

ETHNOGRAPHY AND EMPIRE: HOMER AND THE HIPPOCRATICS IN HERODOTUS' ETHIOPIAN *LOGOS*, 3.17–26*

Abstract: This article examines Herodotus' famous and exotic Ethiopian *logos* from three perspectives that derive from a close reading of the text: in Part I, as a meditation staged at the ἔσχατα γῆς on the profound relationship between ethnographic interest and expansionist desire in which the preoccupations of Hippocratic texts will be seen to play an important role; in Part II, as a piece of extensive engagement with Homer's own *logoi* of travel and inquiry; and in Part III as a narrative about the historical context in which Herodotus' Hippocratic and Homericising *logos*—its ethnography and 'history'—was produced and consumed, one in which the expansionist ambitions of the Athenian *demoi* find themselves mirrored in the mad campaign of the Persian king.

In Book 3, chapters 17–26, Herodotus narrates the fate of three military expeditions planned by Cambyses. One never gets off the ground, another vanishes in the desert sands, but the third, against the Macrobioi Ethiopians living at the southern edges of the earth, has attained fame despite being no less a failure. Its fame is owed both to the strong ethical stance that Herodotus embeds in its 'history' and its intriguing and engaging 'ethnography', although admittedly more to the latter: Cambyses' desire to see the famed Table of the Sun, an appetizer for future conquest, results in a *logos* narrating the fabulous elements in Ethiopia alleged to have been witnessed during the inquiries of Cambyses' spies, the so-called Fish-eaters.¹

* This paper was originally delivered to the Cambridge Philological Society in December 2004, and again before audiences at the Freie Universität, Berlin (under the *aegis* of TOPOI: *The Formation and Transformation of Space and Knowledge in Ancient Civilizations*), Columbia University and Temple University. I am grateful for the comments received each time, and also to Pat Easterling, Emily Greenwood, John Marincola, Robin Osborne, Seth Schein, Rosalind Thomas, James Zetzel, and an anonymous reader of *Cambridge Classical Journal* for critical engagement with the written text.

¹ For an overview of the *logos* see Asheri (2007) 415–17 with bibliography. For detailed studies see Hofmann–Vorbichler (1979) and Herminghaus (1964). Scholars largely deal with the *logos* as utopian literature and with structuralist analyses: see Lovejoy and Boas (1935) 1–15, Hadas (1935), Lesky (1959), Rosellini and Saïd (1978) 962–6, Vernant (1989), Romm (1992) 46–8, 49–60; cf. Gould (1989) 103–6 who warns of the need not just to recognise but to read beyond Herodotus' 'logic of polar opposition'. For more recent approaches that focus on the self-reflexive dimension of the *logos* see the discussion below.

Few believe in the historicity of the events of the *logos*,² but nevertheless anyone who wishes may still debate questions involving what *realia* (if any) lie behind the story, whether Herodotus reports a story he has actually heard, from where and how it was heard, and how much it has been manipulated for his own narrational ends (as it most certainly has).³ In what follows, however, I leave such questions to one side,⁴ examining instead both Herodotus' choice to narrate so manifestly fanciful a tale and the mode in which he has chosen to present his ethnography of Ethiopia, embedded as it is in a narrative of an inquiry conducted by proxy at the behest of the expansionist Persian king

Recent work has become increasingly interested in the self-reflexive aspect of the *logos*. Important among those *logoi* that depict 'figures of inquiry', the Ethiopian *logos* has been examined for what Herodotus' depiction of inquiring characters may be communicating to readers about his own enterprise.⁵ Moreover, among these *logoi* it is considered exceptional in so far as its plot will in fact turn the tables on the relationship between inquirer and subject: those characters whose explicit remit is inquiry, Cambyses' spies, are, in the course of the *logos*, transformed into objects of their subject's inquiry. In what follows I will push this approach further, identifying Herodotus' impulse for narrating his Ethiopian *logos* as lying in the competing and complementary ethnographical discourses of his day, those of Homer and the Hippocratic, and in the ends to which such texts were being used among his contemporaries. I examine the *logos* from three perspectives derived from a close reading of the text: in Part I, as a meditation staged at the *ἔσχατα γῆς* on the profound relationship between ethnographic interest and expansionist desire in which the preoccupations of Hippocratic texts will be seen to play an important role; in Part II, as a piece of extensive engagement with Homer's own *logoi* of travel and inquiry; and in Part III as a narrative about the historical context in which Herodotus' Hippocratic and Homericising *logos*—its ethnography and 'history'—was produced and consumed.

² See e.g. Rawlinson (1880) *ad loc.* who calls the story 'fantastic', dismissing the 'ingenuity expended ... in explaining and rationalising the marvels of this narrative'; Lesky (1959) 28: '... die ganze Vorstellung gründet im Bereiche des Fabulösen'.

³ Asheri (2007) 415: 'mostly fictitious or idealised for didactic purposes'.

⁴ See for instance the monograph of Hofmann–Vorbichler (1979) and Asheri (2007) *ad loc.*

⁵ See esp. Christ (1994) and most recently Demont (2009), both discussed below; see also the dissertation of Renner (1973).

I. Inquire/Empire: Ethnography and Expansionist Desire

The folktale quality of the *logos* has given it a deceptively simple appearance: a Persian king motivated by curiosity and conquest tries to subsume the ends of the earth within his dominion and fails miserably. This seemingly straightforward moralistic tale of what happens to Cambyses when he tries to exceed natural and ethical boundaries is, however, overlaid with a narrative of curiosity, cultural investigation and empire.⁶ Cambyses' desire to know whether there really is such a thing as the fabled Table of the Sun, sending spies to see (*ὀψομένους*) 'if it is really true', is made to coincide with a wish to explore the possibility of expanding his empire (*κατοψομένους*).⁷

This close relationship between Cambyses' curiosity and his desire for conquest belongs to a *topos* of the *Histories*, that of kingly inquirers, in which the desire to know about faraway peoples and places is incited by and/or conjoined with a more sinister and imperialist agenda, discussed by Christ, and most recently by Demont.⁸ Christ detects in the *Histories*' kingly inquirers an opportunity for Herodotus to hold up 'a mirror to his own historical endeavor', to see 'his own enterprise reflected or distorted in their efforts', to 'invite his reader to compare, and ultimately distinguish between, his approach and theirs.'⁹ He further identifies in the Persian and Ethiopian kings a contrast between the bad and good royal inquirer, and concludes by arguing that Herodotus aligns his own historical inquiry with the latter.¹⁰ Building on these observations, Demont recognises also the degree to which the *logos* turns the ethnographic lens on the Greeks, since those Persian customs that come under scrutiny by the Ethiopian king are identical with those of the Greeks.¹¹ Nevertheless, a hellenocentrism still underlies Demont's analysis.¹²

⁶ Asheri (2007) 417 on the moral problem of the campaign interesting Herodotus over the strategic and logistical aspects.

⁷ 3.17.2; see Christ (1994) 180 and Demont (2009) 186–7 n. 28.

⁸ Christ (1994), and reiterated by Demont (2009), but already in Rener (1973) esp. 21–8. See, for instance, Darius' exploration of the Indus river that leads to India's conquest (4.44); the Paeonian *logos* of 5.13 (with Osborne (2007)); and Croesus' investigation into the most accurate oracles (1.46–53).

⁹ Christ (1994) 167, 175; cf. 180; Munson (1991).

¹⁰ Christ (1994) 199–200. The royal inquirer functions as a foil for the 'purer interest' (178) of the historian.

¹¹ Demont (2009) 197–200.

¹² Demont (2009) 202 on Herodotus 'disguish[ing] himself from the inquiring king as a Greek and as a historian', and 203 on his 'greatest marvel' being the 'demonstration of

The recognition that Herodotus has constructed his Ethiopian *logos* in such a way as to reflect upon his own enterprise of inquiry, and by extension upon his audiences as its consumers, is an important one. In the discussion that follows, however, I will demonstrate how that meta-narrative is one that is far less comfortable and comforting than has been previously suggested. On the one hand, the *logos* enacts a tricky reversal relevant to the ensuing narrative: the object of inquiry, the Ethiopian king, turns inquirer in the *logos*, scrutinising the practices of those sent to observe him. This inversion of observer and observed foreshadows the Persian king in 3.38, who, ostensibly the object of Herodotus' own inquiry, turns inquirer. There Darius' examination into the relativity of burial practices not only presents Greek custom as just another subject of scrutiny, but also furnishes a conclusion whose concurrence with Greek authority (Pindar: 'Custom is King of All') Herodotus goes out of his way to note. On the other, the fact that Cambyses' inquiry is mediated through the Fish-eaters renders a distinct analogy between them and Herodotus, each of whom convey on their respective narrative levels an account of Ethiopia in response to the curiosity of their audiences. This analogy between Herodotus and his inquiring characters in turn generates a far less comfortable analogy allowing as it does Herodotus' curious readers to find themselves reflected in the character of the Persian king. It is with this more uncomfortable analogy that the discussion here will be primarily concerned. Such an equivalence between these consumers of inquiries—one of whom is the expansionist Persian king—quickly raises questions about the status of Herodotus' work itself. Herodotus' text may indeed depict disinterested inquiry itself as sometimes possible, but this particular story raises the question of whether narratives of such inquiry, and the audiences that they imply, can ever be so disinterested. This, of course, is a point that has implications for understanding the meaning behind this *logos* and the relationship it strikes with its audiences in Herodotus' own day, and as such will be the subject of Part III.

The meditation on the ethnographic enterprise proceeds in three stages: the first in which Cambyses conceives and acts upon his desire to know about the Ethiopians and their famed Table of the Sun (chs. 17–21); second, the desire of the Ethiopian king to know about the Persian luxury gifts and life style (ch. 22) and the corresponding desire of the Fish-Eaters to know about the Ethiopians, which results in a catalogue of the features of Ethiopia focalised through their eyes (chs. 23–4); and finally, the response of Cambyses to what he learns (ch. 25). At each stage, Herodotus constructs

how men, Greeks, and among them Spartans and Athenians especially, distinguished themselves from others in order to vanquish them.'

complex analogies both within his *logos*, between the characters whose remit is ostensibly ethnographic inquiry, but who in turn find themselves the object of it, and on a meta-level between the inquiries that form the plot of the *logos* and those that his *Histories* themselves constitute.

The Desire to Know

That Cambyses' curiosity about Ethiopia is little more than an appetiser for conquest is clear from the outset. The first lines of chapter 17 list the Ethiopians as among the three *strateiai* planned by Cambyses, even before any interest in knowing about the Table of the Sun is mentioned, while the spies sent to confirm reports of the Table are also meant in addition (*πρὸς ταύτην*) to spy on 'other things' and the 'gifts' they bring for the king are only so 'in word' (*τῷ λόγῳ*).

Moreover, that viewing the Table of the Sun is merely the nominal 'cause' of the expedition is replicated in the very style of narration. Dismissively handled, as if a *prophasis*, the curiosity is explained by Herodotus proleptically in chapter 18, thereby robbing it of any wonder that it might have offered to the reader once encountered in the narrative: a product of rational causes, the Table of the Sun is simply a meadow outside the city filled continually with meat by wealthy citizens who take it in turn to replenish it by night, and by day anyone who wishes can come and eat. The fabulous element resides entirely in what the locals (*ἐπιχώριοι*) say, namely that these meats come from the earth. The object of the king's curiosity is brushed off with a big 'what-did-you-expect?' and when it is finally encountered by the Fish-eaters in 23.4 it consequently holds little interest.

An introductory theme of this *logos* might well be the gullibility of those who would even entertain the existence of what Herodotus never even deigns to call a *θῶμα*, and some readers might infer such credulity to be a distinctive failing of the Persian king. Such a conclusion is, however, hardly compelling: on the one hand, the imperialist Cambyses might have had less interest in the fabulous source of the prosperity than in the fact of prosperity itself, and, on the other, the *logos* far from excludes the possibility that such desire to believe in an unstinting faraway country is one to which humans are universally susceptible. I return to this latter possibility both here and in Part III.¹³ And one should further note that by providing an account of the Table of the Sun at the start of the narrative and in his own voice,

¹³ In wanting to believe that Herodotus believed in the existence of the Table of the Sun, however rationalised, How and Wells (1912) *ad loc.* demonstrate how irresistible the desire to believe can be, even once removed: their commitment to the (naïve) belief that Herodotus must be engaged in a sincere attempt to purvey the Fish-eaters' account may be guilty of the same kind of naïveté that they impute to Herodotus.

Herodotus establishes two things that will become important for this *logos*. First, he demonstrates his critical capacities: no careless purveyor of the fantastic, he provides his audience with rational explanations for the tales that may beguile others, a manoeuvre which establishes at the outset his authority and his discernment, both of which in turn serving to encourage credibility (in some) regarding those wonders that he chooses to identify as such.¹⁴ At the same time, that an account of the Table of the Sun is provided in the narrator's voice, rather than reported by the Fish-eaters whose assignment it was, blurs the distinction between the intra- and extradiegetic audiences: if any in Herodotus' audience had their curiosity piqued for a split second by mention of the Table of the Sun—'Table of the Sun? What is *that?*'—the narrative has caused them to feel a curiosity identical to that of the Persian king, and it is Herodotus himself who then will fulfil their desire to know, just as it is the Fish-eaters' assignment to fulfil that of Persian king. Such is the conflation of the action of the plot with Herodotus' act of narration that the audience is not allowed voyeuristically to have their curiosity satisfied by simply 'overhearing' (as it were) any *logos* about the Table given to the Fish-eaters or later recounted by them to Cambyses: the narration of that *logos* is not a part of the plot, and in fact Herodotus never explicitly reports an account of the Table of the Sun ever to have been given to the Persian king. The story begins with Cambyses attempting to satisfy his curiosity about a particular issue, but the curiosity actually satisfied is the one generated by Herodotus himself, namely, his readers' own. Contrary to the view of Christ, Herodotus' textual double is not the inquiring Persian King, but rather the information-purveying Fish-eaters.¹⁵

When the Fish-eaters reach the Ethiopian king, the reception of their offer of the Persian king's alleged *philia*, *xenia*, and gifts seems to portray the Ethiopian king as no fool. With no indication other than the presence of gift-bearing strangers claiming to offer friendship, he understands the *hyponoia* ('subtext') of their message: what can it mean when unexpected strangers arrive in your country with gifts—other than of course that they want something? The Ethiopian king proves not only astute, but also Herodotean: not only does he appear to understand Cambyses' intention, the 'gifts' which mask his 'curiosity', but his programmatic statement (21.2) that a just man 'would not have desired the land other than his own nor would he bring men into slavery at whose hands he has received no wrong' resounds with a universal principle of the *Histories*, one most familiar in its

¹⁴ See Marincola (2007) 53.

¹⁵ Christ (1994) 180 with n. 34.

application to the Persians of the Persian Wars.¹⁶ The Ethiopian's response is equally strong: handing a huge bow to the Fish-eaters, he attaches this return message to the Persian king, 'When the Persians can draw bows like these let them try—with a huge force—to conquer the Ethiopians, until then they should be grateful to the gods who don't induce the Ethiopians to desire to acquire lands other than their own.'

Ethnographic Encounters

Chapters 22–4 mark a narrative shift: the ethnographic narrative seems at least for a brief moment to separate from the expansionist narrative. In chapter 22, the Ethiopian king engages in his own ethnographic inquiry, first into the gifts given by the Persian king, and then into the Persian King's diet and the maximum lifespan of a Persian, and in response the Fish-eaters, we are told, now reply with 'truth' (τὴν ἀληθείην). The use of this word is marked in this *logos* and in Book 3 more generally.¹⁷ Christ, for instance, was induced by it to see in this exchange the possibility of ethnographic inquiry for its own sake, with the Ethiopian king's agenda-free curiosity providing a positive model for Herodotean inquiry.¹⁸

The meta-reflections on inquiry conveyed by the text are, however, hardly so clear or positive. The Ethiopian king seems to misconstrue the gifts: a combination of his own simple, golden-age life and the framework within which he reads what comes from a foreign king that he believes to be duplicitous, he calls myrrh and dyed clothing 'deceptions', although one must note, too, that his reading of such objects is not entirely alien to the Greek tradition.¹⁹ More alien, however, and some might construe also highly naïve, is his laughter when he responds to the gold necklaces and bangles, remarking that Ethiopian *shackles* are much stronger. Finally, thoroughly jarring is his answer in response to learning the maximum lifespan of the average Persian man to be eighty and that they eat bread: he finds it 'no wonder' (οὐδὲν θαυμάζειν) that eating dung they should live such a short period of time, for they would not even live that long were it not for being revived by wine.

From a Herodotean point of view, the king's laughter (γέλασας) is problematic: apart from this single time, it functions in the *Histories* as a sign

¹⁶ See Asheri (2007) 390.

¹⁷ Asheri (2007) 391–2.

¹⁸ Christ (1994) 180–1. See Munson (2005) 74 who places emphasis on 'the innocent and respectful Ichthyophagi' as, 'vis-à-vis the recipient of the *Histories*, surrogate-ethnographers for Herodotus himself.'

¹⁹ See Asheri (2007) 422.

of *hybris* that bodes misfortune for the figure who laughs, and consequently Asheri here claims the Ethiopian king's laughter to be an exception to the rule.²⁰ But 'exceptional' is clearly a judgement belonging to the individual reader to make.²¹ If such fineries as clothing, perfume and jewellery can be associated by an audience (a little myopically) with Persian luxury and perhaps thereby garner some agreement, the king's response to bread as 'dung' forces the text's relationship with its audience to change. For some among this Greek-speaking/reading audience, bread is not just any *nomos*,²² but one which is constitutive of human progress—their progress—whether conceived of traditionally as a 'divine' gift, or as something more scientific, as in the Hippocratic *Ancient Medicine*.²³ Now the king's derision embraces Herodotus' audience as well.²⁴

The king's disdainful response to the 'true' ethnographic account has the potential to put him at odds with Herodotus' readers, threatening to overturn their earlier impressions of his astuteness in reading Cambyses' 'gifts' correctly. After this comment, he may seem to some a rather primitive

²⁰ Asheri (2007) 429. On laughter in Herodotus see Lateiner (1977).

²¹ Demont (2009) 198 understands the king's challenge to a diet shared by Greeks to put the reader 'himself under examination', which is correct as far as it goes, but I would say that the true examination comes in how the reader responds to this judgement of the Ethiopian king.

²² Of course, the meta-narrative should make the reader aware that it is: interpreters called *Fish-eaters* and the meat- and milk-eating Ethiopians provide other models of consumption.

²³ *Ancient Medicine* 3.33–54 (Loeb). There the processing of wheat to make bread is a major discovery and as a contribution to human health the basis of the medical art itself. I owe this reference to Demont (2009) 199, who cites Ellinger (1993) 111 for the basic point. The intellectual point runs deeper in so far as for a sophist like Prodicus, the utility of grain for man's existence is what leads to its personified deification as Demeter: those considered 'gods' are merely deifications of those things useful, or those men who originally discovered them, and as such evidence of that which is divine in man: Philod. *On Piety* (*PHerc.* 1428, cols. ii 28–iii 13, fr. 19); Cicero, *N.D.* 1.118; for further sources for this view see Mayhew (2011) nos. 71–7 (pp. 47–51, 181–93); see also [Pl.] *Axiochus* 370b–d. Moreover, in the battle for 'dietary superiority' Homer is enlisted to substantiate Greek superiority to barbarians: Stesimbrotus is said to have used *Il.* 21.76 to argue that barbarians do not eat *alphita* (*FGrHist* 107 F 25 = Porphy. Schol. *Il.* 21.76): Ἀποροῦσι πῶς ὁ ἰκετεύων πρὸς τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα ἔφη “Πὰρ γὰρ σοὶ πρώτῳ πασάμην Δημήτερος ἀκτῆν.” τὸ γὰρ λέγειν, καθάπερ Στησίμβροτος, ὅτι οἱ βάρβαροι ἄλφιστα οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν, ἀλλ' ἄρτους κριθίνους, ψεύδος. For the ethnographic *topos* of commenting on what bread a society has, in particular whether they eat wheat, see Ctesias, *FGrHist* 688 F 11 (Indians) and Hecataeus, *FGrHist* 1 F 322 and 323a.

²⁴ See also Demont (2009) 198–9 who stresses that their curiosity will be piqued as well: so outrageous a claim and yet some explanation for Ethiopian long life is required.

figure, albeit perhaps still one ethical, who may have accidentally hit upon the implications of the gifts and offer of *xenia*, whether owing to an overall suspicion of strangers or, worse yet, from a sense of justice that may be nothing more than a kind of cultural backwardness.²⁵ If the polarity constructed at the start of the story invites the Persians to be labelled as deceptive and the Ethiopians as straightforwardly ethical, golden-age figures, the Ethiopian king's understanding of Persian luxury goods as 'deceptions', bread as 'dung', might invert the evaluative force of their depictions and induce audiences to see that very polarity otherwise, as instead the dichotomy between the culturally sophisticated and the culturally backward.²⁶ The choice to frame the dichotomy in these terms will, however, have significant consequences for the readers who make it in that it will subtly align them with the Persian—not the Ethiopian—king.

The Ethiopian King responds with laughter at what he has been told. And here, Herodotus' audiences may choose to reciprocate, laughing in turn and instead at the King's naïve mistake or, more strongly, deriding this uncultured figure inhabiting the edges of the earth, whether because they have already forgotten his earlier astuteness, or because they now choose to dismiss it as simply a case of being accidently astute, 'right for the wrong reasons', so to speak. If this *logos* is meant to provide a paradigm of agenda-free cross-cultural encounter as Christ would have it, it would hardly seem an optimistic one.

Chapter 23 constitutes a further shift in the ethnographic narrative that returns the characters to their traditional roles with the Fish-eaters again making inquiries, although now perhaps as much their own—their curiosity piqued—as any required by the Persian king. Here the Fish-eaters are told the only explicit *thôma* of the story—the long lifespan of the Ethiopians—and they are led to observe all the local wonders, emphasised by the repetition of the verb *θαύομαι*:²⁷ an amazing fountain of extremely light, violet-smelling water, gold in such profusion that even the fetters in Ethiopian jails are

²⁵ This reading is reminiscent of Thucydides' depiction of Sparta (Thuc. 1.71), and their king(s) corrupted by Persian luxury and wealth; cf. Hdt. 9.82 on Pausanias in light of his subsequent history (Thuc. 1.128–34).

²⁶ I might anticipate Part II by noting that this is exactly the dichotomy that the *Odyssey* sets up in the encounter with the Cyclopes (*Od.* 9.105–15), as recognised long ago by Kirk (1962) 236 and (1970) 164–5 (cf. Mondi (1983) 19): there, although offered at the outset, the choice to view the Cyclopes as golden-age figures is quickly sidelined in favour of seeing them as primitives.

²⁷ 3.23.4–24.1 (3x), 25.1.

made of gold, and an amazing style of interring the dead.²⁸ In a land such as that of the Ethiopians, the king's misreading of the gold necklaces now becomes understandable, even enviable—indeed those laughing at his mistake earlier might well be doing so now from the other side of their faces as they hear of the Ethiopians' surplus of gold.

If earlier the Ethiopian king's questions provided some demonstration of apparently agenda-free cultural inquiry, one might well ask what meta-narrative on inquiry this virtual tour of Ethiopia provides, given that it generates a *logos* which is at once both that which the Fish-eaters will narrate to Cambyses *and* that which Herodotus is narrating to his audience. A clue to its understanding comes in 23.3 when Herodotus reports of the remarkable fountain seen by the spies:

θῶμα δὲ ποιευμένων τῶν κατασκόπων περὶ τῶν ἐτέων ἐπὶ κρήνην σφι ἠγήσασθαι, ἀπ' ἧς λουόμενοι λιπαρώτεροι ἐγίνοντο, κατὰ περ εἰ ἐλαίου εἶη· ὄζειν δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ὡς εἰ ἴων. ἀσθενὲς δὲ τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς κρήνης ταύτης οὕτω δὴ τι ἔλεγον εἶναι οἱ κατάσκοποι ὥστε μηδὲν οἶόν τ' εἶναι ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἐπιπλέειν, μήτε ξύλον μήτε τῶν ὅσα ξύλου ἐστὶ ἐλαφρότερα, ἀλλὰ πάντα σφέα χωρέειν ἐς βυσσόν.

While the spies were still held in wonder over the number of years, he led them to a fountain, in whose waters those bathing become rather sleek, just as if from oil. And the odour it emits is as that from violets. So lacking in density is the water of this fountain, as the spies were saying, that nothing is able to float upon it, neither wood, nor anything lighter than wood, but these things all just sink to the bottom.

²⁸ Gold fetters may further associate the Macrobioi Ethiopians with the gods: see Poseidon's golden fetters of *Il.* 13.36–7. (I thank Seth Schein for this point.) Gold chains were also a topic among those sophists whom N. Richardson (1975) labels the 'Homeric professors': see 70–1 for his collection of the evidence. Discussion of the sarcophagi is beyond the scope of this article (on which see Ellinger (1993)), albeit significant, not least because it anticipates the meditation on death rites in 3.38, a *logos* in which Greek practices come under the ethnographic gaze of the Persian king. I suspect the sarcophagi demonstrate that even the Ethiopians engage in some 'deceptions', for while the treatment of the corpse might seem to eschew deception in the attempt to make the corpse's appearance imitate as much as possible that of the living person, the fact that the body neither emits an odour nor decomposes may be considered a type of deception. The point is one about cultural relativity: the 'deceptions' of one's own society never seem such; we all prefer our own *nomoi*.

Here is where the Herodotean narrator intrudes for the second time, making his only substantial and independent contribution to the spies' account by connecting the wonder of Ethiopian longevity to the waters of this fountain:

τὸ δὲ ὕδωρ τοῦτο εἴ σφί ἐστι ἀληθέως οἶόν τι λέγεται, διὰ τοῦτο ἂν εἶεν, τούτῳ τὰ πάντα χρεώμενοι, μακρόβιοι.

And this water, if they truly do have such a thing as is said, for this reason—that is, because they use it for everything—for this reason, the Ethiopians would be *Macrobioi*.

Herodotus' comment is a notable intrusion into the narration, and as such, no less than his account of the cause of the Table of the Sun, forges a stronger analogy between his *logos* of inquiry and the inquiry of the Fish-eaters which it narrates. For this reason, it is itself worthy of wonder in at least three respects. The first has to do with Herodotus' use of ἀληθέως, 'if the fountain is *truly* in any way such as it is said to be'. Truth is a marked concept in this *logos*, and already compromised since the Fish-eaters, the purported source of this *logos*, cannot be considered entirely trustworthy: they do not speak ἀληθείη in 21.2, and only in 22.1 are they said to speak ἀληθείη, when they comment on what the Persian king eats and how long Persians live, 'facts' that in the absence of knowledge external to the text can be believed to be such by Herodotus' readers only because they are (more or less) also true of themselves.²⁹ Herodotus' qualification is significant: this 'if' is a big 'if', and it will be up to the audience to decide whether they will follow their narrator in keeping provisional their own belief in the properties of the fountain, or instead might, for reasons to be discussed below, be induced to drop the qualifier and accept the conclusion he derives from it as fact.³⁰

²⁹ It is a little difficult to know how the Greeks, for whom seventy is often given as the maximum lifespan (e.g. Hdt. 1.32.2 with Solon 27 W² and Asheri (2007) 103), would receive the claim that for Persians it is eighty; cf. Solon 20 W².

³⁰ Cf. Demont (2009) 200. One might here note that Ctesias tells a very different narrative about this fountain (*FGrHist* 688 F 1): its waters are red and it induces madness. One may wonder about Ctesias' fountain that causes *madness* belonging to an episode that for Herodotus is going to mark the beginning of Cambyses' madness (3.25.2: οἶα δὲ ἐμμανῆς τε εἶναι καὶ οὐ φρενήρης)—since its property of being red 'like wine' suggests one of the causes of Cambyses' madness purveyed by Herodotus' text, that given by the Persians, namely, his excessive drinking (Hdt. 3.34.2–3). Although traditional dating has served to place Ctesias later than Herodotus, one is not compelled to understand Ctesias as *innovating* in relation to Herodotus; it is equally possible that he *reasserted* a tradition in

Second, Herodotus' carefully qualified inference about the cause of the longevity of the Ethiopians deserves further scrutiny. Couching the statement as a conditional may seem to discredit the story: the fountain seems to provide a plausible reason for the *thôma* of long life, but *only if* what is said is true. But it may also—paradoxically—lend credibility to the phenomenon he describes: while such qualifications serve to demonstrate the discernment of a narrator who never loses sight of the fact that the hypothesis he is building is contingent on the reliability of the material given by his source, that he chooses to build any theory on this material may inspire confidence in his audience that the account is in fact true. But for such confidence, they become themselves responsible: the narrator's explicit expression of uncertainty will hold them accountable should they race over the 'if' clause enticed by the lure of its conclusion.³¹ If readers should drop the qualifier and accept the story as true, the conscientious narrator can hardly be blamed, and whether they do or not will depend on two sides of the equation, namely, on the persuasive capacities of the narrator and on the degree to which the audience may desire such a story to be true.

As for the narrator's persuasion, one should note that in dismissing the Table of the Sun as he has done, the narrator has already established his critical capacities, his claim to knowledge, and himself as one not naïvely impressed by *logoi* of wonder. And yet, there is an ironic wink in Herodotus' purported conclusion about this fountain: in formal terms, his conjecture as to the cause of Ethiopian longevity can just as easily recall the recent and similar inference of the Ethiopian king, that the short lives of the Persians are no cause for *thôma*, but rather due to eating 'dung', and that without wine they would not live even so long. If any in the audience laughed derisively at the king's interpretation of the relationship of diet to lifespan, they may find themselves arguably no less open to derision should they have

which Cambyses actually went to Ethiopia himself and became mad from the water of this fountain—that is, a 'correction' of Herodotus' departures which would then throw them in high relief. Against such a version, Herodotus' account would then be seen to require readers to diagnose another cause for a madness found manifest in an expansionist Ethiopian campaign, while the intermediaries of the Fish-eaters—whose report they are enjoying once removed—places them in an uncomfortable analogical relationship with the Persian king.

³¹ Asheri (2007) 423 comments on this 'typical Herodotean formula for expressing distance and scepticism', but one should note that such qualifications allow the narrator to draw conclusions, even to persuade, and should the conclusions prove false have them reflect not on him but his source.

found compelling the inference presented by the narrator in spite of its similarly fallacious logic.³²

Was there such a group among Herodotus' contemporaries who might be persuaded in the existence of this fountain, its properties and powers, despite the narrator's qualifier? And if so, why? They would likely be those who have been persuaded by their own cultural assumptions, among which for some would include, above all, current intellectual trends, and in particular those found in the Hippocratic texts. Those whose taste for the Hippocratic led them to find the king's derision of bread ignorant, even as the inexplicably long life of the Ethiopians proved challenging as a source of *thôma*, might well find the Hippocratic sheen of the waters of this fountain too enticing to reject out of hand the claim about Ethiopian longevity: the influence of a place's waters—particularly their density—on health is contemporary medical theory, famously expressed at the outset of the Hippocratic text, *Airs, Waters, Places*: 'Whoever wishes to pursue properly the science of medicine must proceed thus ... It is necessary also to consider the properties of the waters; for as these differ in taste and in weight, so the property of each is far different from that of any other ...' Later, the author praises those waters as the best which flow towards the east: they are brighter (*λαμπρότερα*), fragrant (*εὐώδεα*) and light (*κοῦφα*), similar to (and yet necessarily different from) our waters here.³³ Here in our *logos* the narrator has stepped in to offer—conditionally—a Hippocratic explanation of Ethiopian long life, and one that counters the king's dismissal of the diet championed in that same genre.³⁴ In typical Herodotean style, what at first glance has seemed a fairy-tale narrative in fact alludes with subtle sophistication to the most current of intellectual trends.

Not, however, without some irony:³⁵ for third and finally, one must comment on the name, *Macrobioi*, which Herodotus places emphatically in

³² It is a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy. Cf. *Ancient Medicine* 21.2 which identifies as a fallacy the ascription of the cause of a patient's state to a practice that happens to be *kainon*; there of course the *kainon* pertains to the ill patient's normal life, but the principle might be extended to the ethnographic level, the hasty attribution of responsibility for a medical condition that differs from one's own people (here longevity) to a practice that is *kainon* ('bathing...or eating something different') *vis-à-vis* the observer.

³³ *Airs, Waters, Places* 1–2 (Loeb trans.) and 7.63–80. Ellinger (1993) 124 makes a similar observation to whom I owe the latter reference (cited in Demont (2009) 200 n. 54).

³⁴ Recognition of the Hippocratic in this story associates it with 3.12 (the famous Egyptian skulls) and 3.33 (the 'sacred' disease), in both of which Herodotus *seems* to endorse Hippocratic theory, but in each case not without danger to the reader who is persuaded.

³⁵ Actually, with a lot of irony since the use of the *thôma*—the *thôma* of long life and it being 'no *thôma*' that Persians are so short lived (by Ethiopian standards)—seems pointed.

final position: ‘if this fountain exists as it is said to, these Ethiopians would for this reason be *Macrobioi*’. If one is not a passive reader, the formulation should raise the question, what if this fountain doesn’t exist, for what reason then would they be called *Macrobioi*? The conditional flags a fundamental play on words operative in the *logos*. The name appears only three times in the *logos*, each time significantly placed: at their introduction (3.17) and two other times, here finally where it means ‘long-lived’, but also earlier in 3.21.3 as the king challenges Cambyses to string his *huge bow*: ἐπεὰν οὕτω εὐπετέως ἔλκωσι [τὰ] τόξα Πέρσαι ἔοντα μεγάθει τσαῦτα, τότε ἐπ’ Αἰθίοπας τοὺς μακροβίους πλήθει ὑπερβαλλόμενον στρατεύεσθαι ... (‘When so easily Persians draw bows that are so great in size, then let him march against the *Macrobioi* Ethiopians, provided he is equipped with a force superior in numbers...’) This can hardly be accidental: the βίος (‘bow’) / βίος (‘life’) pun is of course one made famous by Heraclitus (‘*Bios* is a name for life and/but its task is death’), and one that appears frequently thereafter.³⁶ A question is raised: are these Ethiopians to be understood as long-bowed or long-lived?³⁷ For it might be a little odd that the Fish-eaters should be amazed at their long lives, as if it had been unheralded by their name, though of course their wonder may be restricted simply to the extent to which they are long-lived rather than the fact itself; but nevertheless it could strike one as strange that the cause of their long lives had not been the original object of Cambyses’ curiosity. More concretely, in a later meeting with these Ethiopians of the south (7.69), readers learn that they do indeed possess very long bows, the

Given that medical texts attempted to remove *thōma* from medical conditions by providing explanation (e.g. *Sacred Disease* 1), here the Ethiopian king and the narrator can be seen as two competing physicians, which is appropriate given the prominence of doctors in Book 3 as figures who both frame the narrative (3.1 and 3.129–37) and egg the Persian king on in undertaking imperialist ventures. On Herodotus’ allusion to his contemporaries, see most recently Thomas (2000), who notes Herodotus’ polemical response to the environmental determinism displayed in the Hippocratic texts; see also Raaflaub (2002b).

³⁶ Heraclitus 48 D–K: τῷ οὖν τόξῳ ὄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος. See also Aristoph. *Pl.* 33–4, ἥδη νομίζων ἐκτετοξεῦσθαι βίον (‘Believing my life to have been shot out’); Soph. *Ph.* 931 ἀπεστέρηκας τὸν βίον τὰ τόξ’ ἐλών (‘By taking my bow you have deprived me of my life’), cf. 933, 1282, 1426–7. See Robinson (1969) 43–4 and Henry (1974) 3–4. Unclear to me is the extent to which Heraclitus is to be felt in each iteration of this play on words.

³⁷ See Last (1923) who argues compellingly for the interpretation, ‘long-bowed’, but thinks Herodotus has *mistakenly* understood the word to mean ‘long-lived’. *Pace* Halliday (1924) whose generic arguments reasserting the meaning ‘long-lived’, *contra* Last, inadvertently demonstrate the fundamental problematic explored by Herodotus in this *logos*.

bow in fact being a symbol of Ethiopia in Egyptian sources.³⁸ Moreover, this remarkable people have at some point, unremarkably as far as Herodotus' text goes, become part of the Persian army.³⁹

The pun is, however, not incidental: for the tension represented is between two modes of viewing, one based on contemporary Greek usage (*βίος*), which Herodotus places in a Hippocratic context, the other representing a poetic and Homeric usage (*βιός*). The Homeric mode of engaging with the *logos* will become the focus of examination in Part II.⁴⁰ But there is a more important point: when ancient audiences and modern audiences almost universally opt to translate their name as 'long-lived', they testify to a point of Herodotus' Ethiopian *logos*, namely, the persuasiveness of such narratives of wonder and the selectively tuned attention of audiences. The Table of the Sun might have been dismissed at the start by them, following the lead of their narrator, as obviously fantastic but what did they conclude about this remarkable fountain and the fantastically long lives of the Ethiopians? Each reader will herself have to decide: for Herodotus' contemporary readers the decision pertained to whether they would believe in this possibility, or in the 'truth' of the science which seems—conditionally ('if')—to account for its cause, while later readers must decide whether Herodotus should be believed as having believed both in the truth of what he was narrating and in the validity of the 'science' that he purports to lie behind it.

The Consequences of Consuming Ethnography

The final turn in the narrative comes when Cambyses hears the account of his spies (25). Driven by *orgê*, he sets off with his armies without concern for

³⁸ See Asheri (2007) 422 on the bow as a 'symbol of Ethiopia' in the Egyptian hieroglyphics and bas-reliefs of Meroe, 'where the bow is held in the hands of gods and of kings', but having cited such associations Asheri inexplicably dismisses the possible meaning 'long-bowed' (417) out of hand. For Ethiopian bows see also Strabo 17.2.3. At any rate, the questions of interest here are not what Macrobioi 'originally' meant (and indeed there are no extant sources before Herodotus by which to judge), but rather what Herodotus here chooses to make it mean in the course of his narrative and why.

³⁹ A reader may choose to follow the tenor of this *logos* and understand that the Ethiopians have been softened by exposure to Persian luxury goods or they may read this later appearance of 'normal' Ethiopians as a sign of the earlier *logos*' fictionality; though mutually exclusive, the text may be having it both ways.

⁴⁰ The dichotomy is of course salient in contemporary historiography: it is precisely medical writing that Thucydides explicitly champions over epic (see Weidauer (1953) and Hornblower (1997) 173–5, 316–18, 480), while nonetheless using Homer as and when he sees fit: on Thucydides and Homer see Strasburger (1972) and Woodman (1988) 32.

his troops' provisions, and consequently turns his bread-eating Persians into eaters of another order: first of pack-animals, then grass, and finally one another. And it is this cannibalism among the troops that causes Cambyses to turn back. The ethnographic narrative has flowed back into the historical narrative, and at this juncture I conclude the first Part of this study with three broader observations on the *logos*.

The first pertains to its overall structure: the potentially jingoistic narrative about the Persian king foiled in his unjust desire to conquer the ends of the earth, enamoured by the thought of the existence of a Table of the Sun, would be much easier to sustain without the ethnography of chapters 22–4. The narrative would tell of the Ethiopian king's noble pronouncement as he asserts his right to what is his own, and foreshadow the Greeks' own response to Persian expansion. The *orgê* of Cambyses in ch. 25 would then follow hard upon this gesture, his anger arising from the assertion of greater strength and inciting the king to conduct a mad campaign resulting in the transgression of one of the most terrifying of human taboos and a fitting outcome of his hybris. So too, *Macrobioi* would be rendered an unambiguous epithet, 'long-bowed', easily reconcilable with the Ethiopians of Herodotus' later narrative and the Homeric flavour of this story to which we will next turn. Moreover, there would be nothing particularly fantastic about Ethiopia: the one potential 'wonder' of the Ethiopian world, the Table of the Sun, would have been rationalised away at the very start.

As it is, however, the ethnographic excursus of chs. 22–4 purports to reveal the world of the fantastic at the *ἔσχατα γῆς*, and, with it, ambiguity: not only why the *Macrobioi* are so named; but, in terms of the narrative, also an ambiguity about the source of Cambyses' *orgê*. Is his anger simply the product of the Ethiopian king's curt refusal, or has it been stoked by the Fish-eaters' reports of the wonders and wealth that Cambyses has been flatly told he will never possess? Amid the details of the ethnographic wonders purveyed in this *logos*, one must never forget not only the expansionist desire which gave occasion for their discovery, but also how such wonders, once transformed into *logoi*, are, in turn, able to stoke such desire.⁴¹

The second observation pertains to a wider context for interpreting the Ethiopian king's laughter. Some in the audience may have been induced by the king's laughter to change their evaluation of him from positive admiration to one of disdain for his 'naïve' response to the luxury goods of a more sophisticated culture which they likewise possess. For these readers, the narrative's excursus into the fountain's waters as the likely source of the Ethiopians' longevity, clad as it is in Hippocratic sophistication, will have

⁴¹ See below, Part III.

manoeuvred them into a response that is no less capable of eliciting laughter from some quarters despite its claims to superiority:⁴² having fallen foul of the narrator's persuasion, they may be the true object of derision in this *logos*.⁴³ And it is, moreover, the case that the ensuing narrative renders the Ethiopian king's mistaken interpretations of the Persian luxury goods to be entirely understandable, if not also in some cases profoundly true.⁴⁴ The unstinting supply of Ethiopian gold explains the king's 'misunderstanding', which in turn conceals a more fundamental truth, literalised later in Darius' gift of two pairs of golden fetters to Democedes, the Greek doctor he retains against his will (130), and standing as a warning in the words of Cyrus with which Herodotus has chosen to close the *Histories*: the enslaving power of wealth.⁴⁵ This is a truth capable of resonating with those in his audiences who now—thanks to their defeat of the Persians and consequent *archê*—delight in the luxuries of a 'softer' culture.⁴⁶

The third observation pertains to the audience. When Christ claims that Herodotus 'portrays Cambyses' curiosity in terms that anticipate the historian's own interest in 3.18', he elides the important mediation of 'knowledge' at work in this story. The narrator is here mirrored *not* in the inquiring King, but rather in his spies: both purvey information about Ethiopia to their respective audiences.⁴⁷ Once Herodotus is recognised in the

⁴² Lateiner (1977).

⁴³ The response to the unverifiable assertions of the kind made by *Airs, Waters, Places* might induce laughter in an even more privileged audience, but that laughter would be with some rue for those among them who understand the influence of Hippocratic theory as unfortunate: cf. the doctor Democedes who later in Book 3 teaches Atossa medical arguments to entice Darius into expansionist desires in the west.

⁴⁴ The injunction to look to the end also pertains to Herodotus' narrative. In terms of consequences, the Ethiopian king's misreading of the Persian *heimata* is a great deal less worse than what will befall Cambyses as he misreads the *heimata* of the Egyptians in ch. 27.1. There, ignorant of Egyptian customs, Cambyses falls into the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy: he has suffered losses in the Egyptian desert, his subjects are celebrating, therefore they celebrate his failure; first ignorant of the religious *nomoi* of others, and then disregarding their validity as explanation, he implicitly prefers what some of his day commonly believe to be a 'universal' *nomos* or natural law, namely that those ruled of necessity hate their rulers: Thuc. 2.64.5, 3.39.5 (cf. 5.95); [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.14. And of course, Thucydides' text demonstrates the topicality of the dismissal of religious *nomoi* as explanation in preference to those of *Realpolitik*.

⁴⁵ I thank Bridget Murnaghan for this point.

⁴⁶ Miller (1997) and see the *topoi* of slavery and luxury pervading [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* esp. 2.7, 3.2.

⁴⁷ Christ (1994) 180. For Christ the analogy lies in Herodotus 'verifying what is reported to him about the Table', but he fails to notice that in 3.18 there is no explicit

Fish-eaters, the extradiegetic audience of the Ethiopian *logos* becomes mirrored in another of its characters: as Herodotus' audiences receive the account of the Fish-eaters, they are at risk of finding themselves reflected in the expansionist Persian king, the madman with ambitions to bring the ends of the earth under his dominion. Whether this narrative of unstinting gold and the Hippocratic sheen of the waters of this purportedly life-extending fountain will stoke their own desire for faraway places, provoking their consequent *orgê* as it emphasises the impossibility of attaining them, depends entirely upon who they are and their attitude towards *archê*.⁴⁸ I return to this subject in Part III.⁴⁹

II. Herodotus as Reader of Homer, Herodotus as Homeric Narrator

The Ethiopian *logos* is steeped in Homeric allusion. Beyond the Homeric framework already introduced by the tension in the *βίος* ('bow') / *βίος* ('life') play on words between the Greek of Herodotus' contemporaries and that of Homer, the Ethiopians themselves and their location at the *ἔσχατα γῆς*, possessing the Table of the Sun heaped with the boiled meat of four-legged animals, combine to give the passage a general Homeric ambiance: '[a]t the origins of this legend are the hecatombs and banquets of the Ethiopians in Homer, in which the gods participate (*Il.* 1.423–4, 23.206–7, *Od.* 1.22–6).'⁵⁰

indication (in contrast to *λέγεται* of 3.22.3) that Herodotus is relying on a report. Herodotus is placed in the position of the Fish-eaters for his audience in 3.18 purveying to them the truth about the Table of the Sun.

⁴⁸ Such *orgê* would be a common response of the Athenian *dêmos* (see e.g. Th. 2.60.1, 3.36.2, etc. with Connor (1984) 88, 100–1, 252 and below), as would also be the desire to acquire faraway places. Herodotus' narrative is capable of looking backwards to failed expeditions (Egypt in the 450s, to which he has just made reference, 3.12.4, 15.3, and with which he will close the book, 160.2) and those more contemporary (Sicily and Carthage in 427–424 BC, if not also Sicily in 416: see below).

⁴⁹ In anticipation of Part III, see Thuc. 6.24.3 on the eagerness to go to Sicily: *καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι ... τοῖς δ' ἐν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ τῆς τε ἀπούσης πόθῳ ὄψεως καὶ θεωρίας*. Interestingly, the scholiast glosses *theoria*: *τὸ θεωρίας ἀντὶ τοῦ ἱστορίας κείται, ἵνα ᾗ, ποθοῦντες τὴν ἀλλοδαπὴν καὶ ἰδεῖν καὶ ἱστορῆσαι*.

⁵⁰ Asheri (2007) 417. Both poems in fact open with an absent god, feasting with the Ethiopians; one might even say that the Ethiopians provide (were recognised as proving?) the opportunity whereby subversive plots may take shape. For a fuller discussion of the Homeric backdrop to these Ethiopians, see Lesky (1959) and Romm (1992) 49–60 with extensive bibliography.

The engagement with Homer and in particular the *Odyssey*, that most ethnographic of texts, is, however, far more involved.⁵¹ For, on the one hand, the story engages critically with the *Odyssey*'s depiction of its main character, and not least that figure's own tale of ethnographic curiosity in his encounter of the Cyclops; and, on the other, the location of Herodotus' *logos* evokes the other figure who travels in the poem, Menelaus, for only in his mini-*Odyssey* do we find in the Homeric poems any allusion to *southern* Ethiopians.⁵² Analysis of both these features of the narrative will provide a demonstration of Herodotus not only as a reader of Homer but also as a Homeric narrator in his own right, and will in turn have consequences not only for understanding both Homeric poems (though more so the *Odyssey*) but also the history lurking in this otherwise fantastic *logos*, which in turn is the subject of Part III. I begin with the *logos*' reading of the *Odyssey*, its central character and his encounter with the Cyclops (*Od.* 9.105-566), and then turn to Herodotus' take on Menelaus' sojourn in the southern regions (2.112-20).

The king's challenge to draw his giant bow is clearly Homeric, evocative of Odysseus and the famous contest to string his bow.⁵³ Herodotus' choice here to cast the Ethiopian king as a Hellenic, if not specifically Athenian, cultural icon has obvious reverberations in the larger context of the Persian-War narrative of the *Histories*. And yet, as always, Herodotus paints a rather more complex picture.⁵⁴ For the *logos* in reality has rather too many 'Odysseuses', and stages a confrontation between two versions of the *Odyssey*'s hero, but each version constitutes a significant modification of its Homeric model. Audiences may well see Odysseus in the Ethiopian king, and his challenge with the bow as analogous to Odysseus' response to the unjust and arrogant suitors, yet Odysseus lurks also in the depiction of the

⁵¹ On the ethnography of the *Odyssey* see Scodel (2005) and esp. the appendix of Marincola (2007) 68-9.

⁵² *Od.* 4.83-4, as opposed to those of the east and west: Κύπρον Φοινίκην τε καὶ Αἰγυπτίους ἐπαληθείς, | Αἰθίοπας θ' ἰκόμην καὶ Σιδονίους καὶ Ἐρεμβοὺς | καὶ Λιβύην, ἵνα τ' ἄρνες ἄφαρ κεραοὶ τελέθουσι. The passage is somewhat less specific than Hecataeus (*FGrHist* 1 FF 325-8), the first certain attestation of Ethiopians south of Egypt, but allowed by several scholars to testify to this conception (along with Hes. fr. 150, 17-19): West (1988) 75; Romm (1992) 49-50; Ramin (1979) 73-80; Ballabriga (1986) 108-10, 177-92. Hecataeus attests to where fifth-century audiences were locating travel to these Ethiopians, and otherwise ancients understood Helen and Menelaus as travelling to southern Ethiopians: see Ael. *Nat.* 9.21.

⁵³ *Od.* 19.577-8, 21.75-6. See e.g. Asheri (2007) 422.

⁵⁴ *Od.* 19.577 (cf. 21.75, 173, 233, 22.2, 246, 24.170, 177); Asheri (2007) 422.

Persian king, a figure impelled by ‘ethnographic curiosity’, seeking *xenia* and offering wine that is ambiguously either a guest-gift or a stratagem.

One might say the Ithacan Odysseus meets the Odysseus of the *apologoi*, but one must then also note that in both cases the allusion is done with critical differences: the Ethiopian king’s challenge with the bow, unlike Odysseus’, consists in an open and truthful warning to his ‘guests’—there is no *dolos*. Though at fault in their desire to deceive, Cambyses’ representatives fare better than the suitors, spared as they are the violence of the protagonist’s bow.⁵⁵ At the same time, the qualities and behaviour that the *Odyssey* has valorised in its hero, here used by the Persian king through proxy, are presented in a morally negative light.⁵⁶

If the Ethiopian king was an Odysseus with a difference, in the next stage of the encounter his portrayal changes and Cyclopean associations now prevail: a huge man at the ends of the earth (the Ethiopian king is chosen on the basis of being *megistos*, 3.20.2), he rejects the *xenia* relationship sought by his visitors, lacks the fineries of the civilised world, is ignorant of bread and wheat, instead dines on milk and boiled meat, and moreover delights in the strangers’ wine.⁵⁷ He conforms to Odysseus’ characterisation of the Cyclops as οὐδὲ ἐώκει | ἀνδρὶ γε σιτοφάγῳ (‘not like to a bread-eating man’, 9.191), where *sitophagos* as a *hapax legomenon* in Homer is particularly emphatic, and his *hyper*-delight at their wine (ὑπερησθεῖς τῷ πόματι, Hdt. 3.22.3) finds correspondence in Odysseus’ tale (ἦσατο δ’ αἰνῶς | ἦδὲ ποτὸν πίνων, *Od.* 9.353–4).⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Odysseus may warn Amphinomos at *Od.* 18.125ff. but the violence of his bow is a foregone conclusion of the narrative, the warning an implicit and proleptic justification that the extreme punishment about to be doled out will be mete. On the moral ambiguities of Odysseus’ behaviour here see Nagler (1990).

⁵⁶ Odysseus’ desire to meet the Cyclops: *Od.* 9.173–6, 229. On the ambiguity of the wine, see below. Cambyses, too, seems to have staged his own challenge with the bow, which he loses: Hdt. 3.35.

⁵⁷ On the Cyclops’ dietary habits: *Od.* 9.297: ἐπ’ ἄκρητον γάλα πίνων; Eur. *Cyc.* 246: τὰ δ’ ἐκ λέβητος ἐφθὰ καὶ τετηκότα. Note that the wood that Polyphemus brings into the cave in the *Odyssey* belies any insinuation that Polyphemus must eat his meat raw (φέρε δ’ ὄβριμον ἄχθος | ὕλης ἀζαλέης, ἵνα οἱ ποτιδόρπιον εἴη, *Od.* 9.233–4), though some commentators smooth over the difficulty by suggesting the wood provides light and warmth (Σ *ad loc.*, Stanford (1959) and Heubeck–Hoekstra (1989) *ad loc.*), but to settle the ambiguity is to misread the encounter and ultimately the poem; see below. An anonymous reader of this article objected to the idea that this *logos* alludes to the Homeric Cyclops since ‘the most Cyclopean characteristic, the single eye, is absent in the Ethiopian king’; this absence is, however, of course also Homeric.

⁵⁸ Demont (2009) 198 in passing also recognises the Cyclops here.

But once again, it is evocation with a difference, for although rejecting their offer of *xenia*, the Ethiopian king does not violate the requirements of *xenia* and instead sends his visitors away unharmed, and unlike Odysseus' Cyclops who is claimed to belong to a people 'neither knowing justice nor laws' (οὔτε δίκας εὖ εἰδότα οὔτε θέμιστας, *Od.* 9.216; οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, 9.175), the Cyclopean Ethiopian king has a clear notion of justice (οὔτε ἐκεῖνος ἀνὴρ ἐστὶ δίκαιος. εἰ γὰρ ἦν δίκαιος..., *Hdt.* 3.21.2) and one that has a claim to being absolute.⁵⁹ Moreover, although delighted by the wine of his culturally more sophisticated visitors, the king seems not to fall prey to its excesses. These negative elements of the *Odyssey's* Cyclops belong instead to the cultured opponent of the Ethiopian king. The figure whose culture possesses wine will, as the narrative progresses, succumb to its excesses, and later will engage in brutal killing under its influence.⁶⁰ Indeed the *logos* even manages to incorporate the infamous cannibalism of the original, but again the abuse is transferred to the side of culture, occurring among Cambyses' army (ἀλληλοφαγίη, 3.25.6) as they set out against the Ethiopians.⁶¹

The Homeric allusion in this passage is both pervasive and overwhelming, if also confusing, seeming to activate narrative patterns all too familiar from Homer only, it seems, in order to disorient, and this I would suggest it does in order to recreate at the level of narrative the disorientation inherent in the cross-cultural encounter. Schooled in the *Odyssey* from both a literary and an ethnographic point of view, an audience scrambles to find the appropriate models through which to encounter this people, and through supplying *comparanda* from the familiar by which to make them understandable, risks finding that the perception of the original has become altered.⁶² Initially the unquestioned hero of this narrative, the Ethiopian king is equipped with the defining feature of the Ithacan part of the *Odyssey* and its hero, and yet the fantastic second part of the story also evokes an earlier episode of Odysseus' *nostos*, a tale in his *apologoi*, as the Ethiopian king is cast in a Cyclopean role and laid open to derision for his ignorance regarding the trappings of culture. His identification with both

⁵⁹ This is recognised even at Athens, despite the views of a Thrasymachus in *Republic* 1, as in Andocides 3.13: οἶμαι γὰρ ἂν πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁμολογήσαι διὰ τὰδε δεῖν πολεμεῖν, ἢ ἀδικουμένους ἢ βοηθοῦντας ἠδίκημένους.

⁶⁰ *Hdt.* 3.34.2: τῇ δὲ φιλοινίῃ σέ φασι πλεόνως προσκεῖσθαι ... νῦν ἄρα μέ φασι Πέρσαι οἶνον προσκείμενον παραφρονεῖν καὶ οὐκ εἶναι νοήμονα; cf. *Od.* 9.350, σὺ δὲ μαίνεαι οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτῶς.

⁶¹ And note that if the Cyclops lives amid dung (κατακρύψας ὑπὸ κόπρω, | ἢ ῥα κατὰ σπείους κέχυτο μεγάλ' ἤλιθα πολλή, *Od.* 9.329–30), the Persian king eats it (ὁ Αἰθίοψ ἔφη οὐδὲν θαμάζειν εἰ σιτεόμενοι κόπρον ἔτεα ὀλίγα ζώουσι, *Hdt.* 3.34).

⁶² On this point see Pelling (2006) 104.

figures of the *Odyssey* is, however, only partial, and as such casts the moral ambiguities of the original in high relief: the Ethiopian king exercises none of the violence of the Homeric figures, neither evincing Odysseus' deception and violence (in Herodotus' *logos* seen, *contra* the *Odyssey*, as open to moral censure), nor the Cyclops' brutality.

A naïve audience may feel comfortable that the moral failings belong to the Persian king, but their cultural icon, whether Homer or Odysseus, hardly emerges unscathed. For beyond possessing a great bow, the Ethiopian king is hardly an Odysseus at all. More the Cyclops to the extent that he is visited by (the proxies of) a figure driven by 'curiosity' who uses guest-gifts as a stratagem, his depiction consequently challenges the valences ascribed to each figure in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus' qualities when possessed by the Persian king are seen in an unflattering light as greed, deception, and violence, and when Herodotus stages his encounter at the edges of the earth, those possessing greater cultural sophistication are the ones who actually fall foul of its refinement, and it is among them that occurs perhaps the greatest taboo, cannibalism.⁶³

Questions arise: why should Herodotus make the hero of this narrative, the one who speaks a message repeated throughout the *Histories* and the basis of Greek resistance to the Persians, have any Cyclopean characteristics at all? And why call Odysseus' behaviour into question by excluding certain elements from the Odysseus-like Ethiopian king—his deception and violence—and instead choose to reascribe them to the Persian king? Just what kind of response to the *Odyssey* is this Odyssean encounter between primitive and civilised figures at the *ἔσχατα γῆς*?

These questions are all too easily answered if one looks more carefully at Herodotus' template, Book 9 of the *Odyssey*, and examines the choices that Herodotus makes as a reader of Homer and a Homeric narrator. The discourses of ethnography, geography, curiosity, and colonisation are common to both texts, but there are two prominent overarching features of Odysseus' story that correspond closely to Herodotus' Ethiopian *logos*: it is not only a narrative about cross-cultural encounter at the edges of the world, but also a demonstration of the persuasive powers of such narratives to control how audiences will frame that encounter. Will the figure

⁶³ Although an ethnographic *topos*, the fact that among these Ethiopians 'bronze is the most rare and most honoured of all metals' (3.23.4) might well provide a programmatic summary of the dynamics of Homeric allusion in Herodotus' text: a textual world in which the *xenia*-respecting Glaucus would suffer no loss in the exchange of armour with a Diomedes not entirely above suspicion (*Il.* 6.235–7) seems appropriate to this un-Homeric Homeric *logos*.

encountered there be painted as belonging to a golden-age world, or rather as brutish and primitive?

Within a story of fantastic tales, the Cyclops tale is *the* quintessential story of wonder: the words *θαῦμα* and *θηέομαι*, in 190 and 218 respectively, will not appear together again in the *apologoi*, and *θαυμάζω* at the start of the story appears only here in the *Odyssey* (*θαυμάζοντες*, 9.153).⁶⁴ The language conveys for its audience the exoticism of the world of the Cyclopes, and leaves no wonder why this particular story of Odysseus would have been chosen by our fifth-century purveyor of *thōmata*. *ἐθηέυμεσθα ἕκαστα* ('we were gazing with wonder at each of the things', 218) introduces a detailed account of the quaint customs of the Cyclopes' domestic practices, the mundane rendered exotic from a Homeric point of view through a series of *hapax legomena*.⁶⁵ Both Odysseus and his poet provide a Cyclopean ethnography that indulges their respective audiences' curiosity through narrating a tale of the hero having indulged his own. This is of course what Herodotus has been seen to be doing in the Ethiopian *logos*: the inquiring master narrator recounts a *logos* to his audience that will constitute the *logos* that the Fish-eaters will report in their audience with the Persian king, a *logos* of an encounter with a Cyclopean figure.

The *Odyssey's* story of the Cyclops is likewise one in which the desire to acquire new lands is hardly absent. When Odysseus itemises the fantastic attributes of the enticing goat-island (9.130–41), it is not only to demonstrate further the incompetence of the Cyclopes. The shift in moods from the indicative to the optative at 131 reads almost like a real estate brochure: 'Just imagine it, this is land ripe for exploitation by whoever is willing'.⁶⁶ In the island's rich potential too is the potential of the text to exploit both the

⁶⁴ *θηέομαι*: 10.180. *θαῦμα*: 10.326, 11.287. See Mondì (1983) 20 on the 'ethnographic zeal' of the description of the Cyclopes. On the ethnographic dimension of Odysseus' tales, see most recently Scodel (2005).

⁶⁵ E.g. *πρόγονοι, μέτασσαι, γαυλοί, σκαφίδες* (*Od.* 9.221–3); with the last two note that Herodotus likewise presents a *hapax legomenon* for a vessel: *κάδος* (20.1), which Greeks saw as ethno-linguistically significant, an Ionic form for *κεράμιον* (Athen. 11. 473b): *Κλείταρχος δ' ἐν ταῖς Γλώσσαις τὸ κεράμιόν φησιν Ἴωνας κάδον καλεῖν. Ἡρόδοτος δ' ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ "φοινικηίου", φησίν, "οἴνου κάδον"*. Elsewhere it is identified as characteristic of the Soli dialect (*Lex. Segueir.*, s.v. Κάδοι): *ὑπὸ Σολίων κάδοι, ὑπὸ Ἴωνων κεράμια. ἀφ' οὗ καὶ κάδος ἐλέγετο τὸ κεράμιον*. See Asheri (2007) 420. No doubt such linguistic knowledge was in part the work of figures like Hippias (cf. the case of *tyrannis* in Arch. 19 W^o).

⁶⁶ As recognised by the scholiast on *Od.* 9.130. See also Clay (1980) 261 who quotes the comment of Kirk (1970) 165, 'a colonist's ideal landfall' and Jeffery (1976) 50, 'The Greeks would have put a colony there in a twinkling'. See also Mondì (1983) 20 for the 'ethnographic zeal' of the passage. For recent studies on the *Odyssey's* interest in colonisation see Malkin (1998) and Dougherty (2001).

memories and the fantasies of its contemporary audiences in the hey-day and aftermath of archaic colonisation. This island is not just available, but the *real* crime would be to let it go to waste, and at any rate the shipless locals could not stop anyone who wanted from taking it. Ethnographical interest is never far from an expansionist one, as is precisely a central theme of Herodotus' *logos*.

Given the overwhelming allusions to this *logos* of the *Odyssey*, the departures from Homer in Herodotus' characterisation of the Ethiopian king must be considered significant, representing attentive engagement with the original. In Odyssean scholarship it has finally become a commonplace to recognise just how self-serving Odysseus' first-person narrative is—and nowhere more so than in the tale of the Cyclops. Herodotus' inverted depiction of the encounter between a Cyclops and an Odysseus represents not so much Herodotus reading against the grain of the *Odyssey* as him actually drawing his audiences' attention to the very *dolos* of its hero at once celebrated and underplayed by the poem, and picking up the *Odyssey*'s own cues that circumstances may have been other than those Odysseus chooses to relate. One could list the inconsistencies in Odysseus' account that, if noticed, suggest that events were—to be polite—somewhat other than as he describes, while the scholia on this passage highlight just how many moral anxieties the details of Odysseus' behaviour are capable of raising.⁶⁷ The text boldly poses the question of whether Odysseus is a pirate (albeit a question asked by another and reported by an implicated first-person narrator), confident in the persuasive powers of Odysseus' characterisation of the wickedness of the Cyclops, and his repeated assertions that the framework through which this scene should be read is one of *xenia*; confident, too, in the complicity of the intradiegetic audience, the Phaeacians, who no doubt

⁶⁷ For instance, was the wine originally intended as a guest-gift that was made into a stratagem, or as a stratagem that consisted in a guest-gift? The first intention that Odysseus imputes to his bringing it is actually the former (213–5), though the success of Odysseus' rhetoric persuades us to understand that this is rather said in hindsight (e.g. Podlecki (1961) 126). The best discussion of the wine is that of Ahl and Roisman (1996) 106–9 who argue that Odysseus' analeptic revelation of the Maron episode is intended to disguise the 'truth' about Maron's 'gifts' (*ἀγλαὰ δῶρα*, which might be more precisely described as ransom, if not bribery), that in using the wine against the Cyclops the clever Odysseus is actually deploying the stratagem used against him and his men by Maron in response to the destruction inflicted by them on the Cicones. Their reading gains additional support from the mental gymnastics of the scholia, who are hard pressed to explain how exactly six men died from each of the twelve ships, a problem that vanishes, as Ahl and Roisman point out, when one realises that there were twelve amphorae of wine, one per ship. On truth and deception in Odysseus' tales, see also Peradotto (1990) 92–3; S. Richardson (1996) esp. 396–9 (with bibliography, n. 5); Roisman (2001), Ahl (2002).

delight in the indirect praise of their *xenia* by means of this foil and in the derogatory portrayal of their enemies, the Cyclopes.

And yet, the question of whether Odysseus is a pirate is one to which the Cicones would no doubt have supplied a different answer (9.39–61);⁶⁸ moreover, the course urged by Odysseus' men at the start, to take the cheeses and run (9.224–7), and the one they do in fact take, rounding up the Cyclops' animals and running (9.464–5), is distinguished from piracy only by the rhetorical finesse of the narrator, Odysseus himself, who persuades us that the only violation of *xenia* here belongs entirely to the Cyclops, and that his own crime (if indeed it should even be called that) was merely one of ethnographic curiosity and a desire for *xenia* (which he, of course, could hardly be said to have violated by entering, albeit uninvited, such a 'home' and consuming such humble fare as he found there).⁶⁹ The Cyclops' question posits only two reasons why people would sail around as Odysseus and his men do, trade or piracy.⁷⁰ Odysseus, and ultimately the *Odyssey*, tries very hard to assert a third category, curiosity,⁷¹ but whether the efforts of the character and his poem persuade is entirely dependent upon the capacity (or desire) of audiences to respond to the cues that the 'real' story may have been otherwise; and among those audiences we must, of course, include Herodotus.

To contend that the poet laces the text with details allowing (inviting) audiences to read Odysseus' Cyclops story in a way other than it is framed by Odysseus raises the question of why the poet would choose to include in the first-person narrative of his hero material capable of undermining the hero's claim to truthfulness, material that may reveal him as deceptive and even immoral. The answer lies precisely in the function it serves to demonstrate the character of that hero, his *polytropeia*.⁷² By providing the audience with the wherewithal to read against the grain of Odysseus'

⁶⁸ Of course, the persuasive narrator has induced his listeners to adopt his focalisation: see, for instance, Heubeck–Hoekstra (1989) 25 on Maron's wine, 'Odysseus had protected Maron, the priest of Apollo, and been *rewarded* with a number of gifts ...' (italics mine).

⁶⁹ *Od.* 9.224–30. A set of comparativist arguments implicitly exculpate Odysseus: although uninvited, he and his men enter a cave, not a house, and take not finer food, but some cheese; and even if they were the *first* to behave with impropriety, the Cyclops' retaliation was *worse*.

⁷⁰ *Od.* 9.252–5.

⁷¹ For Odysseus' curiosity, 9.174–6, 224–30, but it is a curiosity not separated from greed: see the famous and much repeated formula of Stanford (1954) 76, 'inquisitiveness and acquisitiveness', and *philochrematos* by which the scholia describe Odysseus (Σ *ad Od.* 7.225).

⁷² On Odysseus' *polytropeia*, see Pucci (1982).

narrative, the poet demonstrates the rhetorical finesse of his character (and by extension his poem) witnessed in the fact that most audiences will not do so, and instead will choose to dismiss any inconcinnity or inconsistency on grounds other than those most obvious.⁷³ Alcinoos' famous interjection (11.362–7) asserting that Odysseus' tale does not sound like lies presents the dichotomy: while seeming to confirm the truthfulness of the narrative, all Alcinoos really confirms is that the narrative's internal audience, the Phaeacians, finds it persuasive, if rather like the tale of a poet (cf. *Od.* 11.368), that is, like truth, but not necessarily truthful (*Od.* 19.203; Hes. *Theog.* 22–35). With those words, Alcinoos is made in effect to provide a wink to any in the audience who might prove to be less passive followers than Odysseus' men.⁷⁴ Or rather, his comments show how quickly an aesthetic judgement of a narrative's pleasingness may slide into the narrative being endowed with the status of truth, or at least 'poetic truth'. This point of course is as important for Herodotus as it is for the *Odyssey*, and nowhere more so than in the Ethiopian *logos*.

Here we might summarise the force of Herodotus' engagement with the *Odyssey*. The allusions to the *Odyssey* in the Ethiopian *logos* create a narrative of cross-cultural encounter that reads against the grain of the Odyssean model, suggesting an alternative version of what might have happened when the sophisticated figure arrived at the land of the primitive 'other': an Odysseus who was Cyclopean (in a Homeric sense), that is, lawless and unjust, and a Cyclops who was not the lawless figure that Odysseus would have us believe him to have been.⁷⁵ Although Herodotus' Cyclopean figure at the ends of the earth may lack knowledge of the objects of culture—bread, wine, fineries—he is not, as in Homer, denied a knowledge of justice: justice and astuteness are not the exclusive privilege of the culturally sophisticated, and the Cyclopes' failure to acquire territory other than their own, such as Goat Island, is not owing to backwardness, but rather portrayed as an ethical choice. As for the Ethiopian king's evocation of Odysseus, equipped with the symbol of the *Odyssey*'s hero, he nevertheless refrains from violence against his 'guests', however false they may be, and instead delivers as a clear warning a strong ethical message and one that resounds with the overarching moral stance of the *Histories*. By contrast, ascribed to the figure of cultural sophistication are not only the excesses of the Cyclops, but also aspects of Odysseus' behaviour that though often

⁷³ See Slatkin's astute comments (1996) on the *mêtis* of the poem exceeding and containing that of its hero.

⁷⁴ Cf. Slatkin (1996) 229.

⁷⁵ See Austin (1983) on just who is the real 'Cyclops', that is, the real barbarous figure, in Odysseus' narrative.

praised—at least in some circles—are here instead viewed as immoral. Herodotus' Odyssean tale takes the other path offered at the start of the Cyclops story, choosing to see his figure at the furthest ends of the earth as golden-age, not primitive, and the luxury of the 'cultured' figure as emblematic of moral decadence, not the sophistication of the 'civilised'.

Herodotus deploys his Odyssean allusions thick and fast, challenging audiences capable of reflecting on them: if they carelessly read Herodotus' narrative as an apparent confirmation of something distinctly Persian—unjust expansion—they participate in undermining something distinctly Hellenic, if not Athenian, the *Odyssey*,⁷⁶ a text itself foundational in the construction of Hellenic superiority. More competent readers are forced to re-evaluate the encounter of the Cyclops and Odysseus, a re-evaluation that puts the figure of Hellenic superiority under moral scrutiny no less than it does the Persian king with such moral scrutiny extending to any in the audience who, on the basis of claims to cultural superiority, harbour designs on the lands of others. Here again the distinction between the intradiegetic and extradiegetic audiences of the Fish-eaters' account may start to break down again, a subject which will be the focus of Part III.

It is crucial to recognise in this *logos* not just another instance of the 'most Homeric' Herodotus⁷⁷ and a fifth-century version of an Odysseus *φιλιστορῶν*, or, otherwise said, Herodotus as a Homer and an Odysseus, simultaneously author of and character within a narrative of travel and cross-cultural encounters. Herodotus engages with his model in ways that at least construct, if not underscore, fundamental differences in the ethical stance and cultural bias of his text and that of Homer.

⁷⁶ On the Athenian stamp of our *Odyssey* see Cook (1995) and Irwin (2005) esp. 283–6 with bibliography.

⁷⁷ See Longinus (13.2): *μόνος Ἡρόδοτος Ὀμηρικώτατος ἐγένετο*. See also the new Halicarnassus inscription *τὸν πέζον ἐν ἱστορίαισι Ὀμηρον* with Isager (1998), Lloyd-Jones (1999), and more generally Pelling (2006). For *φιλιστορῶν* see Σ *Od.* 9.229: (*ὑπὲρ φιλοτιμίας ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν θέλει φιλιστορῶν. οὕτω γοῦν καὶ ἐν Ἄιδου* (cf. Σ *Od.* 9.174, *οὐ μόνον διὰ τὸ φιλιστορεῖν*) and Hartog (2001) chs. 1 and 2. Treatment of Herodotus as the 'new Odysseus' has been rather selective in points of identification between the two, ignoring a central debate in Herodotean studies (e.g. Pelling (2006) 79), otherwise said, if Herodotus is self-consciously Odyssean, would he not also be a liar? Just what kind of model can such a figure and text provide for the historians (at least as we have defined their aims)? Most recently, Marincola (2007) 47–66, esp. 51ff. has useful preliminary discussion of the subject. The full depth of what Homer had to teach the fifth-century audiences has yet to be plumbed; the answers might well lead us to a greater appreciation of Plato's criticisms of Homer. Such questions aside, more exploration is needed of the interplay between first- and third-person narration in Herodotus and the *Odyssey*; the most useful contributions to this feature of Herodotus' narrative thus far are Dewald (1987), Marincola (1987), and the narratologically informed Munson (2001).

Here now I turn from the Cyclops to geography, to the Homeric precedent for travels to the southern regions, namely the Egyptian sojourn of Menelaus and Helen, which happens also to be Herodotus' most explicit and extensive instance of engagement with Homer (2.112–20).⁷⁸ Found in this relentless scrutiny of Helen and Menelaus' trip to Egypt are the same crucial ethical differences from Homer as exhibited in the Ethiopian *logos*. A brief examination of this *logos* will serve two related purposes for this discussion: first, in providing an account of what really happened during the sojourn of Helen and Menelaus in Egypt, Herodotus provides a paradigm of textual engagement which cannot be without implications for reading his own work. Second, this mode of reading, I will argue in Part III, provides a basis for understanding what underlies Herodotus' choice to narrate this (at best) tenuously historical and overtly Homericising Ethiopian *logos*.

In Book 2.112–20 Herodotus engages in the longest discussion not only of Homer but of any author in the entire *Histories*, and does so in a narrative that challenges the historical veracity of this seminal text in Greek culture. Although familiar, it is useful here to rehearse the story. Herodotus claims to have learned from Egyptian priests the truth about Paris' abduction of Helen, that in fact she resided in Egypt during the Trojan Wars: blown off course, Alexander and Helen end up in Egypt where the ethical Egyptian king, Proteus, intervenes, dismissing Alexander and making himself guardian of Helen and her valuables until her husband should claim her. The Trojan War seems therefore fought for no purpose as Trojans attempt to tell the Greeks the truth (*alêtheia*) and are, of course, not believed by their enemies, until the city falls and no Helen emerges.

The importance this story holds for understanding Herodotus' methodology has always been recognised, but only narrowly explored. Given the good Greek precedents for this version—Stesichorus and the *Hesiodic Catalogue*⁷⁹—scholars have either struggled to construct scenarios that will allow them to take literally Herodotus' claim to have learned this story from Egyptian priests, or they have simply dismissed the story as

⁷⁸ In fact, the Homeric quality of this section of the *Histories* is dense. The Odyssean Ethiopian *logos* is immediately preceded by the Iliadic Psammenitus story (3.14.10, with *Il.* 22.60, 62): see Huber (1965) 33 and Pelling (2006) 87–9. One should note, despite the textual and geographical proximity of the Helen and Menelaus story with the Ethiopian *logos*, there are grounds outside Herodotus to consider them somehow linked in fifth-century Athenian minds: according to Pausanias (1.23), these Ethiopians appear (inexplicably to him) on the cup of the Nemesis statue whose base represents Helen and Menelaus.

⁷⁹ See e.g. Kannicht (1969) I.21–48 for a discussion of the antecedents of the tradition of Helen's failure to reach Troy and her sojourn in Egypt; cf. Fehling (1989) 59–60.

Herodotean fiction with little regard for his motivation.⁸⁰ The *apodexis* of Herodotus' *historiê* that this *logos* represents is, however, rather more complex. In providing an explicit demonstration of the narrator reading Homer, and using Homer's own text to read against his narrative, it presents a model of engaging with a text that will prove to be relevant to our reading of Herodotus' Ethiopian *logos*.

Herodotus asserts in the first person that Homer seems to have known this 'Egyptian' version, although he has chosen to omit it on the grounds that it was not as suitable for an epic poem as the one that he did use (2.116):

Ἑλένης μὲν ταύτην ἄπιξιν παρὰ Πρωτέα ἔλεγον οἱ ἱρέες γενέσθαι·
δοκέει δέ μοι καὶ Ὅμηρος τὸν λόγον τοῦτον πυθέσθαι· ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ
ὁμοίως ἐς τὴν ἐποποιίην εὐπρεπῆς ἦν τῷ ἐτέρῳ τῷ περ ἐχρήσατο, ἐκὼν
μετῆκε αὐτόν, δηλώσας ὡς καὶ τοῦτον ἐπίσταιτο τὸν λόγον· δῆλον δὲ
κατὰ γὰρ ἐποίησε ἐν Ἰλιάδι (καὶ οὐδαμῇ ἄλλη ἀνεπόδισε ἐωυτόν)
πλάνην τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου, ὡς ἀπηνείχθη ἄγων Ἑλένην τῇ τε δὴ ἄλλη
πλαζόμενος καὶ ὡς ἐς Σιδῶνα τῆς Φοινίκης ἀπίκητο. ἐπιμέμνηται δὲ
αὐτοῦ ἐν Διομήδεος ἀριστείῃ ... ἐν τούτοισι τοῖσι ἔπεσι δηλοῖ ὅτι
ἠπίστατο τὴν ἐς Αἴγυπτον Ἀλεξάνδρου πλάνην· ὁμοῦρῃ γὰρ ἢ Συρίῃ
Αἰγύπτῳ, οἱ δὲ Φοίνικες, τῶν ἐστὶ ἢ Σιδῶν, ἐν τῇ Συρίῃ οἰκεῖουσιν.

The priest told me this was how Helen came to stay with Proteus. Now, I think that Homer had heard this story as well, because although he omitted it on the grounds that it was not as suitable for an epic poem as the other one (the one he used), he still showed that he knew this alternative story too. He makes this clear, because he was drawing on this version when he composed in the *Iliad* (and never corrected himself) the section describing Alexander's travels—how he was driven off course while bringing Helen home and how in the course of his wanderings he landed, among other places, at Sidon in Phoenicia. His mention of Alexander's travels occurs in 'The *Aristeia*

⁸⁰ See Lloyd (1988) 46–7 (endorsed by Pritchett (1993) 64) for a historian's discussion of the possible sources of Herodotus' tale, which is valuable despite his assumption that the *logos*' 'creator cannot be H.; otherwise he could not possibly have treated it so seriously.' My response is closer to the approach of Fehling (1989) 59–65: Herodotus does *appear* to treat the story seriously, but that apparent seriousness serves equally well an attempt to legitimise a fiction (compare Butler's *Authoress of the Odyssey* and the seriousness of his ethical points, Whitmarsh (2003) xxi–xxii; see also the salutary words of Hadas (1935) 115). At the very least, whatever Herodotus may have drawn on in composing his narrative, we can be sure that as it appears it is nothing if not *Herodotean*, as claimed in the final words: ταῦτα μὲν τῇ ἐμοὶ δοκέει εἴρηται (2.120.5; cf. ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ γνώμην ἀποφαίνομαι). Cf. Kannicht (1969) I.41–8.

of Diomedes ...'. It is clear from these words that Homer knew of Alexander's circuitous journey to Egypt, because Syria (where the Phoenicians, to whom Sidon belongs, live) is on Egypt's borders.

Herodotus' statement is radical in its assertion both that Homer rejected this Egyptian version based on criteria involving not truth, but genre, and that the content expected of a genre, here epic poetry, may result in a text at odds with what actually happened, that is, with historical fact.⁸¹ The influence of genre on the conveyance of literal truth raises a fundamental question in relation to Herodotus' own text: just what is the genre to which Herodotus' own text belongs? For if it is as Homeric as sometimes claimed then he may be indicating the same generic constraints apply to his own work's relation to 'truth'. For Herodotus never makes the explicit methodological statements about truth that Thucydides does in his proem, and in fact later will inform his audience that nothing in his work, simply by virtue of its being included, may be taken as evidence of his belief in its veracity (7.152).

As important, however, as the assertion that Homer knew this other version is the basis upon which Herodotus presents himself as making this claim: while his Homer chose not to follow this variant story, he nevertheless *retained* in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* traces of that 'true' version, a version which includes Menelaus committing a great injustice and indeed barbarity against the host who had protected his wife, sacrificing Egyptian children to gain favourable winds. These retained allusions to other narratives are parallel to those underlying the Cyclops' tale, although there they arise from the character Odysseus making choices that serve the 'genre' of his own *logos* (its content a function of the context of performance, what Phaeacians 'want' to hear about Cyclopes and what will assist him in securing conveyance home). These types of allusion, I shall argue in Part III, will prove crucial for interpreting the meaning of the Ethiopian *logos*. But before turning to that discussion, the agenda of Herodotus' alternative *Iliad* needs to be considered: whereas Greek tradition ascribes improbity to the Egyptians, whether in their treatment of Helen or in performing human sacrifice, Herodotus re-ascribes to the Greeks the immorality their texts impute to the cultural 'other'.⁸² This re-ascription of blame parallels his

⁸¹ Neville (1977) 4.

⁸² The re-ascription is two-fold: the ethical Thonos and Proteus stand in contrast to versions of a wicked Thonos who, seeing Helen, takes her from Paris for himself (Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 4 F 153), and opposes the Greek attribution of human sacrifice to the Egyptians as seen in the Busiris myth since the only human sacrifice to occur in

response to the *Odyssey*'s ostensible version of the Cyclops' tale, and in doing so makes a similar and strong ethical statement.⁸³

To establish what he calls the ἀληθείη ('truth') of the Egyptian version, Herodotus lays on an impressive array of academic techniques. First, the priests of old had the chance to question Menelaus himself.⁸⁴ Next, with regard to the child sacrifice, the priests assert that they learnt this from *their* investigations, and that they were competent to speak *accurately* about the events that happened in their *own* country.⁸⁵ Finally, Herodotus mounts a series of arguments from probability to express his agreement with the Egyptian version—all revolving around the likelihood (the historian's and indeed rhetorician's staple argument) that surely the Trojans would have returned Helen if they had had her to give.⁸⁶ The whole account is flavoured with an ironic take on what Rosalind Thomas discusses as Herodotus' rhetoric of persuasion.⁸⁷

Herodotus' Homer emerges as an author who knew an account other than the one he presents, who allowed his account to be influenced by the exigencies of his chosen genre, but who nevertheless retained traces of that other, more truthful (according to Herodotus) account. At the same time, in this Homeric exegesis the Herodotean narrator also emerges more clearly as one who scrutinises the Homeric text and invites his audience to reconsider that text from a different, Herodotean (if not necessarily or actually Egyptian) perspective, capable of viewing his own culture critically from the

Herodotus' Egypt, contrary to Greek beliefs (Hdt. 2.45), is performed by a Greek, Menelaus (a point recognised by Plutarch, *De Her. mal.* 12). See Kannicht (1969) I.45.

⁸³ Compare 2.120.5 and 3.21.2.

⁸⁴ Hdt. 2.118.1: 'When I asked the priests whether or not the Greek version of what happened at Ilium was completely ridiculous (μάταιον λόγον), this is what they told me, adding that they were sure of the correctness of their information because they had asked Menelaus himself (ιστορίησι φάμενοι εἰδέναι παρ' αὐτοῦ Μενέλεω).'

⁸⁵ Hdt. 2.119.3: τούτων δὲ τὰ μὲν ιστορίησι ἔφασαν ἐπίστασθαι, τὰ δὲ παρ' ἑωυτοῖσι γινόμενα ἀτρεκέως ἐπιστάμενοι λέγειν.

⁸⁶ Hdt. 2.120.1: 'That is what the Egyptian priest told me; personally, I accept their version of the Helen story, for the following reasons ...' These include using Homer to illuminate Homer: 'And when (if one should speak from the evidence of epic poets, εἰ χροῖ τι τοῖσι ἐποποιούσι χρεώμενον λέγειν) at least two or three of Priam's own sons died every time battle was joined—under these circumstances, I expect that if it had been Priam himself who was living with Helen, he would have given her back to the Achaeans in order to end the disasters they were faced with.' See Neville (1977) 6–7 for the 'remorseless logic' of ch. 120. One should note that this story of the Egyptian priests, no less than the Ethiopian *logos* with the inquiring Fish-eaters, holds up a mirror to Herodotus' own inquiries.

⁸⁷ Thomas (2000) chs. 6 and 7.

outside, no less than he reverses the valences of Odysseus and the Cyclops. According to Herodotus, the version that Homer knew and rejected as not appropriate to epic poetry was one in which not only does the Egyptian other emerge as hyper-ethical, but Greeks are portrayed as worse violators of *xenia* than even Paris.⁸⁸ Herodotus' final verdict about why the Trojan War happened is straightforward and moral (Hdt. 2.120.5):

ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ εἶχον Ἑλένην ἀποδοῦναι οὐδὲ λέγουσι αὐτοῖσι τὴν ἀληθείην ἐπίστευον οἱ Ἕλληνες, ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ γνώμην ἀποφαίνομαι, τοῦ δαιμονίου παρασκευάζοντος ὅκως πανωλεθρίῃ ἀπολόμενοι καταφανές τοῦτο τοῖσι ἀνθρώποισι ποιήσωσι, ὡς τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλαι εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ τιμωρίαι παρὰ τῶν θεῶν. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τῇ ἐμοὶ δοκέει εἶρηται.

No, the fact is that they did not have Helen to give back; and the Greeks did not believe them when they told the truth. **In my opinion**, this was because the *daimonion* was arranging things so that in their annihilation the Trojans might make it completely clear to mankind that the severity of a crime is matched by the severity of the ensuing punishment at the gods' hands. That is **my view**, at any rate.

Troy fell so that it would be clear to mankind that great crimes receive great punishment from the gods, and this universal principle, which Homer's version of events renders obscure, is applicable to any culture. As in Herodotus' re-evaluation of the characters of the Cyclops story, there is a strong ethical statement and a re-ascription of blame to the traditional Hellenic heroes—the purported (Greek) victims of violated *xenia*, Menelaus and Odysseus, are now seen as in actuality the perpetrators.

Equally important, however, is the demonstration of how the Herodotean narrator reads a text, privileging what it includes in passing, believing it to contain traces of other narratives, and thereby able to read against the grain of the dominant narrative. This is what he then implicitly

⁸⁸ Proteus' verdict on Paris is unequivocal: ἄνδρα τούτον, ὅς τις κοτέ ἐστι, ἀνόσια ἐργασμένον ξείνον τὸν ἑωυτοῦ, ('This man, whoever he is, has performed unholy acts against his host', 2.114). And his protection of Menelaus' interests as host proleptically condemns Menelaus as guilty of a far worse crime: his emphasis on not killing *xenoi* (ἐγὼ εἰ μὴ περὶ πολλοῦ ἡγεόμεν μὴδένα ξείνων κτείνειν ... νῦν ὦν, ἐπειδὴ περὶ πολλοῦ ἡγγῆμαι μὴ ξεινοκτονέειν), especially those who are the victims of adverse winds, stands opposed to Menelaus' sacrifice of children who are *xenoi* in order to obtain favourable winds. Moreover his words to Paris, ὦ κάκιστε ἀνδρῶν, ξεινίων τυχῶν ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον ἐργάσασο (2.115.4), could be addressed equally to Menelaus (verbal repetition in 119.1–2, τυχῶν μέντοι τούτων [sc. ξεινίων μεγάλων] ἐγένετο Μενέλεως ἀνήρ ἄδικος ἐς Αἴγυπτίους ... ἐπιτεχνᾶται πρῆγμα οὐκ ὄσιον).

demonstrates, when, in returning to the historical narrative of the Persians in Egypt, he recounts the Ethiopian *logos*, a story that gestures towards another version of the encounter with the Cyclops, and exploits the traces of what can be found to reside in Odysseus' account itself. But in the case of the *Odyssey*, Herodotus' reading is not entirely at odds with the original: in reading against the grain not of the poet's narrative but of the account of his shifty character, famed for lying, Herodotus' engagement with Homer helps an audience to see that which the poet himself has rendered possible to see if only one has not fallen under the spell of his *polytropos* Odysseus.⁸⁹

In the Helen *logos*, Herodotus' Homer is in fact presented as very like his own bard-like hero: suiting his version of the Trojan war to its occasion, no less than Odysseus does his *apologoi*, the poet nevertheless allows that version to be challenged by retaining details that provide signs of an alternative narrative.⁹⁰ This view of Homer in turn raises questions about Herodotus and his work: just how similar to Homer and his Odysseus can our 'most Homeric' narrator be understood to be? Does Herodotus' textual exegesis of Homer present the reader with a 'demonstration' of how to read Herodotus' own text? If so, what are the alternative versions of events whose traces his main narrative has chosen to retain? What truer narratives, unfitting for his genre (which includes issues of performance context and audience(s), those contemporary and future), lurk in the text's wealth of seemingly inconsequential details? Will they be similar to the *adikia* of Menelaus, and will they reverse the stereotypical moral evaluations of Greeks and barbarians? With these questions in mind, I turn to Part III to establish the historical value of the Ethiopian *logos*.

III. The History in Herodotus' Homeric *Logos*

Having considered the Ethiopian *logos* as an interplay of two genres, Homeric epic and Hippocratic medicine, we are now ready to consider the history behind this *logos*. I want to examine precisely *what kind* of contribution to a historical narrative this *logos* with its blend of fabulous ethnography and poetic allusion can provide. There are two complementary methods of contextualising this tale, pertaining to the two modes in which

⁸⁹ This understanding of the *Odyssey* renders both the character and his poem less ethical than they claim and may appear to be, but that tension between representation and 'reality' is precisely that which demonstrates the famed rhetorical capacities of both.

⁹⁰ *καὶ οὐδαμῆ ἄλλη ἀνεπόδισε ἑωυτόν* (2.216): see Grethlein (2010) 154–6 for the most recent discussion of this phrase.

Herodotus engages with Homer as discussed in Part II. I will treat the first only briefly, returning to it as I develop the second in more detail.

The first mode corresponds to the Cyclopean allusions in this moralistic tale of ruinous expansionist desire, and considers how Homeric poetry, and in particular the Cyclops story, was mapped on to the real world by fifth-century Athenian audiences, and how that mapping may have corresponded to historical cases of expansionist ambition; this time, however, the ambition is not Persian, but Greek, and specifically Athenian. Athens' own ambitions to lead a *stratia* to the *eschata gês* took her into what was considered to be Cyclopean territory, it being standard practice in the fifth century to locate the Cyclopes in Sicily.⁹¹ Each time Thucydides deals with Athens' westward aspirations, he punctuates his narrative with Odyssean allusion, using Homer both as a source for geography and for the island's first occupants, the Cyclopes and the Laestrygonians.⁹² While Thucydides may refuse to speculate in any detail on these fantastic creatures, he does choose to include them, and without contradicting the traditions about them.⁹³ Given this reception (at least nominally) in our self-professed ultra-rational historian,⁹⁴ we can only imagine how and to what effect such allusions may have been used in the Athenian *ekklesia*.⁹⁵

Indeed Sicily also provides a useful historical backdrop in which to understand the Ethiopian *logos*' meditation on the concomitance of ethnographic and expansionist desire. Our sources describe the combined fantasies of spectacles, conquest, and wealth:

Everyone fell in love with the enterprise (*ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι*). Those in the prime of life felt a longing for foreign sights and spectacles (*τῆς τε ἀπούσης πόθῳ ὄψεως καὶ θεωρίας*), and had no doubt that they should come safe home again; while the idea of the

⁹¹ E.g. Eur. *Cyclops*; Σ *Od.* 9.301: ἐν Σικελίᾳ ὑποτίθενται οἱ νεώτεροι τοὺς Κύκλωπας.

⁹² Once in 427–424 (4.24.5) and again in 415–413 (6.2).

⁹³ Thuc. 6.2: 'The earliest inhabitants spoken of in any part of the country are the Cyclopes and Laestrygonians; but I cannot tell of what race they were or from where they came or to where they went, and must leave my readers to what the poets have said of them and to what may be generally known concerning them.' Cf. λέγεται of Thuc. 4.24.5 on the Homeric geography of southern Italy and Sicily. Thucydides also chooses, not unrelated to Sicily, to punctuate each of his Corcyraean excursions with allusion to their claimed connection to the Phaeacians: 1.25.4, 3.70.4, on which see below. For discussion of Odyssean allusion in Thucydides' Sicilian narrative see Mackie (1996) and also Frangoulidis (1993).

⁹⁴ See Hornblower (1994) 9 ('even the realist Thucydides') and 65.

⁹⁵ No doubt Odyssean *mêtis* over the primitive Sicilians was stressed: see Thuc. 6.17.

common people and the soldiery was to earn wages at the moment, and make conquests that would supply a never-ending fund of pay for the future (*προσκτήσεσθαι δύναμιν ὅθεν αἰδίον μισθοφορὰν ὑπάρξειν*).⁹⁶

And one might well wonder if a *hyponoia* of Herodotus' *logos* was that the West was Athens' own version of the Table of the Sun with its promise of unstinting feasts.⁹⁷ Thucydides' Athenians emerge here as not all that unlike Herodotus' Persian King, and of course, as discussed in Part I, they are structurally analogous to him in so far as what Herodotus conveys to his readers is essentially the information alleged to have been supplied to the Persian king by his spies.⁹⁸ And indeed evocative of the Ethiopian King's own words ('That man is not just ... if he were, he would have not desired the territory of another nor would he lead men into slavery by whom he has never been wronged') is one near-contemporary perspective on the venture: Isocrates recalls for his audience how their fathers sent out an expedition

⁹⁶ Thuc. 6.24.3 (quoted above, n. 49; cf. the scholiast, also quoted there, who glosses *theōria* with *istoria*) and the *eros* of Aristoph. *Birds* 410–15 ('Ἔρως | βίου διαίτης τέ σου | καὶ ξυνοικεῖν τέ σοι | καὶ ξυνεῖναι τὸ πᾶν), a play most certainly about Sicily. See also Plut. *Nic.* 12: 'the youth in their training schools and the old men in their work-shops and lounging-places would sit in clusters drawing maps of Sicily, charts of the sea about it, and plans of the harbours and districts of the island which look towards Libya' (Loeb trans., Perrin), and cf. [Pl.] *Eryxias* 392b7–393a6. Nymphodorus' *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ θαυμαζομένων* (*FGH Hist* 572 FF 1–8) may well have drawn on an earlier tradition fuelled by such interest.

⁹⁷ If Vernant (1989) 164–9 is right to link Herodotus' Table of the Sun with the Cattle of the Sun, it becomes significant that there was a tradition (of uncertain date) locating them in Sicily, evident already in Thuc. 6.2.2: see Gomme–Andrewes–Dover (1945–81) IV.210–11; and Connor (1984) 162 n. 9 on Thuc. 6.2.2. See also Nymphodorus *apud Σ Od.* 12.301 (*FGH Hist* 572 F 3), and the ἡρώων in Mylae (North Sicily) said to belong to Helios' herdsman, Philostephanus *apud Σ Od.* 12.301, *FHG* III.15 (p. 31).

⁹⁸ The echoes are perhaps helped by the phraseology Herodotus uses in his Ethiopian *logos*. As a decision of the *demos* in the *ekklesia*, Cambyses' resolution to campaign is expressed with the phrase, *βουλευομένω δέ οἱ ἔδοξε* (3.17.2) and *Καμβύση δὲ ὡς ἔδοξε πέμπειν τοὺς κατασκόπους* (3.19.1): on this formula of enactments of the assembly see Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 20–1. Meanwhile, the Table of the Sun offering an unlimited supply of sacrificial meat to ὁ βουλόμενος (3.18) might suggest a particular audience who would especially desire such a provision (cf. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 2.9); see below. One might of course here bring in Rood (1999) who discusses how Thucydides frames the Sicilian Expedition in terms of the Persian War; see also Raaflaub (2002a), whose discussion would complement my own, but leads us rather away from what this *logos* still has to offer.

‘against those who had never in any respect committed wrong against us’.⁹⁹ And there is no reason that this view of a proposed campaign against Sicily could not have been present among some in the late 430s and early 420s when scholarly consensus maintains Herodotus’ text to have taken its final shape and been published.

A second mode of engagement would take the explicit textual exegesis that Herodotus provides in his Helen *logos* as its cue to consider the kind of Homeric narrator Herodotus might himself be in the Ethiopian *logos*, and ask what other narratives lurk in Herodotus’ *Odyssey* of exotic wonders and his *Iliad* of the Persian War. What traces of other narratives—like Helen’s sojourn in Egypt—are there to be noticed by an audience, if only they are not too carried away by the skill of the narrator, the wonders of the *logoi*, and—most importantly—by an over-investment in their own distinctiveness at the expense of recognising what as humans may be universal to them and the ‘other’? I turn here to such a trace, the campaign against Carthage, a textual non-event—aborted before it started—whose non-occurrence raises the question of why it should even have been included in the first place. Herodotus writes (3.19):

Καμβύση δὲ ὡς ἔδοξε πέμπειν τοὺς κατασκόπους, αὐτίκα μετεπέμπετο ἐξ Ἐλεφαντίνης πόλιος τῶν Ἰχθυοφάγων ἀνδρῶν τοὺς ἐπισταμένους τὴν Αἰθιοπίδα γλῶσσαν. ἐν ᾧ δὲ τούτους μετήρισαν, ἐν τούτῳ ἐκέλευε ἐπὶ τὴν Καρχηδόνα πλέειν τὸν ναυτικὸν στρατόν. Φοίνικες δὲ οὐκ ἔφασαν ποιήσκειν ταῦτα· ὀρκίοισί τε γὰρ μεγάλοισι ἐνδεδέσθαι καὶ οὐκ ἂν ποιέειν ὅσα ἐπὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἐωυτῶν στρατευόμενοι. Φοινίκων δὲ οὐ βουλομένων οἱ λοιποὶ οὐκ ἀξιόμαχοι ἐγίνοντο. Καρχηδόνοι μὲν νυν οὕτω δουλοσύνην διέφυγον πρὸς Περσέων· Καμβύσης γὰρ βίην οὐκ ἐδικαίου προσφέρειν Φοίνιξι, ὅτι σφέας τε αὐτοὺς ἐδεδώκεσαν Πέρσησι καὶ πᾶς ἐκ Φοινίκων ἤρτητο ὁ ναυτικὸς στρατός.

And thus it seemed good to Cambyses to send spies, and immediately he sent to the Elephantine city of the Fish-Eating men for those who knew the Ethiopian language. In the time they sent for them, in this time he was enjoining a naval force to set out against Carthage. But the Phoenicians refused to do this for they were bound by great oaths and it would have been impious for them to campaign against their own children. And once the Phoenicians proved unwilling, the

⁹⁹ Isoc. *de Pace* 84–5: ἐπὶ δὲ τοὺς οὐδὲν πώποτ’ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐξαμαρτόντας στρατιὰν ἐκπέμποντες. He continues: ‘they arrived at such a pitch of folly ... that they expected to extend their power over Italy and Sicily and Carthage.’ No doubt this view was one available to critics of the venture both in 427 and 416, both within and outside Athens.

remaining forces became insufficient for the campaign. In this way then the Carthaginians escaped slavery at the hands of the Persians. For Cambyses did not think it right to bring force to bear on the Phoenicians since they had handed themselves over to the Persians and the entire naval force had been assembled from them.

A very different Herodotean reader from myself, Enoch Powell, makes several apt observations on the intriguing irregularities of this passage:

As it was a waste of at least three weeks to hale the Ichthyophagi all the way from Elephantine to Sais, only to send them back again on the way to Ethiopia, this looks like one of those mechanical devices already illustrated for fitting in an episode which does not organically belong to the main story ... This is the only passage where Phoenician ships appear at all in Herodotus' narrative of the expedition of Cambyses. Elsewhere we hear only of a Greek navy ... [I]n chap. 25 Herodotus clearly speaks as though the fleet were entirely Greek ... Whatever the truth or origin of the Phoenician episode, it seems at least to have no connection with Cambyses in Egypt.¹⁰⁰

To Powell's comments, one might add that whether one possesses the very knowledge taken for granted by the passage will influence its readers' reception of the *logos*: the better informed a reader is about Egyptian geography, the more awkward s/he will find its premise (the addition of some 1600 km) and be compelled—like Powell—to seek some explanation for it, while those lacking such expertise will be more easily carried away by the explicit premise of the narrative. Powell's observations about the intrusive nature of this passage and its inconsistencies deserve further investigation.

From a literary point of view one may observe that the time spent in sending for the Fish-eaters allows a space to open in the text, one that Herodotus flags rather conspicuously, ἐν ᾧ ... ἐν τούτῳ, and one that he chooses to fill with a digression into the mechanics of alliances and the use of allies, particularly naval allies, in expeditions: whether it is appropriate to bring military force against one's children, that is, one's colonies; or to bring compulsion to bear on those who have willingly become allies/subjects (Herodotus' vague ἐδεδώκεσαν can nicely cover both). Needless to say, both

¹⁰⁰ Powell (1935) 150; for suspicion about this story on other grounds see von Bissing (1934) 322. Asheri (2007) 419 likewise notes the exceptional presence of the Phoenicians here in Cambyses' Egyptian Campaign; elsewhere in Cambyses' Egyptian campaign only Ionians and Aeolians are mentioned (2.1.2; 3.1.1, 13.1, 25.2 and 7, 44.2).

these topics have resonance in the later fifth century, particularly for an Athens whose *archê* was predicated on her ability to bring military force to bear on those alleged to be her Ionian children, and likewise required others who ‘had given’ themselves over to her leadership to assist her in this. It is worth noticing also that Cambyses’ respect for the Phoenicians’ religious scruples is not easily reconciled with the popular negative image of Cambyses that Herodotus’ text seems to foster both here and later, and therefore renders its inclusion difficult to account for in terms of characterisation;¹⁰¹ moreover, his behaviour puts the Athens of Herodotus’ day by comparison into a rather less ethical light.

Of course one might claim that such contemporary themes inevitably and unconsciously enter into all reconstructions of the past, and therefore need carry no further implications. Yet the marked and artificial way in which the text causes these themes to enter the narrative here renders such a characterisation of its author hard to sustain. One might then assert that Herodotus intentionally drew out these contemporary themes in his historical material in order simply to make the past intelligible. Such an understanding, however, would only raise the central problematic of the comparative enterprise at the heart of the *Histories*, and this *logos*: can such a manoeuvre be employed without consequence for interpreting the present? If intimations of the present make the past intelligible, how can this narrative of the past so constituted fail also to impact on an understanding of the present? What happens to the distinctiveness of this historical and cultural other, the ostensible historical subject, the mad Persian King, if he is made intelligible through contemporary resonances that are capable of evoking the behaviour of (some members of) Herodotus’ audiences: a mad-man, *μαινόμενος*,¹⁰² subject to *ὀργή*,¹⁰³ whose decision to wage campaigns is

¹⁰¹ See Asheri (2007) 419 for this ‘positive trait’; by contrast, the Athenians praised loyalty to themselves at the expense of a mother-city: see *IG I³* 101 (407 BC).

¹⁰² For the idea of the *dêmos* as *μαινόμενος* and the critique that Athens allows madmen to participate in government see esp. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.9 (cf. *Pl. Alc. II* esp. 138d–139c) and [Pl.] *Axiochus* 368d8; but I would argue a critique of Athens lurks beneath the majority of the appearances of *μαινόμενοι* in Plato, a subject worthy of treatment in its own right; see also Cleon’s proposal in *Thuc.* 4.39.3 as *μανιώδης* with Marr and Rhodes (2008) 73. The popularity of the phrase *dêmos mainomenos* in late writers suggests it was more widely present in the classical texts available to them; cf. *Xen. Mem.* 1.2.50. For madness in relation to an imperialist agenda, see *Aristoph. Birds* 427.

¹⁰³ See n. 48, and see *Thuc.* 3.36.2 for *ὀργή* in the assembly that caused the Athenians to decide to kill all the Mytilenaeans: *ὑπὸ ὀργῆς ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς* ... Thucydides goes out of his way to explain this, attributing the severity to the situation with the Plataeans, but such anger seems to require greater cause, such as *elpis* frustrated by having to deal with a revolt of a subject with a fleet precisely at the time when Sicily was beckoning.

described in a phrase with an all too familiar ring—*βουλευομένῳ δέ οἱ ἔδοξε*—and who desires to possess a Table of the Sun which is described as catering to *ὁ βουλόμενος*?¹⁰⁴ All of these phrases are well attested in relation to the Athenian *demos*, and elicit questions regarding the real identity of the figure about whom we are ostensibly reading.

Here I want to close on a more particular engagement with the historical context of this *logos*, and ask a double question: how might contemporary audiences have framed the subject of this never-occurring campaign against Carthage, and how indeed does Herodotus frame it? A campaign against Carthage would have immediate associations for some audiences. Numerous fifth-century texts attest to Athenian expansionist interest in Carthage—Sicily it seems was from a very early period merely a staging post to bigger and better things. In the *Knights* Aristophanes makes two references to this expansionist *telos*, and in the extravagant mood of 425/4 implied by Thuc. 4.65, some Athenians may seriously have believed that Athens could attack Carthage.¹⁰⁵ Repeated references to Carthage in Thucydides' Sicilian narrative of Book 6 suggest that Carthage was not new on the agenda.¹⁰⁶ Plutarch can be used fairly safely in this case to colour in a picture already well outlined in fifth-century sources.¹⁰⁷ If a *logos* spoke of an expansionist campaign against Carthage, the topical associations activated in at least some of Herodotus' audiences would likely have been Athens' own interest in Carthage; this is how they might have framed the Persian king's goal. Depending on the date of the circulation of this *logos*, some members of an Athenian audience might even have been induced by their strong expectations to frame this past Persian failure by their own desire and anticipation of success: as Thucydides makes his Corinthians say, for the Athenians alone *elpis* is already envisaged as success (1.70.7), or indeed as he says of the Athenians' first attempt at Sicily (4.65.4)

¹⁰⁴ See n. 98. For the political participation of *ὁ βουλόμενος* as the basis of Athenian political ideology, applicable to making proposals in the assembly and bringing forward certain forms of prosecution, see e.g. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.2, 1.6 and [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 9.1 with Marr and Rhodes (2008) 64, 69–70. See also the depiction of the 'truth' about the Table of the Sun: while its rational explanation is at odds with the depiction of these golden-age people who are said to have vastly different *nomoi* from all other men (3.20.2), the terms Herodotus uses allow for comparison with the practices of Herodotus' Greek audiences (e.g. *τοὺς ἐν τέλει* and *ἐν τῷ προαστείῳ ἐπίπλεος κρεῶν ἐφθῶν πάντων τῶν τετραπόδων*: see How and Wells (1912) *ad loc.*); and cf., too, their size-based method of choosing a king (3.20.2) with how political sway in Athens is presented in Pl. *Alc.* 104a5.

¹⁰⁵ Aristoph. *Kn.* 173–6, 1303–4, *Wasps* 700; Plut. *Per.* 20.3–4; Meiggs (1972) 320–1. On the mood in Athens, see Gomme–Andrewes–Dover (1945–81) III.525–6.

¹⁰⁶ Thuc. 6.15.2, 88.6, 90.2; cf. 6.34.2. See also Isoc. *de Pace* 85, quoted above n. 99.

¹⁰⁷ Plut. *Nic.* 12; cf. *Per.* 20.3–4.

Or, depending on the date,¹⁰⁸ they might be ruining their own aborted campaign(s).¹⁰⁹ But whatever the date, as Herodotus frames this campaign, his text conjoins this goal of Carthage with one campaign to the edge of the earth that ends disastrously in cannibalism, and another that vanishes into obscurity, buried under the Egyptian sands.¹¹⁰ Such company provides no positive prognosis for the success of a Carthaginian campaign if it ever were to occur. But like Cambyses' aborted campaign, the much talked about Athenian campaign to Carthage never did occur: despite the spying mission that took place in 427–424 BC, worthy of the Fish-eaters (Thuc. 3.86.3–4, with a *prophasis* of kinship, 4.65.3), and despite Athenian strangers appearing in Carthage in 415/4 offering *philia* ('friendship', Thuc. 6.88.6), the Athenian Carthaginian naval campaign went the way of its Persian predecessor, ending (sort of) before it began—once in 424 to the detriment of the generals who never brought it about (4.65.3), and again in 413. One effort led to the anger of a sovereign *demos* against those it sent on this mission, while both ventures were associated with their own metaphorical *ἀλληλοφαγίη* ('eating of one another'),¹¹¹ stasis, albeit in different cities, Corcyra and Athens.¹¹²

Should Herodotus be seen as commenting on the universal foolhardiness and also immorality ('That man is not just ...') of such imperial ambitions, Persian or Athenian, that juxtaposition would be evidence of the critique of

¹⁰⁸ There is no secure date for publication of our (written) version of the *Histories*: whether the intertextuality with *Achaeians* 524–9 should be considered allusion, and if so in which direction, is far from conclusive as scholarly debate continues to demonstrate; see e.g. Cobet (1977), Sansone (1985), Olson (2002) liii–liv, *contra* Fornara (1971a) and (1981); but see Heath (1987) on the reciprocal rape motif and the *Telephus*. Moreover, Aristophanic allusion to Herodotus would *require* no more than knowledge of his work through oral performance. A *hyponoia* of my own Herodotean readings is the deep uncertainty about when to date the version of the text that we possess—a self-contained story like the Ethiopian *logos* would be very easy to accommodate or modify, if the text were re-circulated with small but significant changes as, for instance, Aristophanes' *Clouds* must have been; in terms of Sicily see the rather disturbing *parenthékê* of Hdt. 7.171.1 with Smart (1977) 252. A full study of this issue deserves its own treatment, but can only emerge from close reading. For preliminary work in this direction see Irwin (2007a) 220–3, and most recently (2013).

¹⁰⁹ *Schadenfreude* might characterise the response of other audiences, hostile to Athens' imperial agenda, on which cf. Isoc. *de Pace* 87.

¹¹⁰ Hdt. 3.25.7, 26.3.

¹¹¹ Consumption as a description of stasis is a traditional one: see Alcaeus' use of *δάπτω* in 70.7, 129.23–4 (cf. [ἀ]λλαλοκάκων πολέταν in 130B 7) Lobel-Page with Irwin (2005) 255 n. 160.

¹¹² Corcyra's stasis will prove to be not an incidental parallel: see below, esp. n. 120.

Athenian *archê* several scholars have identified in the text,¹¹³ and such an understanding of the *logos* would constitute a significant contribution to reconstructing perspectives on Athens that are at odds with those of our largely Athenocentric texts.¹¹⁴ But one last Odyssean allusion may, however, make the specific history contained in this *logos* more apparent. When Athens harboured her own Carthaginian dreams in 427–424, there was a substantial fleet allied to Athens who, like Cambyses' Phoenicians, never joined her in going west on a venture against the land of the Cyclopes. This fleet belonged to figures for whom an Odyssean connection was claimed: the Corcyraeans, that is, inhabitants of the land of the Phaeacians, a detail that Thucydides finds so relevant for his account that he alludes to it twice.¹¹⁵ Like Cambyses' Phoenicians,¹¹⁶ these latter-day inhabitants of Scheria willingly gave themselves over to their imperial *hégēmon*;¹¹⁷ like the Phoenicians, they did not join in a campaign that dreamt of Carthage only to be aborted in 424.

Of course, there are differences, at least as Thucydides tells it: there we are led to infer that Corcyraean non-participation is apparently only the

¹¹³ The best survey of this is Moles (2002) with bibliography (esp. 33 n. 4); see also Blösel (2001); Munson (2001) 58, 203; and the more guarded Fowler (2003).

¹¹⁴ For Thucydides there is no ethical problem with Sicily, only strategic ones: ignorance, bad timing, the prosecution of Alcibiades (implying irrational fear of tyranny, superstition, etc.).

¹¹⁵ 1.25.4, 3.70.5; see also the testimony of Hellanicus, reported in Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Φαίαξ (= *FGrHist* 4 F 77), who was said to be the child of Poseidon and Corcyra (ὁ Ποσειδῶνος καὶ Κερκύρας τῆς Ἀσωπίδος, ἀφ' ἧς ἡ νῆσος Κέρκυρα ἐκλήθη, τὸ πρὶν Δρεπάνη τε καὶ Σχερία κληθεῖσα); and Arist. *Const. of the Corcyraeans* apud Σ A.R. 4.983; Heraclides Ponticus, fr. 157.13. Whether reference to the Phaeacians was relevant for the design of Thucydides' account, or was included because it was relevant in popular politics at the time, or both, is difficult to determine. The appearance of Andocides, son of Leogoras, in Thucydides' list of generals during the Athenian conflict over Corcyra (Thuc. 1.51.4) suggests, precisely because it is incorrect (whether or not intentionally so, see ML 61 with Hornblower (1991) 95; and earlier Gomme–Andrewes–Dover (1945–81) I.188–9), that Odyssean allusion played some part in historical narrative surrounding Corcyra and Athens' relations with her: one of the ten prominent families, as Suda (*s.v.* Ἀνδοκίδης) notes, Andocides, according to Hellanicus (*FGrHist* 4 F 156), claimed descent from Leogoras, son of Telemachus and Nausikaa.

¹¹⁶ σφέας τε αὐτοὺς ἐδεδώκεσαν Πέρσησι ('and they had given themselves to the Persians'), Hdt. 3.19.

¹¹⁷ See Thuc. 1.33.2 where the Corcyraeans emphasise this very point: αὐτῆ [sc. δύναμις] πάρεστιν αὐτεπάγγελτος ἄνευ κινδύνων καὶ δαπάνης διδοῦσα ἑαυτήν. Note also that the remaining forces in the Cambyses story who are rendered not *axiomachoi* by the Phoenicians' withdrawal are none other than the future allies of Athens, i.e., Ionians and Aeolians.

inadvertent consequence of their *stasis*. Herodotus' *logos*, however, arguably presents another version of the event. For the Corcyraeans were likely to have presented their own reasons for opting out of this expedition, not unlike those adduced by the Phoenicians:¹¹⁸ they, too, were bound by great oaths (a defensive alliance), and as Dorians (a sister city of Syracuse), they too would have had a *prophasis* of kinship that could be claimed to constrain them.¹¹⁹ Certainly this must have been among the arguments used at their assembly when they resolved not to alter their alliance from a defensive to an offensive one and a fair-seeming one to present to the Athenians, but rather unlike Cambyses, the Athenian general Nicostratus with 500 Messenian hoplites appeared to the Corcyraean assembly no doubt prepared to use compulsion to bring about the desired campaign.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Cf. Asheri (2007) 419 for whom Corcyra also comes to mind, albeit in relation to Corinth.

¹¹⁹ Hdt. 3.19: ὀρκίοισί τε γὰρ μεγάλοισι ἐνδεδέσθαι καὶ οὐκ ἂν ποιέειν ὅσια ἐπὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἑωυτῶν στρατευόμενοι ('For [they said] they were bound by great oaths and would not act impiously by campaigning against their own children'). Herodotus lets these oaths dangle unexplained in the text, with no necessary link to the kinship claim that follows; indeed, the ἂν with ποιέειν suggest these two grounds for non-participation are of a different order. Those strong oaths, that is, the nature of the alliance that Corcyra was to have with Athens was at issue in 427 (see next note), with consequences for a western campaign, while kinship was likely to have been an alleged Corcyraean *prophasis* during the Sicilian venture of the early 420s as suggested by the biting Thuc. 7.57.7 who calls the Corcyraeans 'Corinthians'; compare Hdt. 7.154 where Corcyra aids Syracuse on a par with her mother-city. Given that Corcyra's alliance with Athens arose as a consequence of warring against her own colony, Epidamnus, and she seemed to have had no compunction about being at odds with her mother-city, it could not have been clear to the Athenians at the time of the alliance that Corcyra would enlist such a *prophasis* to opt out of a Sicilian venture, and once offered, this impediment to their expansionist aims no doubt elicited *orgê*. See also the curse of Hermippus, 63.10–11, dated to the same time: καὶ Κερκυραίους ὁ Ποσειδῶν ἐξολέσειεν | ναυσὶν ἐπὶ γλαφυραῖς, ὅτιν' ἴδιχα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν.

¹²⁰ Thuc. 3.75.1. It is their presence that induces the Corcyraeans to reverse their former decision not to extend their alliance with Athens to an offensive one. Herodotus' *logos* helps to read through Thucydides' account of Corcyra's *stasis*. Although Thucydides presents their *stasis* as paradigmatic, and as such therefore seeming to require no specific explanation, its internal disorder, *pace* Thucydides, seems driven by conflict over a particular foreign policy, a desire not to alter the defensive alliance with Athens to an offensive one (contrast 3.70.2 with 3.70.6 and 3.75.1, and see Bruce (1971)), a change that would have entailed participation in a Sicilian campaign, at the least to the extent of allowing the use of Corcyra's harbours, which seems to have been explicitly excluded by a further motion of their assembly allowing admittance of no more than a single ship of either side into its harbours. But no doubt beyond the harbours Corcyraean forces were also needed given that the Mytilenaeans had revolted. Whether an offensive alliance was satisfactorily (legally) concluded after Nicostratus and 500 Messenian hoplites appeared

Herodotus' reference to these great oaths goes without gloss by commentators, but presumably our most Homeric of narrators expected those careful among his contemporary readers to notice the remark and attempt to provide their own referent for it, the version of events not being told because of the inappropriateness to his genre.

The structural parallels are met by word-play that is both most Odyssean and at home in the name-play of the Ethiopians of Herodotus' *logos* who may be construed as both 'long-lived' and 'big-bowed'. For by means of the *Odyssey* these Phoenicians are linked to the Corcyraeans. The *Odyssey* plays with the homophony of Phoenicians and Phaeacians, and the potential conflation of the two peoples whom Odysseus is alleged to have encountered in his travels: the poet of the *Odyssey* asserts that Odysseus sojourned with the *Phaeacians*, while his main character in disguise asserts to have spent time with *Phoenicians*, thereby forging a link between these fairy-tale masters of the sea and their historical counterparts, both described uniquely in the *Odyssey* as *ναυσικλυτοί*.¹²¹ Here Herodotus, like both Odysseus and his poet, indulges in the same game with names to effect his own narrative aims. One does well to recall at this juncture Powell's observation on the inconsistency of the appearance of the Phoenicians in this passage, when throughout the fleet has been composed consistently of Aeolian and Ionian Greeks.¹²² On the reading presented here, the function of

in the assembly (3.75.1) or not was rendered academic by the events to follow, since full stasis broke out and was not resolved until 425 when, soon after the Sicilians chose to resolve their differences (4.65), Athens was deprived of her *prophasis* to intervene and the Corcyraean fleet was not enjoined.

¹²¹ For all the points of contact between these two peoples see Dougherty (2001) ch. 5 (though ultimately she is interested in the differences); on *ναυσικλυτοί* see Winter (1995) 256, Dougherty (2001) 112. See also Ahl (2002). The explicit substitution begins at 13.271–86 where Odysseus speaks of noble Phoenicians who dropped him off in Ithaca, but as Dougherty (2001) 112 comments, 'Phoenicia is implicated in the world of the Phaeacians from the moment of Odysseus' first encounter with it', as for instance the *Odyssey*'s use of *phoenix* at the start of the Phaeacian tale (6.163). Herodotus' Ethiopian *logos* displays a similar ambiguity at the outset around the gift of the wine, *Φοινικήμιον* (3.20.1), which may equally mean Phoenician or palm (cf. Hermippus, fr. 63.22, *Φοινίκη καρπὸν φοίνικος* [sc. *παρέχει*]), an ambiguity which anticipates the problem with the two meanings of Macrobius. There is, moreover, a *Nachleben* to the Phoenician/Phaeacian wordplay: Virgil places his *homage* to Homer's Phaeacian narrative among Dido's Phoenician Carthaginians (with a further pun of Phoenician/phoenix at *Aen.* 4.621), a pun that accounts for the otherwise awkward transferral of the virginal Nausicaa's simile to the widow Dido. Moreover, Heliodorus runs the gamut of *p/Phoenix* puns and Odyssean intertexts in his suggestively named *Aethiopia*: Bowie (1998).

¹²² See above, p. 61 with n. 100. Of course, a 'Phoenician' fleet, that is a Corcyran fleet, would be Dorian.

their presence in this historical non-event is precisely to introduce the Corcyraeans into this narrative of imperial expansionist designs on the ἔσχατα γῆς.

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From Phoenicians to Phaeacians to Corcyraeans: the *Odyssey* was a foundational text demonstrating how success is to be had through careful choices in masking and revealing identities, above all through the careful manipulation of names. An Odysseus-like Herodotus makes this demonstration his own, challenging some in his audiences to see if they are really as clever in this respect as the hero they so admired even to the extent that they would use him to model their own expansionist desires.

But Herodotus, too, may have a further agenda in his manipulation of identities in the Ethiopian *logos*. The Ethiopian *logos* participates in a universal truth made explicit and prominent in the *logoi* of Cambyses to come: the *orgê* and madness of an imperial ruler. One knows better than to speak plainly before a tyrant, a truism that the Cambyses narrative of Book 3 repeatedly demonstrates.¹²³ Did the same hold true before a *tyrannis polis* and its tyrannical *demos*?¹²⁴ Would they be any less likely to feel *orgê* at someone conveying *logoi* offering moral censure for their expansionist ambitions than Cambyses at the Fish-eaters' report of their interview with the Ethiopian King? Just how plainly should Herodotus be expected to speak?

An in-depth reading of the Ethiopian *logos* contributes something important to our understanding of the use of Homer in a late fifth-century context:¹²⁵ what Homer 'taught' could be variously construed and deployed. Herodotus creates a Homericising narrative that nevertheless reads against Odysseus' version of what happened when the crafty hero met the Cyclops, revealing instead an alternative, 'truer', version of cross-cultural encounters at the edge of the world in which the valences of cultural sophisticate and

¹²³ On speaking before Cambyses, see the narratives of the Egyptian priests and the Apis calf (3.27–9), the Persian judges (3.31), Cambyses' sister (3.32), and Croesus (3.34–6).

¹²⁴ On the *tyrannis polis* see Thuc. 1.122.3, 124.3, 6.85.1, cf. 2.63.2, Aristoph. *Kn.* 1111–12; Knox (1957) ch. 2, Raaflaub (1979), Tuplin (1985), Raaflaub (1987), Munson (2001) 58–9. On the necessity for oblique speech to the Athenian *demos* see Diodotus (Thuc. 3.42) and Nicias (Thuc. 6.19.2); cf. Themistocles (Hdt. 8.63–64.1) with Pelling (1997).

¹²⁵ For the subject of Homer and history writing see Strasburger (1972), and more recently Pelling (2006) and Marincola (2006), and now (2007). Though ostensibly a well-worn subject, more work needs to be done on the different modes of using Homer in our historians and their differences from one another.

primitive are reversed and the abuses of *xenia* re-ascribed, an understanding of Odysseus' encounter which of course lurks in Homer's own text. Herodotus can also present Homer as an author allowing his version to be influenced by the constraints of genre, and this depiction of Homer, in turn, is designed, I argue, both to provide a model for engaging with his own text and to undermine the truth-status of the *Iliad* to reveal a version of the Helen story capable of reversing sympathies in the ideological conflict between Greeks and barbarians. And in doing so he provides a model of 'the author' which I argue is no less applicable to his own narrative. If Herodotus can reveal a version of the story of Helen that 'must' remain latent in Homer's text owing to the constraints of his genre (in the definition of which the expectations of an audience are comprised), in which Greeks and Trojans emerge as no different, guilty alike of analogous crimes in abusing *xenia* (those of the Greeks being in fact even worse), perhaps other narratives lurk in Herodotus' *Histories*, likewise deemed inappropriate to his genre in that they reveal his Greeks and barbarians, and particularly Athenians and Persians, to be in certain respects identical,¹²⁶ and those with perhaps the most invested in claiming a moral superiority to be in fact ethically far worse.

If Herodotus engages his audiences' receptivity to Homer for his own ends, demonstrating to them through his complex Homeric narrative the dangers that reside in mapping the figures of epic—Ethiopians, Cyclopes—onto the real world and the care one must take in reading, there is also—returning to the subject of Part I—a final parting shot for the Hippocratic in his audience which cannot be passed over. For Herodotus' Ethiopians, located not at the eastern or western edges of the earth but in the south, may have only one possible referent in the Homeric poems, and yet there was a more pressing contemporary referent for a late fifth-century Athenian audience with first-hand schooling in epidemiology, and here we come full circle to the Hippocratic element of the *logos*: namely, the plague at Athens, whose starting point, it is said (λέγεται, Thuc. 2.48), was *Ethiopia*, and whose second outbreak followed, if we can trust Thucydides, hard upon Athens' dispatching of twenty ships towards their own Table of the Sun in the

¹²⁶ Most notably, as those who have enslaved Ionian Greeks, collecting *phoros* from them, for Herodotus the first wrong done by the barbarians to the Greeks (1.6), using the word coined for the Delian League (Thuc. 1.96.2). My focus on Athens and Persia in this article, however, is not to exclude other Greeks from Herodotus' revelation of their affinity with non-Greeks, merely to focus on one dimension within Herodotus' ethnographic enterprise: see, for instance, Braund (2004) on Spartan elements in Herodotus' depiction of the Scythians, or the claim that Spartans kings are of Egyptian descent (6.53–5); meanwhile, both Scythians and Egyptians share the Spartan aversion to foreign customs (cf. Lateiner (1989) 155).

summer of 427.¹²⁷ The seeming coincidence of these events was, however, open to moral interpretation and likely to have preoccupied those contemporaries who, as Thucydides admits, albeit disparagingly, found the cause of the plague to lie in war with Sparta, that is, the breaking of the Thirty Years' Peace (Thuc. 2.54). Given that the war was in part the consequence of alliance with Corcyra, encouraged by desire for conquest in the west, though justified by the claim of that war's inevitability, the second outburst might well have been interpreted as a further sign that the westward venture was wrong, either immoral in what it had precipitated (a violated peace) and/or in its very conception (an unjust war of expansion). Typically non-committal, Thucydides leaves it to his readers to draw their own inferences about what significance contemporaries drew from the juxtaposition of these events, knowing this would necessarily become ever harder to reconstruct as time passed. By contrast, there can be little doubt how Herodotus meant his readers to construe a warning from Ethiopia about the injustice of expansionist campaigns, even should they fail to appreciate the historical referent behind this folklorish tale.¹²⁸

Herodotus claims to have written an *apodeixis* of his investigations so that human events might not be erased by time (become *ἐξίτηλα*, *praef.*), but in doing so he also requires his readers to engage in their own *historiê* if he is to be completely successful in his aim.

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¹²⁷ Ships dispatched: summer, 427 (Thuc. 3.86). The second outbreak of the plague, winter 427/6 (3.87.1).

¹²⁸ One might also add that as it was no less clear then than now that the results of ethnographical investigation (not to mention also historical investigation) inevitably risk being enlisted by agents with imperialist agenda, perhaps Herodotus saw that the only ethical way to compose such a work was by not presenting true and accurate accounts but rather by composing his work in such a way as to render it difficult to use straightforwardly towards that end.

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