

WAITING FOR SOLON: AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS IN HERODOTUS*

Abstract: In this article, I focus not so much on what Solon actually says and does in his conversation with Croesus, but on what Herodotus' readers, as well as Croesus himself, *think* Solon might say or do. I argue that Herodotus uses analogous episodes, those of Gyges, Candaules, and Candaules' wife, of Arion and Periander, and of Bias/Pittacus and Croesus, to shape readers' expectations of Solon's conversation with Croesus, but he then subverts many of those expectations within the conversation itself. In so doing, Herodotus emphasises the programmatic function for the *Histories* of much of what Solon tells Croesus.

Keywords: Herodotus, Arion, artistic patronage, audience expectations, Candaules, Croesus, Seven Sages, Solon

Scholars have long recognised the programmatic quality that the encounter between Solon and Croesus (1.29–33) has for Herodotus' *Histories*.¹ Croesus' importance alone for Herodotus' work cannot be underestimated. In a sense, Herodotus begins the *Histories* with Croesus; he follows the story of Croesus and the Lydian Mermnad dynasty from its beginning with Gyges' murder of Candaules all the way to its conclusion with Croesus' defeat by the Persian king Cyrus. Croesus also occupies a primary position in the *Histories* as the first in the line of great eastern imperialists that culminates with the Persian Xerxes. On the one hand, the Solon–Croesus episode foreshadows Croesus' impending downfall. On the other hand, the episode reflects many of Herodotus' chief thematic concerns: the conflict between East and West and the clash between different cultures in general; the mutability of human fortune and the gods' jealousy of human excess; the wise advisor motif and the challenge of acquiring knowledge. All of this is clear in retrospect; that is to say, once one has read the *Histories* as a whole, the foundational nature of Solon's conversation with Croesus is apparent.

Less clear, however, are the expectations that Herodotus' original Greek audience may have had for the Solon–Croesus episode when they first read it

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¹ See esp. Shapiro (1996); Pelling (2006).

in the *Histories*.² The story of Solon's visit with Croesus at his court in Sardis is probably not historical, and even in antiquity the story was doubted on chronological grounds.³ It is even possible that Herodotus himself invented the whole encounter between Solon and Croesus.⁴ Therefore, if Herodotus was the first Greek writer to tell the story about Solon's sojourn in Sardis, it is not as if readers, when they first came to the story, would have known what to expect from it, nor exactly how the Athenian sage, poet, and lawgiver was going to behave when he arrived at the Lydian court, any more than the Herodotean character Croesus knows. In this article, I will explore not so much what Solon actually says and does during his conversation with Croesus, but what Herodotus' readers, as well as Croesus himself, *think* Solon might say and do. I argue that Herodotus prepares for the Solon–Croesus episode by shaping readers' expectations of Solon and then subverting many, but not all, of those expectations during the episode. By such subversion, Herodotus strongly emphasises the encounter between Solon and Croesus in order to draw readers' full attention to the encounter's thematic importance for the *Histories* as a whole.

As part of his shaping expectations, Herodotus prepares readers for the Solon–Croesus conversation with analogous episodes.⁵ One is the encounter between Arion and Periander (1.23–4). Just as the Lesbian musician and singer Arion receives artistic patronage at the court of the Corinthian tyrant Periander, perhaps the Athenian poet Solon, readers may assume, will receive a similar artistic patronage at the court of Croesus. Another occurs in 1.27, where the Greek Bias/Pittacus visits Croesus' court. Just as Croesus delights in the verbal dexterity displayed by the Greek Bias or Pittacus, both of whom were included among the Seven Sages, so too may Croesus be expected by readers to delight in the words of Solon, himself one of the

² The exact regional and political diversity of those first Greek readers of Herodotus' work is unclear. Munson (2013a) 13 (cf. Strasburger (2013) 319–20) even suggests that Herodotus' 'fellow-citizens of Thurii ... may be the ultimate implied audience of the *Histories*'. Although Athens founded its Panhellenic, south Italian colony of Thurii in 444/3 BCE, it is unknown when Herodotus of Halicarnassus moved to Thurii and became a citizen there (as the biographical tradition relates; see Munson 6–7).

³ See Plut. *Solon* 27.1; Moles (1993) 120–1. The one more or less secure date we have for Solon, that of his archonship (594/3 BCE), does not fit well with the dates of Croesus' reign (560–46). If Solon did visit Croesus, therefore, he must have visited later in his life and not around the time of his archonship; see Miller (1963); Rhodes (1993) 169–70 and (2003) 64; Busine (2002) 18 n. 4; Asheri (2007) 99; Flower (2013) 131.

⁴ *Contra* Evans (1978) 36, who argues that the tradition about 'Solon's journey to Asia ... antedated Herodotus'. Similarly, Regenbogen (1965) 398 gives a summary of what the story of Solon's encounter with Croesus probably looked like before Herodotus and others elaborated on it.

⁵ On Herodotus' use of analogy in his work, see Corcella (1984) and (2013).

Seven Sages. The episode featuring the Lydian Candaules and Gyges (1.8–12) is similar to the Solon–Croesus episode in that Candaules, like Croesus, tries to exploit the connection between ‘gazing’ (θεᾶσθαι) and ‘wonder’ (θῶμα): just as Candaules invites Gyges to ‘gaze’ at the naked body of Candaules’ own wife and to consider it a ‘wonder’, so Croesus invites Solon to gaze at the vast wealth in his royal treasure-houses and consider this wealth a ‘wonder’. Thus the behaviour of Candaules in 1.8–12 helps shape readers’ expectations for the behaviour of Croesus in 1.29–33.

Within the context of his conversation with Solon, what Croesus most expects from Solon is flattery. Specifically, when Croesus asks Solon if in his travels he has seen anyone who is the most ‘prosperous’ (ὀλβιος) of all (1.30.2), Croesus thinks that he already knows what Solon’s response will be. As Herodotus explains, Croesus asks Solon the question that he does because Croesus ‘believes’ (ἐλπίζων) that he himself is the most *olbios* of men (1.30.3). Croesus has already laid the groundwork, moreover, towards eliciting a favourable response from Solon by trying to overawe Solon with his wealth and to suggest that Solon may be richly rewarded if he answers the question in the way that Croesus desires. And yet Herodotus hints to readers that Croesus’ efforts to ‘bribe’ Solon are likely futile: Herodotus distances the sage Solon somewhat from the other Greek σοφισταί who have been visiting Croesus’ court (1.29.1), and who presumably left Sardis as wealthier men than when they arrived. Solon will prove to be different, neither flattering Croesus nor receiving gifts in return for that flattery.

Intertwined with Croesus’ own disappointed expectations of his Athenian guest are readers’ expectations of Solon. As the external audience for Solon’s response to Croesus, Herodotus’ readers naturally relate to and, at least momentarily perhaps, equate themselves with Croesus, the internal audience for that same response. Ultimately, what Croesus gets from Solon is not what he expects. Instead of flattery, for example, Croesus gets a pointed warning, first in the form of two stories, one about the Athenian Tellus (1.30.3–5) and the other about the Argive brothers Cleobis and Biton (1.31), and then in the form of a long disquisition focused on the impermanence of human good fortune (1.32).⁶ Croesus is by turns shocked, angered, and disgusted by what he hears from Solon, finally concluding that Solon is a man of ‘no account’ and ‘very stupid’, and he sends him away (1.33). Readers too are probably caught off guard by what Solon says. If readers expected Solon to be an Arion or a Bias/Pittacus, if they expected Solon to be impressed by Croesus’ wealth, if they expected that Solon came to Sardis seeking patronage, they are soon as surprised as is Croesus.

⁶ Cf. Dewald (2012) 79: ‘Although as a guest [Solon] is expected at least to begin with flattery of his host, he more or less harangues Croesus with several long stories ...’ On Solon’s stories about Tellus and about Cleobis and Biton, see Branscome (2013) 24–53.

1. Solon the Sage

Herodotus plays upon audience's expectations of Solon as a sage, whether those of the internal audience (Croesus) or those of the external audience (Herodotus' readers). Based on his experience with others of the Seven Sages—including Bias/Pittacus—the Herodotean Croesus may have already formed an opinion of what he might expect from the sage Solon, before the latter ever arrived in Sardis. Similarly, based on their knowledge that Solon was one of the Seven Sages, as well as their having seen how Bias/Pittacus interacted with Croesus earlier, readers too may have already formed an opinion of what they might expect from the sage Solon. In Solon's conversation with Croesus, there are certainly some ways in which Solon behaves as a sage, much as readers and Croesus would expect: Solon does give a verbal performance for Croesus that demonstrates his wisdom, both in the Tellus and Cleobis and Biton stories and in his comments on human prosperity. There are other ways, however, in which the sage Solon's behaviour is peculiar and unexpected: Solon's performance, far from being designed to please Croesus, is designed more to reprove and reform the king.

But did Herodotus or his late fifth-century readers already recognise Solon as one of the Seven Sages?⁷ Plato's *Protagoras* (343a) is the earliest surviving work that mentions the Seven Sages as a group, but oral (if not also literary) tradition about the Seven Sages was no doubt much older.⁸ Although lists varied widely, four names tended to appear in every list: Solon, Thales, Bias, and Pittacus,⁹ all four of whom are associated with Croesus in *Histories* I.¹⁰ While Herodotus never refers to the Seven Sages as a group, he does mention many of those who would later be counted among the Seven Sages. In the *Histories*, moreover, these figures, including Thales or Solon, put on verbal and visual displays of their wisdom just as the Seven Sages will do in later Greek sources.¹¹ As Richard Martin has demonstrated,

⁷ On the Seven Sages, see Lefkowitz (2012) 50–1 (on Solon); Oliva (1988) 15–17; Martin (1993); Bollansée (1998); Nightingale (2000) 158–61; Busine (2002); Asheri (2007) 90; Kurke (2011); Tell (2011) index s.v. 'Seven Sages'; Griffiths (2012).

⁸ See Bollansée (1998) 112–19, (1999), who demolishes Fehling's 1985 thesis that Plato first invented the idea of the Seven Sages. Cf. Martin (1993) 112–13 and 125 n. 16; Busine (2002) 16, 29–30, 34.

⁹ As Bollansée (1998) 145 n. 75, 175–6; cf. Oliva (1988) 15; Busine (2002) 34–5.

¹⁰ Croesus came to be so closely associated with the Seven Sages that in some post-Herodotean accounts (e.g., Plutarch's *Banquet of the Seven Sages*) he actually hosted a *symposion* for all seven in Sardis. See Lo Cascio (1997); Bollansée (1998) 173 and n. 11; Busine (2002) 93–102; Asheri (2007) 90.

¹¹ Herodotus mentions, in addition to Thales, Solon, Bias, and Pittacus, the Corinthian Periander, the Spartan Chilon, the Samian Pythagoras, and the Scythian Anacharsis, all

the Seven Sages were *performers*: they did not simply say wise things, but also put on display their full range of verbal and poetic talents.¹² As we will see, the sage Bias (or Pittacus) gives a performance of wisdom before Croesus in 1.27 that is punctuated by Bias/Pittacus' skilful verbal play with a metaphor. In addition to verbal display, there could also be a strong visual component to a performance by one of the sages, especially an action that would lead to an impressive visual display of a given sage's learning or expertise. For example, Herodotus records 'the common story of the Greeks' (ὁ πολλὸς λόγος Ἑλλήνων, 1.75.3) that Thales of Miletus made the Halys passable for Croesus' army with a visual display of his expertise: he diverted the river into two streams that flowed on either side of and around the Lydian camp.¹³ As far as Herodotus and his Greek readers were concerned, therefore, we can probably conclude that Solon *was* one of the Seven Sages.¹⁴

Although Greek sources that discuss the Seven Sages often simply use the word *σοφός* to refer to a sage, sometimes such sources use *σοφιστής* instead.¹⁵ The primary meaning of the latter in the *Histories* seems to be 'wise man' or 'sage'.¹⁶ Herodotus uses the word in 1.29.1 (when he first introduces Solon) and then twice more: 2.49.1 (those *σοφισταί* who, building on the earlier teachings of Melampus, introduced Greeks to the worship of Dionysus) and 4.95.2 (the *σοφιστής* Pythagoras). His usage is in keeping with that of earlier Greek writers, for whom *σοφισταί* could denote equally poets, prose-writers, and other 'wise men'.¹⁷ What all *sophistai* seem to have in common is that they are *teachers* of some sort, whether of moral or of technical knowledge.¹⁸ We could appropriately label Solon a *σοφιστής*, then, at least to the extent that he was a poet and that he was one of the Seven Sages.

of whom occur in later lists of sages. See Nagy (1990) 333–4; Payen (1997) 57–8; Busine (2002) 17.

¹² See Martin (1993) 117–18; Nightingale (2007) 176–7 with reff. to her earlier discussions.

¹³ Herodotus, however, dismisses this story about Thales: 'as I say' (ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ λέγω, 1.75.3)—but not as the 'common story of the Greeks' says—Croesus' army crossed the Halys using bridges that already existed at the river.

¹⁴ See Oliva (1988) 16. Cf. de Blois (2006) 431; *contra*, Brown (1989) 4 (cf. Busine (2002) 17, 25–7), who states unequivocally that 'Herodotus had never heard of the seven Sages'.

¹⁵ The Seven Sages as *sophistai*: [Dem.] 61.50; Isocrates 15.235 (on Solon).

¹⁶ See Kurke (2011) 103–4. Similarly, Griffith (1983) 95: 'Herodotus' *sophistai* are venerable, ancient seers and sages'. Cf. Thomas (2000) 284; Asheri (2007) 99 (specifically on 1.29.1).

¹⁷ On the meaning of *σοφιστής*, see Kerferd (1950) and (1981) 24–41; Guthrie (1971) 27–54; Lloyd (1987) 92–4 nn. 152–3; Bollansée (1998) 160; Tell (2011) 21–37; Aicher (2013) 123.

¹⁸ Cf. Kurke (2011) 102 n. 22, who stresses that the teaching done by *sophistai* had a marked religious and agonistic nature.

And yet, by the time Herodotus was publishing his work, whether in parts or as a whole, (probably) in the 420s BCE, the word *σοφιστής* had already begun to be associated with the Sophists,¹⁹ who were famously viewed with suspicion and were notorious (especially in Plato) for charging fees for their instruction. Herodotus' late fifth-century Greek readers could not help but have these Sophists in mind whenever they encountered the word *σοφιστής* in the *Histories*.²⁰

Herodotus seems aware of the possible negative connotations of the word *σοφιστής*, for he rather ambiguously associates Solon with *sophistai* (1.29.1):

κατεστραμμένων δὲ τούτων καὶ προσεπικτωμένου Κροίσου Λυδοῖσι, ἀπικνέονται ἐς Σάρδις ἀκμαζούσας πλούτῳ ἄλλοι τε οἱ πάντες ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος σοφισταί, οἳ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον ἐτύγχανον ἔόντες, ὡς ἕκαστος αὐτῶν ἀπικνέοιτο, καὶ δὴ καὶ Σόλων ἀνὴρ Ἀθηναῖος ...

After Croesus had subdued these [peoples] and acquired additional territory for the Lydians, there arrived in Sardis, which was abounding in wealth, both others, all the *sophistai* from Greece, who by chance lived at this time, as each of them used to come [to Sardis], and in particular Solon, an Athenian man ...²¹

With the word order *ἄλλοι τε οἱ πάντες ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος σοφισταί ... καὶ δὴ καὶ Σόλων* ('both others, all the *sophistai* from Greece ... and in particular Solon'), Herodotus separates Solon syntactically from the other *sophistai* who travel to Croesus' court.²² In effect, then, Herodotus both links Solon with *sophistai* and, at the same time, distances him from *sophistai*.

¹⁹ As Moles (1996) 262: 'What *are σοφισταί*? On one level, "wise men". But already in the late fifth century *σοφιστής* can mean "sophist" in the modern sense'. On the publication date for Herodotus' *Histories*, see Sansone (1985); Hornblower (1996) 19–38, cf. 122–45. Although most scholars date the publication of the *Histories* to 425 BCE or earlier (e.g., Dewald (1998) x–xi; Stadter (2012) 2 n. 4) Fornara (1971) esp. 32–4; cf. id. (1981) (*contra* Cobet (1977), cf. (1987)) convincingly argues for a publication date of 424 at the earliest. Irwin (2013) goes even further, dating the *Histories* to sometime after 413. See further Munson (2013a) 11–13.

²⁰ *Contra* Legrand (1946) 47n.2: 'Le mot *σοφιστής* ne semble pas avoir dans ce passage, non plus qu'au livre II chapitre 49 et au livre IV chapitre 95, un sens défavorable ou ironique.'

²¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own. The edition of Herodotus used is the third edition of Hude (1927).

²² How and Wells (1928) I.66 go too far, however, in arguing that '[t]he order of the words *ἄλλοι τε οἱ* not *οἱ τε ἄλλοι* show that H. *did not consider Solon a σοφιστής* [my italics]'. A possible alternate word order that Herodotus could have used, *οἱ τε ἄλλοι πάντες ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος σοφισταί ... καὶ δὴ καὶ Σόλων*, would mean 'both all the other *sophistai* from

Herodotus' decision to do both rests on the mercenary associations of the Sophists. The detail that Sardis is 'abounding in wealth' (*ἀκμαζούσας πλούτῳ*) should be taken in part with the very first words of 1.29.1, *κατεστραμμένων δὲ τούτων καὶ προσεπικτωμένου Κροίσου Λυδοῖσι*, since Croesus' conquests would have certainly contributed to the wealth flowing into Sardis.²³ But Sardis' wealth also helps explain just why all these *sophistai* have been traveling to the Lydian capital: to receive some of Croesus' wealth in return for their teachings.²⁴ In connection with these *sophistai*, the notoriously venal Sophists would naturally have come to mind for Herodotus' readers.²⁵

In addition to the detail about Sardis' 'abounding in wealth', Herodotus also suggests in a more specific way that Croesus intends to reward Solon financially (1.30.1):

ἀπικόμενος δὲ ἐξεινίζετο ἐν τοῖσι βασιλῆιοισι ὑπὸ τοῦ Κροίσου· μετὰ δέ, ἡμέρη τρίτη ἢ τετάρτη, κελύσαντος Κροίσου τὸν Σόλωνα θεράποντες περιῆγον κατὰ τοὺς θησαυροὺς καὶ ἐπεδείκνυσαν πάντα ἔόντα μεγάλα τε καὶ ὄλβια.

When [Solon] arrived, he was entertained by Croesus in the palace; afterwards, on the third or fourth day, at Croesus' bidding, servants led Solon around through the treasure-houses and pointed out to him all the great wealth that existed [for Croesus].

Greece ... and in particular Solon'. The latter word order would have clearly indicated that Herodotus considered Solon one of the *sophistai*, but his actual expression renders the relationship between Solon and the *sophistai* unclear.

²³ That the 'wealth' (*πλούτῳ*, 1.29.1) of Sardis can be read as a concomitant result of Croesus' conquests undermines the suggestion made by many scholars (Stein (1962) 34; How and Wells (1928) I.66; Legrand (1946) 46 n. 5; Immerwahr (1966) 29 n. 43; McNeal (1986) 119; Cooper (2002) 2587 (2.56.14.1A), Asheri (2007) 99) that the words *καὶ προσεπικτωμένου Κροίσου Λυδοῖσι* in 1.29.1 are interpolated; cf. Moles (1996) 262 and 281 n. 13 (on 1.28).

²⁴ Cf. Pelling (2013) 367. How and Well's assertion ((1928) I.66) that 'the *causal* [my italics] participle *ἀκμαζούσας πλούτῳ* reminds us of the reproach of venality made against the sophists' is too limiting. However much it may be tied to the notion of sophistic venality, the phrase is also tied to Croesus' conquests. See, however, Lateiner (1982) 97–8, who argues that out of the five occurrences of the verb *ἀκμάζειν* ('flourish') in Herodotus, four of them (as in 1.29.1) occur in connection with cities (like Sardis) that will soon be captured.

²⁵ This is true, even if we do not accept the arguments of Moles ((1996) 263–4; (2002) 36; cf. (2007) 259 n. 76) that Herodotus intends readers to see both in Sardis contemporary Athens and in Croesus Pericles.

Croesus has his servants give Solon a tour of his richly stocked treasure-houses (τοὺς θησαυρούς) prior to their conversation.²⁶ With this guided tour, Croesus not only means to impress Solon with a display of the wealth contained in the treasure-houses, but also means to imply that Solon, as a result of his upcoming conversation with Croesus, might receive some of this very wealth as payment.²⁷

That Croesus might enable a Greek visitor to enrich himself with the wealth from Croesus' own treasure-houses is demonstrated by another Herodotean tale, which features the Athenian Alcmaeon (6.125). According to Herodotus, Alcmaeon's aristocratic family was already a 'distinguished' (λαμπροί) one in Athens, but it had its wealth vastly increased by the gold that Alcmaeon received from Croesus (6.125.1).²⁸ Alcmaeon had won the gratitude of Croesus by acting as a 'facilitator' (συμπρήκτωρ) for the Lydians whom Croesus had sent to Delphi to consult the oracle (6.125.2).²⁹ In return for Alcmaeon's services, Croesus summons Alcmaeon to Sardis and makes him a very attractive offer: 'whatever [amount] of gold he can carry out on his own body all at once' (χρυσοῦ τὸν ἂν δύνηται τῷ ἑωυτοῦ σώματι ἐξενείκασθαι ἐσάπαξ, 6.125.2). Taking Croesus up on his offer, Alcmaeon puts on an oversized tunic (κιθών) and oversized boots (κόθυρνοι) and enters Croesus' treasure-house (τὸν θησαυρόν); he stuffs the fold of the tunic and the boots full of gold dust, sprinkles gold dust in his hair, and even fills his mouth with gold dust (6.125.3–4). Alcmaeon is so weighted down and stuffed with gold that 'laughter came upon Croesus when he saw [Alcmaeon]' (ἰδόντα ... τὸν Κροῖσον γέλωσ ἐσῆλθε), and he let Alcmaeon keep all the gold and gave him that much more gold besides (6.125.5).³⁰

²⁶ Purves (2010) 138–40 discusses the significance of royal treasure-houses in the *Histories*.

²⁷ Diod. 9.2.1, cf. 9.26.1 makes explicit Croesus' generosity toward visiting Greek sages: 'Croesus ... used to send for the wisest of the Greeks and . . . used to send them off with many gifts' (Κροῖσος ... μετεπέμπετο τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοὺς σοφωτάτους, καὶ . . . μετὰ πολλῶν δῶρων ἐξέπεμπε). See Tell (2011) 112.

²⁸ The encounter between Alcmaeon and Croesus (6.125) is probably not historical: Alcmaeon belongs to the early sixth century BCE, Croesus to the mid-sixth century. See How and Wells (1928) II.116; Thomas (1989) 269 n. 79; Nenci (1998) 304; Kurke (1999) 143 n. 39; Rhodes (2003) 64.

²⁹ Kurke (2011) 425, cf. (2003) 92, 99 n. 57 notes the low register of the word συμπρήκτωρ, which 'occurs elsewhere to designate a slave "helper" or "assistant"'.

³⁰ On laughter in the *Histories*, see Lateiner (1977), cf. Flory (1978b). The foreign king Croesus rewards the Greek citizen Alcmaeon with gifts, says Kurke (1999) 145–6, only after the latter has debased himself by wearing effeminate, eastern clothing (κιθῶνες and κόθυρνοι; cf. 1.155.4) and distorted his appearance in his greed to such a degree that he no longer even looks human. Cf. Ker (2000) 315. Similarly, Thomas (1989) 266–8 argues that Herodotus' story about Alcmaeon and Croesus (6.125) originates not in aristocratic

What Alcmaeon himself gives Croesus in 6.125 is a *performance*. With his body and clothes deformed by all the gold stuffed inside them, Alcmaeon is as grotesque and visually comical as any comic actor in padded costume is on stage. Croesus acts as a director—we might even say a *χορηγός*—by setting up Alcmaeon’s performance and suggesting that Alcmaeon grab as much gold as he can by putting it on his own person.³¹ Alcmaeon, we might say, gets paid for entertaining the king.

Solon provides neither of these things, neither service (as Alcmaeon had rendered to Croesus at Delphi) nor pleasing entertainment—at least none that is pleasing to Croesus—and so receives no Alcmaeonian payday.³² Prior to his conversation with Solon, however, Croesus can only base his opinion on what Solon may do at his court on the evidence of what all the *sophistai* (and perhaps Alcmaeon as well) who came to Sardis before Solon had done; for his own part, Croesus had presumably paid all these visiting *sophistai* for their services. Thus, when the sage Solon arrives, Croesus can reasonably expect from him some sort of verbal, or even visual, performance as a showcase for his wisdom and skill. Perhaps Solon’s performance will even delight Croesus as much as (the non-sage) Alcmaeon’s visually comical performance does, and perhaps Solon will be as richly rewarded as Alcmaeon. That Solon resisted the temptation of Croesus’ gold may explain why Herodotus hesitates to call Solon unambiguously a *σοφιστής*, with all the notions of venality that the term connoted in the late fifth century.³³

The figure of Alcmaeon gives readers a retrospective view of what Solon *could have done* at Sardis. Solon could have grabbed as much of Croesus’ money as he could, whether literally (as Alcmaeon did) or figuratively. He could have delighted Croesus with his performance as Alcmaeon did and could have made Croesus laugh with pleasure. Instead, Solon eschews Croesus’ money and enrages his royal host by criticising Croesus’ own belief in his unmatched prosperity. The performance of wisdom that the

(Alcmaeonid) family tradition, but in popular, anti-aristocratic tradition, which sought to present the Alcmaeonidae’s acquisition of wealth in a negative light; cf. Derow (1995) 41–2.

³¹ Cf. Purves (2014) 113: ‘Alcmeon ... engages in two stages of comical dressing—first with the overlarge clothes, then with the gold—that put his body on hyperbolic display, expanding and illuminating it. This childish, theatrical kind of dressing-up ... is safe and comical’.

³² Strasburger (2013) 313 contrasts Alcmaeon and Solon, the latter of whom reacted very differently to ‘the sight of [Croesus’] treasure (1.30 ff.)’.

³³ Cf. Moles (1996) 263: ‘The ambiguity of Solon’s being at once inside and outside the category of *σοφισταί* fairly reflects Herodotus’ own position vis-à-vis the sophists. He travelled and lectured widely, was accused of venality, and shows acquaintance with sophistic thought, yet in the debate between “old” and “new” morality, favoured “the old”’. On the relationship between Herodotus’ thought and that of the Sophists, see Dihle (1962); Thomas (2000) and (2006); Winton (2000); Fowler (2013) 81–3.

Herodotean Solon gives in Sardis truly confounds Croesus. When Herodotus' original Greek readers reached the Alcmaeon story in 6.125, they would have remembered how differently Solon's visit to Sardis had gone in 1.29–33. Such readers would probably also have remembered just how surprised they were that the sage Solon had behaved as he did at Croesus' court.

2. Arion and Periander (1.23–4)

Perhaps Croesus, like Herodotus' readers, expects the sage Solon to behave something like Arion does. The musician and poet Arion of Methymna is a traveling performer who both becomes wealthy from his craft and receives patronage at an autocratic court. At the very least, Solon resembles Arion in that he is a traveling performer (as both a sage and a poet). Unlike Solon, for whom Croesus is his internal audience, Arion has two internal audiences for his performances, the Corinthian tyrant Periander and the Corinthian sailors, who hijack Arion.³⁴ The autocrats Periander and Croesus share certain similarities with each other as audiences for their respective performers, as do Croesus and the Corinthian sailors, especially as these latter two audiences misunderstand the meaning of the performances given by their performers.

In Herodotus' telling, Arion's story begins (and ends) at the court of Periander (1.24.1, 1.23):

τοῦτον τὸν Ἀρίωνα λέγουσι, τὸν πολλὸν τοῦ χρόνου διατρίβοντα παρὰ Περιάνδρῳ, ἐπιθυμῆσαι πλωσάει ἐς Ἰταλίην τε καὶ Σικελίην, ἐργασάμενον δὲ χρήματα μεγάλα θελῆσαι ὀπίσω ἐς Κόρινθον ἀπικέσθαι.

This Arion, they say, after he had spent a long time at the court of Periander, got the desire to sail to Italy and Sicily, and after he had earned a lot of money [there], he wanted to come back to Corinth.

... ἔοντα κιθαρωδὸν τῶν τότε ἔόντων οὐδενὸς δεύτερον, καὶ διθύραμβον πρῶτον ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν ποιήσαντά τε καὶ ὀνομάσαντα καὶ διδάξαντα ἐν Κόρινθῳ.

³⁴ Although I will use the term 'sailors' throughout my discussion for the Corinthians who hijack Arion, Harvey (2004) 293 correctly points out that Herodotus never uses the word *ναῦται* for these specific seamen, but rather refers to them as *πορθμεῖς* ('ferry-men': 1.24.3, 7).

... [Arion] was a singer to the accompaniment of the *kithara* second to none of those who lived then, and he was the first of the men of whom we know to create and name the dithyramb, and to teach it [to a chorus] in Corinth.

Arion was able to win the continued patronage of the tyrant Periander and to amass much money from his travels, therefore, because he was a highly skilled and innovative musical performer.

The Corinthian sailors also recognise Arion's musical accomplishments. Being from Corinth, where Arion had spent so much time at Periander's court, the sailors have apparently already been convinced of Arion's reputation as the 'best singer of men' (τοῦ ἀρίστου ἀνθρώπων ἀοιδοῦ, 1.24.5).³⁵ When the sailors refuse to spare Arion's life in return for his money, they tell him that he must either kill himself on the spot—and they will bury him when they reach land—or leap into the sea (1.24.3). With no way out, Arion asks (1.24.5–6):

... περιδεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ σκευῇ πάσῃ στάντα ἐν τοῖσι ἔδωλίοισι ἀεῖσαι· ἀείσας δὲ ὑπεδέκετο ἑωυτὸν κατεργάσεσθαι. καὶ τοῖσι ἐσελθεῖν γὰρ ἡδονὴν εἰ μέλλοιεν ἀκούσεσθαι τοῦ ἀρίστου ἀνθρώπων ἀοιδοῦ, ἀναχωρῆσαι ἐκ τῆς πρύμνης ἐς μέσσην νέα. τὸν δὲ ἐνδύντα τε πᾶσαν τὴν σκευὴν καὶ λαβόντα τὴν κιθάρην, στάντα ἐν τοῖσι ἔδωλίοισι διξελθεῖν νόμον τὸν ὄρθιον, τελευτῶντος δὲ τοῦ νόμου ῥῖψαί μιν ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν ἑωυτὸν ὡς εἶχε σὺν τῇ σκευῇ πάσῃ. καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἀποπλέειν ἐς Κόρινθον, τὸν δὲ δεελφίνα λέγουσι ὑπολαβόντα ἐξενεῖκαι ἐπὶ Ταίναρον.

... that [the sailors] allow him to sing in all his gear while standing on the quarterdecks; and he promised to do away with himself after he sang. And with pleasure coming upon them since there were going to hear the best singer of men, they went up from the stern to the middle of the ship. Arion put on all his gear and took up the *kithara*, and while standing on the quarterdecks he performed the shrill tune; when the tune was over, he threw himself into the sea just as he was with all his gear. The sailors sailed off to Corinth, but they say that a dolphin took up Arion and brought him to Taenarum.

³⁵ Just as the sailors could presumably use Arion's repute in Corinth to evaluate his musical talents, so Arion could draw upon his familiarity with Corinth to assess the sailors' trustworthiness. According to Herodotus, Arion had hired the Corinthian sailors to convey him back to Greece 'because he trusted no one more than Corinthians' (πιστεύοντα ... οὐδαμῶσι μᾶλλον ἢ Κορινθίοισι, 1.24.2). Arion's trust in the sailors—and perhaps his trust in Corinthians (e.g., Periander) in general—proves to be misplaced.

Although they are unwilling to spare Arion's life, the sailors are nevertheless a very eager audience for the performance of this great musician.³⁶

Just as Arion's audience (the Corinthian sailors) recognises his reputation as a performer, so Solon's audience (Croesus) recognises his reputation as a traveling sage. Croesus begins his conversation with Solon with the glowing remarks (1.30.2):

Ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, παρ' ἡμέας γὰρ περὶ σέο λόγος ἀπῖκται πολλὸς καὶ σοφίης εἵνεκεν τῆς σῆς καὶ πλάνης, ὡς φιλοσοφέων γῆν πολλὴν θεωρίας εἵνεκεν ἐπελήλυθας ...

Athenian guest, much talk about you has reached us for both the sake of your wisdom and your wandering, how while loving knowledge you have come to many a land for the sake of touring ...

Even before Solon arrives in Sardis, Croesus has already heard 'much talk' (λόγος πολλός) about Solon's 'wisdom' (σοφίης) and 'wandering' (πλάνης). Solon's σοφίη is particularly suggestive, since this word can mean equally 'wisdom', 'skill', or 'expertise'. As we have seen, the Seven Sages were known not only for their *wisdom*, but also for their *skill* at performing that wisdom.

As audiences, moreover, both Croesus and the Corinthian sailors are marked by Herodotean vocabulary that carries with it negative associations, ἔμερος in Croesus' case and ἡδονή in the Corinthian sailors' case. Croesus continues in his address to Solon (1.30.2):

νῦν ὦν ἔμερος ἐπειρέσθαι μοι ἐπήλθέ σε εἴ τινα ἤδη πάντων εἶδες ὀλβιώτατον.

So now, a desire has come upon me to ask you whether by this time you have seen anyone [who is] most prosperous of all.

We can compare Croesus' 'desire' (ἔμερος) to ask Solon—and so hear the performance that constitutes his response—with the Corinthian sailors' 'pleasure' (ἡδονήν, 1.24.5) to hear Arion perform. 'Being pleased' is rarely a

³⁶ For Arion's 'stage' on the ship, see McNeal (1986) 117. The Corinthian sailors did not have to rely merely on Arion's reputation to know that he was a highly-paid, professional musical performer; he also looked the part. Herodotus repeatedly draws attention to Arion's 'gear/garb/equipment' (σκευή, 1.24.4, 5 [*bis*], 6). On citharodic *skeuē*, see West (1992a) 54–5; Power (2010) 11–27. On the narrative function that Arion's costume serves in the *Histories*, see Munson (1986) 99, cf. 103n.31; Long (1987) 58; Friedman (2006) 171; Power 27.

positive indicator in the *Histories*.³⁷ The Corinthian sailors' 'pleasure' at the prospect of hearing Arion perform foreshadows their doom, especially their future refutation by Arion himself, when he reappears back in Corinth (1.24.7).³⁸ Herodotean *ἕμερος* always reflects badly on the desirer and often points to an ominous end.³⁹ Croesus' eager 'desire' to hear Solon perform foreshadows Croesus' own doom, especially his overconfidence in his own prosperousness and the concomitant 'vengeance' (*νέμεσις*, 1.34.1) from the gods that settles on Croesus at some time after his conversation with Solon.

Croesus' 'desire' to hear Solon and the Corinthian sailors' 'pleasure' to hear Arion also point to their ignorance of the true nature of the performances they will hear. The Corinthian sailors do not realise that the intended audience for Arion's song—the 'shrill tune' (*νόμον τὸν ὄρθιον*, 1.24.5)—is actually the god Poseidon.⁴⁰ Arion's song is in effect a prayer to Poseidon to save him from drowning in the sea, and by sending the dolphin to rescue Arion Poseidon appears to respond favourably to the prayer.⁴¹ Croesus does not realise just what he will hear from Solon as a performer:

³⁷ Flory (1978b) 150 argues that in Herodotus' work joy, in particular, points both to the ignorance of the character experiencing the joy and to impending disaster for that character. Gray (2011) cautions, however, that sometimes 'being pleased' is a good thing in the *Histories*, even for kings and rulers; she points to Cleomenes' pleasure (*ἡσθείς*, 5.51.3) at his daughter Gorgo's advice—advice 'which turns out to be so sensible', as Gray notes—that he walk away from Aristagoras.

³⁸ Although Herodotus does not indicate a specific punishment, one assumes that the Corinthian sailors did receive *some* punishment: cf. Flory (1978a) 412 n. 4; Long (1987) 54; Munson (1986) 102 n. 9; Arieti (1995) 37.

³⁹ On Herodotus' use of *ἕμερος*, see esp. Baragwanath (2012) 302 and n. 53. 'Desire for land' (*γῆς ἰμέρω*, 1.73.1) is a main reason Croesus seeks to expand eastward into Persian-controlled territory; see Immerwahr (1966) 160 n. 29. Athenians covet and desire land (*φθόνον τε καὶ ἕμερον τῆς γῆς*, 6.137.2) farmed by Pelasgians, before the Athenians unjustifiably seize it. Histiaeus claims that the Ionians revolted from Persian rule out of a wish 'to do things for which they have long desired' (*ποιῆσαι τῶν πάλαι ἕμερον εἶχον*, 5.106.5). Xerxes has 'a desire to gaze at' (*ἕμερον ... θεήσασθαι*, 7.43.1) Priam's Troy, not realising a link between the Greek sack of Troy and his own upcoming defeat by the Greeks. Mardonius rejects sound Theban advice (i.e., bribing leading Greeks as a way of dismantling Greek resistance to Persia) because he has 'a terrible desire' (*δεινός τις ... ἕμερος*, 9.3.1) to sack Athens; see Flower and Marincola (2002) 105; Baragwanath 300–10.

⁴⁰ As Gray (2001) 13–14, (2002) 37 argues, although most scholars state that the *nomos orthios* was a song sung in honour of Apollo: see McNeal (1986) 117; Arieti (1995) 37–8; Asheri (2007) 93.

⁴¹ Cf. McNeal (1986) 117: 'Arion's song was an act of worship'. Gray (2001) 13–14 notes, moreover, both that Taras, from where Arion starts his journey back to Greece, was named after a son of Poseidon, and that Taenarum, where the dolphin takes Arion, contained an important shrine dedicated to Poseidon. For more on Arion's connection with Poseidon, see Bowra (1963), esp. 133.

the stories of Tellus and of Cleobis and Biton and Solon's pointed comments on the instability of human fortune.

If Croesus corresponds to the Corinthian sailors as an audience, then Solon corresponds to Arion as a performer, since both are famed performers who travel widely and spend time at autocratic courts.⁴² Moreover, just as scholars have noted the resemblance between Solon and Herodotus, they have also noted the resemblance between Arion and Herodotus, 'both of whom are "performer[s]"', says Rosaria Munson (2001) 255, 'who must eventually confront hostile audiences', in Arion's case the Corinthian sailors and Periander himself, who at first disbelieves Arion's story.⁴³ Hostile audiences that Herodotus himself might have encountered would have been some of the Greeks who attended the public readings that (according to the biographical tradition) Herodotus gave of parts of the *Histories*.⁴⁴ The Herodotean Solon, too, will experience an ultimately hostile audience in Croesus, who will send Solon away in disgust at the latter's apparent stupidity. Standing in contrast to Croesus, who starts out as a receptive audience only to turn hostile later, is Periander, who is initially hostile but later receptive.⁴⁵

In the Arion story Periander too has been seen by scholars as self-referential to Herodotus. Munson (2001) 55 points out that the 'disbelief' (*ἀπιστίας*, 1.24.7) that Periander feels when he first hears Arion tell 'all that had happened' (*πάν τὸ γεγονός*, 1.24.6) concerning Arion's own rescue from the sea and his conveyance to the Peloponnese is analogous to the disbelief that Herodotus himself often expresses as narrator when faced with unbelievable *logoi*. Periander puts Arion under guard until he can question the Corinthian sailors, whom he summons to his court.⁴⁶ Periander uses inquiry (*ἱστορέεσθαι*, 1.24.7)⁴⁷ and produces a star witness, Arion, whose

⁴² Benardete (1969) 16 connects Solon with Arion by playing upon two of the meanings of the word *nomos*, 'law' and 'tune': Solon is characterised by the 'laws' he makes for the Athenians, Arion by the 'tunes' he sings to the Corinthian sailors. On Arion's 'lawfulness' versus the Corinthian sailors' unlawfulness, see Power (2010) 223 n. 87.

⁴³ Cf. Benardete (1969) 15; Friedman (2006), esp. 167–9.

⁴⁴ On Herodotus' public readings, see Munson (2013a) 9–12. See also Flory (1980); Johnson (1994); Thomas (2000) 257–69; Waterfield (2009) 487.

⁴⁵ Presumably Periander had earlier been a receptive audience (and patron) for Arion, prior to Arion's departure for Italy and Sicily.

⁴⁶ The coercive manner in which Periander puts both Arion and the sailors to the test helps to differentiate Periander as an inquirer from Herodotus. Cf. Christ (2013) 232: 'in the hands of [Herodotean] kings trial and torture are not always easily distinguished from one another'. Legrand (1946) 44 n. 3 glosses over the sinister nature of Arion's confinement by Periander; similarly, Stadter (2006) 252.

⁴⁷ Cf. Payen (1997) 58; Gray (2001) esp. 14–16 (*contra* Baragwanath (2008) 16 n. 43), (2002) 306–7; de Jong (2004) 113–4, (2012) 136; Fowler (2006) 42 n. 16; Christ (2013) 213 n.6.

sudden appearance before the ‘thunderstruck’ (ἐκπλαγέντας) sailors proves that their story is false.⁴⁸

Thus Herodotus uses the Arion–Periander episode to shape readers’ expectations of what they will find in the Solon–Croesus episode. Indeed, the former story supplies readers with interpretive tools they can use for the latter story. Readers can see Arion, a musician and poet who travels widely, as an analogue to Solon, a sage and poet who similarly travels widely. Both Arion and Solon will give performances at autocratic courts. The autocrats in question, Periander and Croesus, express ‘disbelief’ regarding what their performers say to them at some point. As audiences both Periander and the Corinthian sailors, moreover, are partial analogues to Croesus. What really separates Periander from Croesus is that he not only is an audience, but also engages in inquiry with both Arion—whom he initially disbelieves—and the sailors, and so finds out the truth about what has happened to Arion. Croesus does not question Solon in so thorough and exacting a manner. As an audience, Croesus is actually closer to the Corinthian sailors; just as the sailors misunderstand the true import of Arion’s performance on the ship—that Arion is performing for the divine audience of Poseidon—so Croesus misunderstands the purpose of Solon’s words, that Solon is warning Croesus about just how unstable human fortune, even the extraordinary good fortune of a king like Croesus, can be.

3. Bias/Pittacus and Croesus (1.27)

Although Arion in his encounter with the Corinthian sailors and with Periander can be seen as a precursor to Solon in his encounter with Croesus, an even closer match between Solon as internal narrator and Croesus as internal audience comes in the conversation that Bias/Pittacus has with Croesus in 1.27.⁴⁹ Not only is Croesus himself the audience for both Bias/Pittacus and Solon, but Bias and Pittacus are also, along with Solon, usually counted among the Seven Sages. Like Solon, Bias/Pittacus is a traveling Greek sage who visits Croesus’ court at Sardis, and gives a performance of wisdom before the Lydian king. Croesus’ angry reaction to Solon’s performance, however, stands in marked contrast to his pleasure at Bias/Pittacus’. Croesus responds so favourably to Bias/Pittacus’ words—

⁴⁸ As Power (2010) 27. Gray (2001) 16, cf. (2007) 212 n. 29 argues that Periander’s use of visual proof—that is, the appearance of Arion before the sailors—as a way to test the veracity of the sailors’ story is akin to Herodotus’ own use of visual proof in this episode. At the very end of the episode, Herodotus cites as a visual confirmation of the Arion story the bronze statuette of a man riding a dolphin, dedicated at Taenarum and said to depict Arion (1.24.8). On the statuette (1.24.8), see further Harvey (2004) 297.

⁴⁹ Kurke (2011) 412, 429 says that 1.27 ‘serves as foil and preamble’ to 1.29–33.

which actually may be skewed due to self-interest—that he alters his plans for conquest: he is dissuaded from mounting a naval assault against the Greek islands of the Aegean. With the Bias/Pittacus–Croesus episode Herodotus partly shapes readers’ expectations of the Solon–Croesus episode (that Croesus will be an unperceptive audience for a Greek sage’s performance of wisdom) and partly subverts readers’ expectations (that Solon will delight Croesus with his performance of wisdom).

Bias/Pittacus shows up in Sardis to offer his military advice at a point when Croesus has already subdued many of the peoples in Anatolia to his rule and has turned his thoughts toward building ships to use against the Greek islanders (1.27.2–3):

έόντων δέ οί πάντων έτοίμων ές τήν ναυπηγίην, οί μέν Βίαντα λέγουσι τόν Πριηνέα άπικόμενον ές Σάρδεις, οί δέ Πιττακόν τόν Μυτιληναίον, είρομένου Κροίσου εί τι είη νεώτερον περι τήν Έλλάδα, είπόντα τάδε καταπαύσαι τήν ναυπηγίην. Ω βασιλεύ, νησιώται ίππον συνωνέονται μυρίην, ές Σάρδεις τε καί έπι σέ έν νόω έχοντες στρατεύεσθαι. Κροίσον δέ έλπίσαντα λέγειν εκείνον άληθέα είπέιν. Αί γάρ τουτο θεοί ποιήσειαν έπι νόον νησιώτῃσι, έλθειν έπι Λυδών παιδας σύν ίπποισι.

When all things were ready for him for the shipbuilding, some say that Bias of Priene, others Pittacus of Mytilene, came to Sardis, and that when Croesus asked if there was any news concerning Greece, he [i.e., Bias/Pittacus] stopped the shipbuilding by saying the following things: ‘King, islanders are buying up ten thousand horse since they have in mind to lead an army to Sardis and [to campaign] against you’. [They say that] Croesus, since he believed that that man was telling true things, said, ‘If only gods would put this in the minds of islanders, to come against sons of Lydians with horses!’

The encounter described here is probably not historical,⁵⁰ and Herodotus is not even sure of the advisor’s actual identity, whether Bias or Pittacus. Regardless, what matters here is the characterisation of that advisor as a Greek sage.

A key word in the Bias/Pittacus–Croesus episode is the verb *έλπίζειν*. Herodotus almost always uses this verb to indicate a *mistaken* belief or expectation.⁵¹ Croesus calls off his invasion of the Greek islands largely because he ‘believes’ (*έλπίσαντα*) that Bias/Pittacus is ‘telling true things’

⁵⁰ For discussion see Asheri (2007) 96; cf. Lattimore (1939) 34–5; Erbse (1992) 11–12; Kurke (2011) 127, 135n.24.

⁵¹ On the verb *έλπίζειν* in the *Histories*, see further Branscome (2013) 217.

(λέγειν ... ἀληθέα) (1.27.3).⁵² The implication is clear: Bias/Pittacus is in actual fact *not* telling the truth, and so Croesus' belief in this particular Greek sage is misguided.⁵³ In the Solon–Croesus episode Herodotus will use the verb again of Croesus (1.30.3):

ὁ μὲν ἐλπίζων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ὀλβιώτατος ταῦτα ἐπειρώτα, Σόλων δὲ οὐδὲν ὑποθωπεύσας, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐόντι χρησάμενος λέγει· ὦ βασιλεῦ, Τέλλον Ἀθηναῖον.

[Croesus] was asking this since he believed that he [himself] was most prosperous of men; Solon, while flattering him in no way, but while using the truth, said, 'King, Tellus, an Athenian'.

Although Solon speaks τὸ ἐόν—literally 'that which is', and so 'the truth' or 'reality'⁵⁴—Croesus refuses to accept it due to his 'belief' (ἐλπίζων) in his own prosperousness; he even concludes that Solon is 'very stupid' (κάρτα ... ἀμαθία, 1.33). Readers will thus recall how mistaken Croesus' 'belief' (ἐλπίζειν) in Bias/Pittacus words was when they come to Croesus' mistaken 'belief' in his prosperousness 1.30.3.

Croesus mistakenly believes Bias/Pittacus in part because he fails to appreciate how self-serving the latter's response is. Both Bias of Priene and Pittacus of Mytilene are Greeks, and that is presumably why Croesus asks for 'any news concerning Greece' (τι ... νεώτερον περὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα, 1.27.2). Being an islander himself, however, Pittacus especially would have had a vested interest in dissuading Croesus from attacking the Greek islands of the Aegean. At the very end of the episode, moreover, Herodotus refers to the islanders as 'the Ionians inhabiting the islands' (τοῖσι τὰς νήσους οἰκημένοισι Ἴωσι, 1.27.5); thus the Greek islanders that Croesus was preparing to attack were *Ionians*. Perhaps, then, the Ionian Bias would have just as much of a vested interest in dissuading Croesus as would the islander Pittacus. As a

⁵² Cf. Croesus' mistaken belief (ἐλπίσας, 1.71.1) that he will conquer Cyrus and the Persians; see Corcella (1984) 116.

⁵³ Cf. Nagy (1990) 243: Croesus is dissuaded from attacking the islands 'only through the *ingenuity* of one or another of the Seven Sages' [my italics]; cf. Harrison (2004) 262; Adrados (1999) 337. Kurke (2011) 127, cf. 406 observes that 1.27 'is the only place in [Herodotus'] narrative in which a sage is credited with a statement acknowledged by the narrator to be untrue'. See further Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 176.

⁵⁴ On the phrase τὸ ἐόν in Herodotus, see Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 179; Cartledge and Greenwood (2002) 354; Kahn (2003) 352–5 (esp. 353 on Hdt. 1.30.3). Regarding Herodotus' general thoughts on 'truth', see Marincola (2007) 15–17; Baragwanath (2008) 19.

result, the external audience can appreciate the irony of Bias/Pittacus' words more than the internal audience.⁵⁵

Croesus also fails to recognise—at least initially—that Bias/Pittacus may be speaking in metaphorical terms about the horses that the Greek islanders are buying. With the word ἵππος, Bias/Pittacus may actually mean *ships*, the metaphorical horses of the sea.⁵⁶ While Bias/Pittacus does not explicitly state that the islanders are buying ships rather than horses, he seems to imply it in the continuation of his conversation with Croesus. After Croesus has exclaimed that he hopes the islanders will attack the Lydians with horses (1.27.3), Bias/Pittacus responds (1.27.4):

ὦ βασιλεῦ, προθύμως μοι φαίνεται εὐξασθαι νησιώτας ἵππευομένους λαβεῖν ἐν ἡπείρῳ, οἰκότα ἐλπίζων· νησιώτας δὲ τί δοκέεις εὐχεσθαι ἄλλο ἢ, ἐπεῖτε τάχιστα ἐπύθοντό σε μέλλοντα ἐπὶ σφίσι ναυπηγέεσθαι νέας, λαβεῖν ἀρώμενοι Λυδοὺς ἐν θαλάσῃ, ἵνα ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν τῇ ἡπείρῳ οἰκημένων Ἑλλήνων τείσωνταί σε, τοὺς σὺ δουλώσας ἔχεις;

King, you seem to me zealously to pray that you seize islanders, while they are horsemen, on the mainland, and the things that you expect are reasonable. But what do you think islanders are praying other than, as soon as they learned that you were going to build ships against them, that they seize Lydians on the sea, [just as] they have prayed, so that they may punish you on behalf of the Greeks inhabiting the mainland, whom you [now] hold, having made them your slaves?

Using *elpizein*, the same word that Herodotus had earlier used to comment on Croesus' lack of understanding (1.27.3), Bias/Pittacus similarly turns the word against Croesus, noting that Croesus wants the islanders to bring their cavalry against the Lydians on the mainland, presumably because Croesus thinks that the islanders' cavalry will be no match for the Lydians'. With this line of thinking, says Bias/Pittacus, Croesus is 'expecting reasonable things' (οἰκότα ἐλπίζων). We have seen, however, that in the *Histories* the verb *elpizein*, when it refers to future events, almost always indicates a *mistaken* expectation, an expectation of something that will not come to pass. Thus, Bias/Pittacus is implying that although Croesus' expectation that the Lydians would defeat the islanders in a cavalry battle is 'reasonable', Croesus is mistaken in

⁵⁵ Dewald (2012) 79 comments on Solon's 'long-winded, ungracious, and pedantic speech' in 1.30–2: 'Perhaps one aspect of the Solon story is ironic: is Herodotus as a cultivated East Greek slyly mocking the customary but somewhat ponderous fifth-century Athenian deliberative mode of decision-making?' On Herodotus' use of irony in the *Histories*, see Schellenberg (2009).

⁵⁶ As Martin (1993) 118; Dewald (2012) 79. Cf. LSJ s.v. ἵππος I.1.

expecting that such a cavalry battle is ever going to take place.⁵⁷ This is because the islanders are not really buying up horses, but are instead (according to Bias/Pittacus) building up their navy in preparation for a possible Lydian naval assault on the islands. Bias/Pittacus goes on to say that this is exactly what the islanders want the Lydians to do: attack the Greek islands by sea. Just as Croesus thinks that the land-based Lydians would defeat the islanders in a cavalry battle, so do the sea-based islanders think that they would defeat the Lydians in a naval battle.⁵⁸

At the end of his response, Bias/Pittacus alludes, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, to the extent to which Greeks are willing to fight on behalf of other Greeks. He argues that the islanders not only believe that they can defeat the Lydians at sea, but also desire, by defeating the Lydians, to punish Croesus for ‘enslaving’ (*δουλώσας*) the Greeks on the mainland.⁵⁹ Given Herodotus’ later portrayal of the Ionians’ fickleness and ineffectiveness during the Ionian Revolt, this statement regarding Ionians fighting on behalf of Ionians seems ironic.⁶⁰ The stress that Bias/Pittacus places on the loyalty that the Ionian islanders feel toward the mainland Ionians, moreover, actually undermines Bias/Pittacus’ own reliability as an advisor to Croesus on Greek affairs.

Croesus is nonetheless delighted. After Bias/Pittacus has finished speaking, Herodotus ends the episode as follows (1.27.5):

κάρτα τε ἠσθῆναι Κροῖσον τῷ ἐπιλόγῳ καὶ οἱ, προσφύεως γὰρ δόξαι λέγειν, πειθόμενον παύσασθαι τῆς ναυπηγίης. καὶ οὕτω τοῖσι τὰς νήσους οἰκημένοισι Ἴωσι ξεινίην συνεθήκατο.

[They say that] Croesus was both very pleased with the concluding statement and persuaded by him—since he thought that he [i.e., Bias/Pittacus] was speaking suitably—to stop the shipbuilding. In this way Croesus formed a guest-friendship with the Ionians who inhabit the islands.

Croesus is ‘pleased’ (*ἠσθῆναι*) by Bias/Pittacus’ words. As we saw in the case of the Corinthian sailors’ ‘pleasure’ (*ἡδονήν*, 1.24.5) at the prospect of hearing

⁵⁷ On Herodotus’ use of argument from likelihood, see Thomas (2000) index s.v. *eikos*.

⁵⁸ Asheri (2007) 96 notes that ‘the Lydian cavalry ... represents here the typical army at the service of a continental state as opposed to the fleets used by thalassocracies’. Payen (1997) 59–60, 288–9 sees 1.27 as an object lesson in the difficulty that a continental power faces in conquering an insular power.

⁵⁹ On the concepts of political ‘slavery’ and ‘freedom’ in the *Histories*, see Serghidou (2004).

⁶⁰ On Herodotus’ portrayal of Ionians, see Irwin and Greenwood (2007a) 21–5, 38 n. 108, 39; Munson (2007); cf. Immerwahr (1966) 230–3; Thomas (2004).

Arion perform, joy often not only signals a character's ignorance, but also foreshadows that character's doom. Croesus is ignorant of the fact that he has likely been manipulated by Bias/Pittacus into stopping the shipbuilding. Instead, he is so pleased by the *ἐπίλογος* he has just heard from Bias/Pittacus that he readily abandons his military preparations against the islanders.

As Martin points out, the word *ἐπίλογος* (which occurs only here in the *Histories*) is normally tied to performative contexts, whether dramatic or rhetorical.⁶¹ The sage Bias/Pittacus punctuates the performance of his wisdom with a skilfully delivered *epilogos* ('concluding statement').⁶² According to Martin, moreover, Bias/Pittacus' *epilogos* contains a surprise for Croesus: Bias/Pittacus finally reveals to Croesus that the islanders are buying not horses, but ships. 'When the truth sinks in', says Martin, 'Croesus reacts with pleasure to the *performance* of the sage's wisdom (*epilogos*, Hdt. 1.27)' (Martin (1993) 118).

Herodotus adds in 1.27.5 that Croesus is not only pleased but also 'persuaded' (*πειθόμενον*) to call off the shipbuilding 'because he thought that [Bias/Pittacus] was speaking suitably' (*προσφύεως γὰρ δόξαι λέγειν*). The meaning of the Herodotean hapax *προσφύεως* is ambiguous. On the one hand, *προσφύεως* may point to the informative content of Bias/Pittacus' *epilogos*: when Croesus realises that the islanders are buying up ships, he is 'very pleased' with that information and accordingly alters his military plans of attacking the islanders by sea.⁶³ On the other hand, *προσφύεως* may point to the performative appropriateness of Bias/Pittacus' *epilogos*: Croesus is 'very pleased' with Bias/Pittacus' *epilogos* because it is so well executed from a performative standpoint.⁶⁴ By unravelling the metaphor of the horses/ships only at the end, Bias/Pittacus surprises, entertains, and intellectually stimulates his audience.

Despite Croesus' pleasure at what Bias/Pittacus has to say, he does not understand that the information he receives from Bias/Pittacus may be skewed due to self-interest. Just because Bias/Pittacus claims that the islanders are buying *ten thousand* horses/ships or even that the islanders are buying horses/ships at all—that is, that the islanders are making any such

⁶¹ Martin (1993) 126 n. 35. On *epilogos* as the technical term for the concluding section of a Greek oration, see de Brauw (2007) esp. 196–8.

⁶² Cf. Powell (1938) s.v. *ἐπίλογος*. Kurke (2011) sees strong echoes of Aesopic fable, both in language and in theme: '*ἐπίλογος* here is a technical term that designates the "punch line" or "moral" of a fable' (130; cf. 275). *Contra* Gray (2011), who notes that the word *epilogos* never occurs in Aesop's own versions of the Bias/Pittacus–Croesus encounter.

⁶³ Thus, Powell (1938) s.v. translates *προσφύεως* as 'shrewdly'.

⁶⁴ LSJ s.v. *προσφύεως* translates the phrase *προσφύεως λέγειν* (while citing 1.27.5) as 'speak suitably, ably'. According to the *TLG*, *προσφύεως*, at least in its Ionic spelling, occurs only here (1.27.5) in Greek literature.

military preparations to meet the Lydian threat—does not necessarily mean that his claim is truthful. Croesus is so delighted by Bias/Pittacus' performance, however, that it does not seem to occur to him to question the underlying 'truth' (*ἀλήθεια*, 1.27.3) of that performance.

The delighted Croesus whom Herodotus' readers encounter in 1.27 differs greatly from the angry Croesus readers find during his later conversation with Solon. But Croesus' pleasure in 1.27 is based on ignorance: he does not realise that he is being manipulated by Bias/Pittacus into halting his planned invasion of the Greek islands. Readers are able to view Croesus' pleasure here ironically, however, since Herodotus as narrator has alerted them to Croesus' mistaken belief (*ἐπίσταντα*) in the truthfulness (*ἀληθεία*) of Bias/Pittacus' words. Croesus is so delighted because he hears what he wants to hear; he is thoroughly entertained by the performance, in particular by the skilfully delivered *epilogos*, of the traveling Greek sage Bias/Pittacus. As a result of the delightful performance Croesus calls off the invasion of the islands and even goes so far as to make the Ionian islanders his guest-friends (*ξεινίην*, 1.27.5).⁶⁵ And yet for all his ignorance regarding the true, self-interested motives of Bias/Pittacus Croesus fully seems to believe that his Greek visitor is telling him the truth about the Ionian islanders' military preparations. As such, Croesus uses the information he learns from Bias/Pittacus to make an informed military decision.⁶⁶ In 1.27, then, Croesus wisely accepts (what at least appears to be) good advice from an advisor. Or to put it another way: *if* Bias/Pittacus *were* telling the truth about the islanders buying up ships, then Croesus *would be* shrewd to listen to his advice and to call off the invasion of the islands. Nevertheless, the contrast between 1.27, when Croesus happily follows (seemingly) good advice, and 1.29–33, when he angrily rejects (definitely) good advice, is marked. That Croesus delights in the untruth of Bias/Pittacus, but despises the truth of Solon tells readers much about Croesus' perceptiveness and temperament as an audience.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Croesus is so pleased by Bias/Pittacus' performance that he actually allows the performance to alter his military plans. Nevertheless, Croesus does not appear to cancel his invasion of the Greek islands *as a reward* for the Greek sage Bias/Pittacus.

⁶⁶ Although Stahl (1975) 4 argues that '[f]rom the beginning, Croesus' problem as presented by Herodotus is a lack of knowledge', he concedes that at least in his encounter with Bias/Pittacus 'Croesus does listen to advice and, accepting wise Bias' warning, refrains from waging naval war against the superior Greek islanders'. For similar views, see Hellmann (1934) 35; Arieti (1995) 41, cf. 52; Shapiro (1996) 362; Schulte-Altdorneburg (2001) 132–3; Asheri (2007) 96; Kurke (2011) 130; Wesselmann (2011) 76. Moles (1996) 269 connects Bias/Pittacus with Solon.

⁶⁷ Cf. Benardete (1969) 18: 'Bias or Pittacus made up a story and convinced Croesus, Solon told the truth and failed'.

4. Θεᾶσθαι and Θῶμα

With his story of how the Lydian king Candaules tried to impress Gyges with a spectacle (1.8–12), Herodotus also shapes readers' expectations for how the Lydian king Croesus will try to impress Solon with a spectacle (1.29–33). Although by the end of his conversation with Solon Croesus is utterly displeased with his Athenian guest, he had reason initially to be optimistic. Indeed, Croesus had taken pains to ensure that Solon would be favourably disposed toward his Lydian host by having Solon 'gaze' (θεᾶσθαι) at the wealth contained in Croesus' own treasure-houses.⁶⁸ The 'gazing' denoted by the verb θεᾶσθαι carries with it a sense of 'wonder' (θῶμα) and admiration. In Herodotus' work, characters—most often kings—invite viewers, in effect, to 'gaze' (θεᾶσθαι) at their own possessions or achievements as 'wonders' (θῶματα).⁶⁹ Croesus, therefore, tries to overawe Solon with a display of his wondrous wealth. Candaules similarly relies on the connotations of θεᾶσθαι and on the verb's connection to 'wonder' (θῶμα) in his attempt to overawe Gyges (1.8–12). Candaules invites Gyges to 'gaze' (θεᾶσθαι) at his queen (1.8–12), and arranges for Gyges to 'gaze at' (θεᾶσθαι) and, by implication, to regard as a 'wonder' (θῶμα) one of Candaules' own possessions: the naked body of Candaules' wife.

The Gyges–Candaules–Candaules' wife story has many resonances in the Solon–Croesus story. Perhaps the most important is that Gyges is Croesus' own ancestor, founder of the Mermnad dynasty which will come to an end when Croesus is defeated by the Persian king Cyrus.⁷⁰ Another significant link between the two stories is that both Candaules' and Croesus' attempts to use *theāsthai* in order to evoke a sense of wonder (*thōma*) backfire. Candaules and Croesus, therefore, each arrange a spectacle in order to affirm their own royal magnificence. Both Candaules and Croesus orchestrate spectacles, but their audiences for those spectacles do not respond in the way the kings expect them to do. Herodotus' readers may thus have Candaules' failure in mind when they come to Croesus' failure.

Solon's 'gazing' occurs immediately before Croesus questions him in 1.30.2:

ἀπικόμενος δὲ ἐξεινίζετο ἐν τοῖσι βασιλῆιοισι ὑπὸ τοῦ Κροίσου· μετὰ δέ, ἡμέρη τρίτη ἢ τετάρτη, κελεύσαντος Κροίσου τὸν Σόλωνα θεράποντες περιῆγον κατὰ τοὺς θησαυροὺς καὶ ἐπεδείκνυσαν πάντα ἔοντα μεγάλα τε

⁶⁸ Although Herodotus uses both Attic θεᾶσθαι and Ionic θηέεσθαι (see Powell (1938) s.v. θεῶμαι; McNeal (1986) 111–12), I will use θεᾶσθαι throughout my discussion.

⁶⁹ On the connection between 'gazing' and 'wonder' in the *Histories*, see further Branscome (2013) 213–5, 219–20.

⁷⁰ On the Lydian dynasties, see Asheri (2007) 79–80. On Gyges, *ibid.* 83–4.

καὶ ὄλβια. θεησάμενον δέ μιν τὰ πάντα καὶ σκεψάμενον, ὥς οἱ κατὰ καιρὸν ἦν, εἶρετο ὁ Κροῖσος τάδε ...

When [Solon] arrived, he was entertained by Croesus in the palace; afterwards, on the third or fourth day, at Croesus' bidding servants led Solon around through the treasure-houses and pointed out to him all the great wealth that existed [for Croesus]. And when [Solon] had gazed at and examined everything—when he had had sufficient time to do so—Croesus asked him the following ...

Croesus waits until Solon has had 'sufficient time' (*κατὰ καιρὸν*) to 'gaze at' (*θεησάμενον*) and 'examine' (*σκεψάμενον*) all the wealth contained in the treasure-houses.⁷¹ Thus, Croesus intends Solon's 'gazing at' (*theāsthai*) and 'examining' the contents of the treasure-houses to serve as preparation for Croesus' and Solon's impending conversation.

Neither Candaules nor Croesus, however, properly understands or anticipates the audiences for their spectacles. Solon seems unimpressed by 'gazing' (*theāsthai*) at Croesus' wealth; nor does the wealth appear to invoke in him a sense of 'wonder'. It is instead Croesus who expresses wonder at Solon: when Solon names Tellus, not Croesus, as the most *olbios*, Croesus is 'amazed' (*ἀποθωμάσας*, 1.30.4). As soon as Solon answers Croesus, Solon takes control of the conversation, and it is Croesus who will react to Solon in the conversation and not the other way around. Solon assumes the more active role in the conversation, and Croesus the more passive role of audience. Later, on the pyre, Croesus admits to Cyrus and the Persians that the spectacle had not had the effect on Solon that Croesus had planned: Croesus says that 'after [Solon] had gazed at all of [Croesus'] own wealth, he had made light of it' (*θεησάμενος πάντα τὸν ἑωυτοῦ ὄλβον ἀποφλαυρίσειε*, 1.86.5). Even Croesus must admit that in Solon's case his attempt to exploit the link between 'gazing' (*theāsthai*) and 'wonder' (*thōma*) had failed.⁷² Rather than being a source of wonder for Solon, Croesus ultimately proves to be a wonder only for Cyrus and the Persians, all of whom 'were looking on [Croesus] in amazement' (*ἀπεθώμαζε ... ὀρέων*, 1.88.1) once Croesus was taken down from the pyre and unchained.⁷³

⁷¹ McNeal (1986) 119 translates *κατὰ καιρὸν* in 1.30.2 as 'sufficiently' and renders *ὥς οἱ κατὰ καιρὸν ἦν* as 'when Solon had had ample time to see and examine everything'; cf. Arieti (1995) 45 and n. 70.

⁷² *Contra* Ker (2000) 312 (cf. Travis (2000) 355), who argues that Croesus mistakenly seeks to exploit a different connection between words, that is, between Solon's 'touring' (*theōria*) and his 'gazing' (*theāsthai*) at Croesus' wealth. Similarly, Demont (2009) 183, cf. 201 n. 58 connects *theāsthai* in the *Histories* with both *theōria* and *theōrein*.

⁷³ As Ker (2000) 313.

Candaules not only misunderstands Gyges as an audience for his spectacle, but also makes the fatal mistake of not considering his wife as a potential audience for the spectacle at all. He assures Gyges that the latter has nothing to fear from the queen (1.9.1):

ἀρχὴν γὰρ ἐγὼ μηχανήσομαι οὕτω ὥστε μηδὲ μαθεῖν μιν ὀφθελίσαν ὑπὸ σεῦ.

For from the beginning I will devise it in such a way so as for her not to learn that she has been seen by you.

The very things that Candaules tells Gyges that the queen will *not* do, namely, ‘see’ (ὀφθελίσαν) Gyges and ‘learn/know’ (μαθεῖν) what has happened, are the very things, Herodotus later tells us, that the queen does do (1.10.2):⁷⁴

καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἐπορᾶ μιν ἐξιόντα. μαθοῦσα δὲ τὸ ποιηθὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οὕτε ἀνέβωσε αἰσχυνθεῖσα οὕτε ἔδοξε μαθεῖν, ἐν νόῳ ἔχουσα τείσασθαι τὸν Κανδαύλεα.

And the woman saw him (i.e., Gyges) as he left. Although she knew what had been done by her husband, she neither cried out in shame nor seemed to know, since she had it in mind to punish Candaules.

Candaules’ wife both ‘sees’ (ἐπορᾶ) and ‘knows’ (μαθοῦσα, μαθεῖν). The object of Candaules’ spectacle, his wife, thus becomes the unexpected audience for that same spectacle. It is Candaules’ wife who takes control of both action and speech once the spectacle occurs, much as Solon takes control of his conversation with Croesus; Candaules will not utter another word in the episode.⁷⁵ By contrast, Gyges seems never in control, being at the mercy first of Candaules and then of the queen.⁷⁶ Ironically, we never learn if the spectacle that Candaules orchestrates actually achieves its purpose; we never learn whether Gyges actually did ‘gaze’ at the naked body of the queen and

⁷⁴ As Long (1987) 20–1.

⁷⁵ Flory (1987) 35–7 stresses how much Candaules underestimates his formidable wife. According to Travis (2000) 340–1, the complete control that Candaules imagined he could exercise over his spectacle—both where Gyges and his wife were concerned—was mere ‘fantasy’. Cf. Dominick (2007) 434; Purves (2014) 99–110.

⁷⁶ Flory (1987) 36–8, cf. (1978a) 421 (cf. Long (1987) 19–20, 26–7, 29) criticises the cowardice of Gyges. *Contra* Baragwanath (2008) 216 (cf. Arieti (1995) 22 n. 41; Griffin (2006) 51), who argues that Herodotus means for his readers to feel empathy for the decisions Gyges makes in the episode, decisions that are based on Gyges’ own self-survival; similarly, de Jong (2001) 74.

consider it a ‘wonder’.⁷⁷ Instead, Gyges’ sense of ‘wonder’ toward the queen occurs when she issues her ultimatum to Gyges that either he or Gyges must die: Gyges is ‘amazed at what has been said’ (*ἀπεθώμαζε τὰ λεγόμενα*, 1.11.3). It is the queen’s *words*, not her beauty, that Gyges looks upon as a ‘wonder’.

While Croesus is utterly shocked that the spectacle involving his treasure-houses has so little effect on Solon, Herodotus’ readers perhaps would not have been surprised at the outcome of Croesus’ spectacle. Readers had already encountered Candaules’ disastrous spectacle; they had seen Candaules’ attempt to exploit the connotations of *θεᾶσθαι* fail miserably. Thus, when Croesus has Solon ‘gaze’ (*theāsthai*) at his riches, readers would be clued in to the possibility that the spectacle king Croesus was orchestrating might not go quite the way he had planned.

5. Solon and Patronage

Another expectation that Croesus, as well as Herodotus’ Greek readers, may have had for Solon when he arrives in Sardis was that the traveling Athenian poet was seeking artistic patronage for his poetry. We saw the traveling poet and musician Arion receiving patronage at the court of the Corinthian tyrant Periander and amassing great sums of money from his performances in Italy and Sicily (1.23–24). We also saw that Herodotus’ mention of ‘Sardis abounding in wealth’ in conjunction with the *sophistai* in 1.29.1 and his description of Solon’s tour of Croesus’ treasure-houses imply that *sophistai* might get paid if they came to Sardis. At the very least, *sophistai* could be ‘entertained’ (*ἐξείνιζετο*) by Croesus, as Solon is entertained for at least three or four days (*ἡμέρη τρίτη ἢ τετάρτη*) in Croesus’ palace (1.30.1). Free room and board in a royal palace is no small thing, especially the palace of a king who was as famously wealthy and philhellenic as the Lydian Croesus was.⁷⁸ Moreover, ancient sources tell us that many of the Seven Sages were, like Solon, poets.⁷⁹ Along with whatever performance of wisdom one of the Seven Sages might give, therefore, perhaps a sage might also read or perform (or have a chorus perform) one of his poems. It is possible, then, that both Croesus and Herodotus’ late fifth-century Greek readers may have expected

⁷⁷ Cf. Travis (2000) 339: ‘Candaules takes for granted the desire of Gyges [for Candaules’ wife], a desire that the narrative never states’.

⁷⁸ On the wealth of Lydia, specifically its gold, see Ramage and Craddock (2000); on Croesus’ philhellenism, see Cook (1982) 197–9; Forrest (1982) 318–9; Flower (2013).

⁷⁹ On the Seven Sages as poets, see Nagy (1990) 333 and n. 99; Martin (1993) 113–5; Busine (2002) 41–3. Busine 43 argues (*contra* Martin) that ancient reports concerning the poetic activity of the Seven Sages are spurious and are modelled after the activity of Solon, the one unquestioned poet from among the sages.

that Solon had travelled to Croesus' court to seek artistic patronage for his poetry. If this is so, then both Croesus and readers have their expectations subverted by Herodotus' narrative because Solon receives from Croesus neither patronage nor payment.

The artistic patronage of poets by tyrants and kings appears to have been a firmly established practice in the sixth and early fifth-century BCE Greek world.⁸⁰ For example, the Athenian tyrant Hipparchus (527–514) brought to Athens several poets, including Anacreon of Teos and Simonides of Ceos.⁸¹ Anacreon, according to Herodotus (3.121.1), had previously spent time at the court of the Samian tyrant Polycrates. The versatile, prolific, and in-demand Simonides, who died at the court of the Syracusan tyrant Hieron (478–466), was notorious for the money that he made from his poetic commissions.⁸² Sixth and fifth-century poets like Anacreon and Simonides, therefore, as well as fifth-century epinician poets like Pindar and Bacchylides or tragedians like Aeschylus and Euripides, were all said to have received patronage from autocrats and to have travelled from court to court while doing so. The Seven Sages therefore could have been thought by Herodotus and his readers—even if the sages' encounters with autocrats were not historical—to have received a similar patronage for the sages' own performances, many of which may have been poetic in nature.

According to Herodotus, the wealthy Lydian court of Croesus was not the only royal court Solon visited (1.30.1):

αὐτῶν δὲ ὧν τούτων καὶ τῆς θεωρίας ἐκδημήσας ὁ Σόλων εἶνεκεν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπῆκετο παρὰ Ἀμασιν καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐς Σάρδις παρὰ Κροῖσον.

After he had gone abroad for the sake of these very things and for the sake of touring, Solon came to Egypt to the court of Amasis and in particular to Sardis to the court of Croesus.

⁸⁰ On the artistic patronage of Archaic and Classical Greek poets at autocratic courts, see Gentili (1988) 160–2; Hutchinson (2001) 256–60 (Anacreon), 286–8 (Simonides), 321–3 (Bacchylides and Pindar; cf. Hornblower (2004) 33–6); Hunter and Rutherford (2009a) 11–13, 18; Kivilo (2010) 213. Cf. Bowie (2009), (2012). Martin (2009) 103–4 (*contra* Bowie (2012) 86–8) points out that from the viewpoint of democratic Athens such patronage could appear subversive.

⁸¹ See Lewis (1988) 292–4; Slings (2000).

⁸² On the generally accepted dates for Simonides' life (556–468), see Molyneux (1992). Cf. Hutchinson (2001) 288; Pelliccia (2009) 240–1.

Herodotus does not indicate which country Solon reached first, Lydia or Egypt; the narrated order, as well as the expression *καὶ δὴ καί* ('in particular'), however, suggests Sardis as a climax.⁸³

Later in the narrative Herodotus reports that Solon visited yet another royal court, that of Philocyprus, ruler of the city of Soloi on the island of Cyprus (5.113.2):

καὶ ὁ Σολίων βασιλεὺς Ἀριστόκυπρος ὁ Φιλοκύπρου, Φιλοκύπρου δὲ τούτου τὸν Σόλων ὁ Ἀθηναῖος ἀπικόμενος ἐς Κύπρον ἐν ἔπεσι αἶνεσε τυράννων μάλιστα.

And the king of the Solioi was Aristocyprus, the son of Philocyprus, that Philocyprus whom Solon of Athens, when he came to Cyprus, praised in verses most of [all] rulers.⁸⁴

Here Solon is unquestionably a poet. Perhaps poetry could form just a part of the verbal and visual display that characterised a performance by one of the Seven Sages. In addition to whatever poetic performance Solon gives Philocyprus, Plutarch reports in his *Life of Solon* (26.2–3) that Solon also lent Philocyprus his skill as a lawgiver and politician: Solon not only persuaded Philocyprus to move his city to a better location, but also helped to consolidate and organise the newly founded city.⁸⁵ (We can compare here the practical military advice that the sage Bias/Pittacus gives Croesus.) The implication of Herodotus' participial phrase *ἀπικόμενος ἐς Κύπρον* ('when he came to Cyprus') in 5.113.2 is both that Solon composed his poetic 'verses'

⁸³ Like Croesus, the Egyptian king Amasis was a noted philhellene: see Braun (1982) 40–1, 51–2. Solon's visit to Amasis' court has the same chronological problems that Solon's visit to Croesus' court has: Amasis' reign (c. 569–525 BCE), just as Croesus' reign, is likely too late for Solon. See Legrand (1946) 47n.3; Lloyd (1975) 55–7. Cf. Asheri (2007) 100. Similarly, it is primarily on chronological grounds that scholars reject Herodotus' report (2.177.2) that Solon adopted for the Athenians an Egyptian law originally created by Amasis. See Lloyd (1988) 220–1, (2007) 372–3.

⁸⁴ At Hdt. 5.113.2, it is unclear whether we should consider Philocyprus a 'king' (*βασιλεύς*), as Herodotus calls Philocyprus' son, Aristocyprus, or simply a 'ruler' (or even a 'tyrant': *τυράννων*), as Solon (in Herodotus' paraphrase of the poem Solon wrote for Philocyprus) calls him. See Hornblower (2013) 297. In both his quotation of and translation of Herodotus 5.113.2, Bowie (2009) 115 omits (inadvertently?) the word *τυράννων*.

⁸⁵ Plutarch (*Solon* 26.3) claims that Philocyprus (in addition to other gifts?) gave Solon a gift of honour: in return for Solon's help in founding his new city, Philocyprus named the city Soloi (*Σόλους*) after Solon. On the resulting image of Solon as the founder of a city or colony (*οἰκιστής*), see Irwin (2005) 148, 150. On the improbability of Soloi being named after Solon, see Hornblower (2013) 298.

(ἔπεισι) *while on Cyprus*—and not, say, when he returned to Athens—and (admittedly this next point is less clear) that he presented his poem(s) directly to Philocyprus. Plutarch (*Solon* 26.4) preserves an elegy purportedly written by Solon to Philocyprus; this poem (fr. 19 = West 1992b: 152) offers wishes of long rule for Philocyprus and his descendants in Soloi and serves as a propempticon for Solon’s return voyage to Athens.⁸⁶ Thus this poem does not appear to be the same poem that Herodotus mentions in 5.113.2, which ‘praised’ (αἰνεσε) Philocyprus ‘most of [all] rulers’ (τυράννων μάλιστα).⁸⁷ The overall spirit of the Herodotean and the Plutarchan poems is nevertheless the same: both are praiseworthy of Philocyprus. Solon thus travels to Cyprus and composes (apparently) two different poems for the local ruler Philocyprus.

Perhaps some modern scholars might object that Solon would not have considered Philocyprus his ‘patron’, who paid Solon for his poetry, whether with room and board in his palace or with more direct monetary gifts. Rather, such scholars might argue that Solon was Philocyprus’ ‘guest-friend’ (ξένος). In the institution of ‘guest-friendship’ (ξενία), a person’s ‘guest-friends’ (*xenoi*) could belong to the highest social classes of foreign communities (and could include kings and tyrants); guest-friends often gave each other guest-gifts, such as luxury goods and precious objects, as a way of maintaining their relationship with one another.⁸⁸ *Symposia* seem often to have been the site for this exchange of goods between *xenoi*, and such goods might have included poetry composed at or for a specific *symposion*.⁸⁹ Perhaps it was at a Cypriot *symposion*, suggests Ewen Bowie (2009)115, that Solon composed his poems for Philocyprus; in Bowie’s view, then, Solon would be composing his poems for Philocyprus out of a relationship of *xenia*. At any

⁸⁶ On the authenticity of the poem that Plutarch (*Solon* 26.4) attributes to Solon, see Nenci (1994) 320; Bowie (2009) 115 n. 14. After dismissing Solon’s visit to Croesus as ‘chronologically almost impossible if not quite’, Rhodes (2003) 64 writes that Solon’s ‘visit to Philocyprus does appear to be authentic, though without confirmation from a fragment from one of his poems we should have labelled that chronologically almost impossible too’. Hornblower (2013) 297–8 is more convinced that the Solon–Philocyprus encounter is historically possible.

⁸⁷ *Contra* Linforth (1919) 299 (cf. Irwin (2005) 147), who argues that the poem quoted by Plutarch (*Solon* 26.4) ‘is a portion, probably the close, of the very poem referred to by Herodotus [in 5.113.2]’. Although Bowie (2009) 115 does distinguish the two poems from one another, he concludes that the poem to which Herodotus refers was probably composed in elegiacs—like the poem in Plutarch *Solon* 26.4—rather than in hexameters.

⁸⁸ On guest-friendship (*xenia*), see Herman (1987), (2012).

⁸⁹ On poetry and the *symposion*, see Carey (2009) 32–8; Griffith (2009) 88–90. Carey (2007) 204–5 (cf. Budelmann (2012)) argues, however, that the first performance of many an epinician ode was probably not at an informal private *symposium*, but at a grand public feast paid for by the victor and his family; references in Pindar’s poetry for a sympotic setting for epinicia are often, therefore, poetic fictions.

rate, Herodotus reports that Simonides ‘wrote’ (ἐπιγράψας) an epigram for the seer Megistias ‘out of guest-friendship’ (κατὰ ξεινίην) (7.228.4).⁹⁰ The encounter between Croesus and Solon has also been viewed by scholars through the lens of guest-friendship (*xenia*); by this reading, Croesus gives Solon a tour of his treasure-houses, in part, to imply that Solon could have a guest-gift given to him from those same treasure-houses.⁹¹ Croesus does address Solon specifically as ξέινε (‘stranger/guest/guest-friend’) in 1.30.2 and 1.32.1.⁹²

Guest-friendship no doubt did have a part to play in the transfer of some poems from poets to their guest-friend recipients, but relegating artistic patronage only to the poorest, non-aristocratic segment of Greek poets is nevertheless untenable.⁹³ If it is wrong for scholars to accept all of the specific details that the ancient biographical tradition tells us about how poets such as Simonides received artistic patronage,⁹⁴ then it also must be wrong to accept at face value what poets such as Pindar have to say about the relationship that exists between their own poems and *xenia*. Just because Pindar refers to the Syracusan tyrant Hieron as *xenos* (ξένον, *Ol.* 1.103), for example, does not mean that Pindar and Hieron were guest-friends; such a reference could instead be merely a polite literary fiction meant to imply that the tyrant Hieron, due to the high and lasting quality of the epinician poetry that Pindar is composing for him, should effectively consider the poet Pindar as his equal.⁹⁵ Pindar may *present* his poems as being the products of *xenia*, therefore, but that does not mean that they actually were. A poet’s reason for wanting to downplay the issue of patronage with regard to his poetry is clear: patrons paid poets to write poems for them. Guest-friends, however, simply gave each other gifts, gifts that were part of the mutual obligations that tied *xenos* to *xenos*.

⁹⁰ According to Hornblower (2009) 41, the very fact that Herodotus points out that Simonides composed Megistias’ epigram κατὰ ξεινίην (7.228.4) may ‘indicate that such poems were normally written for money’.

⁹¹ See Kurke (1999) 146–7. Both Kurke 143–6 and Herman (1987) 89 also connect Croesus’ encounter with Alcmaeon (6.125) to this same theme of aristocratic gift-exchange.

⁹² On the implications that the vocative ξέινε/ξένε has in Greek literature, see Dickey (1996) 146–9. Vandiver (2012) 163 contrasts the *xenos* Solon with the *xenos* Adrastus, ‘one of whom warns [Croesus] against overconfidence in his good fortune and the other of whom [by killing Croesus’ son Atys] enacts the nemesis that punishes that overconfidence’.

⁹³ *Contra* Pelliccia (2009) 246: ‘At the lowest levels of the economy there probably did exist poets willing to compose epitaphs and other occasional poems for a fee’ [my italics].

⁹⁴ As Pelliccia (2009) 245–7; Bowie (2012).

⁹⁵ As Kurke (1991) 140–1, cf. 135–59; see also (1993).

The early sixth-century poet Solon himself does appear to have been an aristocrat. It must be borne in mind, however, that virtually everything we know of Solon's life—or, it appears, everything that ancient sources knew of his life—is gleaned from his own poetry.⁹⁶ Solon seems to have been a distinguished (and probably independently wealthy) enough figure that the Athenians entrusted him with making laws for Athens.⁹⁷ In the remains of his poetry, Solon at times cuts an aristocratic figure; for example, he counts as 'prosperous' (ὄλβιος) the man who has 'a guest-friend in foreign lands' (ξένος ἀλλοδαπός, fr. 23 = West 1992b: 154). At other times, Solon comments on the dangers of wealth and strikes a moderate position, placing himself and his law-making reforms between the rich and the poor.⁹⁸

Whatever Solon's aristocratic origins, some ancient sources do attribute to Solon a largely non-aristocratic means of funding his travels: trade. In his *Life of Solon*, Plutarch twice (2, 25.5) refers to Solon's trading ventures.⁹⁹ According to Plutarch, Solon's father had dissipated the family fortune through acts of philanthropy, and accordingly Solon 'while still a young man had embarked on [a career in] trade' (ἄρμησε νέος ὡν ἔτι πρὸς ἐμπορίαν) (*Sol.* 2.1). Nevertheless, Plutarch seeks to defend Solon from any opprobrium associated with trade: Plutarch notes that some say Solon had actually

⁹⁶ See Lefkowitz (2012: 46–54). Irwin (2005) 148–51, (2006) 14 stresses the control that Solon himself—through his authorial self-presentation in his poetry—must have exerted over his later reception.

⁹⁷ Cf. Hornblower (2009) 40: 'if there is anything in the stories of Solon's travels, he must have been rich and independent. Certainly no friend of his own class would have sponsored Solon to do what he did, because the economic reforms associated with Solon were not obviously in the interests of that class.' Similarly, Gentili (1988) 160: 'one can see the clear contrast between a poet who, like Solon, works in conditions of complete economic independence ... and the poet who pursues his calling—as the itinerant rhapsode must have done—to gain a living'.

⁹⁸ Wealth: e.g., fr. 13.7–13, 74–76; 15 (= West (1992b) 147, 150–1). Moderate position: e.g., fr. 5; 34; 36 (= West 144, 159–62).

⁹⁹ In addition, the Aristotelian author of the *Athenaion Politeia* claims that Solon went to Egypt 'for trade and at the same time for touring/sightseeing' (κατ' ἐμπορίαν ἅμα καὶ θεωρίαν, 11.1). On the expression κατὰ θεωρίαν, see Rutherford (2000) 135. There is evidence, however, that the phrase κατ' ἐμπορίαν ἅμα καὶ θεωρίαν in *Ath. Pol.* 11.1 is stereotypical in nature and so may not actually reveal much about the reasons for Solon's travels specifically. Essentially the same phrase appears in Isocrates' *Trapeziticus*: in this speech, the unnamed speaker says that he travelled to Greece 'at the same time for trade and for touring/sightseeing' (ἅμα κατ' ἐμπορίαν καὶ κατὰ θεωρίαν, 17.4). On Solon's θεωρία—mentioned by the Herodotean narrator in 1.29.1 and 1.30.1 and by Croesus in 1.30.2—in particular, the view of Ker (2000), that Solon travelled abroad as a way of ensuring that the laws he had made for the Athenians could be fully implemented in his absence, is more persuasive than the view of Nightingale (2004) 63–8, cf. (2005) 171, that he did so simply to acquire wisdom.

travelled not for ‘money-making’ (*χρηματισμοῦ*), but for ‘experience’ (*πολυπειρίας*) and ‘inquiry’ (*ἱστορίας*) (*Sol.* 2.1).¹⁰⁰ Plutarch further claims that in Solon’s time ‘trade’ (*ἐμπορία*) could even improve a man’s reputation by giving him experience of and personal contacts in foreign countries (*Sol.* 2.3).¹⁰¹ After Solon had made his laws for Athens, Plutarch relates, he ‘sailed off, making ship-owning the excuse for his wandering, having obtained permission from the Athenians to go abroad for ten years’ (*πρόσχημα τῆς πλάνης τὴν ναυκληρίαν ποιησάμενος ἐξέπλευσε, δεκαετῆ παρὰ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀποδημίαν αἰτησάμενος*, *Sol.* 25.5).¹⁰² Solon’s ‘ship-owning’ (*τὴν ναυκληρίαν*) suggests trade once again.¹⁰³

If Herodotus’ Greek readers knew that Solon had travelled while engaging in the non-aristocratic activity of trade, then perhaps readers might also have suspected—whether rightly or wrongly—that when Solon travelled to foreign courts, he may have done so, like several later well-known poets (Simonides, Pindar, Aeschylus, etc.), in order to seek patronage for his poetry. Herodotus (as well as his late fifth-century readers, we can assume) certainly knew Solon as a poet: he alludes to the poems that Solon composed (apparently) at the court of Philocyprus (5.113.2).¹⁰⁴ Readers would have already met Arion (1.23–24), the traveling poet and musician who becomes rich from his performances. Could readers have suspected that Solon was going to be like Arion, that Solon was going to perform his poetry for king Croesus as Arion had done for the tyrant Periander?

The episode involving Philocyprus (5.113.2) becomes one that—like the episode involving Alcmaeon (6.125)—provides readers with a retrospective view of what Solon *could have* done at Sardis. Solon could have composed a poem or poems praising Croesus ‘most of all rulers’.¹⁰⁵ One can imagine that

¹⁰⁰ Szegedy-Maszak (1978) 202 sees the travels of Solon, when he was a young man (Plut. *Sol.* 2.1), as part of the education that legendary Greek lawgivers typically acquired before their law-making activities began.

¹⁰¹ On Solon’s turning to trade to finance his travels, see Linforth (1919) 94–5, and on his travels in general, see Linforth 36–7, 93–7, 297–302; Irwin (2005) 47–51.

¹⁰² Plutarch says that Solon gives his *τὴν ναυκληρίαν* (‘ship-owning’) as a *πρόσχημα* (*Sol.* 25.5). Rawlings (1975) 34 notes that in *Herodotus*, at any rate, the word *πρόσχημα* always indicates a false ‘reason’, whereas *πρόφασις* (as in the Herodotean phrase *κατὰ θεωρίας πρόφασιν* in 1.29.1) can indicate either a true or false ‘reason’.

¹⁰³ As Rutherford (2000) 135 n. 15.

¹⁰⁴ In addition, Herodotus seems to be alluding to a specific Solonian poem (Solon 27) when he has Solon in 1.32.2 tell Croesus that seventy years is the limit of a person’s life; see Chiasson (1986) 252–3; Clarke (2008) 1–5; Lefkowitz (2012) 54; *contra* Stehle (2006) 105 n. 71. On what Herodotus’ readers might have expected from the Herodotean Solon based on their knowledge of Solon’s own poetry, see Pelling (2006) 151–2.

¹⁰⁵ Diod. 9.26.1 (cf. 9.2.1) underlines exactly what Croesus wanted from those Greek sages who visited his court: ‘Croesus used to send for those who were preeminent for

Croesus especially would have been a very appreciative audience for such poetry. Perhaps the poet Solon could memorialise Croesus much as an epinician poet like Pindar memorialises a victor like Hieron. Since the main thing that Croesus seems to expect from Solon is flattery, perhaps he also expects that Solon will not only name him as the most prosperous (*olbios*) man that Solon has seen, but also sing of him in poetry as that most prosperous of men. And perhaps the tour of the treasure-houses is Croesus' way of letting Solon know what the latter could receive if his flattering poetry finds favour with the Lydian king. It may be that with this tour Croesus subtly holds out the offer of artistic patronage to Solon, but Solon—who Herodotus explicitly states did *not* flatter Croesus (1.30.3)—refuses to accept the offer. Judging from Solon's encounter with Philocyprus, readers might wonder how differently Solon's encounter with Croesus would have turned out, had Solon simply composed praise poetry for Croesus rather than giving Croesus his unwelcome comments about the mutability of human fortune.

6. Conclusion

It is with a combination of shaping readers' expectations and of subverting some of those expectations, therefore, that Herodotus prepares readers for the encounter between Solon and Croesus in 1.29–33. One expectation that is met is when Croesus gives Solon a tour of his treasure-houses: Herodotus had conditioned readers to expect that Croesus was going to attempt to overawe Solon with a display of his wondrous possessions, just as Candaules had tried to overawe Gyges with a display of his beautiful wife (1.8–12). Several things readers might expect to see, however, do not occur in this episode. The sage Solon does not give a performance of wisdom that will delight Croesus, as the sage Bias/Pittacus (1.27) did. The poet Solon has not travelled to Sardis to seek artistic patronage, as the poet Arion (1.23–24) travelled to Corinth; Solon is not looking for a gift as a part of such patronage, as one might expect after Solon's treasure-house tour. By subverting readers' expectations in these ways—by surprising readers—Herodotus draws readers' attention all the more to the programmatic function of much of what Solon tells Croesus in 1.29–33.

But what is so special about the encounter between Solon and Croesus? It is certainly a thematically important or programmatic episode. Is this episode unique, however, in the way that Herodotus shapes and subverts readers' expectations? Or does it either establish or follow a pattern

wisdom in Greece ... and used to honour with great gifts *those who hymned his good fortune*' (ὁ Κροῖσος μετεπέμπετο ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος τοὺς ἐπὶ σοφία πρωτεύοντας ... καὶ τοὺς ἐξυμνοῦντας τὴν εὐτυχίαν αὐτοῦ ἐτίμα μεγάλας δωρεαῖς).

evidenced in other such thematically important episodes? Can we identify a recurring narrative strategy whereby Herodotus uses analogous episodes both to shape readers' expectations and to subvert at least some of those expectations with a given episode's paradoxical content? Can we find other examples of Herodotus' employing the element of surprise in this way as a means of underlining an episode's thematic importance for the *Histories*? A brief survey of comparable episodes will show that the Solon–Croesus episode *is* in fact unique in these respects.

One such thematically important episode is the Gyges–Candaules–Candaules' wife episode itself. We find in this episode, just as we do in the Solon–Croesus episode, pithy statements that can be seen to function programmatically for Herodotus' work. In Solon's last words to Croesus, for example, he tries to explain why he cannot call Croesus *olbios* until he learns how Croesus' life comes to an end (1.32.9):

σκοπέειν δὲ χρῆ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτὴν κῆ ἀποβήσεται·
πολλοῖσι γὰρ δὴ ὑποδέξας ὄλβον ὁ θεὸς προρρίζους ἀνέτρεψε.

But one must consider the end of every matter [to see] how it will turn out; for indeed the god shows a glimpse of prosperity to many and [then] overturns them by the roots.¹⁰⁶

Using the same verb *σκοπέειν* ('consider'), Gyges tries to dissuade Candaules from ordering the spectacle involving his wife by saying (1.8.4):

πάλαι δὲ τὰ καλὰ ἀνθρώποισι ἐξεύρηται, ἐκ τῶν μανθάνειν δεῖ· ἐν τοῖσι
ἐν τῷδε ἐστὶ, σκοπέειν τινὰ τὰ ἑωυτοῦ.

Long ago, fine things have been discovered for men, from which [things] one must learn; among them there is this one thing, that one look at one's own [possessions].

With the two aphorisms Gyges and Solon deliver crucial advice to their respective interlocutors, and it is advice that Candaules and Croesus ignore to their ruin.¹⁰⁷ Solon's closely related ideas of 'looking to the end' and of the jealousy gods exhibit toward human prosperity can serve as Herodotean explanations for the ultimate failure of the Persian king Xerxes' invasion of

¹⁰⁶ For *ὑποδέξας* in 1.32.9, I take the translation 'showing a glimpse of' from Shapiro (1996) 350.

¹⁰⁷ Asheri (2007) 82 notes a link between 1.8 and 1.32 in the sheer conglomeration of aphorisms that appear in both chapters. On the function of aphorisms or proverbs in the *Histories*, see Lang (1984) 58–67; Shapiro (2000).

Greece in 480–79 BCE, which forms the subject of Books 7–9 of the *Histories*. Similarly, Gyges' idea of 'looking at one's own' can carry with it an anti-imperialistic message that, again, Herodotus may be directing against Persian (and later Athenian) imperialistic acts of expansion and aggression.¹⁰⁸ Like Solon's surprising refusal to flatter Croesus or to accept his patronage, Candaules' wife surprisingly turns the table on her husband and coerces Gyges into killing Candaules. Even so, the Gyges–Candaules–Candaules' wife episode occurs so early in the *Histories* that there is little time for Herodotus to build up to it with other, analogous episodes, as he does with (the slightly later) Solon–Croesus episode.

An even closer analogue to Solon's conversation with Croesus is Demaratus' conversation with Xerxes in 7.101–5.¹⁰⁹ Both conversations feature Greeks advising eastern kings, and both Greek advisors try to explain to those kings Greek customs and ways of thinking. In his dialogue with Xerxes, the exiled Spartan king repeatedly tries to distinguish the characteristics of 'free' Greeks from those of Xerxes' 'slavish' subjects; Demaratus says of the Lacedaemonians (7.104.4):

ἐλεύθεροι γὰρ ἔοντες οὐ πάντα ἐλεύθεροί εἰσι· ἔπεστι γὰρ σφι δεσπότης νόμος, τὸν ὑποδευμαίνουσι πολλῶ ἔτι μάλλον ἢ οἱ σοὶ σέ.

For although they are free, they are not completely free; for there is a master over them, law/custom/tradition, which they fear far more than your men fear you.

The story of the Persian Wars told by Herodotus in the *Histories* can be seen as the victory of Greek freedom—characterised by Greek adherence to *nomos* ('law', especially in the case of Greeks as a whole, but also 'custom/tradition' in the case of the Lacedaemonians specifically)—over Persian despotism.¹¹⁰ Whatever words Demaratus speaks in praise of his erstwhile countrymen in 7.101–5 are somewhat surprising; after all, Herodotus has already informed readers how Demaratus was driven into exile after he had been ousted from his kingship through the machinations of his fellow Spartan king Cleomenes.¹¹¹ Demaratus himself admits that he no longer has any affection (ἔστοργός, 7.104.2, cf. 7.239.2) for Lacedaemonians. And yet Greek readers would not have been completely shocked to hear Demaratus praising

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Dewald (2013) 387 n. 19.

¹⁰⁹ On the series of conversations that Demaratus has with Xerxes in the *Histories*, see Branscome (2013) 54–104.

¹¹⁰ For the translation of *nomos* in 7.104.4 as 'tradition', see Branscome (2013) 69–70, cf. 58–9.

¹¹¹ See Hdt. 6.61–70.

Lacedaemonians and other Greeks; in the chauvinistic Greek mind, Greek cultural superiority over that of barbarians was such that even an exiled Greek with an axe to grind could not deny it.¹¹² To Herodotus' Greek readers, therefore, Demaratus' praise of Greeks in his conversation with Xerxes would not appear to be nearly as paradoxical as Solon's rather discourteous behaviour toward his potential royal patron Croesus would appear.

Perhaps the best match for the Solon–Croesus episode in terms of the episode's thematic importance and Herodotus' subversion of audience expectations is the Constitutional Debate (3.80–3).¹¹³ Nothing that comes before this episode in the *Histories* really prepares readers for what they find here: a debate on which form of government—democracy, oligarchy, or monarchy—the Persians should choose in 522 BCE, after Darius and his six fellow conspirators have killed (the false) Smerdis, the Magian pretender to the Persian throne. When they arrive at the Constitutional Debate, readers of the *Histories* have only ever seen the Persians ruled by monarchs, whether by the Median Astyages, by the Persian Cyrus (Astyages' conqueror), by Cyrus' son Cambyses, or by Smerdis. Up to the point of the Constitutional Debate, Herodotus has guided readers to expect that the Persian government will always be a monarchy. For the Persians even to consider adopting democratic or oligarchic rule for themselves, therefore, would no doubt seem quite surprising to readers.¹¹⁴ Thematically, however, readers would see many Herodotean resonances in the debate, especially in the criticisms levelled at autocrats, first by Otanes (the proponent of democracy: 3.80.2–6), and then by Megabyxus (the proponent of oligarchy: 3.81).¹¹⁵ These criticisms may reflect, at least in part, Herodotus' own views not only of Persian and other eastern kings, but also of Greek tyrants and even of the imperialistic Athenians of Herodotus' own day.

What really distinguishes the Constitutional Debate (3.80–3) from Solon's encounter with Croesus is Herodotus' insistence on the debate's historicity. Some scholars do not accept Herodotus' claim that the debate happened; as John Moles notes, for example, Otanes would be arguing for democracy at a

¹¹² Some scholars view the Herodotean Demaratus' praise of despotic Spartan *nomos* in 7.104.4, however, as a back-handed compliment that has been filtered through the lens of Athenian democratic ideology; see Forsdyke (2001) 341–54, (2006) 233; Millender (2002a), (2002b) 29–31.

¹¹³ On the Constitutional Debate (3.80–3), see Lateiner (1989) 163–86, (2013); Pelling (2002); Dewald (2003) 28–30.

¹¹⁴ *Contra* Pelling (2002) 127–9, 154–5.

¹¹⁵ Lateiner (1989) 172–9 compiles a list of the criticisms made against autocrats in the Constitutional Debate and matches those criticisms with the actions of autocrats displayed throughout the *Histories*.

time when this concept had not yet been invented in Athens.¹¹⁶ The debate also has no real historical impact: a majority of the seven conspirators side with Darius' position that the Persians should retain monarchy as their form of government (3.83.1). In his introduction to the debate, however, Herodotus is adamant: 'speeches were given that are unbelievable to some of the Greeks, but they were, at any rate, given' (ἐλέχθησαν λόγοι ἄπιστοι μὲν ἐνίοισι Ἑλλήνων, ἐλέχθησαν δ' ὧν, 3.80.1). Herodotus thus shapes readers' expectations of the debate in a direct manner: by telling readers that, despite what 'some of the Greeks' think, the debate really happened. He later reminds readers of this assertion, when he relates that in the aftermath of the Ionian Revolt the Persian general Mardonius overthrew tyrannies throughout Ionia and replaced them with democracies (6.43.3):

ἐνθαῦτα μέγιστον θῶμα ἐρέω τοῖσι μὴ ἀποδεκομένοισι Ἑλλήνων Περσέων τοῖσι ἐπτά Ὀτάνεα γνώμην ἀποδέξασθαι ὡς χρεὸν εἶη δημοκρατέεσθαι Πέρσας.

Then I will say a most wondrous thing to those of the Greeks who do not believe that Otanes showed forth an opinion to the seven of the Persians that Persians should be democratic.

Just who were these Greeks who doubted not only that the Constitutional Debate happened (3.80.1), but also that Otanes advocated for democracy in the debate (6.43.3)? Presumably they were audience members at one or more of the public readings that Herodotus gave from his work. It is also possible that the Greeks to whom Herodotus refers in 3.80.1 and 6.43.3 are merely straw men inserted by Herodotus to emphasise the wondrous nature of the debate or—to give Herodotus more credit as an historian—Greeks who Herodotus imagines *would* doubt the historicity of the debate if they heard tell of it. Regardless of who these Greeks were (and if they existed or not), what is important here is that Herodotus actively shapes readers' expectations of the Constitutional Debate in a way that he does not with the Solon–Croesus episode: Herodotus never explicitly states that the conversation between Solon and Croesus (which, again, Herodotus may have himself invented) actually occurred. Instead, Herodotus relies almost exclusively on preceding, analogous episodes (Gyges–Candaules–Candaules' wife, Arion–Periander–Corinthian sailors, Bias/Pittacus–Croesus)—and not overt authorial statements—to shape what readers might expect to find in the encounter between Solon and Croesus.

¹¹⁶ Moles (1993) 119. That Otanes actually uses the term *ἰσονομία* ('equality before the law': 3.80.6, cf. 83.1), rather than *δημοκρατία*, does not affect Moles' point. See further Fehling (1989) 122; van Wees (2002) 327.

This comparison between the Solon–Croesus episode and a select number of other, thematically important Herodotean episodes¹¹⁷ has shown that the former episode is special. If all or many of these episodes began as self-contained epideictic set pieces¹¹⁸ delivered by Herodotus before various live audiences, as seems likely, it was Herodotus’ challenge to weave these originally oral *logoi* into his written *Histories*. As evidence for just how crucial Solon’s conversation with Croesus in 1.29–33 is to his work, Herodotus tries something with this episode that he never repeats in his work: with analogous episodes he builds up readers’ expectations about what both they as the external audience and Croesus as the internal audience will experience in this conversation (e.g., that Solon will seek patronage and that he will flatter Croesus), but then Herodotus subverts many of those expectations when Solon actually interacts with Croesus. The surprising, programmatic advice that Solon gives to Croesus in 1.29–33, including the appropriate admonition to ‘consider the end of every matter’, is thrown into sharp relief by such subversion.

The Florida State University

DAVID BRANSCOME
dbranscome@fsu.edu

¹¹⁷ Strasburger (2013) 301–2 lists several more episodes of this type, including the Persian Council Scene (7.8–11).

¹¹⁸ As Thomas (2006) 73–4.

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