔτεα πέντε πόλιν Καμικόν, τὴν κατ' ἐμὲ Ἀκραγαντῖνοι ἐνέμοντο· [2] τέλος δὲ οὐ δυναμένους οὔτε ἐλεῖν οὔτε παραμένειν λιμῷ συνεστεῶτας, ἀπολιπόντας οἴχεσθαι. Ὡς δὲ κατὰ Ἰηπυγίην γενέσθαι πλέοντας, ὑπολαβόντα σφέας χειμῶνα μέγαν ἐκβαλεῖν ἐς τὴν γῆν· συναραχθέντων δὲ τῶν πλοίων (οὐδεμίαν γὰρ σφι ἔτι κομιδὴν ἐς Κρήτην φαίνεσθαι), ἐνθαῦτα Ὑρίην πόλιν κτίσαντας καταμεῖναι τε καὶ μεταβαλόντας ἀντὶ μὲν Κρητῶν γενέσθαι Ἰηπυγας Μεσσαπίους, ἀντὶ δὲ <τοῦ> εἶναι νησιώτας ἠπειρώτας. [3] Ἀπὸ δὲ Ὑρίης πόλιος τὰς ἄλλας οἰκίσαι, τὰς δὴ Ταραντῖνοι χρόνον ὕστερον πολλῶ ἐξανιστάντες προσέπταισαν μεγάλως ὥστε φόνος Ἑλληνικὸς μέγιστος οὗτος δὴ ἐγένετο πάντων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, αὐτῶν τε Ταραντίνων καὶ Ῥηγίνων, οἱ ὑπὸ Μικύθου τοῦ Χοίρου ἀναγκαζόμενοι τῶν ἀστῶν [καὶ] ἀπικόμενοι τιμωροὶ Ταραντῖνοισι ἀπέθανον τρισχίλιοι οὗτοι· αὐτῶν δὲ Ταραντίνων οὐκ ἐπὶν ἀριθμὸς. [4] Ὁ δὲ Μίκυθος, οἰκέτης ἐὼν Ἀναξίλειω, ἐπίτροπος Ῥηγίου κατελέλειπτο, οὗτος ὅς περ ἐκπεσὼν ἐκ Ῥηγίου καὶ Τεγέην τὴν Ἀρκάδων οἰκήσας ἀνέθηκε ἐν Ὀλυμπίῃ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀνδριάντας. (171) Ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν κατὰ Ῥηγίους τε καὶ Ταραντίνους τοῦ λόγου μοι παρενθήκη γέγονε. Ἐς δὲ

<sup>67</sup> See 7.149.1 ff.

<sup>68</sup> On the dichotomy of motives and necessity, see Baragwanath (2008) 205 (discussed above).

<sup>69</sup> Munson (2012) 211.



τὴν Κρήτην ἐρημωθεῖσαν, ὡς λέγουσι Πραῖσιοι, ἐσοικίζεσθαι ἄλλους τε ἀνθρώπους καὶ μάλιστα Ἑλληνας, τρίτη δὲ γενεῇ μετὰ Μίνων τελευτήσαντα γενέσθαι τὰ Τρωικά, ἐν τοῖσι οὐ φλαυροτάτους φαίνεσθαι ἐόντας Κρήτας τιμωροὺς Μενέλεω. [2] Ἄντι τούτων δέ σφι ἀπονοστήσασι ἐκ Τροίης λιμὸν τε καὶ λοιμὸν γενέσθαι καὶ αὐτοῖσι καὶ τοῖσι προβάτοισι, ὥστε τὸ δεύτερον ἐρημωθείσης Κρήτης μετὰ τῶν ὑπολοίπων τρίτους αὐτὴν νῦν νέμεσθαι Κρήτας (7.170-171).

(170.) [The Cretans refrained from providing help to the Hellenic League] because it is said that after arriving at Sicania (which is now called Sicily) to look for Daedalus, Minos died a violent death. In time, at the urging of a god, all of the Cretans except for the Polichnians and the Praesians reached Sicania with a large fleet and besieged the city of Camicus for five years, which the Acragantines used to inhabit in my time. [2] In the end, since they were unable to capture the city or stick around after being beset by hunger, they picked up and left for home. But when it happened that they were sailing off Iapygia, a great storm overtook them and cast them out onto land. Since their ships had been wrecked and they no longer had any way of getting back to Crete, they then founded the city of Hyria and remained there, having changed from Cretans to Messapian Iapygians and from islanders to mainlanders. [3] From the city of Hyria they set up other colonies, including those which the Tarentines in much later times tried to destroy and suffered such a terrible defeat that this became the greatest Greek slaughter of all those we know, both for the Tarentines and the Rhegians. Three thousand citizens from the latter died, who had been forced by Micythus son of Choerus to come to the Tarentines' aid. There was no count of the Tarentines who were killed. [4] Micythus, who was a slave of Anaxilaus, had been left behind as governor of Rhegium. This was the man who after being expelled from Rhegium and after settling in Arcadian Tegea set up all those statues at Olympia. (171.) But these matters pertaining to the Rhegians and Tarentines have come about as an addendum to my account. But as the Praesians say, other peoples, mostly Greeks, settled on Crete after it had been deserted. In the third generation after Minos' death, the Trojan War broke out, in which the Cretans showed themselves to be not the least capable avengers for Menelaus. [2] But in exchange for this, the Cretans got plague and famine when they came home, both they and their flocks. The result is that with Crete having been deserted a second time, the Cretans who now inhabit the island represent the third wave along with those who had remained from before.

Although it is not a stretch to infer from this complex narrative that the Cretans are driven to act as they do for fear of being decimated by the waves of war and migration that plagued their island in the time of Minos and the Trojan War, Herodotus

does not tell us whether this was what truly spurred their repudiation of the Hellenic League. However, what he *does* tell us (i.e. that the ensuing battle of 473 BCE between the Tarentines and the Rhegians<sup>70</sup> was the “greatest slaughter of all those we know” (...φόνος Ἑλληνικὸς μέγιστος οὗτος δὴ ἐγένετο πάντων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, 7.170.3)) can explain this apparent omission if we think back to a basic feature of Herodotean aetiology first expressed in the priamel in the proem to the *Histories*. Just as the remark that Croesus was the first person he *knew* (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον..., 1.5.3) to have inflicted unjust deeds against the Greeks demarcates what can be known about the historical versus the distant past, so, too, does the first person interjection about the battle between the Tarentines and the Rhegians in the Cretan aetiology delimit what can be deduced from ἱστορίη.<sup>71</sup> But while this paradoxical distinction may serve to underscore the mendacity of these proverbial liars and so undercut the veracity of their account, we must be mindful of the fact that Herodotus does not disavow the events of either the *spatium mythicum* or the *spatium historicum* in 7.170-171 any more than he does in 1.5.3.<sup>72</sup> Instead, he asks us to see these points in time as part of an inextricable whole and to consider their possible bearing on what has yet to be.

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<sup>70</sup> On the historical context of this battle, see e.g. Munson (2006) 266-267 and Prontera (2013) 129-130. See also n. 75 below for a different interpretation of this reference.

<sup>71</sup> Munson (2012) 211-212. That the battle between the Tarentines and Rhegians was the “greatest” Greek slaughter (μέγιστος, 7.170.3) may also serve to signpost an epistemological obstacle and thereby prompt “superlative revision” (see Bloomer (1993), discussed in Chapter 2.1).

<sup>72</sup> The fact that the entire account is framed by *oratio obliqua* in one form or another (Λέγεται, 7.170.1; ὡς λέγουσι Πραίσιοι, 7.171.1) may also alert us to the problems of trusting Cretans (see n. 30 in Chapter One on this topos) and of *Quellenforschung* in general, but as in 1.1-5 and the derivative examples of 2.2-3 and 4.5-12 we have now studied in Chapters 2.1 and 4.1, implicit questioning via indirect statement does not amount to a patent, wholesale indictment.

The manner in which Herodotus establishes this continuum<sup>73</sup> by fusing the past with the narrative present (and by extension the future)<sup>74</sup> finds yet another point of departure in the proem, namely, the section that immediately follows the priamel:

...προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιόν. [4] Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ’ ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρὰ. Τὴν ἀνθρωπηὴν ὄν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῶντῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.3-4).

...I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small human settlements alike. [4] For many of those settlements that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that human prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.

As we discussed in Chapter One, Herodotus’ integration of the present (γέγονε, ἐπιστάμενος) with the past (ἦν) and the future (ἐπιμνήσομαι) in the conclusion to the proem invites a dialogue with subsequent generations of readers about the nature of change far beyond the confines of the event under immediate consideration, yet stops short of positing one explicit meaning or citing one specific parallel. The aetiology of 7.169-171 exemplifies this pattern in that it builds up towards the explanation of the evolution of the Cretans from islanders to mainlanders in the time of Minos (7.170.2) and then to islanders again after the Trojan War (7.171.2), a point which ultimately raises the question of what further changes the Cretans will undergo in the generations to come. While Irwin may be right to see the answer to this question in Minos’ search for Daedalus

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<sup>73</sup> See e.g. Vandiver (1991) 148 and Munson (2012) 210.

<sup>74</sup> The remark that “...the Cretans besieged Camicus, which the Acragantines inhabited **in my day**” (πολιορκέειν...Καμικόν, τὴν **κατ’ ἐμὲ** Ἀκραγαντῖνοι ἐνέμοντο, 7.170.1) is a prime example of what Naiden (1999) calls the “prospective imperfect.” On this construction, see esp. Chapter Six below.

in Sicily (κατὰ ζήτησιν Δαιδάλου, 7.170.1), which she believes looks ahead to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and even the doomed Sicilian expedition,<sup>75</sup> this apparent association is never marked out directly. Rather, as with every case study we have now considered in this chapter, the aetiology of 7.169-171 turns out to be proleptic of points that are not absolutely circumscribed. So that we may better understand this programmatic tendency of Herodotus to use original narratives to expand our critical gaze and cause us to project into the realm of the unknown, let us turn to the all-important end of the *Histories* and offer some conclusions based on our findings from previous chapters.

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<sup>75</sup> Irwin (2007) 220-222. In addition to viewing ζήτησις as a kind of code word for the Sicilian expedition (cf. Thuc. 1.20.3 and Eur. *Cyc.* 14), Irwin also sees Herodotus' comment on the battle between the Rhegians and the Tarentines being "the greatest Greek slaughter of all those we know" (...φόνος Ἑλληνικὸς μέγιστος οὗτος δὴ ἐγένετο πάντων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, 7.170.3) as a reference to Thucydides' assessment of the demise of the Athenian fleet at Syracuse in 413 BCE (ξυνέβη τε ἔργον τοῦτο [Ἑλληνικὸν] τῶν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον τόνδε μέγιστον γενέσθαι, δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ὦν ἀκοῆ Ἑλληνικῶν ἴσμεν κ.τ.λ., Thuc. 7.87.5-6). But even if ζήτησις were not a common word throughout the *Histories* (e.g. 1.94.6, 2.44.4, 2.54.2, 4.140.1, 5.21.2, etc.), there would still be problems assigning such a late date to the composition and publication of Herodotus' text during the Peloponnesian War (see n. 22 above).

## 6. What's Past is Prologue: Seeing Aetiology as Teleology

The preceding chapters of this work have all sought to demonstrate the programmatic significance of aetiology to Herodotean methodology in even the most disparate places in the *Histories*. However, by directing us consistently to look past the question of origins at hand and pushing us ever deeper into the unknown, Herodotus may seem fundamentally more concerned with ends than beginnings. On one level, this is consistent with the maxim of his alter ego, Solon,<sup>1</sup> who informs Croesus in the Lydian λόγος that “it is necessary to look carefully at the end of every matter to see how it will turn out” (Σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτὴν κἢ ἀποβήσεται, 1.32.9).<sup>2</sup> But while Solon’s teleological outlook does indeed reverberate throughout the *Histories*, this perspective does not negate the importance of aetiology to Herodotus’ work.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, if we follow Solon’s advice and look to the end of the *Histories*, we will discover that the message there is much the same as it was in the beginning of the work, namely, that there is always something beyond what can be known definitively about the past and the future, both of which turn out to be complementary points on the chronological spectrum. Therefore, in order to make this final case for narrative and methodological cohesion across the *Histories* as far as aetiology is concerned, we will

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Shapiro (1996) 348 n. 1 and Pelling (2004) 103 n. 43 for lists of scholars who see Solon functioning as the inscribed author of the *Histories* (now a commonplace in Herodotean studies).

<sup>2</sup> See below for further discussion.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the paradigmatic examples from the life of Croesus set out below, the speech of Socles (5.92), the longest in the *Histories*, is also directed towards an end (i.e. inchoate Athenian hegemony), but an end that is vague and contingent upon dubious prophecies from the past (see e.g. Stadter (1992) 781-785, Moles (2007), and Grethlein (2013) 215-223).

conclude by indicating the correspondence between these all-important bookends and the λόγοι they enclose. As a way of prefacing these remarks, let us start by considering the advice of Solon in more detail.

### ***6.1 Back to the Future: Anticipating a Chronological Paradox***

As several scholars have observed in the case of the teleological dictum set out at 1.32.9, it is something of a paradox that Solon's words can portend Croesus' end so assuredly, yet still be so vague in articulating how and when it will come about.<sup>4</sup> While certain narratological demands may account for this contradictory type of prolepsis (such as the need to create and maintain suspense),<sup>5</sup> Solon's failure to specify what constitutes "the end of every matter" (παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτήν) substantiates a thematic point of critical importance to Herodotus' own intellectual outlook that is reiterated throughout the *Histories*: in the great march of time, the end is never quite the end.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, even after Croesus is deposed, he himself does not come to an end, but is paradoxically saved

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<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, the fact that Croesus' rejection of Solon's mandate to look to the end (1.33) is immediately juxtaposed with his impending downfall (Μετὰ δὲ Σόλωνα οἰχόμενον ἔλαβε ἐκ θεοῦ νέμεσις μεγάλη Κροῖσον, 1.34.1) appears to validate Solon's teleological perspective. On the other hand, the multivalence of Solon's remarks in the Lydian λόγος leading up to the climatic dictum in 1.32.9 make it difficult to discern what Solon is actually referring to here (see e.g. Pelling (2006b) and Branscome (2013) 24-53). Compare the similarly prescient yet vague warning of Croesus' doom issued at 1.13.2.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Grethlein (2009) 164 (following de Jong (1999) and Rengakos (2006)): "It can be concluded that the reconfiguration of time in the *Histories* establishes a strong discrepancy between characters and readers. The temporal organization of the narrative combined with the use of perspective and focalization emphasizes on the one hand the disappointment of expectations at the level of action, and, on the other, safely guides the readers through the narrative without major surprises, while at the same time maintaining suspense as to the exact character of the further development."

<sup>6</sup> See Lateiner (1989) 44-45 for examples of how Herodotus' closing formulae exemplify this theme on the most basic textual level throughout the *Histories*.

from death on the pyre by recalling Solon's dictum to his conqueror Cyrus (1.86).<sup>7</sup> From there, he is made to serve in much the same capacity as Solon once did for him, first as "wise adviser" to Cyrus (1.207), and then to Cyrus' successor Cambyses (3.36)<sup>8</sup> before all but vanishing from the narrative.<sup>9</sup>

That this sort of reversal of fortune will not be limited solely to Croesus as the *Histories* unfold is presaged by the programmatic statement made in the conclusion of the proem, which encapsulates the dichotomy of vicissitude and constancy inherent to Herodotus' worldview:

...προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. [4] Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρὰ. Τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ὧν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τούτῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως (1.5.3-4).

...I will proceed with my *logos* by going through great and small human settlements alike, [4] for many of those that were great in the past have become small, and those that were great in my time were once small. Knowing, then, that human prosperity never abides in the same place, I will mention both alike.

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<sup>7</sup> The impetus for Croesus' rescue from the pyre stems from his recollection of the maxim of 1.32.9: Τῷ δὲ Κροίσῳ ἐστεῶτι ἐπὶ τῆς πυρῆς ἐσελθεῖν, καίπερ ἐν κακῷ ἔοντι τοσοῦτῳ, τὸ τοῦ Σόλωνος, ὡς οἱ εἶη σὺν θεῷ εἰρημένον, τὸ «μηδένα εἶναι τῶν ζώντων ὄλβιον» (1.86.3). While Croesus' equation of the end with death is a reduction of a much more general understanding of ends which Solon hints at (see Pelling (2006b) 159 and Branscome (2013) 49-50), the teleological focus of 1.32.9 is nevertheless instrumental in bringing about the paradoxical extension of Croesus' life.

<sup>8</sup> For summaries of the "wise adviser" motif in Herodotus, see e.g. Bischoff (1932), Lattimore (1939), and Immerwahr (1966) 72-75. For discussions of Croesus' own ambiguous role as wise adviser following the Lydian λόγος, see e.g. Stahl (1975), Shapiro (1994), and Pelling (2006b).

<sup>9</sup> With the exception of several analepses (i.e. 5.36, 6.37, 6.125), we never hear what happens to Croesus after he flees from the wrath of Cambyses (3.36). As Evans (1978) postulates, the historical tradition surrounding Croesus' fate was vague enough to have allowed Herodotus to subject the Lydian king to a less decisive end than the ones handed down by others (cf. esp. the third ode of Bacchylides, discussed in Crane (1996)). Though it is impossible to determine with certainty whether Croesus' indistinct end amounts to an ironic affirmation of Solon's maxim in 1.32.9, this is not unlikely given Croesus' role as a literary model in the *Histories*.

The conclusion to the proem is remarkable not only for the way it seamlessly blends the past, the present, and the future together,<sup>10</sup> but also for where it falls in the grand scheme of Herodotus' text. Though it scarcely need be mentioned that Solon's adage about ends is supported most explicitly in the *beginning* of the *Histories*, this irony has been largely understated. We will therefore strive to emphasize the significance of this chronological paradox to the conclusion to the *Histories* and so demonstrate the inextricability of aetiology from teleology.

By the time we reach Book Nine of the *Histories*, the extent to which things appear to have changed since Herodotus first began to trace the humble origins of Persian hegemony in Book One is huge. Against all odds, a loose confederation of Greek states has managed to repel the might of the Persian Empire's second expedition across the Aegean, thereby shifting the balance of power in favor of the former with a resounding victory at Salamis (8.40-125). But while the changes following the events of 480-479 BCE are themselves enormous, Herodotus begins to suggest at this stage in his narrative that the *nature* of these changes is not altogether surprising or out of step with several key patterns established towards the beginning of the *Histories*. One of the first indicators of this reversal comes in the form of an anecdote about the aftermath of the battle of Plataea (9.25-89), when the victorious Spartan general, Pausanias, puts goods abandoned by the Persians in the wake of their defeat to an unusual use:

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<sup>10</sup> Grethlein (2013) 222 observes that the use of the prospective imperfect to describe "...a future that is indefinite, perhaps infinite" (*pace* Naiden (1999) 142) may also be located in the three uses of ἦν in 1.5.3-4. For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Chapter 1.3.



...ὡς Ξέρξης φεύγων ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος Μαρδονίῳ τὴν κατασκευὴν καταλίπει τὴν ἑωυτοῦ. Πausανίην ὧν ὀρῶντα τὴν Μαρδονίου κατασκευὴν χρυσῶ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ καὶ παραπετάσμασι ποικίλοισι κατεσκευασμένην κελεῦσαι τοὺς τε ἀρτοκόπους καὶ τοὺς ὀψοποιοὺς κατὰ ταῦτά [καθῶς] Μαρδονίῳ δεῖπνον παρασκευάζειν. [2] Ὡς δὲ κελευόμενοι οὗτοι ἐποίεον ταῦτα, ἐνθαῦτα τὸν Πausανίην ἰδόντα κλίνας τε χρυσέας καὶ ἀργυρέας εὖ ἐστρωμένας καὶ τραπέζας τε χρυσέας καὶ ἀργυρέας καὶ παρασκευὴν μεγαλοπρεπέα τοῦ δεῖπνου, ἐκπλαγέντα τὰ προκείμενα ἀγαθὰ κελεῦσαι ἐπὶ γέλωτι τοὺς ἑωυτοῦ διηκόνους παρασκευάσαι Λακωνικὸν δεῖπνον. [3] Ὡς δὲ τῆς θοίνης ποιηθείσης ἦν πολλὸν τὸ μέσον, τὸν Πausανίην γελάσαντα μεταπέμψασθαι τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοὺς στρατηγούς, συνελθόντων δὲ τούτων εἰπεῖν τὸν Πausανίην, δεικνύντα ἐς ἑκατέρην τοῦ δεῖπνου τὴν παρασκευὴν· «Ἄνδρες Ἕλληνας, τῶνδε εἵνεκα ἐγὼ ὑμέας συνήγαγον, βουλόμενος ὑμῖν τοῦ Μῆδων ἡγεμόνος τὴν ἀφροσύνην δεῖξαι, ὃς τοιήνδε δίαίταν ἔχων ἦλθε ἐς ἡμέας οὕτω οἰζυρὴν ἔχοντας ἀπαιρησόμενος.» (9.82).

When Xerxes was fleeing from Greece, he left his things to Mardonius. Now when Pausanias saw Mardonius' things decked out in gold and silver and embroidered hangings, he ordered the bakers and cooks to prepare dinner as they would for Mardonius. [2] And they did this at Pausanias' bidding, and then, when he saw the gold and silver couches with beautiful coverings and the gold and silver tables and accoutrements befitting the feast, he was struck by all the good things lying before him, and as a joke, he ordered his attendants to prepare a Spartan dinner. [3] Once the meal was ready, Pausanias laughed at the huge difference and summoned the Greek generals. When they were all there, Pausanias pointed to each of the two meals and said, "Men of Greece, I brought you here because I wanted to show you the foolishness of the Persian king, who invaded our land with such a lifestyle as this in order to rob us of the meager one we possess."

Even before he relates this anecdote about Pausanias, Herodotus seems ambivalent about the consequences of a Greek victory at Plataea when he calls it the "fairest victory of all those we know" (νίκην...καλλίστην ἀπασέων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, 9.64.1), a distinction which evokes the sort of irony that has already gone hand-in-hand with many superlative statements made throughout *Histories*.<sup>11</sup> This interpretation is

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<sup>11</sup> See esp. the discussion of 2.2-3 in Chapter 2.1 (following Bloomer (1993)).

substantiated not only by two conspicuous instances of joking and laughter in the scene above (which Lateiner has shown to be signs of impending reversal in Herodotus),<sup>12</sup> but also by what has led up to Pausanias' mock-Persian banquet and what will follow. And yet, Herodotus does not pass explicit judgment on the meaning of this episode, but rather points to past and future analogues for us to ponder and so reach our own conclusions. As we shall see, his reasons for doing so will find justification in the programmatic statements concerning the inextricability of teleology from aetiology set out above.

With the benefit of Thucydides' account, Pausanias' conduct at the banquet may be said to foreshadow the Spartan general's purported medism after Plataea, including his indulgence in the very Persian luxuries he decries in the passage immediately above.<sup>13</sup> Although Herodotus himself seems to hint at this about-face on at least two occasions,<sup>14</sup> we must be mindful of the fact that the question of Pausanias' allegiances was as controversial in antiquity as it is today.<sup>15</sup> And yet, even if his reputation as a medizer had been more secure, Herodotus is unlikely to have judged Pausanias' role in the *Pentecontaetia* on a personal level, not only because reputation is unstable in the *longue*

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<sup>12</sup> See Lateiner (1977) 177 ad loc. See also Raaflaub (1987) for a general discussion of Herodotus' role as dramatic ironist (see pp. 245-246 ad loc.).

<sup>13</sup> On Pausanias' medism, see Thuc. 1.94-95 and 1.128-138. On Pausanias' hypocritical adoption of luxurious Persian clothes and diet, see esp. Thuc. 1.130.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. 5.32 and 8.3.2.

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Evans (1988) for an analysis of two conflicting traditions regarding Pausanias in antiquity, which make a consensus about his medism all but impossible to reach. Compare Herodotus' depiction of Themistocles, which, though less opaque than that of Pausanias, is also ambiguous when the Athenian general's conduct before and after the battle of Salamis is weighed together (see e.g. Blösel (2001) and Baragwanath (2008) 289-322).

durée,<sup>16</sup> but also because Pausanias' banquet says more about a human tendency than an individual one, namely, the proclivity towards acquisition that can lead to empire.

This point is reinforced if we look back to the speech that the wise-adviser Sardanis gives to Croesus on the eve of his doomed campaign across the river Halys, which explains how the Persians came to acquire the sort of fineries the Spartans mock at Pausanias' banquet:

«Ὡ βασιλεῦ, ἐπ' ἄνδρας τοιούτους στρατεύεσθαι παρασκευάζει, οἱ σκυτίνας μὲν ἀναξυρίδας, σκυτίνην δὲ τὴν ἄλλην ἐσθῆτα φορέουσι, σιτέονται δὲ οὐκ ὅσα ἐθέλουσι, ἀλλ' ὅσα ἔχουσι, χώρην ἔχοντες τρηχέαν. [3] Πρὸς δὲ οὐκ οἶνω διαχρέωνται, ἀλλὰ ὑδροποτεύουσι, οὐ σῦκα δὲ ἔχουσι τρώγειν, οὐκ ἄλλο ἀγαθὸν οὐδέν. Τοῦτο μὲν δὴ, εἰ νικήσεις, τί σφεας ἀπαιρήσει, τοῖσί γε μὴ ἔστι μηδέν; Τοῦτο δέ, ἢν νικηθῆς, μάθε ὅσα ἀγαθὰ ἀποβαλέεις. Γευσάμενοι γὰρ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀγαθῶν περιέζονται οὐδὲ ἀπωστοὶ ἔσονται. [4] Ἐγὼ μὲν νυν θεοῖσι ἔχω χάριν, οἱ οὐκ ἐπὶ νόον ποιεῦσι Πέρσησι στρατεύεσθαι ἐπὶ Λυδούς.» Ταῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἔπειθε τὸν Κροῖσον. Πέρσησι γάρ, πρὶν Λυδοῦς καταστρέψασθαι, ἦν οὔτε ἄβρον οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὐδέν (1.71.2-4).

“O King, you are preparing to march out against such men as these, who wear leather trousers and other clothes made of leather, and eat not as much as they want, but as much as they have because they have a rugged land. [3] What's more, they do not use wine, but are water-drinkers, and they do not have figs to eat or anything else that is good. Now, if you conquer them, what will you deprive them of since they have nothing? But if you are conquered, know how many good things you will throw away, for once they have tasted our good things, they will cling to them and they will be impossible to get rid of. [4] I for my part thank the gods for not putting it in the minds of the Persians to march out against the Lydians.” In spite of these words, Sardanis did not persuade Croesus. Indeed, before they overthrew the Lydians, the Persians did not have anything fine or good.

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<sup>16</sup> Recall 1.5.3-4 (see above). Though Fornara (1971) 64-65 is right to apply Solon's maxim from 1.32.9 to the case of Pausanias, he takes the sage's words much as Croesus does (see n. 7) to refer not to ends themselves, but to the “instability of good fortune.” In light of Pausanias' wretched demise in Thucydides (1.134), this interpretation is not incorrect, but it takes for granted what Herodotus only suggests implicitly and so circumscribes Pausanias' end more than the programmatic statements concerning teleology instruct us to do.

The fact that the Persians come to embrace luxury goods only after they have conquered their Lydian foes in this, their first step towards the enlargement of the Achaemenid Empire,<sup>17</sup> makes an even stronger case for seeing the banquet of Pausanias as a foreshadowing of the Greeks' internecine struggle over empire, which also has its origins in the most unpretentious simplicity.<sup>18</sup> However, the matter-of-fact conclusion of this aetiology (Ταῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἔπειθε τὸν Κροῖσον. Πέρσησι γάρ, πρὶν Λυδοῦς καταστρέψασθαι, ἦν οὔτε ἀβρὸν οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὐδέν, 1.71.4) suggests that what happened to the Persians will not be unique to them or to any other people for that matter<sup>19</sup> (the dubious influence of climate and geography notwithstanding).<sup>20</sup> This broad interpretation is consistent not only with Herodotus' ecumenical understanding of ethnicity advocated

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<sup>17</sup> Note Croesus' warning to Cyrus about the dangers of the Persians ransacking Lydian goods at Sardis: Πέρσαι, φύσιν ἔοντες ὑβρισταί, εἰσι ἀχρήματοι. Ἦν ὧν σὺ τούτους περιίδης διαρπάσαντας καὶ κατασχόντας χρήματα μεγάλα, τάδε τοι ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπίδοξα γενέσθαι· ὅς ἂν αὐτῶν πλεῖστα κατάσχη, τοῦτον προσδέκεσθαι τοι ἐπαναστησόμενον (1.89.2).

<sup>18</sup> Recall 9.82.3, noting in particular the Pan-Hellenic implications of Pausanias' address to "Ἄνδρες Ἕλληνας." That Pausanias here describes the Spartan way of life as "woeful" (ὀϊζυρὴν) may also indicate ironic foreshadowing, given the word's status as a ἄπαξ λεγόμενον in Herodotus and its strong poetic associations with war and grief in Homer (e.g. *Il.* 3.112, *Od.* 5.105). See Flower and Marincola (2002) ad loc. for additional examples.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Harrison (2009) 391-392 on the imperial proclivities of the most unlikely groups of people in the *Histories* (e.g. Ethiopians, Thracians, etc.), which, though unsubstantiated in this particular narrative, could very well be made manifest in the future given Herodotus' emphasis on the mutability of national character (see the discussion of 9.120.4 ff. below for a vivid demonstration of this reversal).

<sup>20</sup> Sardanis' juxtaposition of a land's quality (χώρην... τρηχέαν, 1.71.2) with its luxuries or lack thereof (e.g. wine and figs, 1.71.3) may point to an argument from climatic and geographic determinism, thereby limiting his warning to certain peoples. Though the existence of this schema is not unfounded in the *Histories*, Herodotus suggests here as elsewhere that this sort of determinism cannot account for a people's devolution from hard to soft by itself (see esp. 2.35-36 and 4.36, discussed in Chapters 2.3 and 4.2 respectively). Other factors such as a given people's customs (i.e. νόμοι et al.) and way of life (i.e. δαίαιτα) must account for this change as well (see Thomas (2000) 102-114). Even then, there are suggestions that those ἔθνεα that are predisposed to softness are not without "hard" qualities (see e.g. 1.79.3 for the remark about the courage and bravery of the Lydians (discussed in Thomas (2000) 109) and 9.40, 9.62-63, 9.68.1, 9.71.1, 9.102.3 on the excellence of Persian warriors (discussed in Pelling (1997) 62-63)). On the hard/soft dichotomy, cf. 1.155-156, 1.211, 5.49, and esp. 9.122 (discussed below).

throughout this dissertation,<sup>21</sup> but also with the open-endedness of ends we have already started to glimpse in the examples above. To solidify the validity of this reading, no end will be more important than the last chapter of the *Histories* (9.122), which will also harken back to 1.71 along with several other antecedents corresponding with the beginning of the work. For the moment, however, it is enough to note that our analysis of Pausanias' banquet has required us to look back in order to look forward to a future that appears at once assured and imprecise. In order to show just how closely aetiology and teleology are bound to one another in this regard, let us proceed with our discussion of the aftermath of the battle of Plataea as a way of prefacing our consideration of the conclusion to the *Histories*.

## ***6.2 Coming Full Circle***

After recounting another Greek victory won against the Persians at the battle of Mycale (9.93-107), Herodotus initiates the process of concluding the *Histories*. But the closer he gets to the ending of the work, the more we are directed to look to its beginning. This is in keeping with the conventions of ring composition exemplified in Homeric poetry, whose influence on the final chapters of Book Nine has been detected by a number of scholars.<sup>22</sup> Noteworthy among them is Herington, who convincingly correlates

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<sup>21</sup> See esp. Chapters Two and Four.

<sup>22</sup> Rawlinson (1880) was one of the first modern readers of Herodotus to see the workings of ring composition in the final chapter of the *Histories*: "Artistically,—by this last chapter—the end is brought back into a connection with the beginning—the tail of the snake is curved around into his mouth" (ad loc.). Since then, several scholars have advocated for such a correspondence between the beginning and the end of the *Histories*, including Fränkel (1924), Beck (1971) 84, and especially Herington (1991a) (discussed below). See also Cobet (1971) 171-176, Ayo (1984), Boedeker (1988), Moles (1996), and Dewald (1997)

three sets of episodes in both the end and the beginning of the *Histories*: A) the lustful actions of Xerxes and Candaules (9.108-113 and 1.8-13), B) the execution of Artayctes and the Greco-Persian conflict in the proem (9.116-121 and 1.1.1-5), and C) Cyrus' epilogue and the very beginning of the *Histories* (9.122 and 1.1.0 ff.).<sup>23</sup> These pairings are important not only in that they make one of the strongest cases yet argued for the completion of the *Histories*,<sup>24</sup> but also because they collectively show, better than any individual example, that the opposing ends on the chronological spectrum are indeed dialogic in Herodotus.

Even if the philological similarities between the two corresponding episodes in case A) were not so pronounced, it would still be easy to read Xerxes' sexual misconduct towards the wife and daughter of his brother Masistes in Book Nine as a reprise of Candaules' own misconduct towards his wife at the start of the Lydian λόγος.<sup>25</sup> But while Xerxes' transgressions (including the eventual murder of Masistes) may be emblematic of a stereotypically "oriental" morality, such depraved acts will not be limited to Persian

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for discussions of this convention and other compositional techniques in the end of the *Histories*. See also Myres (1953) 62-64, 300 on the influence of "pedimental" composition in this place.

<sup>23</sup> Herington (1991a) 150 ff. See Dewald (1997) 66-68 for a synopsis of 9.108-9.122.

<sup>24</sup> For the reasons set out below, the following discussion will stand with Herington (1991a) 150: "While the book [i.e. the *Histories*] is open-ended as a strictly historical narrative, as a work of archaic art it is perfectly and unambiguously closed." This is not to say, however, that Herodotus' work, though structurally complete, necessarily represents a "final draft." For an introduction to this complex question pertaining to the composition of the *Histories* (which still lacks a consensus), see Jacoby (1913) cols. 372-379. See also Boedeker (1988) 30-32 for additional bibliography.

<sup>25</sup> See Herington (1991a) 152-153, following Wolff (1964), ad 9.108-113. The most striking parallels concern two major programmatic motifs: fate (...χρῆν γὰρ Κανδαύλη γενέσθαι κακῶς κ.τ.λ., 1.8.2; Τῆ δὲ κακῶς γὰρ ἔδεε πανοικίη γενέσθαι, 9.109.2) and wonder (Ὁ δὲ Γύγης τέως μὲν ἀπεθώμαζε τὰ λεγόμενα κ.τ.λ., 1.11.3; Ὁ δὲ Μασίστης ἀποθωμάσας τὰ λεγόμενα, 9.111.3), both of which admit a huge amount of ambiguity for the reader to work through (see below). See also Blok (2002) 230-232 for a discussion of how this episode relates to the issue of female agency in the *Histories*.

court intrigues.<sup>26</sup> As the wheel of fortune turns and the mantle of power is transferred in the last chapters of the *Histories*, we are led back inexorably to the proem with Xerxes' renewal of a familiar cycle of violence and retribution,<sup>27</sup> which will blur not only the distinction between reality and pretext,<sup>28</sup> but also the distinction between Greek and barbarian.

These categories start to meld into one another as soon as Herodotus shifts his focus back to the relentless drive of the Greeks against the Persians following the battle of Mycale (case B in Herington). For instance, it is significant that those Greek forces dispatched with the express purpose of destroying the Persian bridges spanning the Hellespont do not fall back even when they find the Persians' escape route already broken up.<sup>29</sup> Instead, they stay as ordered by the commanding Athenian general, Xanthippus, so as to "make an attempt upon the Chersonese" (πειρᾶσθαι τῆς Χερσονήσου, 9.114.2). From a certain point of view, Xanthippus' decision to lay siege to the occupied town of Sestos in spite of his objective already having been achieved (and

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<sup>26</sup> See Boedeker (2011) 232 for an exploration of how "ruling Persians do not differ so much in kind from other men and women in the "Histories", but because of the immense power they wield, their history shows in larger scale the unforeseen, far-reaching effects that occur when these two different kinds of human beings interact." On the Masistes' episode in particular, see pp. 220-221.

<sup>27</sup> See Ayo (1984) 43 for an eloquent summation of this reciprocal phenomenon: "Prolog lusts lead to epilog invasion defeats and court intrigues of incest, mutilation, and parricide. Greed leads to war. In the epilog, lust and war are not now seed and harvest; they rage on as passions out of control, one feeding the other like the strophe and antistrophe of a tragic chorus."

<sup>28</sup> In this respect, we are already well on our way to Thucydides, whose coexistent causal schemes (e.g. αἰτία, προφάσεις, etc.) find much in common with Herodotus' multivalent understanding of aetiology advocated throughout this dissertation (see Pelling (2000) 82-103).

<sup>29</sup> ... τὰς γεφύρας εὖρον διαλελυμένας... καὶ τούτων οὐκ ἦκιστα εἵνεκεν ἐς τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ἀπίκοντο (9.114.1).

the repeated requests from his men to return home)<sup>30</sup> presupposes the existence of imperialist motives from the get-go. Even though Herodotus does not explicitly deny such ulterior aims on the part of the Athenian general who is also Pericles' father,<sup>31</sup> the denouement of the siege of Sestos, set precariously astride the border of Europe and Asia, presupposes additional motives (e.g. vengeance) stemming from an older and more complex struggle.<sup>32</sup> As we have now come to expect from Herodotus' fundamentally integrative approach to aetiology, the reasons for the Greek expedition against the Hellespont will entail more than the passing of the baton of hegemony from one regional power to another.<sup>33</sup>

The notion that the siege of Sestos represents not only a contest of *Realpolitik* but a primordial struggle as well<sup>34</sup> is indicated by the manner in which the local Persian governor Artayctes comes to occupy the tomb and sanctuary of the hero Protesilaus, the first Greek to die in the battle for Troy.<sup>35</sup> Though it later turns out that Artayctes has more

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<sup>30</sup> Ἐπει δὲ πολιορκεομένοισι σφι φθινόπωρον ἐπεγίνετο, καὶ ἡσχαλλον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἀπὸ τε τῆς ἐωυτῶν ἀποδημέοντες καὶ οὐ δυνάμενοι ἐξελεῖν τὸ τεῖχος, ἐδέοντο [τε] τῶν στρατηγῶν ὄκως ἀπάγοιεν σφέας ὀπίσω· οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἔφασαν πρὶν ἢ ἐξέλωσι ἢ τὸ Ἀθηναίων κοινόν σφεας μεταπέμψηται· οὕτω δὲ ἔστεργον τὰ παρεόντα (9.117).

<sup>31</sup> Herodotus' ambivalence about empire is exemplified in his account of the birth of Pericles, in which he records that Pericles' mother, Agarista, dreamed that she gave birth to a lion (6.131.2), an animal with "polyvalent connotations" in the *Histories* (Munson (2001) 244-247, quotation at 245). See also Fornara (1971) 53-54.

<sup>32</sup> See Boedeker (1988), esp. pp. 32-33, where she posits that Herodotus reveals his knowledge of (at least) two traditions for the siege of Sestos (i.e. Athenian and Chersonesian), neither of which are privileged.

<sup>33</sup> I employ this metaphor *pace* Stadter (1992) 798. For a summary of the debate between temporally-specific and universal readings of the end of the *Histories* (and thus, by extension, pessimistic and optimistic readings) as argued by Fornara (1971) 41, 74, 90-91, and Gould (1989) 116-120 respectively, see Derow (1995). See also Stadter (1992) and Moles (1996) in the vein of the former.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. 4.1.1-2 (discussed in Chapter 4.1 above).

<sup>35</sup> ...τὸν δ' ἔκτανε Δάρδανος ἀνὴρ // νηὸς ἀποθρόσκοντα πολὺ πρότιστον Ἀχαιῶν (II. 2.701-702).



selfish motives for taking over the sanctuary of Protesilaus than the ones he intimates,<sup>36</sup> he prevails upon Xerxes to let him have it, ostensibly “so that all may learn not to make war against your land” (...ἵνα καὶ τις μάθῃ ἐπὶ γῆν τὴν σὴν μὴ στρατεύεσθαι, 9.116.3). That Artaχctes resolves to pay back the Greek who stood at the fore of the initial incursion into Asia, a land which the Persians consider to be entirely their own (τὴν Ἀσίην πᾶσαν νομίζουσι ἑωυτῶν εἶναι Πέρσαι, 9.116.3), takes us straight back to the proem, where requital for original wrongs during the Trojan War led to the establishment of the continental boundary that is still being contested at the end of the *Histories*:<sup>37</sup>

[3] Σφέας μὲν δὴ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας λέγουσι Πέρσαι ἀρπαζομένων τῶν γυναικῶν λόγον οὐδένα ποιήσασθαι, Ἑλληνας δὲ Λακεδαιμονίης εἵνεκεν γυναικὸς στόλον μέγαν συναγεῖραι καὶ ἔπειτα ἐλθόντας ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην τὴν Πριάμου δύναμιν κατελεῖν. [4] Ἀπὸ τούτου αἰεὶ ἠγήσασθαι τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν σφίσι εἶναι πολέμιον. Τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίην καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνεα βάρβαρα οἰκηιοῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἤγηνται κεχωρίσθαι (1.4.3-4).

[3] The Persians say that they for their part took no account of the abductions of their women from Asia, but the Greeks amassed a huge army for the sake of a Spartan woman and then invaded Asia and destroyed Priam’s power. [4] From this time on, they have always considered the Greeks to be their enemy, for the Persians claim Asia and the barbarian nations that live there as their own, but they consider Europe and the Greeks to be separate.

It is no wonder, then, that Artaχctes’ subsequent defilement of Protesilaus’ shrine with the theft of sacred objects, unlawful agriculture, and illicit sex<sup>38</sup> in the context of this volatile setting reignites ancient enmities that make the end of the *Histories* look much

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<sup>36</sup> See n. 38 below.

<sup>37</sup> Boedeker (1988) 42.

<sup>38</sup> ... τὰ χρήματα ἐξ Ἐλαιοῦντος ἐς Σηστὸν ἐξεφόρησε καὶ τὸ τέμενος ἔσπειρε καὶ ἔνεμε, αὐτὸς τε ὄκως ἀπικόιτο ἐς Ἐλαιοῦντα, ἐν τῷ ἀδύτῳ γυναιξὶ ἐμίσητο (9.116.3). These actions as well as their consequences are foreshadowed at 7.33.

like the beginning. But while the punishment that is eventually meted out against Artayctes for his wrongdoing may appear to be a simple case of “tit for tat” like the Greeks’ abduction of Europa early on in the proem (ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα, 1.2.1), there are a number of indications that what happens to the Persian governor will be no more reciprocal than the actions that brought about the delineation of Europe and Asia in 1.4.3-4.<sup>39</sup>

The first such indication comes after the Greeks break the siege of Sestos and capture Artayctes, who witnesses a remarkable portent of a dead fish come back to life and then explains it to a prison guard as follows:

Ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, μηδὲν φοβέο τὸ τέρας τοῦτο· οὐ γὰρ σοὶ πέφηνε, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ σημαίνει ὁ ἐν Ἐλαιούντι Πρωτεσίλεως ὅτι καὶ τεθνεὼς καὶ τάριχος ἐὼν δύναμιν πρὸς θεῶν ἔχει τὸν ἀδικέοντα τίνασθαι. [3] Νῦν ὧν ἄποινά μοι τάδε ἐθέλω ἐπιτεθῆναι, ἀντὶ μὲν [χρημάτων] τῶν ἔλαβον ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἑκατὸν τάλαντα καταθεῖναι τῷ θεῷ, ἀντὶ δ’ ἐμεωυτοῦ καὶ τοῦ παιδὸς ἀποδώσω τάλαντα διηκόσια Ἀθηναίοισι περιγενόμενος (9.120.2-3).

“Athenian stranger, do not fear this portent, for it is not meant for you, but it is for me that Protesilaus from Elaeus indicates that he, though dead and dry, has power from the gods to exact retribution against the one who commits injustice. [3] Now I am willing to impose the following penalty upon myself: to offer one hundred talents to the god in exchange for what I took from the shrine; and I will pay two hundred talents to the Athenians for myself and my son if I am left alive.”

Artayctes’ recognition of the ability of Protesilaus to seek redress for his impious acts at the behest of the gods (...δύναμιν πρὸς θεῶν ἔχει τὸν ἀδικέοντα τίνασθαι, 9.120.2) makes divine vengeance seem like a foregone conclusion, especially in light of the disaster that befell Xerxes for his similar transgressions just a few chapters earlier.<sup>40</sup> Although his

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<sup>39</sup> On the lack of reciprocity in the proem, see Chapter One.

<sup>40</sup> See above (ad 9.108-113).

eventual punishment may ultimately have some such impetus, Herodotus does not explicitly identify the agency of the gods any more than he does in the proem.<sup>41</sup> The agency of the Greeks, however, is on full display once they reject Artaÿctes' personal indemnity (ἄποινα, 9.120.3) of two hundred talents (which could have gone a long way towards funding their nascent imperial ambitions) in order to undertake an act of primal retribution:<sup>42</sup>

Ταῦτα ὑπισχόμενος τὸν στρατηγὸν Ξάνθιππον οὐκ ἔπειθε· οἱ γὰρ Ἐλαιούσιοι τῷ Πρωτεσίλει τιμωρέοντες ἐδέοντό μιν καταχρησθῆναι, καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ στρατηγοῦ ταύτη <ὁ> νόος ἔφερε. Ἀπαγαγόντες δὲ αὐτὸν ἐς τὴν ἀκτὴν ἐς τὴν Ξέρξης ἐζευξε τὸν πόρον, οἱ δὲ λέγουσι ἐπὶ τὸν κολωνὸν τὸν ὑπὲρ Μადύτου πόλιος, <πρὸς> σανίδα προσπασσαλεύσαντες ἀνεκρέμασαν· τὸν δὲ παῖδα ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι τοῦ Ἀρταῦκτεω κατέλευσαν (9.120.4).

In spite of these promises, he was getting nowhere with the general Xanthippus, for the Elaeans were asking that he be strung up as punishment for Protesilaus, and the general himself was so minded. So they led him away to the headland where Xerxes had bridged the strait (though some say that they led him to the hill overlooking the city of Madytus), and they fastened him to boards and hung him up. Then they stoned Artaÿctes' son before his eyes.

As Desmond observes, it is noteworthy that the method of execution the Greeks choose for Artaÿctes is similar to the one preferred by the Persians.<sup>43</sup> Not only does

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<sup>41</sup> See Hollmann (2011) 237-239 for a good discussion of the broad semiotic valence of the portent at 9.120.2-3, which Herodotus ultimately leaves open. Compare the similar parable of the fish and the flute-player, which Cyrus tells to the Ionians and the Aeolians (1.141, discussed at n. 67 in Chapter Two).

<sup>42</sup> This enormous indemnity represents a third of Athens' allied tribute at the start of the Peloponnesian War (Thuc. 2.13.3), equal to about five metric tons of silver (see Sosin (2014) 43 for this conversion and other helpful equivalences). Ransom is also a unifying force in the bookends to the *Iliad* (see e.g. Wilson (2002) and Cairns (2011) on ἄποινα and other forms of compensation in Homer). But whereas Achilles ultimately accepts Priam's "boundless ransom" (ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα, *Il.* 24.578) for Hector at the close of the *Iliad*, Xanthippus rejects Artaÿctes' similarly boundless offer, suggesting that the conflict between Persians and Greeks will ultimately continue beyond the end of the *Histories* (see Herington (1991a) 158-160 for other such indications based on a close reading of the last book of the *Iliad*).

<sup>43</sup> Desmond (2004) 34-36.

“hanging and fastening to boards” (σανίδας προσπασσαλεύσαντες ἀνεκρέμασαν) find much in common with the Persians’ penchant for impalement and other brutal forms of public execution;<sup>44</sup> the extension of the father’s punishment to the son while in full view of one another also mirrors the actions of Cambyses, Darius, and Xerxes earlier on in the *Histories*.<sup>45</sup> As Pelling notes, the fact that Xanthippus is the one to supervise this act implies that “...the style of the Athenian expansion is bound to destabilise any univocal picture of what is Greek and what is barbarian. The Greekest of states—‘the Greece of Greece’, as an epigram put it (*Anth. Pal.* 7.45)—is now falling into the barbarian pattern, and the Other is coming very close to home.”<sup>46</sup>

Since this role reversal of the sort predicted in 1.5.3-4 makes one of the best cases yet argued for Herodotus’ desire to see past ethnic stereotypes in order to get to the bottom of their common human foundations,<sup>47</sup> it would be out of keeping with this ethos of circumspection to read the execution of Artaÿctes purely as an occasional warning about burgeoning Athenian imperialism. This is not to say that the references to subsequent fifth century history which Stadter (1992), Moles (1996), and others have

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<sup>44</sup> See Desmond (2004) 34-35 for a series of examples. Some of these bear a striking resemblance to the Athenian ἀποτυμpanισμός, which was designed to achieve much the same result as the apparatus used in Artaÿctes’ execution.

<sup>45</sup> See 3.14-15, 4.84, and 7.39 (as cited in Desmond (2004) 35, along with additional examples).

<sup>46</sup> Pelling (1997) 61. In this vein, compare Antiphon’s maxim in *On Truth*: ἐν τ[ο]ύτῳ οὖν πρὸς ἀλλήλους βεβαρβαρώμεθα, ἐπεὶ φύσει γε πάντα πάντες ὁμοίως πεφύκ[α]μεν καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνας εἶναι (Fr. 44 (A2), in Decleva Caizzi (1989)).

<sup>47</sup> See Gruen (2011a) for a discussion of the many corresponding similarities between Greeks and Persians in the *Histories* (echoed in Gruen (2011b) 21-39), through which “...Herodotus seeks neither to commend nor to condemn, but rather to employ ambiguities that allow each society to reflect in subtle ways, one upon the other” (74). See also Thomas (2011) for similar conclusions based primarily on an analysis of Herodotus’ Persian ethnography (ad 1.131-140) and Momigliano (1979) for some general remarks to this effect (see esp. pp. 146-149).

seen here and elsewhere in the *Histories* were not necessarily meant to anticipate the events of the Pentecontaetia and the Peloponnesian War.<sup>48</sup> However, our equation of aetiology with teleology in the first two sections of this chapter has already demonstrated that Herodotus' programmatic interest in ends and beginnings need not be so rigidly defined. After all, in light of the broad parameters of the proem, who could say whether Athenian imperialism in the grand scheme of things would have been that much of a concern for Herodotus, whose commitment to recording the changes of both great and small settlements appears to know no cultural or temporal limits?<sup>49</sup>

Such boundlessness is further suggested by what happens immediately after the execution of Artaxerxes:

Ταῦτα δὲ ποιήσαντες ἀπέπλεον ἐς τὴν Ἑλλάδα, τὰ τε ἄλλα χρήματα ἄγοντες καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ ὄπλα τῶν γεφυρέων ὡς ἀναθήσοντες ἐς τὰ ἱερά. Καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἔτος τοῦτο οὐδὲν ἐπὶ πλεον τούτων ἐγένετο (9.121).

Once they had done these things, they sailed back to Greece, bringing with them various goods including the cables of the bridges to set up as offerings in their temples. And nothing else happened this year.

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<sup>48</sup> See n. 33 above.

<sup>49</sup> i.e. 1.5.3-4 (see above, including n. 10). In light of this ecumenical stance, I tend to side with Gould (1989) 118-119 over Fornara (1971) in the universal vs. temporally-specific debate (summarized in n. 33 above): "I should not want to say that at some level of consciousness Herodotus did not perceive the events of his own lifetime as somehow falling into the same pattern as the events of two generations earlier that he was engaged in narrating, but to see that parallelism as forming the 'message' of his work and the reason for his writing is to focus the reader's attention on things that are peripheral to Herodotus' purpose and to preclude understanding of the tradition in which he sees himself as working. It implies that Herodotus' obligation in writing is to his contemporary readers and (in spite of Fornara's careful distinctions) it makes his purpose closely parallel to that of Thucydides, in that they both see the narrative of past events as justified by present or future understanding of human experience. That is not quite what Herodotus himself says, and the difference is an important one. In his introductory sentence, he implies firstly that the obligation he is discharging in writing is to the heroic figures of his own narrative, and secondly that the justification of his narrative lies in its function of preserving the human past from oblivion, from being simply erased from memory by the passage of time."

On the one hand, the Greeks' departure with the bridge cables used by the Persians to conduct their doomed invasion of Europe signals that Herodotus' own historical narrative is all but complete.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, we get the sense that not everything has been wrapped up as neatly as the conquering Greeks might imagine, not least of all because we are left with the image of Artaxerxes suspended above the symbolically-charged Hellespont without knowing whether this brutal punishment has befitted his crimes and thus whether the ancient conflict that has already claimed his son must continue to be fought, one reprisal after another.<sup>51</sup> Although Herodotus leaves it to us to decide whether justice has in fact been done and order has been restored in the final sentence of this chapter, the emphasis on what happened in *that* year (Καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἔτος τοῦτο οὐδὲν ἐπὶ πλέον τούτων ἐγένετο) suggests that he could extend his historical narrative to subsequent years, but will instead leave it open for others to engage with.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, for Thucydides, who picks up with the siege of Sestos in the opening of his discussion of the Pentecontaetia, the end of the *Histories* will be just the beginning.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Herington (1991a) 157. See also Cobet (1971) 172.

<sup>51</sup> Desmond (2004) 34. See also n. 42 above for the possible significance of Xanthippus' rejection of Artaxerxes' ransom towards the perpetuation of the struggle between Greeks and Persians.

<sup>52</sup> Flower and Marincola (2002) ad loc. Compare the concluding formulae at 6.42.1, 9.41.1, 9.107.3. For a discussion of how this particular formula has been variously interpreted by scholars, see Dewald (1997) 67 n. 13.

<sup>53</sup> See Thuc. 1.89. Xenophon's *Hellenica* in turn picks up where Thucydides leaves off (though, perhaps, as Professor Baragwanath points out to me, with a slight temporal gap) in 411 B.C.E. (Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα κ.τ.λ., 1.1.1), at the Hellespont, no less. As far as can be discerned from the fragmentary state of the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, this work also seems to have begun immediately after Thucydides' account (see e.g. Bruce (1967) 3-27 and McKechnie and Kern (1988) 7-24 for overviews of this continuity, including its possible application to the works of Theopompus, Cratippus, and other historians of the classical period). The notion that the end of one work will be the beginning of another is also part and parcel of the conventions of ring composition as evidenced in the epic cycle. In addition to the Homeric analogues noted above (see n. 42), this tendency may also be seen in Hesiod, who ends the *Theogony* by announcing the beginning of the

Our analysis of the Artaÿctes episode has now demonstrated the inextricability of aetiology from teleology as first suggested by the programmatic examples cited in the opening of this chapter. Just as Herodotus indicated the impossibility of assigning one original cause or agent to the conflict that first pitted Greeks and barbarians against one another in the proem, so too does he submit at the end of his work that there can be no absolute distinction between imperialist motives and more fundamental ones in the Artaÿctes episode. But more than just validating the commonplace that Herodotus' understanding of origins and causes "embraces variety and multiplicity",<sup>54</sup> this analysis has shown that both the analogous beginning and end of the *Histories*, like the λόγοι they enclose, ask us to look past the status quo and so continue Herodotus' far-reaching inquiry. Thus, while it possible to say that the Artaÿctes episode is open-ended because aetiology (and now, by extension, teleology as well) is inherently variform in the *Histories*, it is also possible to say that Herodotus distinguishes this feature as part of his intellectual mission to urge us to take up the tools of ἱστορίη and put them to use in our own time.

Even if this polyvalent approach were not already apparent by the end of the historical narrative, the so-called "epilogue" to the *Histories* (case C in Herington) would still permit an open reading of the end of Herodotus' work:

Τούτου δὲ τοῦ Ἀρταΰκτεω τοῦ ἀνακρεμασθέντος προπάτωρ Ἀρτεμβάρης ἐστὶ ὁ Πέρσησι ἐξηγησάμενος λόγον τὸν ἐκεῖνοι ὑπολαβόντες Κύρω προσήνεικαν λέγοντα τάδε: [2] «Ἐπεὶ Ζεὺς ... Πέρσησι ἡγεμονίην διδοῖ, ἀνδρῶν δὲ σοί, Κύρε,

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*Catalogue of Women* in the last two lines of the poem (i.e. 1021-1022). For a general overview of Hesiodic narrative, see e.g. Rengakos (2009).

<sup>54</sup> Gould (1989) 65.

κατελὼν Ἀστυάγεα, φέρε, γῆν γὰρ ἐκτίμεθα ὀλίγην καὶ ταύτην τρηχέαν, μεταναστάντες ἐκ ταύτης ἄλλην σχῶμεν ἀμείνω. Εἰσὶ δὲ πολλὰ μὲν ἀστυγείτονες, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἐκαστέρω, τῶν μίαν σχόντες πλέοσι ἐσόμεθα θωμαστότεροι· οἰκὸς δὲ ἄνδρας ἄρχοντας τοιαῦτα ποιέειν. Κότε γὰρ δὴ καὶ παρέξει κάλλιον ἢ ὅτε γε ἀνθρώπων τε πολλῶν ἄρχομεν πάσης τε τῆς Ἀσίας;» [3] Κύρος δέ, ταῦτα ἀκούσας καὶ οὐ θωμάσας τὸν λόγον, ἐκέλευε ποιέειν ταῦτα, οὕτω δὲ αὐτοῖσι παραίνεε κελεύων παρασκευάζεσθαι ὡς οὐκέτι ἄρξοντας ἀλλ' ἄρξομένους· φιλέειν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν μαλακῶν χώρων μαλακοὺς ἄνδρας γίνεσθαι· οὐ γάρ τι τῆς αὐτῆς γῆς εἶναι καρπὸν τε θωμαστὸν φύειν καὶ ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς τὰ πολέμια. [4] Ὡστε συγγνόντες Πέρσαι οἴχοντο ἀποστάντες, ἐσσωθέντες τῇ γνώμῃ πρὸς Κύρου, ἄρχειν τε εἴλοντο λυπρὴν οἰκέοντες μᾶλλον ἢ πεδιάδα σπεύροντες ἄλλοισι δουλεύειν (9.122).

The ancestor of this Artaxctes who was strung up was Artembares, who devised a proposal for the Persians who took it and brought it before Cyrus: [2] “Since Zeus gives hegemony to the Persians, and to you among men, Cyrus, now that you have deposed Astyages, let us move away from this land and get a better one, since the land we possess is small and rugged. There are many on our borders and many farther away. If we get one of these, we will be more wondrous to more people. It is fitting for men who have power to do these things, for when will there be a finer opportunity than the present, when we rule so many people and all of Asia?” [3] Though Cyrus was not amazed by their proposal when he heard it, he told them to do it, but in that case, he advised them to prepare to no longer be rulers, but subjects, on grounds that soft men are wont to come from soft lands, for it is not possible for wondrous fruit and men who are good at war to grow from the same land. [4] So admitting their mistake, the Persians went away, having been bested by Cyrus’ judgment, and they chose to rule by living in a poor land rather than to sow fields and be slaves to others.

Though there is no longer much opposition to the thesis that Cyrus’ valediction does in fact constitute the end of the *Histories* from a structural standpoint,<sup>55</sup> there is still debate over what it is meant to indicate. As Dewald notes, there are three basic interpretations for this passage that are typically advanced by scholars: 1) Cyrus saves the Persians from

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<sup>55</sup> The reticence of von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1893) I.26, Jacoby (1913) cols. 372-379, and Pohlenz (1937) 163-177 to accept 9.122 as the conclusion to the *Histories* on compositional or historical grounds has lost favor with scholars, most of whom now argue in the vein of the close contextual reading of Immerwahr (1966) 144-147. See Boedeker (1988) 30-32 for a helpful survey of these respective positions (including additional bibliography).



expanding outside of their land against Artembares' wishes and sets a good example for the Greeks in turn; 2) the Persians eventually forget Cyrus' advice to the benefit of the Greeks, who ultimately prevail over eastern despotism; and 3) both the Persians and the Greeks forget Cyrus' advice as a result of their respective imperial ventures.<sup>56</sup>

The existence of three such interpretations resonates with the model of the priamel whose echoes we have now heard in many key places throughout the *Histories*, all of which emanate from the one paradigmatic example at the end of the proem.<sup>57</sup> This association is germane since Herodotus here expresses no more of a preference for the accounts of the original enmities between East and West than he does for the range of meanings implicit in Cyrus' valediction.<sup>58</sup> While the lack of an authorial interjection *in propria persona* may make this seem like an argument from silence, there are several indications in 9.122 which suggest that the interpretation of the end is in fact meant to be left to the readers (like the Masistes and Artayctes episodes before it) as a way of inciting them to carry on with the process of ἱστορίη begun by Herodotus.<sup>59</sup>

The most pronounced indication comes with Cyrus' lack of wonder at Artembares' proposal to relocate (οὐ θαυμάσας τὸν λόγον, 9.122.3), which the Persian king rejects on grounds that "it is not possible for wondrous fruit (καρπὸν...θαυμαστόν, 9.122.3) and men who are good at war to grow from the same land." The placement of

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<sup>56</sup> Dewald (1997) 73-75 for full discussion and relevant bibliography for each of the three positions.

<sup>57</sup> i.e. 1.5.3. See esp. Chapter 1.3 for discussion and bibliography on the priamel.

<sup>58</sup> Dewald (1997) 80-81.

<sup>59</sup> Dewald (1997) approximates this conclusion, but appears unwilling to accept it because of the thematic and structural inconcinnity of the end of the *Histories*, which at one point she calls a "tacked-on pendant" (64). See also pp. 65 and 69-70 for other signs of this strange ambivalence.

θωμάζω and its deverbative θωμαστόν here is significant not only because the concern for great and wondrous works in the programmatic first sentence of the *Histories* (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, 1.1.0) is firm evidence that Cyrus' epilogue does indeed mark the end of the work (in good ring compositional style), but also because the ἀπορία-inducing qualities of wonder have already been shown to serve as a springboard for further inquiry.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the fact that Cyrus is the one to prompt us to look back to this all-important precedent and at the same time look forward to an indeterminate future is equally significant, since his role as wise adviser, like that of Solon and Croesus before him, inscribes Herodotus' own expansive outlook.<sup>61</sup> Thus, when Cyrus allows Artembares and his Persian comrades to choose whether to rule or be ruled (εἴλοντο, 9.122.4), it is entirely possible to read this as Herodotus' own affirmation of the importance of giving historical actors and their interpreters the freedom to come to their own decisions.<sup>62</sup> As we have now seen time and again in our study of aetiology and historical methodology in the *Histories*, this emphasis on human agency has exerted a tremendous influence on Herodotus' work beginning in its very first sentence (τὰ

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<sup>60</sup> Recall Aristotle's assessment of wonder as the beginning of philosophy (διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν (*Metaph.* 982b, cf. *Pl. Th.* 155c-d)), whence wise men may be led from ἀπορία (περὶ τῶν μειζόνων διαπορήσαντες (*Metaph.* 982b)) to "theorize the cause" (ἄρχονται μὲν γὰρ ... ἀπὸ τοῦ θαυμάζειν πάντες εἰ οὕτως ἔχει, καθάπερ περὶ τῶν θαυμάτων ταυτόματα τοῖς μήπω θεωρηκόσι τὴν αἰτίαν κ.τ.λ. (ibid. 983a)). In this vein, see esp. the discussion of Herodotus' description of the Labyrinth (2.148) in Chapter 3.1, including n. 23 for a comprehensive bibliography on wonder in the *Histories*.

<sup>61</sup> "The wise saying of Cyrus... is another case where one who once stood in need of advice becomes one who gives it" (Lattimore (1939) 32). See n. 8 and corresponding discussion above.

<sup>62</sup> For similarly multivalent advice given by Cyrus, cf. 1.141 (and to a lesser extent, 1.125-126). Compare also 6.11.2-3, where Dionysius gives the Ionians a choice between freedom and slavery.

γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, 1.1.0),<sup>63</sup> but its emphasis at the end of the *Histories* does more than make one last cogent case for reading the proem programmatically. It also asks us the readers to continue to examine origins and their causes beyond the here and now, just as the preceding λόγοι have instructed, and so to see ἱστορίη as something greater than the sum of its parts.

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<sup>63</sup> Chiasson (2001) 59 takes this to be the first of many indicators of the subordination of climatic and geographic determinants to human action and achievement in the *Histories* despite the piquant reprise of the language from 1.71 (i.e. γῆν... τρηχέαν, 9.122.2) set out above (see Chiasson (2001) 62-65, with Thomas (2000) 106-108), a position which this dissertation has corroborated throughout (see n. 20 above).

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## Biography

Mackenzie Steele Zalin was born on August 11, 1987 in Santa Monica, California. In 2009, he earned a B.A. (honors research, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa) in Greek and Roman Studies from Rhodes College. In 2010, he earned a M.St. in Greek and Latin Languages and Literature from Wolfson College, Oxford. He matriculated at Duke University the same year. During 2010-2015, Zalin held a Graduate Fellowship and in 2015-2016 a Competitive Teaching Fellowship in the Department of Classical Studies at Duke. During the summers of 2014 and 2015, he held research fellowships awarded by the Graduate School at Duke. In 2015, he participated in Summer Session II of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens with the support of a Lawler Scholarship. Zalin has presented his research at several venues, including most recently in March 2015 at the national meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS) in Boulder, Colorado, where he gave a paper entitled “Reading Herodotus and Solon in Tandem: an Argument from Numeracy.”