

HERODOTUS—THE MOST HOMERIC HISTORIAN?

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HERODOTUS—THE MOST
HOMERIC HISTORIAN?



Edited by
IVAN MATIJAŠIĆ

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PREFACE

This book explores the relationship between Herodotus and Homer and the reason why Herodotus was considered Homeric in antiquity. It stems from a conference at the School of History, Classics and Archaeology of Newcastle University which took place in March 2019, where most of the chapters that make up the book were presented. The conference was funded by the Research Committee of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology at Newcastle, and by the Institute of Classical Studies in London. I wish to express my gratitude to both institutions for their generous support, to the speakers for accepting my invitation to Newcastle, to the other numerous participants for a successful and fruitful discussion during the event, and to the chairs of each session: Federico Santangelo, Rowland Smith, Christopher Tuplin, and Jaap Wisse.

I also wish to thank the *Histos* editors, Rhiannon Ash and Timothy Rood, for accepting this edited book for publication in the journal's Supplements, and especially the supervisory editor of the Supplements, John Marincola, for the extremely helpful guidance and valuable assistance in the final stages of the publication process.

Each chapter is autonomous and includes a self-standing bibliography, but all have benefitted from discussion during the conference and from subsequent exchanges of emails and texts. The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly made our work more challenging, especially because of limited access to libraries, but we hope that our efforts have produced something that will benefit Herodotean and Homeric scholars. If the book manages to stimulate further thoughts or provoke some constructive reaction, it will have accomplished its principal objective.

I. M.

Siena, October 2021

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BLOODY DEATH IN GREEK
HISTORIOGRAPHY AND HOMER:
DISCURSIVE PRESENCES AND MEANINGFUL
ABSENCES IN HERODOTUS' BATTLE
NARRATIVES*

Maria Fragoulaki

1. Introduction: Meaningful Absences

This chapter revisits the question of Herodotus' descriptions of the dying body on the battlefield and reads them against Homer's different treatment of this theme, aiming to bring to light new aspects of Herodotus' interaction with the Homeric text. In the *Histories*, deaths of warriors in battle are reported briefly, often by a single verb or with minimal information, provided in the form of a vignette of the warrior's body and the wound received. In most cases there is no reference to the last moments of the dying individual, such as his words or thoughts, the way he falls onto the ground or loses his senses. This is in sharp contrast to Homeric descriptions of death, which can be extensive, often providing graphic details of the wound and the warrior's way of dying.¹ This striking difference is of

* I dedicate this chapter to the memory of Ioannis-Theophanis Papadimitriou, Emeritus Professor of Classics at the University of Athens (EKPA) and President of the Hellenic Humanistic Society, who died on 8 May 2021, after a short illness. He was an excellent classicist and a man of rare integrity, generosity, and fine humour. I was blessed and honoured by his teaching, unfailing support, and friendship.

A note on translations: For Herodotus, I have used Waterfield (1998), and for Homer's *Iliad*, Murray (1924–5), with my adaptations, in both cases. Other translations are my own.

¹ Homeric descriptions of injury and death in combat are not found in Thucydides either (see also below, on the word 'blood', αἷμα, below, pp. 116–22, but resurface in historical accounts of the Roman period, such as the Alexander-historian Arrian and the Byzantine Procopius: Salazar (2000) 159–60; Hornblower (2007) 48–50. Tragedy seems to be Homer's most obvious inheritor in the physicality and gruesomeness of death-scenes in the fifth century BCE, e.g., de Jong (1991) for death in messenger speeches. The way in which the

special importance, since the way one dies on the battlefield is intimately connected with the heroic ethics of death, thus posing challenging questions about the reception of Homer within the political, social, and military context of the classical period in which Herodotus is situated, including new technologies in war and political institutions.

The study of the absence of descriptions of death on the battlefield in Herodotus as an un-Homeric feature is not new in the bibliography. Important suggestions have been made as to why Herodotus, the so-called ‘prose Homer’ (*SEG* 48.1330, the Salmacis Inscription) or ‘the most Homeric’ of authors ([Long.], *Subl.* 13.3),² departs from his predecessor so sharply in his habits of describing death on the battlefield. For example, Deborah Boedeker has argued for a contrast between Homer and Herodotus using the theoretical framework of Bakhtin’s monologic vs dialogic/multiplicity of voices. According to this view, Homer is a basically monologic text in its commitment to the heroic honour and subjective description of death from the dying hero’s viewpoint; by contrast, Herodotus’ interest in multiple and competing levels of discourse bestows a dialogic or polyphonic quality to the *Histories*.³ Yet studies on the complexities of motivation in Herodotus and Homer permit us to argue that polyphonic complexity can also be sought within Homer’s world too and in the relationship between the Homeric narrator and his subject matter.⁴ The complexities of Homeric focalisation can expose very different views of the most incontestably heroic deaths, such as Hector’s. As Christopher Pelling points out to me, ‘Hector’s death may be as good a death as one can get—glorious, fighting for the city, eternally remembered as Homer has seen to that—but it means something very different for Andromache’.⁵ On the other hand, there are occasions when the multifocal world of Herodotus can be ‘poetically’ monologic. Again, Ove Strid has argued for Herodotus’ interest in recording solely extraordinary deaths in some detail.⁶ This idea too can be complicated further, if we consider, for example, Leonidas’ death at

early historians interact with tragedy’s tropes in reporting death deserves separate examination.

² See Matijašić in this volume, above, pp. 2–4.

³ Boedeker (2003).

⁴ See, e.g., Baragwanath (2008); Pelling (2019) and (2020a) showing that the boundaries between epic and historiographic tropes of aetiology are permeable.

⁵ Per email of 25.9.2019.

⁶ Strid (2006).

Thermopylae (on which see below, §4), which is pretty extraordinary, but is still reported tersely; a case which shows that presence and/or amplification is only one way to signpost the memorable and the extraordinary.⁷

Through linguistic and narratological analysis of Herodotus' 'un-Homeric' descriptions of the dying body on the battlefield, this chapter will argue that the absence of detailed information is part of Herodotus' Homeric allusive practice or Homeric intertextuality. As has been noted, later writers may wave at an earlier writer, by means of a brief allusion, a sort of shorthand, asking their audience to use the memory of the earlier writer to fill in the details of their own story.⁸ In modern literary and cultural theory, this 'waving' and 'filling in' of gaps are central in the notions of reception and intertextuality, or of the discursive space in which a work is received and meaning is created. But as is also widely acknowledged in the bibliography, such a network of textual discourse is complicated and elusive, and the understanding of its mechanism is difficult, if not impossible, at times. Suffice it only to note the intense discussions about texts relating to distant or foreign systems, codes, and traditions, which deal with questions such as 'what happens when specific intertexts are culturally lost?' and the role of philology as 'an archaeology of reading' in surmounting 'the intertext's obsolescence'.⁹

In order to address Herodotus' Homeric intertextuality focusing on descriptions of death on the battlefield, attention will be paid to the interplay between Homeric presences and absences on the surface of Herodotus' discourse. Critical discourse analysis has engaged with questions of 'meaningful absences' or 'meaningful silences' and how these might be investigated in an empirical way, dealing with questions such as: 'How do we come to notice absences?' or 'How are absences determined by what is semiotically present?'¹⁰ For something to be perceived as meaningfully absent, there has to be at least one thinkable alternative presence that comes to mind. And in order for this alternative presence to come to mind, there has to be a context in which this presence is possible or expected. 'Silence and absence are of interest to us in that they can be interpreted, and this is

⁷ Pelling (2006) 94: 'There is indeed something magnificent about Leonidas and the three hundred'. On descriptions of death on the battlefield in Herodotus, see also Darbo-Peschanski (1988); Friedrich (2002); Marincola (2018).

⁸ Pelling (2013a). On intertextuality and allusion, see also Machacek (2007). On Homeric allusions in Herodotus see Matijašić, Haywood, Barker, and Tuplin, above, Chs 1, 3, 6, 9 (respectively).

⁹ Allen (2000) 126.

¹⁰ Schröter-Taylor (2018) 5.

only possible if they are relatable to an alternative presence that can be spelled out'.¹¹

In relation to our investigation, the many Homeric features (or presences) of Herodotus' narrative create a Homeric context or a suitable textual environment, where Herodotus' audience could construe something as meaningfully absent. An important aspect of this open-ended negotiation of 'Homeric' presences and 'un-Homeric' absences is the experiential and performative relationship of Herodotus' audiences with the Homeric text; among other things, a cultural bank of rich, detailed, and grisly descriptions of injury and death in battle.¹² This is further connected with the complex question of orality and literacy in ancient Greece and how their interaction determined the way in which a word remembered 'its own path and [could not] completely free itself from the power of those concrete contexts into which it ha[d] entered', in Michael Bakhtin's words.¹³ The memory space of a word can be vast and deep, however desperate and frustrated we might be in our investigation of ancient texts by the feeling of building so much on small details. Memory space can also be painful; suffice it to think how trauma and memory studies deal with narrative and silence.¹⁴ Even in victory, war and heroism are inextricably connected with the pain of loss. Homer speaks a good deal about this pain and from various perspectives, and so do the tragic poets who have been influenced by epic tropes of heroism.¹⁵ Herodotus' war narrative is no exception.

The oral context holds an important place in the bibliography on Herodotus, and its challenges must always be kept in mind when using tools of philology (or the 'archaeology of reading'; see above), such as the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG)—an invaluable tool for the modern reader. There is no doubt that poets such as Simonides (and Homer) were quoted and studied from memory at the level of word and particle in the classical period:

¹¹ Schröter–Taylor (2018) 6, and *passim*.

¹² See Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) xviii on the preponderance of the epic genre among Herodotus' influences and debts. The accomplished, refined, and deeply original narrative of Herodotus is also a reflection of his audience's horizon of expectations: Vannicelli (ibid.) xix. On the deep familiarity of fifth-century BCE audiences with the Homeric text in relation to Thucydides, see Fragoulaki (2020b).

¹³ Bakhtin (1984) 201 and Thomas (1992), esp. 101–8; in relation to Thucydides and collective memory, see Fragoulaki (2020a) and (2020b).

¹⁴ See, for example, Dessingué–Winter (2016).

¹⁵ See below, pp. 143–4, on Hector's address to his heart in *Iliad* 22. For the Homeric background of the heroic in tragedy, see Easterling (1997).

The intellectuals who gather for discussion in Plato's *Protagoras* rely on their collective memory to quote large portions of a complicated Simonidean ode that they proceed to subject to extremely close verbal analysis (339a–347a) [...] These savants are doubtless exceptional, and the scene in *Protagoras* comes from one of the most literate of fourth-century authors, but nothing in principle prevents an orally circulating song from being carefully quoted and studied.¹⁶

The oral memory of the text is crucial, and my aim in this discussion is to pay attention to the literary level as a means of approaching (indirectly but no less clearly) questions posed not only for poetry but also for fifth-century historiography, such as: 'the nature of the performance itself (which is very hard to determine, but extremely important, as recent work shows); the character and role of the audience; the relation of the written text to the performed version; the social and political context'.¹⁷

In my effort to deal empirically with the question of Herodotus' 'un-Homeric' way of depicting death in battle, I follow specific steps, always putting emphasis on the relational nature of meaning. I start with a brief overview of descriptions of death in the *Histories* (what I call 'Herodotus' landscape of death') (§2), followed by an examination of Herodotus' descriptions or 'typology' of death in combat (§3), drawing a comparison between death in combat and non-combat contexts in the text. This comparison reveals a significant disparity within the *Histories*, since in many non-combat contexts descriptions of the dying and dead body can easily be characterised as 'Homeric', in their grisliness and anatomical detail, by contrast with the 'un-Homeric' description of death in combat. This disparity within the *Histories* adds a further relational dimension to the discussion of Herodotus' 'un-Homeric' treatment of death in battle, which is further established through tracing the word 'blood' (αἷμα) in Herodotus. This linguistic element is widely used in descriptions of death in Homer (and is an element present in the harsh realities of war in all periods), but is totally absent from Herodotus' battle descriptions, although it appears (rarely) in non-battle contexts. Focusing on the interplay between discursive absences and presences in the construction of meaning, I also pay attention to the intertextual potential of rare or *hapax* words (such as the rare word *kleos* in

¹⁶ Ford (2002) 154.

¹⁷ Thomas (1992) 102.

Herodotus). The same applies to the examination of specific vignettes and longer episodes in the *Histories*, which to their greatest extent have been acknowledged in the bibliography as ‘Homeric’. My discussion will be rounded off by such a ‘Homeric’ episode, namely the battle of Thermopylae (§4). In general, I concentrate on comparisons between battle scenes in Herodotus and the *Iliad*.¹⁸ At points, a comparison with Thucydides is also drawn, in order to put the descriptions of the dying body in Herodotus into the wider canvas of fifth-century historiography and contemporary cultural and ideological aspects of the heroic ethics of death. At all levels of examination (language, narrative organisation and patterning, and themes), I am building on existing scholarship on Herodotus and Homer, hoping to offer new perspectives of Herodotus’ Homeric intertextuality through the application of the methodological tool of discursive presences and meaningful absences.

2. The Landscape of Death in Herodotus: The Suffering and Dying Body

In non-combat scenes, Herodotus does not shun providing detailed descriptions of the human body in moments of suffering, exposure, trauma, and humiliation. ‘Landscape of death’ is a metaphor, used to convey the richness and variety of death in the *Histories*, also conjuring up the visual and spatial dimensions, which are central to our examination.¹⁹ Death and suffering in Herodotus involve different contexts of death, torture, and maltreatment of the dead or living human body, female or male: mutilation, death in the sea by drowning or devouring by big fish, illness, cannibalism, crucifixion, decapitation and impalement, individual and mass murders, necrophily, human sacrifice, and suicide are some of the scenes of death and suffering found in Herodotus. Such descriptions resemble the ‘Homeric’ mode of describing death, and their level of detail varies: more detailed descriptions tend to surface in connection with Herodotus’ deep themes and

¹⁸ Cf. Mueller (2011) 125: ‘To talk about Homeric battle-scenes is to talk for the most part about the *Iliad*’. There are gruesome descriptions of death in the *Odyssey* too, in contexts which can be viewed as ‘alternative’ battlefields (e.g., the cave of the Cyclops or the extermination of the suitors in Odysseus’ palace). The Epic Cycle is another influence: West (2013) 149 and n. 35, ‘it is a typical motif that at the fall of the champion the troops turn to flight’. Cf. the effect of the death of Mardonius at Hdt. 9.63; Briscoe–Hornblower (2020) on Livy 22.6.5. Saunders (1990), for wounds in the *Iliad*.

¹⁹ On ‘death’ in the *Histories*, see Fragoulaki (2021).

programmatic interests, such as characterisation of individuals and groups, ethnography and its ability to explain history, and different systems of political administration and their impact on individuals and groups. The way death, of significant individuals in particular, is described in Herodotus (and Thucydides) also relates to the early historians responding to other contemporary prose sources regarded as precursors of biography. These sources were likely to have contained proto-biographical material (such as anecdotal vignettes or grisly details of an individual's death), which would have been filtered out or drastically recycled by the historians to suit the purposes of their works.²⁰

In battle-narrative contexts brief descriptions of the human body tend to surface in the framing narrative, that is, either before or after the description of the battle. A representative example is Herodotus' version of Cyrus' death.²¹ Here the Persian king died after a prolonged and difficult battle with the Massagetans, in which many of his Persians lost their lives. Both collective (the Persian army) and individual (Cyrus) deaths are reported by a single verb, *διαφθείρεσθαι* and *τελευτᾶν*, respectively: *ἢ τε δὴ πολλή τῆς Περσικῆς στρατιῆς αὐτοῦ ταύτῃ διεφθάρη καὶ δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς Κύρος τελευτᾶ* ('most of the Persian army lost their lives there and Cyrus himself died too', 1.214.3). Within this short death report, the shift from past tense to historical present (*διεφθάρη ... τελευτᾶ*) in the original text, underscores the unexpectedness of Cyrus' death, adding drama to the narrative. This is a trope characteristic of historiography and tragedy: for example, the death of the Athenian general Lamachus in Sicily is reported in a similar manner by Thucydides: *ἀποθνήσκει αὐτὸς τε καὶ πέντε ἢ ἕξ τῶν μετ' αὐτοῦ* ('he was killed together with five or six of his companions', Thuc. 6.101.6).²² The naming of

²⁰ For example, Pelling (2016) 114–15 reads Herodotus' 'in a way which does not bear mentioning' (*οὐκ ἀξίως ἀπηγγήσιος*, 3.125.1), said of Polycrates' death, 'as a potential response to something like a *Life of Polycrates* by Stesimbrotus of Thasos, which might have contained graphic details about the manner in which Polycrates was killed. Ion of Chios' *Epidēmiāi* has been identified as another forerunner of biography: 'his forte was the anecdotal vignette, with an eye for the good remark and an eye for the visual' (Pelling (2020b) 93). All this was Herodotus' forte too, and if we were to risk making a hypothesis based on Sophocles' quotations found in Ion's fragments, Ion's biographic elements could have been mediated to Herodotus via the tragic poet Sophocles, who was known to have been an Athenian connection of Herodotus since antiquity (Plut. *Mor.* 785B).

²¹ On versions of Cyrus' death, see Asheri (2007) 216.

²² Hornblower (2008) 531 cites (*ad loc.*) more examples of abrupt deaths in Thucydides, also mentioning (in his introductory note) that 'the key-moments are signalled by the historical present ... [which] is, for Livy, as for Th., the "initiative-tense"; for historical

a single dying individual against the non-naming of his fellow-combatants is another trope underscoring drama and the significance of the individual. Cyrus (and Lamachus in Thucydides) are the only named individuals who fall in battle, among a group of other unnamed men who fall with them. The death of Leonidas and the Three Hundred at Thermopylae too is reported by a present tense in a similar patterning of named and anonymous deaths (see below, §4).

In contrast to the economic statement, ‘Cyrus himself died too’ (1.214.3), the scene of the posthumous maltreatment of his body, which follows, is rich in gory details (1.214.4–5):

ἄσκὸν δὲ πλήσασα αἵματος ἀνθρωπηίου Τόμυρις ἐδίζητο ἐν τοῖσι τεθνεῶσι τῶν Περσέων τὸν Κύρου νέκυν, ὡς δὲ εὔρε, ἐναπήκε αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐς τὸν ἄσκόν· λυμαιομένη δὲ τῷ νεκρῷ ἐπέλεγε τάδε· ‘σὺ μὲν ἐμὲ ζώουσαν τε καὶ νικῶσαν σε μάχῃ ἀπώλεσας παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν ἐλὼν δόλω· σὲ δ’ ἐγώ, κατὰ περ ἠπειλήσα, αἵματος κορέσω’.

Tomyris filled a wineskin with human blood and searched among the Persian corpses for Cyrus’ body. When she found it, she shoved his head into the wineskin, and as she maltreated the dead body addressed it as follows: ‘Although I have come through the battle alive and victorious, you have destroyed me by capturing my son with a trick. But I warned you that I would quench your thirst for blood, and so I shall.’

This is a story of wine, blood, and revenge, in which Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetans, is involved (on blood, see below, §3). Herodotus has an interest in royal women who demonstrate extraordinary cruelty, especially in contexts of revenge, such as the Persian queen Amestris, Xerxes’ wife (9.108–13), or the Greek queen of Cyrene Pheretime (4.162–5, 200–5).²³ Herodotus’ story of Tomyris communicates with a deeper vein of Near Eastern stories with women protagonists.²⁴ At the same time, in the ethnographic spectrum of the *Histories* and the different shades of Otherness

present in Thucydides, see Lallot et al. (2011); cf. Basset (2011) 160: ‘an unexpected event with heavy consequences is indeed what this tense seems to express’. For the use of historical present in messenger speeches reporting death, see, e.g., Eur. *Ion* 1207, with de Jong (1991).

²³ On the connection between Amestris and Pheretime and ethnography’s aetiological function, see Baragwanath (2020).

²⁴ Weststeijn (2016).

in it, Tomyris' vengeful defilement of Cyrus' body invites a cross-cultural comparison with Xerxes' punishment and hubristic maltreatment of the Hellespont, by having its water flogged, while addressing it with words 'outlandish and presumptuous' (*βάρβαρά τε καὶ ἀτάσθαλα*, 7.35). Clashes or commonalities of culture suggest historical interpretations, and Tomyris' bloodthirstiness is central to the ethnographic characterisation of the Massagetans as paradigms of crude and deep-shaded Otherness.²⁵

3. Where is the Blood? Meaningful Absences in Herodotus' Discourse of Death

In most battle scenes in Herodotus, death is usually reported briefly, without descriptions of the wound or other details. In Homer on the other hand details about types of wounds and anatomical details abound, and it is no exaggeration to say that descriptions of battles in Homer are soaked in blood. Unsurprisingly, the word 'blood' (*αἷμα*) itself is very frequent in Homeric battle scenes, whereas it is totally absent from battle descriptions in Herodotus, and scarce in his work more generally. In this section, we will examine the interplay of presences and absences of the word *αἷμα* in Homer and Herodotus, in order to observe the differences between the two authors in descriptions of death, by means of this linguistic element. Before doing so, a brief survey of Herodotus' language of death will help us situate the presence (or absence) of *αἷμα* in his discourse against the Homeric discourse of death.

In Herodotus, verbs reporting the warrior's death from different narrative viewpoints are: *πίπτειν* ('fall', metaphorically for dying; frequent, e.g., 1.76.4, 82.7; 4.201.1; 7.210.2, 223.3, 224.1); *ἀποθνήσκειν* (*μάχη*) (5.46.1); *συναποθνήσκειν* ('dying/falling together with': 5.46.2; 7.222); *ἀπόλλυμι* (7.209.1); *ἀπόλλυσθαι* (5.126.2; 7.209.2); *καταβάλλειν* (7.211.3); *διαφθείρειν* (7.213.1); *τελευτᾶν* (5.48; 6.1, and in the Cyrus passage above);²⁶ *διαφθείρεσθαι* (1.82.8, 214.3); *ἀποκτείνειν* (1.100.3); *φονεύειν* (4.204); *κατεργάζεσθαι* (7.211.2; 9.106.1); *ξίφει διεργάζεσθαι* (7.224.1); *κατασφάζειν* (8.127);²⁷ *κατακρεοργεῖσθαι* (7.181.1); *κρεοργηδὸν διασπᾶν* ('tear apart limb

²⁵ Cf. Munson (2001) 97–8, on the 'same degree of primitivity' between the Nasamones and the Massagetae (*ibid.* 161–3).

²⁶ *τελευτᾶν* is often used in phrases such as *τελευτᾶν τοῦ βίου* ('end one's life') or *νοῦσῳ τελευτᾶν* ('die of illness'); rarely in battle contexts.

²⁷ Not of death on the battlefield in the strict sense, but the context is war-related.

from limb’: 3.13.2); *κατατραυματίζεσθαι* (‘suffer casualties/wounds’: 7.212.1).²⁸ Some of these verbs, such as *πίπτειν*, are found in Homer too (and elsewhere). Others, such as *κατακρεοργεῖσθαι*, *κρεοργηδὸν διασπᾶν*, and *κατατραυματίζεσθαι*, are rare and their earliest appearance in the surviving literary sources is in Herodotus.²⁹ Death in combat may also be reported through short verbal phrases containing the noun *θάνατος* (‘death’), as in the Thermopylae narrative: *τὸν μέλλοντα σφίσι ἔσεσθαι θάνατον* (‘the death that was approaching for them’, 7.223.4; cf. 7.219.1 for the seer Megistias) and *τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ ἔξοδον ποιούμενοι* (‘making a sortie to meet their death’, 7.223.2). Comparing numbers of survivors after battle with the number of the initial force is another way to suggest a large number of casualties and a bloody and gruesome battle, without using the vocabulary of death or bodily injury and suffering, e.g., in the battle of the Lacedaemonians and Argives (sixth century BCE): *ὑπελείποντο ἐξ ἀνδρῶν ἑξακοσίων τρεῖς* (‘of six hundred men three survived’, 1.82.4). The trope is also found in Thucydides (7.87.6: *ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ’ οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν*, ‘few out of many returned home’).

3.1. αἷμα (‘blood’) in Homer and Herodotus

Let us now turn our focus to the word ‘blood’ and the presences and absences of this word in Homer and Herodotus. A search of *αἷμα* on the *TLG* database yields 116 occurrences in Homer, 80 in the *Iliad*, and 36 in the *Odyssey*.³⁰ The much greater frequency of the word in the *Iliad* than in the *Odyssey*, over 50%, reflects the preponderance of battlefield scenes in the former. The focus in the *Iliad* may be either on collective deaths reported in high-camera mode, or on individual deaths of named heroes in middle- or low-camera narrative mode.³¹ Though individual deaths tend to stand out, examples are plenty in each category. In addition to the visual aspect of

²⁸ Many of these verbs, such as *πίπτειν*, *συναποθνήσκειν*, *ἀπολλύειν*, *ἀπόλλυσθαι*, *διαφθεῖρειν*, *κατεργάζεσθαι*, *ξίφει διεργάζεσθαι* and *κατατραυματίζεσθαι* appear in the Thermopylae narrative (7.201–33; see below, §4).

²⁹ *κατατραυματίζεσθαι* also in Thucydides (e.g., 7.41.4, 79.5).

³⁰ The word *αἷμα* alone was looked up as a *TLG* lemma; compounds or *αἷμα*-rooted words have not been included in the search. Cf. Neal (2006).

³¹ I employ Lendon’s (2017) cinematic language to describe the different heights (high, middle, low) from which the battle narrator’s camera hangs when recording motions of army units, groups, individuals, and different amount of detail; with Marincola (2018) 10–13 and *passim*. For Homeric battle narratives, see also Fenik (1968); Latacz (1977).

blood and imagery of massive loss of life, Homeric battle scenes contain auditory imagery of loud sounds of weapons and human bodies (*Il.* 8.62–5):

... ἀτὰρ ἀσπίδες ὀμφαλόεσσαι
ἔπληντ' ἀλλήλησι, πολὺς δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς ὀρώρει.
ἔνθα δ' ἄμ' οἴμωγῇ τε καὶ εὐχολῇ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν
ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων, ῥέε δ' αἷματι γαῖα.

They dashed their bossed shields together, and a great din arose. Then were heard alike the sound of groaning and the cry of triumph of the slayers and the slain, and the earth flowed with blood.³²

The soaking of earth—or the water growing red with human blood—belongs to formulaic imagery,³³ and blood is often found in paratactic relationship with slaying and death.³⁴ Human blood is often described as dark in Homer, and so is death itself.³⁵

When the camera zooms into individual (fatal or non-fatal) wounds, the length and detail of descriptions vary. Often snapshots of anatomical details and information about armour and weapons used to inflict the wound are provided.³⁶ The variety of fatal wounds inflicted by Achilles towards the end of Book 20 and the details and vividness of these descriptions sketch a particularly fierce and unrelenting personality (cf. οὐ γάρ τι γλυκύθυμος ...

³² Cf. the formulaic 'he fell to the ground with a thud and his armour rattled around him', *Il.* 4.504; 13.187, with Fenik (1968) 3.

³³ E.g., *Il.* 4.451; 20.494 (water: *Il.* 21.21); variants: *Il.* 21.119; 17.360–1.

³⁴ *Il.* 11.164: ἔκ τ' ἀνδροκτασίης ἔκ θ' αἵματος ἔκ τε κυδοιμοῦ, 'from the man-slaying and the blood and the din'; *Il.* 19.214: φόνος τε καὶ αἷμα καὶ ἀργαλέος στόνος ἀνδρῶν, 'slaying, and blood and the grievous groans of men'.

³⁵ E.g., adjectives such as μέλας, κελαινός, κελαινεφής are standard epithets of αἷμα: *Il.* 4.140, 149; 7.329; πορφύρεος used both for death and blood: *Il.* 5.83; 17.360, respectively (with Kelly (2007) 236); for the darkness enfolding the eyes of the dying hero, see, e.g., *Il.* 4.461; 5.82–3). For blood and blood spilt in Homer, Neal (2006) 185–266. Cf. Griffin's (1980) 91–3 panorama of death in the *Iliad*.

³⁶ Examples: 'smote him as he rushed onwards upon the right shoulder on the plate of his corselet; through this sped the bitter arrow and held straight on its way, and the corselet was spattered with blood', *Il.* 5.98–100 (Diomedes' non-fatal wound); 'he let fly a bronze-tipped arrow ... Him Paris struck beneath the jaw under the ear, and swiftly his spirit went away from his limbs, and hateful darkness seized him', *Il.* 13.662–72 (Euchenor's fatal wound). For gruesome deaths and heroic ethics in Homer, see, e.g., Schein (1984); Vernant (1991) 50–74; Rutherford (2013) 62–4.

ἐμμεμαώς, *Il.* 20.467–8).³⁷ Even when wounds are reported briefly, sensory information of astonishing vividness is provided, typical of the Homeric physicality of death. The speed with which the metal blade gets warm inside Achilles' hand by the blood of the dying Echeclus is a case in point (*Il.* 20.474–7):

... ὁ δ' Ἀγήνορος υἷὸν Ἔχεκλον
 μέσσην κὰκ κεφαλὴν ξίφει ἤλασε κωπήεντι,
 πᾶν δ' ὑπεθερμάνθη ξίφος αἵματι· τὸν δὲ κατ' ὅσσε
 ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή.

He struck him square on the head with his hilted sword, and all the blade grew warm with his blood, and down over his eyes came dark death and mighty fate.

How fast can a metal blade get warm from the victim's blood? There is arguably a degree of poetic hyperbole in this sensory detail. On the other hand, the scene surely communicates with sensory realities, not only of the battlefield but also of animal sacrifices. From the modern reader's point of view, it arguably stretches the limits of modern cultural experience and sensory imagination, and therefore the modern audience's capacity to assess the scene's realism.

The imagery of blood and the descriptions of the dying body are central to the exploration of human mortality and divine immortality in Homer. It might be argued that blood, as human biological substance, is the single most palpable criterion that separates men from gods, who most of the time mingle on the battlefield and elsewhere in Homer's world.³⁸ In the episode of Sarpedon's death, one of the most extensive descriptions of death in the *Iliad*, the ingenious poetic handling of the imagery of blood signposts the special significance of the dying hero, also exposing the closeness of ancient theology and the realities of war. Sarpedon is hit by Patroclus' spear close to

³⁷ E.g., *Il.* 20.469–71: 'He [Achilles] smote him upon the liver with his sword, and forth the liver slipped, and the dark blood welling forth from it filled his bosom' (Tros' fatal wound).

³⁸ See, for example: ἀναίμονές εἰσι καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται, 'they are bloodless and are called immortals', *Il.* 5.342. In fact the gods have blood, but not that of mortals; and they can be wounded, but cannot die: ἀμβροτον αἷμα θεῖο, ἰχώρ, 'the immortal blood of the goddess, the ichor' (5.339–40), of the episode of Aphrodite's wounding by Diomedes; cf. Neal (2006) 151–84.

‘the throbbing heart’ (16.481). No information is provided about the profuse blood loss and the quickness of Sarpedon’s death suggested by the adjective *ἀδινός* (‘throbbing’), at this point in the poetic narrative. This is unusual, in light of similar Homeric descriptions of death from a fatal wound, as we saw. Instead, the imagery of blood in the episode is organised in three vignettes of displaced temporality vis-à-vis Sarpedon’s moment of death from the wound received, as all three take place either before or after that moment. The first vignette concerns the time before: the bloody rain-drops (16.458–60: *αἱματοέσσας ψιάδας*), which Zeus sends to honour his son, whose death is still ahead in the narration. The second turns the focus to the bloody dust (16.486: *κόνιος δεδραγμένος αἱματοέσσης*) which the hero clutches as he falls dead, in the few seconds following his death. The third concerns a much later time, when the battle over Sarpedon’s corpse takes place; the hero’s corpse is depicted as ‘utterly covered with missiles and blood and dust, from his head right to the tips of his feet’ (16.639–40: *βελέεσι καὶ αἵματι καὶ κονίησιν | ἐκ κεφαλῆς εἴλοντο διαμπερές ἐς πόδας ἄκρους*; cf. 16.667).³⁹

In Herodotus the presence and frequency of the word *αἷμα* are totally different. As shown in the Appendix at the end of this chapter, it is used only fifteen times.⁴⁰ This is a surprisingly low number, considering the rich and diverse landscape of death and bodily suffering in the *Histories*, as we saw above (§2). None of these occurrences relates to battle descriptions. Thirteen concern non-Greek individuals and groups, and are related to the ethnographic vein of the work and its explanatory function, with four of them appearing in the episode of Cyrus’ death and posthumous maltreatment (see above, pp. 113–15). Some of the ethnographic references of *αἷμα* concern scenes of blood rituals or human sacrifice (e.g., Scythian or Arab customs). It may also appear in (semi-)medical scenes (e.g., the Egyptian Psammenitus or the Persian Pharnuches); or in the Persian Zopyrus’ self-mutilation in the siege of Babylon. Although a military aspect may exist in some of these scenes, nowhere does blood relate to injury or death on the battlefield.

³⁹ For the role of blood in the episode, see Brügger (2018) 216–17 and *passim*; Janko (1992).

⁴⁰ The word *αἷμα* in Herodotus was looked up as a lemma (cf. above, n. 30). In all cases the word is used in its literal sense. But the compounds *ὁμαίμος* and *ὁμαίμων* (‘of the same blood’) are used to denote intercommunal kinship (*syngeneia*) and not for the battlefield: 1.151.2; 5.49.3; and 8.144.2 (in a famous statement of panhellenic identity (*Hellenikon*)). For kinship in Herodotus, see Hornblower (2013) 21–3 and 164, on Hdt. 5.49.3). Other purely poetic words for ‘of the same blood’ are *σύναιμος*, *αἰθαίμος*, *αἰθαίμων* (used in Sophocles: LSJ, s.v.), none of which is found in Herodotus or Thucydides.

Only in two passages in Herodotus (Appendix, nos. 14 and 15) is the word used in relation to Greek contexts, both in hexametric Delphic oracles received by the Greeks in relation to the battle of Salamis.⁴¹ I am not interested here in problems of authenticity or the poetic quality of the oracles, but in the fact that Homeric echoes and other poetic intertexts are loud and clear at the level of the oracles' metrical form (epic hexameter), vocabulary, style, and imagery. For example, in the first oracle (Hdt. 7.140), the Pythia's bloody vision of temple roofs dripping with blood interacts with Theoclymenus' prophetic vision in the *Odyssey* (20.351–7); and ὀξύς Ἄρης ('bitter Ares') as personification of War is also Homeric.⁴² Again, in the second oracle (Hdt. 8.77), among other poetic overtones,⁴³ the polyptoton in the phrase χαλκὸς γὰρ χαλκῶ συμμίξεται ('bronze shall clash with bronze') and αἶματι δ' Ἄρης πόντον φοινίξει ('Ares will dye the sea red') evoke Homeric archetypes: χαλκόφι χαλκός (*Il.* 11.351), for the clashing of bronze; and Ares' darkening the banks of Scamander with blood (τῶν νῦν αἶμα κελαινὸν ἐύρροον ἀμφὶ Σκάμανδρον | ἐσκέδασ' ὀξύς Ἄρης, *Il.* 7.329–30).

It is worth pausing to glance at Thucydides, the other early Greek historian who communicates with Herodotus closely. Thucydides too avoids graphic descriptions of the dying and suffering human body in battle, and the word αἶμα is not found in his *History*.⁴⁴ There are only two αἶμα-rooted words. The first is αἵματώδης ('of blood-red colour'), used in the medical

⁴¹ On the absence of the word 'blood' (αἶμα) in Greek-related contexts in Herodotus, see, for example, the episode of the Spartan king Cleomenes' death, caused by self-mutilation, which must have involved blood loss (6.75.3); or amputation scenes, such as 9.37, involving a leg; 8.106.4, involving male genitals. Nowhere does the word αἶμα crop up. See also below, the first vignette concerning Cynegirus. For Cleomenes, mutilation, and thigh wounds in Herodotus, see Felton (2014).

⁴² For the oracle's 'epicising language' and poetic intertextuality, including Hesiod and Aeschylus' *Persians*, see Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 468–70, who also notes the need for a systematic study of the language of Herodotus' oracles; Russo (1992) 125 (on *Od.* 20.351–7 and Hdt. 7.140).

⁴³ E.g., see Nagy (1990) on Herodotus' implicit interaction with the poetics of *kleos* in relation to the oracles he cites, and more specifically the convergences in theme and divergences in style between the oracle in Hdt. 8.77 and Pindar's *Ol.* 13.6–12. Cf. Nagy (1979), on *kleos aphthiton* ('undying fame'), *timē* ('honour'), and other terms/means of heroism in poetry.

⁴⁴ For Thucydides' reporting of individual and collective deaths, see, e.g., 'He was killed, along with five or six of those with him' (Lamachus, 6.101.6; with Hornblower (2008) 531, on similar brief statements); above p. 116 on 7.87.6, 'few out of many returned', with Hornblower (2008) 745, for poetic and Herodotean echoes.

context of the Great Plague of Athens to describe the intense blood-red colour of the throat and the tongue of the person affected by the disease (2.49.3). The plague is the only section in Thucydides (2.47.3–54) where the diseased and dying body is described in excruciating detail, vying, it could be argued, with the Homeric text, and coming much closer to the physicality of human suffering in a medical-scientific context than Herodotus ever does, whose communication with the early medical authors is much more diffused in his work.⁴⁵ The second occurrence is *ἡματωμένον* (passive participle of *αἵματώω*, ‘turn bloody’), in the description of the final moments of the Sicilian expedition. In a scene of culminating drama, we watch the Athenian hoplites striving to drink the bloody and muddy water of the river Assinarus in Sicily, as they are being slaughtered by the Syracusans on the river’s banks (*καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ εὐθὺς διέφθαρτο, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἐπίνετό τε ὁμοῦ τῷ πηλῷ ἡματωμένον*, ‘the water quickly turned foul, blood mingling with mud, but the Athenians drank on’, Thuc. 7.84.5).⁴⁶ It is worth noting that the later Diodorus Siculus (first century BCE) does use the word ‘blood’ in a scene with clear epic overtones, namely Brasidas’ fainting at Pylos: *διὰ τῶν τραυμάτων αἵματος ἐκχυθέντος πολλοῦ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο λιποψυχήσαντος αὐτοῦ* (‘he suffered much loss of blood from the wounds, and as he lost consciousness’, D.S. 12.62.4). Diodorus’ passage represents the same scene as that in Thucydides (*τραυματισθεὶς πολλὰ ἐλιποψύχησε*, 4.12.1), but the specific and explanatory mention of loss of blood is additional. The intermediate source is probably Ephorus (fourth century BCE), but it is not possible to say for sure whether he or Diodorus himself was responsible for the interesting amplification. Whoever added the words seems to have thought that Thucydides should have mentioned blood but did not.⁴⁷

The absence of references to blood in the early historians surely cannot be viewed as an indication that hoplite warfare in the classical period became less bloody or that it claimed fewer human lives. This chapter argues that far from effacing, as it were, the Homeric imagery of death, the ‘meaningful’ absence of descriptions of battle injury and death in Herodotus (as defined by critical discourse analysis) evokes the rich Homeric landscape of death even more powerfully, in the context of historiography’s re-configured

⁴⁵ For the influence of medical writers on Herodotus, see Thomas (2000).

⁴⁶ Thucydides’ description of the slaughter at Assinarus evokes Achilles’ slaughter of the Trojans at the banks of Xanthus in Homer, *Il.* 21.1–16, 21, 147, 325. For Thucydides’ interaction with Homer, see Fragoulaki (2020b).

⁴⁷ I am grateful to Simon Hornblower for pointing this out to me.

relationship with the poetics and politics of *kleos* and the living experience of war in the fifth century BCE. Through the interplay between Homeric presences and meaningful absences on the surface of Herodotus' battle narrative, the audience's textual memory and imagination is activated, against the background of fifth-century warfare realities and ideologies, while the boundaries between poetry and prose remain distinct.

3.2. Three Vignettes in Herodotus and their Homeric Contexts

So far we have used the absence of explicit mentions of blood from Herodotus' battlefield as a linguistic means by which the interplay between presences and absences in the two texts can be observed, and as revealing of Herodotus' interaction with Homer. In the following three Herodotean vignettes, we will continue to examine the interplay between discursive presences and meaningful absences as a mechanism of Homeric evocation, by encompassing within our scope more aspects of the dying body, in addition to blood, before concentrating on the battle of Thermopylae.

The first vignette is one of the rare cases in which some details concerning the dying body on the battlefield are given. It concerns the death of Cynegirus, one of the distinguished Athenians, who fell at the battle of Marathon (Hdt. 6.113.2–114):

φεύγουσι δὲ τοῖσι Πέρσησι εἶποντο κόπτοντες, ἐς ὃ ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν ἀπικόμενοι πῦρ τε αἶθρον καὶ ἐπελαμβάνοντο τῶν νεῶν. καὶ τοῦτο μὲν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ πόνῳ ὁ πολέμαρχος Καλλίμαχος διαφθείρεται, ἀνὴρ γενόμενος ἀγαθός, ἀπὸ δ' ἔθανε τῶν στρατηγῶν Στησίλεως ὁ Θρασύλεω· τοῦτο δὲ Κυνέγειρος ὁ Εὐφορίωνος ἐνθαῦτα ἐπιλαμβανόμενος τῶν ἀφλάστων νεός, τὴν χεῖρα ἀποκοπεῖς πελέκεϊ πίπτει, τοῦτο δὲ ἄλλοι Ἀθηναίων πολλοὶ τε καὶ ὀνομαστοί.

They harried the retreating Persians and cut them down until they reached the sea, where they demanded fire and laid hold of the Persian ships. During this *mêlée* the War Archon Callimachus was killed, fighting bravely, and one of the commanders, Stesilaus, the son of Thrasylaos, died as well. It was also at this point that while Cynegirus, the son of Euphorion, was grabbing hold of the stern of one of the ships, he was fatally wounded when his hand was chopped off by a battle-axe. A number of other famous Athenians fell as well.

Having recorded the retreat of the Persians to the sea en masse, their cutting down by the Athenians, and their wish to set the Persian ships on fire from a high-level camera, Herodotus lowers the camera to the battlefield to record the death of Cynegirus, providing some ‘contextual information’,⁴⁸ namely the type of wound (loss of arm), the weapon used (battle-axe), and topographical detail (the stern of the ship is the epicentre of action and probably of a death in water).⁴⁹ Cynegirus’ death is recorded together with those of two other named individuals, the polemarch Callimachus and the general Stesilaus, which are reported each by a single verb (*διαφθείρεται* and *ἀπέθανε*, respectively), in the usual terse manner of historiography.

The fashioning of the episode under the influence of the Homeric scene in which Hector grasps the stern of an Achaean ship and calls the Trojans to action with the words, ‘Bring fire!’ (*Il.* 15.716–18) has been well acknowledged.⁵⁰ But most importantly for our discussion, the episode’s interaction with Homer has been dealt with not only in relation to what occurs on the surface of the text, but also to what does not. One such non-occurrence in the Cynegirus vignette is the lack of any reference to the marshy area of Marathon. The intriguing absence of such an important element of the battle’s topography has been viewed as a ‘deliberate choice’ meant not to spoil the evocation of the Homeric model, which does not involve fighting in the marshes.⁵¹ By the same token, the absence of cavalry in the fighting or the emphasis on the hoplite charge (6.112) have been viewed

⁴⁸ Fenik’s term: (1968) 16–17.

⁴⁹ Hornblower–Pelling (2017) 211 note Hdt. 6.91.2 as the only other occasion in Herodotus where *χείρ* and *ἀποκόπτω* are combined in a less glorious scene.

⁵⁰ Hornblower–Pelling (2017) 243: ‘Cynegirus is presented by Herodotus as a “modern-day Hector”’. Ibid. 254–5 for the words *πῦρ*, *ἀφλάστων* (a rare word, only in Homer and Herodotus in the surviving literature until the fifth century BCE and alluding to *Il.* 15.717–18 (Hector scene)), and *κόπτοντες* in the sense of ‘smiting’ (Hdt. 6.113.2) as resonating with other Homeric passages (e.g., *Il.* 13.203–4 for Imbrius’ head), with Pelling (2013b) 25–6, and Flower (1998).

⁵¹ Hornblower–Pelling (2017) 243–5 also point out the logistical problems of Herodotus’ topography (‘the Greeks would by now be some way from their camp, and it is hard to see where such fire could come from’, 255), which they attribute to Homeric influence. Cf. Janko (1994) 306. For the marsh in Marathon, see Paus. 1.32.3, with 1.15.3 as noting that it was depicted on the Stoa Poikile. Herodotus must have visited the Stoa in the 420s, so he could have been aware of the marsh at least from this monument. For analogies between this scene and Hdt. 7.224.1–3, see Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 576; also below, p. 135, on 7.225.3, ‘with hands and mouths’; Wilson (2015) 151, on two post-classical vignettes of Cynegirus’ death, in which mouth and teeth take part.

as part of Herodotus' strategy of constructing a Homeric background against which his description of the battle of Marathon is placed.⁵²

Without the interference of elements alien to Homer, the Homeric background of Herodotus' vignette can thus be evoked through the presence of formulas typical of heroic ideology, such as *ἀνὴρ γενόμενος ἀγαθός* and *πολλοί τε καὶ ὀνομαστοί*,⁵³ and the variation on a theme-wound. Cynegirus' arm wound activates the textual memory of alternative Homeric arm wounds, such as the high-camera scene occurring immediately before Hector grasps the ship's stern (in the low-camera scene we have just seen), where massive arm and hand amputations are described, causing swords to fall to the ground (*Il.* 15.713–15):

πολλὰ δὲ φάσγανα καλὰ μελάνδετα κωπήεντα
 ἄλλα μὲν ἐκ χειρῶν χαμάδις πέσον, ἄλλα δ' ἀπ' ὤμων
 ἀνδρῶν μαρναμένων· ῥέε δ' αἵματι γαῖα μέλαινα.

And many fair blades, bound with dark thongs at the hilt, fell to the ground, some from the hands and some from the shoulders of the warriors as they fought; and the black earth flowed with blood.

This image of mass carnage communicates with other images of individual deaths caused by arm mutilation. One such is that of Hypsenor, son of Dolopion, priest of the river god Scamander. Though the scene is fairly typical in terms of narrative patterning, the mini-narrative about the individual's identity and the description of his arm amputation are not (*Il.* 5.76–83):⁵⁴

Εὐρύπυλος δ' Εὐαιμονίδης Ὑψήγορα δῖον
 υἱὸν ὑπερθύμου Δολοπίονος, ὅς ῥα Σκαμάνδρου
 ἀρηγτῆρ ἐτέτυκτο, θεὸς δ' ὡς τίετο δῆμῳ,
 τὸν μὲν ἄρ' Εὐρύπυλος, Εὐαίμονος ἀγλαὸς υἱός,

⁵² Hornblower–Pelling (2017) 244 and 253, also citing van Wees (2004).

⁵³ *ἀνὴρ γενόμενος ἀγαθός* is an epigraphic formula: cf. Hdt. 6.14.3, with Hornblower–Pelling (2017) ad loc.; *ibid.* 243 'lapidary words of highest praise'. On *ὀνομαστοί* see also 8.89.1; 9.72.1. The phrases are also found in the Thermopylae narrative (7.224.1–2); see below pp. 132–3.

⁵⁴ Fenik (1968) 11, 19; cf. *Il.* 11.145–7 for Agamemnon cutting off both arms of Hippolochus and then his head, which he rolled amid the crowd; Neal (2006).

πρόσθεν ἔθεν φεύγοντα μεταδρομάδην ἔλασ' ὤμον
 φασγάνῳ αἶξας, ἀπὸ δ' ἔξεσε χεῖρα βαρεῖαν
 αἱματόεσσα δὲ χεῖρ πεδίῳ πέσε· τὸν δὲ κατ' ὄσσε
 ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταίη.

Meanwhile Eurypylus, son of Euaemon, slew godlike Hypsenor, son of Dolopion high of heart, who served as priest of Scamander and was honoured like a god by the people. As Hypsenor fled before him, Eurypylus, Euaemon's glorious son, rushed with his sword and in mid-course smote him upon the shoulder and lopped off his heavy arm. The arm full of blood fell to the ground; and down over his eyes came dark death and mighty fate.

The words *φάσγανον*, *ὤμος*, and *χεῖρ* also appear in the scene of Hector grasping the stern of an Achaean ship. Both Homeric scenes are grisly with powerful imagery of blood; Hypsenor's in particular is intensified by the formulaic closure in which blood and the darkness of death dominate (see also above, in relation to *Il.* 20.476–7).⁵⁵ In Herodotus, the absence of an explicit mention of blood from Cynegirus' massive amputation activates, I suggest, a range of alternative presences from the rich repository of injury and death in Homer, such as Hector's and Hypsenor's archetypal scenes, where blood is dominant and explicit. In this paradoxical game of evocation through absence, both audience and text partake in a cultural experience, co-constructing meaning through relationality.

The second vignette concerns the death of Masistius, commander of the Persian cavalry at the battle of Plataea. As in the case of Cynegirus' death, there is a shift from a high-camera collective description of the battle ('they fought long and hard, and the battle was eventually resolved as follows', 9.22.1) to a low-camera description of the individual death: wounded by an arrow in its side, Masistius' horse reared on its back legs in pain and shook off its rider. When Masistius fell to the ground, he was killed after having fought back. Killing Masistius was not a straightforward task, Herodotus continues, because he had a special breastplate made of golden scales hidden under his red tunic, which was impenetrable. 'Eventually someone realised

⁵⁵ Also: *Il.* 16.333–4; Kirk (1990) 62: 'The "purple death over the eyes" is associated with blood in all three contexts, here through *αἱματόεσσα δὲ χεῖρ*'. The more gruesome wounds appear to be reserved for the Trojans: Salazar (2000) 130.

what was happening and struck Masistius in the eye. This is how he fell and died' (ἔπεσέ τε καὶ ἀπέθανε, 9.22.2–3).

In Homer the death of a hero of Masistius' calibre would normally involve a duel between two named and distinguished individuals. Presenting, rather 'un-Homerically', the killing of a distinguished Persian as the achievement of an anonymous hoplite (τις), appears to be an homage to classical period hoplite ethics. At the level of battlefield realities, there were differences between the mode of fighting described in Homer and fifth-century hoplite fighting, though the debate is complicated.⁵⁶ What is important for our discussion is the interaction of 'un-Homeric' and Homeric elements in this episode. The fierce battle around dead Masistius (μάχη ὀξέα περὶ τοῦ νεκροῦ, 9.23.1) and the size and beauty of his corpse as objects of spectacle (ὁ δὲ νεκρὸς ἦν θέης ἄξιος μεγάθεος εἶνεκα καὶ κάλλεος, 9.25.1) are distinctively Homeric.⁵⁷ As has been observed by scholars, Masistius' fatal eye wound could also be seen in the light of Ilioneus' eye wound in the *Iliad* (14.492–9), and against the wider category of bloody head-wounds of Homeric heroes, although, again, no explicit mention of blood is made.⁵⁸

The inability of Masistius' golden breastplate to protect him from death evokes the logistics of human frailty and mortality, so salient in Homer.⁵⁹ Gold, bronze, or iron, the armour is unable to provide full protection to the human body and cover all of its vulnerable parts. There is an ethnographic dimension in the close association of the Persians with gold and their overreliance on its power; on this occasion, its power to protect human life on the battlefield. Xerxes' Immortals too are decked in gold, yet despite their valuable imperial gear, their fame, and their very name, they die at the battle of Thermopylae (7.211; gold: 7.83). The Immortals' death illuminates a deeper theme of Herodotus' narrative: the vulnerability of the Great King's expeditionary force, despite its superiority in numbers, abundant resources, and use of cutting-edge technology. This subversiveness, inherent in war,

⁵⁶ E.g., van Wees (1994).

⁵⁷ The battles around Sarpedon's and Patroclus' corpses (*Il.* 16.485–683 and 17.1–18.238, respectively) are key Homeric intertexts. Flower–Marincola (2002) ad loc. for many of these Homeric features; note their point on size (*Hdt.* 9.20: Μακίστιον καλέουσι): 'it is well possible that knowing their *Iliad* well, the Greeks purposefully called him by a name which meant "tallest"' (139).

⁵⁸ This applies to the Ilioneus' scene too, though anatomic details, such as the eyeball being thrown out of the skull, vividly evoke blood imagery. For the Masistius–Ilioneus analogy, see Boedeker (2003); Aly (1921) 162–3, 274–5.

⁵⁹ E.g., Griffin (1980); Pelling (2006); Baragwanath (2008).

finds its poetic expression in Homer in the thin and often blurry line that separates mortality from immortality, also in contexts of wounding and death. A case in point is the post-Homeric tradition about Achilles's death by an arrow piercing the only vulnerable point of his body, which his divine mother Thetis had made impenetrable to iron by dipping him in the waters of Styx.⁶⁰

The third and final vignette relates to another episode of individual heroism in the panhellenic context of the Greek victory at Plataea. It is the death of the Spartan Callicrates. At least one analogy with the episode of Masistius' death is that Callicrates too is overwhelmingly good-looking (*ἀνὴρ κάλλιστος ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον τῶν τότε Ἑλλήνων, οὐ μόνον αὐτῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων*, 9.72.1). His death is narrated analeptically in relation to the narrative of the main battle, while the death itself is reported to have taken place in the preliminaries and outside of the battle itself (*ἔξω τῆς μάχης ἀπέθανε*, 9.72.1). The historical narrator provides contextual information about the weapon and the body part wounded: Callicrates was injured by an arrow in his side while he was sitting in position. The picture is amplified with the description of the last moments of the hero: Callicrates was transferred outside the battlefield and died a 'difficult death' (*ἐδυσθανάτεε*, 9.72.2); the verb is rarely attested in classical Greek, and probably means a lingering and painful death.⁶¹ Callicrates is given the 'narratological time' to express his regret to a named fellow fighter, Arimnestus (or Aeimnestus) of Plataea (tellingly bearing a name related to memory), not because he was dying, as he said, but because he was not given the opportunity to see battle and perform as well as he knew he could and wanted to.⁶²

⁶⁰ The first source known to us which speaks of a vulnerable foot is first-century BCE Statius' *Achilleis* (e.g., 1.268–70), though the story must have been known to his audience already (Gantz (1993) 625–5). Cf. Hom. *Hymn. Dem.* 239ff. for fire as another element bestowing immortality to humans. Monsacré (2018), on the transformative power of armour.

⁶¹ *δυσθανάτεω* is a *hapax* in Herodotus and very rare in general in early Greek literature (not in Homer or other epic or lyric); next found in prose at Pl. *Rep.* 406b. Cf. Eur. *Ion* 1051, *δυσθάνατος* (adj.), 'bringing a hard death'.

⁶² In Herodotus, Philippus of Croton, who joined the Spartan Dorieus in a colonising expedition to Sicily (end of the sixth century BCE), is a figure of distinctively archaic and Homeric resonances, comparable to Callicrates. In typically historiographic vein, Philippus' death is reported briefly: *συνέσπετο δὲ Δωριέι καὶ συναπέθανε*, 5.47.1–2. The paratactic verbal construction (*συνέσπετο ... καὶ συναπέθανε*) and the use of the same preposition (*συν-*) in the two compound verbs underscore heroic—and Homeric—companionship in battle.

Unlike the words of Homeric heroes, usually provided in direct speech, Callicrates' thinking process and feelings are authorially mediated; but the aspiration of a heroic death is similar to that of a Homeric hero such as Hector.⁶³ Analogous is the thinking process of the Spartan Leonidas at the battle of Thermopylae, which precedes in Herodotus' narrative (more on this below, §4). The type of Callicrates' wound and its timing in relation to the main battle can be compared with the scene of Menelaus' wounding by the Trojan Pandarus' arrow in his side (*Il.* 4.141–7). Both Callicrates' and Menelaus' scenes prefigure fighting between whole armies: in the *Historiēs* Callicrates' wound takes place during Pausanias' pre-battle sacrifices; in the *Iliad* Pandarus' arrow initiates war by violating the truce. But the comparison between the two scenes brings to light some differences too, which relate to the 'un-Homeric' elements of Herodotus' battle narrative and the discursive category of meaningful absence, which we have been using in this discussion: in Callicrates' episode there is no mention of blood or a zooming in on other parts of the hero's body, whereas in the *Iliad* the image of Menelaus' bleeding is vivid (*αὐτίκα δ' ἔρρεεν αἷμα κελαινεφές ἐξ ὠτειλῆς*, 'forthwith the dark blood came from the wound', *Il.* 4.140), further intensified by 'one of the most striking and unusual of Iliadic similes' (*Il.* 4.141–5),⁶⁴ occurring in the poetic narrator's direct address to the hero (*τοιοῖ τοι Μενέλαε μιάνην αἵματι μηροῖ | εὐφύεες κνήμαί τε ἰδὲ σφυρὰ κάλ' ὑπένερθε*, 'So now Menelaus your well-shaped thighs were stained with blood and your shins and beautiful ankles', *Il.* 4.146–7). Another difference between the two scenes is that unlike Herodotus' Callicrates, Homer's Menelaus is healed from his wound by the divine doctor Machaon and his soothing drugs, passed on to him by his father, the god Asclepius, who had received them from the Centaur Chiron as gifts of friendship (*Il.* 4.208–19). Soon afterwards in the Homeric narrative we watch Menelaus fighting with his usual strength (*Il.* 5.50–8), miraculously healed from his wound. Whether a doctor in the Greek camp at Plataea tried

Philippus of Croton is the epitome of the archaic hero: like Callicrates, he was 'the most handsome man of his generation in Greece', *κάλλιστος τῶν Ἑλλήνων τῶν κατ' ἑωυτόν* (5.47.2), and in addition he was an athlete and Olympic victor, and took part in Dorieus' colonial expedition with his own trireme (5.47.2). The idea of staying and dying together is stated emphatically in the Thermopylae episode too (see below, §4), in both negative and affirmative mode. Cf. Salazar (2000) 172, for the combination of handsomeness and the aspiration of a 'beautiful death'.

⁶³ Boedeker (2003) 13.

⁶⁴ Kirk (1985) 345.

to soothe Callicrates while he was dying ‘a difficult death’, does not surface in Herodotus’ narrative.⁶⁵

The influence of medical authors on both Herodotus and Thucydides has been well-acknowledged, and mentions of doctors do appear in their works, but they are rare, generally associated with either technical contexts or politics, and always outside action on the battlefield.⁶⁶ It is against common sense to believe that doctors did not exist in Greek armies, operating on the battlefield or in the camp. Attributing the absence of references to doctors to the relative lack of organised medical support in Greek armies of the classical period seems improbable.⁶⁷ They could not have disappeared after the archaic period only to reappear later.⁶⁸ Doctors are mentioned in Thucydides in the technical language of the Great Plague, where a cognate of *αἶμα* also appears, as we saw above (pp. 120–1); on the other hand, for example, there is no reference to doctors taking part in the expeditionary force which sailed out for Sicily in 415 BCE, although the description of preparations and the army’s different compartments is fairly detailed (Thuc. 6.20–3, 30–1; no mention of a doctor either in relation to Nicias’ kidney disease and its serious repercussions, 6.102.2; 7.15.1). Operating in the same historiographic vein, the Hellenistic historians likewise provide numbers of casualties, but no information about the treatment of wounded soldiers.⁶⁹

The appearance of physicians in the Greek historians is a topic which deserves separate investigation. Within the limits of this discussion, I would like to suggest that fifth-century physicians were associated with technical and scientific contexts, which tended to surface in specific parts of the historical narratives of Herodotus (and Thucydides). Descriptions of battles were not such contexts, for which the historians tapped into the rich

⁶⁵ Hdt. 7.181.2 is the only passage in the *Histories* in which the treatment of wounds is mentioned, but no mention of professional doctors is made (Salazar (2000) 170–1).

⁶⁶ Cf. Democedes of Croton, a Greek doctor working for the Aeginetans, the Athenians, and Polycrates of Samos (Hdt. 3.131); and specialist doctors in Egypt (Hdt. 2.84). For Thucydides’ description of the plague in Athens, see above, pp. 120–1. See also Thuc. 6.14 for a metaphorical use of the word *ιατρός* (‘doctor’): Thomas (2000); Demont (2018).

⁶⁷ E.g., Gabriel (2011).

⁶⁸ E.g., Xen. *Anab.* 3.4.30: eight doctors treating different types of the soldiers’ wounds; cf. *Anab.* 2.5.33, a graphic vignette of a soldier holding his intestines having suffered an abdominal wound. The absence of vultures and animals of prey from the battlefield of Herodotus and other Greek historians is another un-Homeric feature, discussed in Kostuch (2018).

⁶⁹ Chaniotis (2005) 96.

mythopoetic background of the epic. Unlike their fifth-century counterparts, doctors in Homer are semi-divine, associated with the mortal hero and his many encounters with death. References to physicians in a fifth-century context would have worked against the heroic tenor of Herodotus' battle narrative, in the same way that in the Cynegirus vignette (see above, pp. 122–4) a reference to the marshes of Marathon would have worked against the evocation of its Homeric model, where no marshes appear. From a narratological and allusive perspective, the absence of doctors from Herodotus' battlefield can be viewed as one of the 'un-Homeric' elements in the historian's engagement with the human body in descriptions of battles, alongside the absence of anatomical details and explicit references to blood. In a textual environment under the heavy influence of Homeric descriptions of battles, the absence of blood, anatomical details, and doctors should be viewed, I suggest, as meaningful absences, which enhance the resonance of the Homeric context by effectively preventing the interference of dissonant elements.

4. The Battle of Thermopylae (7.201–39) and Herodotus' Homeric Allusive Practice

Herodotus' narrative of the battle of Thermopylae is a section with acknowledged Homeric debts to a degree unparalleled in the work.⁷⁰ 'The Persian Wars were the new Trojan War, the stuff of legendary heroism',⁷¹ and analogies that have been drawn in form and content are many. Features that stand out are the heroic code of Leonidas and his Three Hundred Spartans who fell on the spot, expressed in Homeric vocabulary and concepts—such as *ἀνὴρ γενόμενος ἄριστος* (7.224.1; cf. 209.5) and *κλέος μέγα* (7.220.2 and 220.4)—especially in relation to Hector. It has also been pointed out that in the narrative of Thermopylae Leonidas, the Spartan king, and Xerxes, the Persian king, resemble each other in their singularity, and that 'the way the spotlight singles out both leaders presents the encounter almost as a duel, one which (at least at the level of *kleos*) Leonidas will win'.⁷² Other

⁷⁰ Boedeker (2003); Pelling (2006); Foster (2012); de Jong (2015); Carey (2016); Marincola (2018); Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 547–92.

⁷¹ Pelling (2019) 202; cf. Gainsford (2013) 131: 'On a mythological level, the heroism of Leonidas' Spartans at Thermopylae compensates for the Dorians' supposed absence from the Trojan War'.

⁷² Carey (2016) 83. On the battle: Cartledge (2007); Carey (2019).

Homeric features are the battle (*ὄθισμός*) around the corpse of Leonidas, a ‘kind of narrative detail [which] is normally withheld by Herodotus’,⁷³ or the distinctively epic number of attempts to save the corpse from the enemy (four times they forced the Persians back, 7.225.1). The passage is usually compared with the struggle over the corpses of Patroclus (*Il.* 17.274ff.) and Sarpedon (16.485–683; see also above, pp. 125–7 on Masistius), but the numbers 3 and 4 are also typical of epic descriptions of offensive/defensive movements in combat more generally.⁷⁴

Building on this scholarly background, in the rest of this chapter I will aim to contribute some new observations on the Homeric interactions of the battle of Thermopylae, from the perspective of the typology of death on the battlefield and human mortality and suffering at war, pursuing Homeric presences and meaningful absences in Herodotus’ text. My examination is organised in themes and, for parts of this discussion, focuses on a comparison between the Thermopylae narrative and the conflict between Hector and Achilles outside the walls of Troy in *Iliad* 22.

4.1. Individual and Collective Death and Heroism

Like most of Herodotus’ battle narratives, the battle of Thermopylae (7.201–39) is an extended episode, in which the narration of the actual fighting and events taking place on the battlefield is restricted.⁷⁵ The organisation of the narrative is complex. The focal point of the action is the final day of the battle, when Leonidas and the Greeks, on the one side, and distinguished Persians, on the other, fell (7.223–5). Background information and the previous days of the fighting at Thermopylae occupy chapters 7.201–22, while the aftermath of the battle is described in 226–39.⁷⁶

In the Thermopylae episode collective and individual heroism mesh through the heroic deaths of named individuals and anonymous groups in the Greek and the Persian camps. Persian deaths are reported tersely at different phases of the fighting: *οἱ Μῆδοι, ἐπιπτον πολλοί*, ‘the Medes fell in large numbers’, 7.210.2; cf. *τρηχέως περιείποντο*, ‘they were badly mauled’, 7.211.1 (again with no detailed descriptions of wounds); and ‘they [= the

⁷³ Carey (2016) 84.

⁷⁴ E.g., Rengakos (2006). For Herodotus’ shaping of the narrative of Thermopylae, see, e.g., van Wees (2018).

⁷⁵ Cf. Marincola (2018).

⁷⁶ This is a broad-brush division of the narrative. For detailed presentations of the structure, see Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 547; De Bakker (2018) 62.

Lacedaemonians] cut the Persians down (*κατέβαλλον*) in untold numbers. However, a few Spartans would be lost (*ἐπιπτον*) during this manoeuvre', 7.211.3. Persian casualties in large numbers are contrasted with the Greeks' and especially the Spartans' superior knowledge of the art of war, even when fighting against the Immortals: 'they [= the Lacedaemonians] were experts, fighting against amateurs' (*ἐν οὐκ ἐπισταμένοισι μάχεσθαι ἐξεπιστάμενοι*, 7.211; cf. 211.3). On the sixth and decisive day of the battle, which takes place outside the wall in the broader part of the neck of the battle ground (7.223; see below on space), anonymous crowds in the Persian army ('barbarians') are reported to fall in great numbers again (*ἐπιπτον πλήθει πολλοὶ τῶν βαρβάρων*, 7.223.3), flogged and urged to move forwards by their leaders. This is another instance in Herodotus when death becomes an ethnographic criterion: the way the Persians are forced to their death is meant to be contrasted with the Greeks' agency over their own death (see below on *παραχρῶμενοί τε καὶ ἀτέοντες*, 7.224.1). Within this patriotic agenda, there is room for cultural nuancing: from this general picture of massive loss of anonymous 'barbarians' emerge deaths of individuals and smaller groups of the Persian élite, who are singled out for fighting and falling in battle (*πίπτουσι ἐνταῦθα ἄλλοι τε πολλοὶ καὶ ὀνομαστοί*, 7.224.2), among them two brothers of Xerxes, Abrocomes and Hyperanthes, whose mention is accompanied by brief kinship material about their relationship to the King's royal family.

In the Greek army, Leonidas is presented as the key heroic individual from the beginning: 'he was admired the most, above all the other generals' (*οἱ ἄλλοι στρατηγοί*, 7.204). His genealogy and descent from Heracles, son of Zeus (7.204, 208.1), create a sharp contrast with the anonymity and collective mention of the other generals. As for the anonymous collective mention of the Three Hundred Spartans, it is presented by the historical narrator as deliberate non-naming: 'I was told the names of all the Three Hundred' (7.224.1). Here, the narratorial voice not only creates a moment of meaningful absence of a catalogue of warriors, a distinctively Homeric feature, but also flags it as deliberate suppression.⁷⁷

In addition to Leonidas, there are a few other named individuals in the whole episode. But all named casualties in both camps are listed after the statement about the stand and heroic death of Leonidas and the Three

⁷⁷ For an explanation, see Fragoulaki (2020a) xxiii–xxv. Cf. Marincola (2016), on Herodotus' heroisation as a historian through his handling of the catalogue of the Three Hundred, whose names he claims he has learnt.

Hundred, in which individual and collective achievements are closely bound: ‘Leonidas fought to the death (*πίπτει*) with the utmost bravery during this *mêlée*; and with him fell other famous Spartans too’ (*Λεωνίδης τε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ πόνῳ πίπτει ἀνὴρ γενόμενος ἄριστος, καὶ ἕτεροι μετ’ αὐτοῦ ὀνομαστοὶ Σπαρτιητέων*, 7.224.1). It is at this point that we get the statement about the deliberate omission of the names of the Three Hundred. The use of a single word (*πίπτει*) for the death description of the Three Hundred and their leader is typical of the historiographic mode of describing death on the battlefield, as we have seen. The verb itself is not distinctively Homeric; it is in fact one of the most frequent words used to denote death in our literary and epigraphic sources. But *ἀνὴρ ἄριστος* resonates with heroic vocabulary and ideology of the archaic and classical periods, whose archetypal expression was Homer.

The statement about the death of Leonidas and the Three Hundred is not the first mention of the Greeks’ collective heroism in the Thermopylae episode. The first, proleptic, reference to the outcome of the battle concerns the Greeks as a whole, and the individual pointed at as responsible is the Greek Epialtes, and not Xerxes and his army: ‘he [= Epialtes] caused the deaths of the Greeks who had taken their stand there’ (*διέφθειρε τοὺς ταύτη ὑπομείναντας Ἑλλήνων*, 7.213.1). Herodotus’ polemical authorial commemoration is noteworthy: ‘it is him I include in my written account as responsible’ (*τοῦτον αἴτιον γράφω*, 7.215.1). The idea of ‘bearing’ (*ὑπομείναντας*) is repeated, in the variant *καταμείναντες* ‘stay in place’, in another brief statement of the heroic death of Leonidas and the Greeks around him (*Λεωνίδην καὶ τοὺς μετ’ αὐτοῦ*), which precedes the focal 7.224.1, including the unwilling Thebans and the willing Thespians, in addition to the Spartans: ‘they stayed and died with them’ (*καταμείναντες συναπέθανον*, 7.222;⁷⁸ cf. *κατέμειναν μόνοι παρὰ Λακεδαιμονίοισι*, 7.222).

The contextual information of the scene, describing the mental state of the heroes and their weapons, points specifically to the Homeric text (7.223.4–224.1):

The Greeks knew they were going to die at the hands of the Persians who had come around the mountain, and so they spared none of their strength, but fought the enemy with reckless disregard for their lives (*παραχρεώμενοί τε καὶ ἀτέοντες*). By now most of their spears (*δόρατα*)

⁷⁸ See above, n. 62, on Philippus of Croton and the Spartan Dorieus.

had been broken and they were using their swords (*τοῖσι ξίφεσι*) to kill the Persians.

The Spartans' use of their swords, after their spears had been broken, describes fifth-century hoplite fighting and Spartan military ethics. At the same time, in this heroic context it alludes to the typical Homeric 'sequence of spear followed by sword in two quick slayings', frequent in the *Iliad*, a 'typical' incident.⁷⁹ The word *ἀτέοντες* is worth pausing at, since the only other use of the word in our sources before Herodotus is in the *Iliad*, in Poseidon's address to Aeneas, urging him not to fight Achilles yielding to a 'blindness of heart' (*ἀτέοντα*, *Il.* 20.332).⁸⁰

4.2. The Dying and Dead Body

As in the case of Cyrus (above, §2), the only glimpse of Leonidas' body is that of posthumous maltreatment, reported after the main battle narrative. Xerxes is described as walking through the corpses of his enemies, when someone identifies Leonidas for him as the dead Spartan king. Then the Persian king orders the decapitation and impaling of Leonidas' head (7.238.1). Once again through his ethnographic lens Herodotus comments that such an act of brutality is normally untypical of the Persians, who honour men who fight bravely, attributing it instead to personal animosity (*ὅτι βασιλεὺς Ξέρξης πάντων δὴ μάλιστα ἀνδρῶν ἐθυμώθη ζῶοντι Λεωνίδην*, 7.238.2). It can be argued that a further posthumous glimpse of Leonidas' metaphorical body is the stone lion standing (in Herodotus' time) on the spot where he and the Greeks fell. The resonances of not only Leonidas' funerary monument but also his own name (< *λέων* 'lion') with lion imagery in Homer have been pointed out in scholarship.⁸¹ As for the maltreatment of a corpse as the result of raw emotion, the association with the archetypal Homeric example of Achilles' unprocessed anger and maltreatment of Hector's dead body on the battlefield cannot be missed.

Let us now concentrate on the culminating scene of the resistance and fall of the last Greeks at Thermopylae. Herodotus' description of the final moments of the Greeks who remained alive on the rise in the pass is the

⁷⁹ Fenik (1968) 6; Latacz (1977).

⁸⁰ Cf. Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 577–8.

⁸¹ Recently Pelling (2019) 203. Cf. Baragwanath's (2008) 77–8 apt remark about potential 'unheroic' associations of the lion monument, in relation to the 'Lion-related' name of the Theban commander *Leontiades* and his medism.

closest we get to a description of bodily injury and death on the battlefield in the episode (7.225.3):

ἐν τούτῳ σφέας τῷ χώρῳ ἀλεξομένους μαχαίρησι, τοῖσι αὐτῶν ἐτύγχανον ἔτι περιεοῦσαι, καὶ χερσὶ καὶ στόμασι κατέχωσαν οἱ βάρβαροι βάλλοντες, οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐπισπόμενοι καὶ τὸ ἔρυμα τοῦ τείχεος συγχώσαντες, οἱ δὲ περιελθόντες πάντοθεν περισταδόν.

In that place they defended themselves with knives, as many as yet had such, and with hands and mouths; till the foreigners overwhelmed them with missile weapons, some attacking them in front and throwing down the wall of defence, while the rest surrounded them on all sides.

This vignette is about the whole group and resumes the fighting from the death of Leonidas and other distinguished Spartans, who fell after having used first their spears and then their swords (7.224.1). In this climactic scene of group fighting, the short and vivid phrase *χερσὶ καὶ στόμασι* ('with hands and mouths/teeth') evokes a shocking and grisly range of wounds, without an explicit reference to blood, comparable to Cynegirus' death at Marathon after the massive amputation of his arm (above, pp. 122–4).⁸² As suggested earlier, Cynegirus' death in Herodotus interacts with Homeric fatal amputations of arms or head wounds, such as Hypsenor's in the *Iliad* (5.76–82; above, pp. 124–5) or Pedaeus' fatal head wound (*Il.* 5.74–5), which immediately precedes Hypsenor's death in the narrative sequence of the *Iliad*; again, the 'typical incident' sequence 'spear (*δόρυ*) [Pedaeus]—sword (*φάσγανον*) [Hypsenor]' may be observed.⁸³

Two Homeric presences at the level of word in Herodotus' scene are worth noting: *περισταδόν* ('surrounded on all sides', 7.225.3) is a *hapax* in Herodotus, resonating with Homeric (and Thucydidean) intertexts. The word is rare and a *hapax* also in Homer (*Il.* 13.551) and Thucydides (7.81.5).⁸⁴ The word *ἀλεξομένους* (7.225.3; cf. *στρατὸν τὸν Μήδων ἀλέξασθαι*, 7.207)

⁸² Livy's (22.51.9) horrible description of the morning following the battle of Cannae has been thought to have been inspired by Hdt. 7.225.3, creating a triple association with Homeric intertexts (de Bakker–van der Keur (2018) 330–1).

⁸³ *Il.* 5.73–5: ... βεβλήκει κεφαλῆς κατὰ ἰνίον ὀξείῃ δουρί· | ἀντικρὺ δ' ἀν' ὀδόντας ὑπὸ γλῶσσαν τάμε χαλκός, | ἦριπε δ' ἐν κονίῃ, ψυχρὸν δ' ἔλε χαλκὸν ὀδοῦσιν ('... with a cast of his sharp spear on the sinew of the head. Straight through amid the teeth the bronze shore away the tongue at its base. So he fell in the dust, and bit the cold bronze with his teeth').

⁸⁴ Hornblower (2008) 730, with other ancient intertexts and modern bibliography.

evokes similar language in the extensive episode of Hector and Achilles' conflict on the battlefield in *Iliad* 22, which results in Hector's death and the defilement of his corpse: the goddess Athena, having deceitfully taken the form of Deiphobus, Hector's brother, falsely appears to stand by Hector's side in his deadly combat with Achilles: 'let us make a stand and defend ourselves staying here' (ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ στέωμεν καὶ ἀλεξώμεσθα μένοντες, *Il.* 22.231).⁸⁵ The conflict between Hector and Achilles outside the walls of Troy in *Iliad* 22 is an extensive episode of climactic quality,⁸⁶ similar to that of Thermopylae.

4.3. Gaze, Nudity, and the Athlete-Warrior

War as spectacle is distinctively Homeric. In the *Iliad* visibility has a central role in the way the poetic narrator delivers his story, engaging audiences within and outside of the narrative.⁸⁷ Gaze is a source of knowledge and understanding for those partaking in the act of gazing and is often associated with intense emotive responses. The central role of vision and gaze in the cognitive and emotive dimensions of the war narrative is another major 'meeting point' between epic and historiography. In the Thermopylae episode, the visit of Xerxes' scout to the Greek camp to observe the enemy and report back to the King (7.208) lends itself to examining Herodotus' response to the epic palette in relation to key themes of his work and its sociocultural context, namely war, athletics, and vision, and their role in the Greeks' ethnic self-definition vis-à-vis the ethnic Other.

There is a concentration of words related to vision and gaze in the episode. Xerxes sent a scout on horseback to the Greek camp, because he needed to 'see (*ιδέσθαι*) how many men they were and what they were doing' (7.208.1). The Greek word for 'scout' or 'spy' is *κατάσκοπος*, 7.208.1 ('one who keeps a look out', LSJ), deriving from *σκοπέω*, a word related to vision. Although the word *κατάσκοπος* itself is not found in Homer (the Homeric word is the cognate *ἐπίσκοπος*, e.g., *Il.* 10.38, 'one who watches over', LSJ), it is frequent in tragedy engaging with archetypal episodes of espionage and

⁸⁵ De Jong (2012), with further bibliography.

⁸⁶ Richardson (1993) 105: 'The event towards which the action of the poem has been tending'.

⁸⁷ Clay (2011); Blundell–Cairns–Rabinowitz (2013); Kampakoglou–Novokhatko (2018); Miltisios (2016), on Herodotus; on gaze viewing and theatricality in Thucydides, Greenwood (2006).

intelligence in the Trojan War and with Odysseus as an archetypal spy.⁸⁸ The visit of a mounted spy to the enemy camp is another discursive presence in the Thermopylae episode which interacts with the epic background.⁸⁹

Xerxes' scout was 'looking and observing' (ἐθελίτο τε καὶ κατώρα) (7.208.2; cf. *κατιδέσθαι, ὥρα*, 7.208.2), but he was not able to see the whole of the Greek camp, but only those men who were outside the recently repaired wall. These were the Spartans, 'some of whom were exercising in the nude while others were combing their hair' (τοὺς μὲν δὴ ὥρα γυμναζομένους τῶν ἀνδρῶν, τοὺς δὲ τὰς κόμας κτενιζομένους, 7.208.3), according to their custom, as Demaratus explained later to the King. The scout looked and marvelled at the sight (θεώμενος ἐθώμαζε, 7.208.3, cf. *ὀπώπεε*, 7.209.1), and tried to understand the numbers of the enemy (ἐμάνθανε, 7.208.3). He did make a note of them, and undisturbed ('no one paid any attention to him', 7.208.3) returned to Xerxes to report. The latter 'did not know what to make of this, namely that the Spartans were getting ready to be killed and to kill (ἀπολεόμενοι τε καὶ ἀπολέοντες) to the best of their ability' (7.209.1).

Xerxes' reaction to the scout's report is scorn and puzzlement. The pre-battle activities of the Spartans struck the King as laughable (*γελοῖα*, 7.209.1–2). He sends for the expatriate Spartan Demaratus 'wishing to understand' (ἐθέλων μαθεῖν, 7.209.2), but even after Demaratus' explanation, Xerxes reacts with laughter (*γέλωτα*, 7.209.2), finding the explanation hard to believe (7.209.5). Xerxes' laughter has sinister connotations, aiming to construct the portrait of the Oriental monarch as fundamentally unable to comprehend Spartan heroic ethics and the Greeks' relationship with freedom at large. Xerxes' lack of comprehension is a hint at the failure of the Persian King's campaign, enhancing the capacity of the *Histories'* external audience for comprehension and foresight.⁹⁰

Soon after the scout episode, Xerxes' scorn and laughter turn into fear, as his gaze ranges over the battle of Thermopylae. The Persian King—this time seeing with his own eyes—is described as watching his men, including the Immortals, falling in great numbers in their battle with the Greeks. This unmediated vision of his men's destruction causes Xerxes to leap from his seat three times in fear (*θηγόμενον, τρίς ἀναδραμεῖν ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου, δείσαντα,*

⁸⁸ Wilder (2021).

⁸⁹ Cf. Hdt. 9.44–5, another episode with Homeric overtones, involving Alexander the Macedonian's clandestine night operation on horseback visiting the enemy.

⁹⁰ E.g., Redfield (1985) 115–16; Munson (2001). For the limits of Xerxes' understanding associated with the gaze, see Grethlein (2013) 195.

7.212.1). The phrase resonates with the Iliadic description of Hades' similar reaction in the Battle of the Gods (*Il.* 20.61–2: 'leapt screaming from his throne for fear', *δείσας δ' ἐκ θρόνου ἄλτο καὶ ἕαχε*).⁹¹ Once again Herodotus situates the conflict between Greeks and Persians in a Homeric background, reconfiguring heroism and masculinity for fifth-century panhellenic audiences. The Greco-Persian conflict is presented as a clash of political systems, military ethics, and cultures, also hinting at the importance of ethnographic factors in historical understanding.

At a linguistic level, it is worth pausing at two further Homeric presences in the scout episode in Herodotus: *ἀπολεόμενοι τε καὶ ἀπολέοντες* ('to be killed and to kill', 7.209.1) evokes the polyptoton *ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων* (employing the same verb *ὀλλυσθαι*) in the Homeric high-camera scene of large-scale death on the battlefield: *ἔνθα δ' ἄμ' οἰμωγή τε καὶ εὐχολή πέλεν ἀνδρῶν | ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων, ῥέε δ' αἵματι γαῖα*, 'Then were heard alike the sound of groaning and the cry of triumph of the slayers and the slain, and the earth flowed with blood', *Il.* 8.64–5; (cf. *Il.* 4.450–1, and above p. 117).⁹² The second Homeric presence can be traced in Demaratus' address to Xerxes, where he refers to a rather peculiar Spartan custom (*νόμος*), associating it with exceptional bravery (7.209.3):

It is their custom to do their hair when they are about to risk their lives (*κινδυνεύειν τῇ ψυχῇ*). But you can rest assured that if you defeat these men and the force that awaits you in Sparta, there is no other ethnic group on earth which will take up arms and stand up to you, my lord, because you are now up against the noblest and most royal city in Greece, and the bravest of men.

The phrase *κινδυνεύειν τῇ ψυχῇ* occurs only here in Herodotus. *κινδυνεύειν* alone does not crop up in Homer, but the word *ψυχή* is used frequently for the human life (also 'soul' or 'spirit') leaving the body, often from the wound itself (*Il.* 14.518), when a warrior dies on the battlefield.⁹³ Its occurrence in

⁹¹ Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 563.

⁹² The use of *τε ... καὶ* joining the two participles in the polyptoton structure *ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων* is distinctively Homeric, serving 'to mark an assertion as general or indefinite': Monro (1891) 301.

⁹³ In the formula *τοῦ δ' ἀθλι λύθη ψυχῆ τε μένος τε* (*Il.* 5.296, 8.123), and elsewhere: e.g., 1.3; 5.696; 22.325; 24.168, 754.

Herodotus side by side with *κινδυνεύειν* in this unique formulation is a discursive presence, evoking Homeric contexts of heroic death.

Hector is a singularly significant hero in Homer, whose life (*ψυχή*) is put at risk in a dramatic, prolonged, and visually rich episode in *Iliad* 22, before leaving his body (361–2): *ὡς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε, ψυχή δ' ἐκ ῥέθρων παταμένη Ἀϊδούσδε βεβήκει*, 'As he spoke the end of death enfolded him: and his spirit flitted from his body and went on the way to Hades'. The climactic quality of both *Iliad* 22 and the Thermopylae narrative have been acknowledged.⁹⁴ Building on this idea, one can add that in both episodes death comes as an inescapable fate, after a prolonged struggle, and only after those who fall have provided ample evidence of their valour. In the episode of Hector's death, the idea of the warrior's life (*ψυχή*) being at risk is materialised through the deadly running contest of Achilles and Hector around the walls of Troy: *περὶ ψυχῆς θέον Ἔκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο*, 'it was for the life of horse-taming Hector that they ran' (*Il.* 22.161). When the heroes have completed three rounds and are about to start the fourth, Zeus opens up his golden scales and Hector's fate of death weighs down (*Il.* 22.208–13). As has been noted, 'Hector's fate is already decided in advance, and this is a visual or symbolic representation of the crucial moment at which the decision becomes irrevocable'.⁹⁵

This Homeric scene provides a blueprint for the intermingling of athletics and battlefield, with gaze playing a crucial role in the audience's emotional involvement and the hero's posthumous praise. In the *Iliad*, internal spectators (divine and human) have a full and painful understanding of the events unfolding before their eyes and lament Hector's loss, as a singularly important death (e.g. *Il.* 22.424–5), in a manner befitting their human or divine nature (Priam, Hecuba, Andromache, and the citizens of Troy: 22.25–

⁹⁴ See de Jong (2012) 13–15, 59 and *passim*, Lateiner (1989) 125 and *passim*, Pelling (2019) 202–3: 'The most Homeric battle of all is Thermopylae, that climax of Spartan heroism'. In the same context, Pelling compares the fighting with the struggle over Patroclus' body in *Iliad* 17–18.

⁹⁵ Richardson (1993) 129. The scene is said to have inspired Aeschylus' *Psychostasia*, of which only a few fragments survive, and its dramatic quality has been undoubtedly influential: Richardson (1993) 129–30. In Thucydides, the combination of *ψυχή* with *κίνδυνος/κινδυνεύειν* is similarly rare and distinctive (only in 3.39.8 and 8.50.5), interacting with the Homeric theme of *psychostasia*, and its many intertexts, with Hdt. 7.209.3 being a major one. Cf. *Il.* 8.68–74, where Zeus weighs the fates of the Achaeans and the Trojans collectively.

92, 405–36; Zeus and other Olympians: 166–76).⁹⁶ In the Thermopylae narrative, the cognitive and emotive reactions of the non-Greek internal viewers—the Persian scout and Xerxes (viewer by proxy)—of the pre-battle gymnastic spectacle are part of the larger schema of the heroization of the Three Hundred. Audiences external to the narrative are guided to view the collective death of the Three Hundred at Thermopylae, technically a Greek military disaster, as a triumphant episode of Greek national history and to ponder signs that foreshadow the disastrous outcome of Xerxes’ campaign against Greece.

The role of athletics in the Thermopylae episode and their close connection with war and spectacle further testify to culture’s role in the historical outcome of the conflict, as presented in the *Histories*. As we saw, before engaging in battle, some of the Spartans were combing their hair, whereas others were exercising naked. The heroic world of the Homeric epics is recognisable in both activities. ‘Long-haired Achaeans’ (κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοί, e.g. *Il.* 2.472) is a formula describing the Achaeans in Homer, and the double identity of the warrior-athlete is particularly prominent in *Iliad* 23. There we watch the Achaean warriors pausing from war to compete as athletes at the funeral games for Patroclus, which Achilles has set up to honour the memory of his dear departed. At the same time, both activities, hair combing and exercising naked, were anchored in Greek and Spartan institutions of the archaic and classical periods: Herodotus (1.82) gives us the (fictional) explanation of the long hair of the Spartan warriors in the context of the Spartans’ decisive victory against the Argives over Thyrea in the archaic period (c. 546 BCE). More generally, the long hair of men past the age of adolescence is associated with Spartan customs and identity.⁹⁷ As for the scene of pre-battle athletic activities of the Spartans outside the wall at Thermopylae, it is the only image of nude athlete-warriors in Herodotus.⁹⁸ Through the mediated gaze of the Persian scout, the historical narrator takes pains to mention that the Spartans had laid their arms and armours against the wall (τοῖσι πρὸ τοῦ τείχεος τὰ ὄπλα ἔκειτο, 7.208.2) and that some of them were exercising naked (γυμναζομένους (7.208.3), deriving from γυμνός

⁹⁶ For the divine viewing of the scene, see Griffin (1978); Richardson (1993) 108–9, 125–7; de Jong (2018) on *oroskopia* (viewing from a mountain) as a literary topos, signposting detachment and superior gaze (p. 34 for ‘Homeric “ur”-intertext’); Myers (2019) 179–206. On Homer’s poetic geography and visuality, Clay (2011).

⁹⁷ Xen. *Lac.* 11.3; Plut. *Lyc.* 22.2, with Lipka (2002) 193–4.

⁹⁸ Athletics in Herodotus are often associated with political ambition: Munson (2001) 59–60.

(‘naked, unclad, or unarmed’, LSJ)). The aspect of nudity in this athletic scene evokes Greek élite masculinity, with a special focus on practices and institutions of the late archaic and classical periods.⁹⁹

Both Herodotus and Thucydides, early in their works, associate nudity with Greek identity. Herodotus’ remark (1.11.3) centres on the distinction Greek vs ethnic Other: ‘for the Lydians and more or less throughout the non-Greek world, it is a source of great shame even for a man to be seen naked’ (*παρὰ γὰρ τοῖσι Λυδοῖσι, σχεδὸν δὲ καὶ παρὰ <ἅπασιν> τοῖσι ἄλλοισι βαρβάροισι, καὶ ἄνδρα ὀφθῆναι γυμνὸν ἐς αἰσχύνην μεγάλην φέρει*, Hdt. 1.10.3). Thucydides, who concentrates more on ethnic differences among the Greeks, turns the focus to the Spartans: ‘[The Spartans] were the first, too, to strip naked for the games, to take off their clothes in public and to rub themselves with oil after exercise’ (*γυμνάζεσθαι*, Thuc. 1.6.5). The old custom of absence of nudity is mentioned as a commonality ‘between the old Greek and the present barbarian ways of life’ (Thuc. 1.6.6: *τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑλληνικὸν ὁμοίотροπα τῷ νῦν βαρβαρικῷ διαιτώμενον*). Nudity in sport was thus both a trait characterising the Greeks and marking them out from the non-Greek Other, and at the same time it was a post-Homeric development, since in Homer men compete wearing a loincloth (e.g., *Il.* 23.710). In Homer nudity (through the use of the word *γυμνός*) is associated with the warrior’s dead body and inability to fight, because of deprivation of armour (e.g., *Il.* 17.122, 711, weakness and shamefulness combined: 22.124–5). Priam’s words at 22.66–76, without actually including the term *γυμνός*, provide the most powerful description of shameful nudity of a dead man’s body in war setting, through the image of an old man’s corpse being mauled by dogs.

In the Thermopylae episode, the nudity of the Spartan athlete-warriors was an ‘un-Homeric’ feature in a generally Homeric textual environment. It is worth pointing out that, despite the startling effect that the unclad Spartans had on the Persian scout and Xerxes, there is no comment on Greek nudity by either Persian, although the sight of Greek nakedness too

⁹⁹ Christesen (2014) 146, on the snapshot at Thermopylae as representative of sport and society in fifth-century Sparta. For nude games (*ἀγῶνα γυμνικόν*) as distinctively Greek, see, e.g., Hdt. 2.91, with Kyle (2009) 186. Papakonstantinou (2012) 1660, focusing on tombstones from Athens, notes the association of youthful athletes with warriors and the role of nudity in underscoring masculinity. There is plenty of visual evidence from vases with naked athletes and semi-naked Greek warriors fighting Persians, the latter covered by oriental trouser-suits and other distinctive attire (e.g., British Museum Collection, Numbers 1867,0508.1060 and 1866,0415.244). On the boundaries between idealisation and realism regarding male nudity in Greek art and real life, see Osborne (1997); id. (1998) on nudity and athletic and military élite masculinity in the classical city.

must have contributed to the astonishment of the Oriental Other, given the absence of nudity in Persian culture. Herodotus' handling of the theme of nudity in the Spartan warrior-athletes' pre-battle activities should be viewed as a typical example of the interplay between Homeric presences and absences in Herodotus' discourse. On the one hand, corporeal nudity emerges in the narrative through the single word *γυμνάζεσθαι*, anchoring the scene in fifth-century Greek institutions; and on the other, the absence of the ethnic Other's gaze in relation to Greek nudity enables the Herodotean scene of Spartan athletics in a war setting to resonate with its Homeric contexts.

The Homeric resonance is further accentuated by the verb *ἀεθλέω* (epic of *ἀθλ-*), used not to praise Greek performance, but to put a spotlight on Persian ineffectiveness ('they laboured but fared no better', *οὐδὲν ἄμεινον ἀέθλεον*, Hdt. 7.212.1).¹⁰⁰ Self-praise focalised through the shortcomings of the 'barbarian' Other was a mechanism of Greek propaganda after the Persian Wars, with Aeschylus' *Persians* being a large-scale poetic example. The verb *ἀθλέω* (or *ἀεθλ-*) is rare in both Herodotus and Homer, but the noun *ἄθλον* ('prize') is much more frequent in both authors.¹⁰¹ In Homer it is prominent in the scene of Hector's chase around the walls of Troy by Achilles, underscoring the beauty and frailty of the mortal warrior-athlete's body within the thematic nexus of war, athletics, and the gaze (*Il.* 22.159–66):

... ἐπεὶ οὐχ ἱερήϊον οὐδὲ βοεῖην
 ἀρνύσθην, ἃ τε ποσσὶν ἀέθλια γίγνεται ἀνδρῶν,
 ἀλλὰ περὶ ψυχῆς θεόν Ἔκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο.
 ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀεθλοφόροι περὶ τέρματα μώνυχες ἵπποι
 ῥίμφα μάλα τρωχῶσι· τὸ δὲ μέγα κεῖται ἄεθλον
 ἢ τρίπος ἢ ἔ γυνὴ ἀνδρὸς κατατεθνηῶτος·
 ὡς τὰ τρεῖς Πριάμοιο πόλιν πέρι δινηθήτην
 καρπαλίμοισι πόδεσσι· θεοὶ δ' ἔς πάντες ὄρῳντο.

... for it was not for beast of sacrifice or for bull's hide that they strove,
 such as are men's **prizes** for swiftness of foot, but it was for the **life** of

¹⁰⁰ The semantic variants of, e.g., *ἀέθλιον*, *ἄεθλον*, *ἀθλέω*, *ἄθλημα* etc. (see LSJ) are associated with contests of an athletic or military kind, further testifying to the closeness of the two spheres.

¹⁰¹ E.g., *Il.* 19.133, frequent in Book 23; Hdt. 5.8; 9.101.

horse-taming Hector that they ran. And as single-hoofed horses that are **winners of prizes** gallop lightly about the turning posts, and some great **prize** is set out to be won, a tripod or a woman, in the funeral games for a man who has died; so these two circled thrice with swift feet about the city of Priam; and all the gods **gazed** on them.¹⁰²

4.4. Space and Loneliness in Death

The so-called Phocian Wall near which the Persian scout watches the Spartans exercising and combing their hair is a crucial topographic element in the scenery of the Greek resistance and death, but it does not really contribute much to our understanding of the realities of the battle. Like many topographical details in Herodotus' battle scenes, the wall's position and precise function are matters of endless discussion.¹⁰³ As has been noted, 'the level of detail in [Herodotus'] description suggests the authority of an eye-witness. He had been there'.¹⁰⁴ Both in Marathon (another case of loose topography) and in Thermopylae, Herodotus was able to be more concrete with the space of the battle. The looseness of his topographical information when it comes to battles is, I suggest, not so much a question of access to information and ability to provide details, as one of shaping his battle narrative under the heavy influence of Homeric battle scenes and tropes of visualising landscape.

The topography of Hector and Achilles's battle scene in *Iliad* 22, where the walls of Troy play a crucial role in organising space and Hector's gradual isolation and loneliness towards the culminating moment of his death,¹⁰⁵ provides a helpful Homeric background for Herodotus' use of space in the Thermopylae narrative. As has been noted, 'in death Leonidas is

¹⁰² Cf. *Il.* 22.22 where again Achilles is likened to a prize-winning horse (*ἵππος ἀεθλοφόρος*).

¹⁰³ For an updated discussion of the uncertainties, Carey (2019) 27–33; Matthews (2006) 155: 'the Phocian Wall was at the centre of the fighting and its importance must be understood if the fighting is to make sense'. Details of topography and chronology are often difficult to establish in Herodotus: cf., e.g., Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 569, in relation to Thermopylae. On wall imagery in general, see Baragwanath (2008) 144–7.

¹⁰⁴ Carey (2019) 25.

¹⁰⁵ For a 'lone fighter' type-scene, foreshadowing tragedy with Hector's monologue addressed to his own heart (*Il.* 22.99–130), see de Jong (2012) 80. On the organisation of space in Homer and the association of vision with cognition and memory, Clay (2011) 96–109 *et passim*; Purves (2010), esp. 55–9, on Hector's chase around the walls of Troy.

characterised by a kind of tragic isolation'.¹⁰⁶ Herodotus' configuration of space in which Leonidas and the Greeks move and fight magnifies the sense of individual and collective loneliness before death. The wall provided them with some protection until the moment of the final decision of the sortie for death, when they went out of it advancing to the broader part of the neck (οἱ ἀμφὶ Λεωνίδην Ἕλληνας, ὡς τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ ἕξοδον ποιούμενοι ... ἐπεξήρισαν εἰς τὸ εὐρύτερον τοῦ ἀνέμου, 7.223.2). In this broader space, they were much more exposed to the enemy, and knew that death was approaching them (ἐπιστάμενοι τὸν μέλλοντα σφίσι ἕσεσθαι θάνατον, 7.223.4); vision and landscape in the broader part of the neck contributed to this realisation. The idea of a sensory understanding of death approaching nods to the Homeric personification of Death (Θάνατος) and Sleep (Ὕπνος) in the *Iliad* (16.681–3), where the twin brothers collect Sarpedon's body to carry it to Lycia. War is the big theme of the historians, and in their works it can appear either personified (a violent teacher, Thuc. 3.82.2) or as something that can cause desire for sight (Hdt. 8.116.2, 'a desire to see the war', θυμός ἐγένετο θεήσασθαι τὸν πόλεμον).

Walls and buttresses are important topographical elements in staging death in both the Homeric and the Herodotean episodes. It is worth reading the repetition of θάνατος ('death') in the deadly sortie from the wall at Thermopylae (7.223.2 and 223.4, as above) against the word's paired mentions in Hector's deadly sortie from the walls of Troy to face Achilles, in a scene of climactic isolation of the hero and his gradual realisation of approaching death (*Il.* 22.202 and 210; and in Hector's final monologue 297 and 300). Throughout the episode, the Trojan Walls are important spatial points of reference in Hector's dialogue with his heart, as he processes the prospect of his death. He leans his shield before a buttress before speaking to himself (*Il.* 22.97) and visualises the hypothetical uncladding and leaning of his spear against the wall to meet Achilles and negotiate peace with him (22.111–12).

Like the feeble Phocian Wall at Thermopylae, Troy's mighty wall circuits prove unable to protect Hector from death. His abandonment by Phoebus Apollo (*Il.* 22.213) sets the final countdown of his death into motion. We have already mentioned Deiphobus-Athene deceptively prompting the hero to

¹⁰⁶ Vannicelli (2007) 316. The loneliness of the resolute warrior appears also in the story of the Spartan Eurytus, one of the Three Hundred, who, although he could be excused from the battle on account of his eye infection and inability to see, asked his helot to lead him into the battle. The helot abandoned him, but Eurytus stayed and fell bravely (7.229.1). The story is narratologically displaced, since it is provided in the post-battle chapters.

stand and face Achilles outside Troy's walls. Hector's response to Deiphobus clearly locates the latter outside Troy's walls: 'you have dared for my sake ... to come outside the wall, while the others remain inside' (ὄς ἔτλης ἐμεῦ εἶνεκ', ... | τείχεος ἐξελθεῖν, ἄλλοι δ' ἔντοσθε μένουσι, *Il.* 22.236–7). Soon Hector realises he is alone before death, seeing that Deiphobus is in fact not on his side: 'Well now! Truly have the gods called me to my death' (θεοὶ θάνατόνδε κάλεσσαν, 22.297; cf. ἐγγύθι μοι θάνατος κακός, 22.300). This realisation is turned to aspiration of fame and a great accomplishment, which the poetic narrator conveys through the hero's own words: 'Not without a struggle let me die, nor ingloriously (ἀκλειῶς), but having done some great deed for men yet to be born to hear' (*Il.* 22.304–5). In the Thermopylae narrative too, the Three Hundred's gradual isolation as death approaches is bound up with the aspiration to a heroic death. On this occasion, Leonidas' internal processing is mediated through the historical narrator: 'Feeling (ἦσθετο) his allies demoralised and unwilling to face the danger', Leonidas ordered them to go, but 'it did not seem right to him to leave' (the Spartan Callicrates' words too are mediated; see above, pp. 127–9). Leonidas' determination aims at his personal renown (*kleos*) and Sparta's prosperity (*eudaimoniē*, 7.220.2).

4.5. Fame and Fear

The aspiration of fame (*kleos*) and fear are a doublet defining the epic hero's utterances and actions, and are also prominent in the Thermopylae narrative. *Kleos* has been acknowledged as a major obvious hinge between the world of Homer and Herodotus. The powerful and programmatic presence of the compound ἀκλεᾶ (a single occurrence in the text, meaning 'being forgotten'¹⁰⁷) in the proem of the *Histories* sets the tone for the work's deep and consistent engagement with future memory. The word *kleos* does not in fact crop up more than four times in the *Histories*, but this linguistic rarity does not suggest that *kleos* is not important in the work; quite the opposite, as this discussion has also shown in relation to the word αἷμα ('blood') (see above, pp. 116–22 with Appendix, below, pp. 150–4). The Thermopylae episode is a case in point: amid the general scarcity of the word in the *Histories*, the double appearance of *kleos* in close textual proximity (7.220.2 and 7.220.4), before and after the hexameter oracle foretelling Leonidas' death, along with the fact that this is the first occurrence of the

¹⁰⁷ Cf. ἀκλειῶς in 5.77.1, another single occurrence; 7.228.3, κλεινοῖο [< κλέος] Μεγιστία in Simonides' oracle (7.228; see below).

word in the work, are emphatic affirmations of its importance in the episode.¹⁰⁸

The interplay between discursive presences and meaningful absences of the word *kleos* is combined with other means of Homeric evocation in the *Histories*. At the level of narrative patterning, the short scene of the Spartan Dieneces evokes the psyche and ethics of the Homeric hero. In a manner reminiscent of the low-camera mode in Homer, the historical narrator zooms into this scene and its main character, Dieneces, whose words are imbued by a keen concern for excellence on the battlefield and posthumous memory: ‘Such and similar words, it is said, the Lacedaemonian Dieneces left behind as memorials’ (ἔπεά φασι Διηνέκεα τὸν Λακεδαιμόνιον λιπέσθαι μνημόσυνα, 7.226.2); a powerful evocation of *kleos* without the actual use of the word.¹⁰⁹

Kleos is inextricably connected with the way in which the warrior manages the fear of death on the battlefield. Again, the combat between Hector and Achilles outside the walls of Troy in *Iliad* 22 is a suitable comparandum for Thermopylae. I would like to consider the individual and collective fear of death as a central emotion of the warrior vis-à-vis the life-threatening conditions of the battlefield, against Boedeker’s critical background of monologic vs. dialogic, with which our discussion started. Arguably, in the Thermopylae episode the psychology of Leonidas and the Greeks around him (not least the Three Hundred) points to a monologic rather than dialogic approach to individual and collective heroism. Nowhere is fear or any mental wobbling mentioned in the mediated thoughts of Leonidas or any of the Greeks who stayed and died with him. The seer Megistias appears to be equally ‘monologic’ and uncomplicated, as it were, before death: he is the first to see the coming death in the sacrifices, but chooses to stay (7.219.1). We do not witness any internal dialogue with himself or a decision-making

¹⁰⁸ In addition to the two occurrences in the Thermopylae narrative, *kleos* also appears in 9.48 and 78; four times in total in the *Histories*. For the oracle’s (7.220.4) Homeric language, see Pelling (2006) 92–3 n. 48; Vannicelli ap. Vannicelli–Corcella–Nenci (2017) 571–3; Darbo-Peschanski (2019) 165.

¹⁰⁹ I would be hesitant to accept that ‘it [= *kleos*] does not provide the matter for the making of *historiē*, namely for knowing what happened (*ta genomena*): Darbo-Peschanski (2019) 166. *Kleos* is pivotal in the historian’s shaping of *ta genomena*. As Christopher Pelling points out to me (per email of 25.9.2019), ‘*Kleos* does not need to be mentioned often explicitly because it is so present implicitly by the very act of recording: the text is performative, conveying the *kleos* by what it does as much as what it says’. For *kleos*’ role in collective memory, also in relation to Thermopylae and Dieneces, see Fragoulaki (2020a) xxii–xxix.

process in which the option fight-or-flight is somehow considered. His choice to die with *kleos* is underscored by the poetic κλεινοῖο Μειγιστία ‘famed Megistias’ (7.228.3), the only named individual in the funerary epigrams cited in the commemorative section of the Thermopylae narrative, following the description of the main battle.

The basic emotion of the fighter’s fear of death—or fear of combat, a universal sentiment—has been effaced from the narration of the battle. A reference to the Thebans ‘staying very much against their will’ (7.222) might be viewed as a hint towards this emotion, but very indirectly. It is only in the post-battle section that the fear of the hoplite in combat emerges in relation to two survivors of the battle, who are named, in contrast to the anonymous collective bravery of the Three Hundred.¹¹⁰ The first is Aristodemos, whose ‘heart failed him’ (λιποψυχέοντα, 7.229.2) and was later called ὁ τρέσας ‘the man who ran away’ (7.231).¹¹¹ Like λιποψυχέοντα (see above on ψυχῆ), τρέσας too is an epic word, resonating with the Homeric ἀνδρῶν τρεσσάντων, *Il.* 14.502 (cf. *Il.* 22.143, in relation to Hector, below) and Tyrtaeus, fr. 11.14 *IEG*². The other individual is Pantites (7.232) who did not take part in the battle because he was sent as a messenger to Thessaly; back at Sparta he was met with such dishonour (ἡτίμωτο) that he hanged himself (7.232). In Pantites’ case, loss of courage is not explicitly mentioned, but his social exclusion and shaming are the outcomes of his inability to manage his fear on the battlefield. In narratological terms, both combat-fear stories are temporarily displaced in relation to the description of the battle, creating a monologic environment of solid unshaken bravery, as it were, for the Three Hundred and their leader.

The psychological and cognitive processes of Homeric Hector in *Iliad* 22, on the other hand, are much more complex and polyphonic. Hector’s internal turmoil in the face of death and his techniques to manage his fear on the battlefield emerge in a manner that foreshadows tragedy.¹¹² He is seized by trembling (ἔλε τρόμος) at the sight of Achilles, and he dares no longer remain where he was (οὐδ’ ἄρ’ ἔτ’ ἔτλη αὖθι μένειν); he leaves the gates behind him and flees in fear (φοβηθείς, *Il.* 22.136–7). Hector is then compared to a frightened dove and his fear is stated with another variant: τρέσε δ’

¹¹⁰ The two named individuals appear without patronymics, probably because the commemoration is negative.

¹¹¹ On this episode see Barker, below, Ch. 6.

¹¹² De Jong (2012) 80 on Hector’s address to his heart, reviewing fight-or-flight scenarios (*Il.* 22.99–130); cf. above, n. 105.

Ἐκτωρ (22.143), with which ‘the runaway Aristodemus’ (ὁ τρέσας Ἀριστόδημος) in Thermopylae resonates. Deceptively encouraged by Deiphobus (Athena in disguise), Hector proclaims: ‘I will be no more afraid of you, son of Peleus ... now my heart prompts me to stand and face you’ (*Il.* 22.250–3). At the moment of realisation of loneliness (Deiphobus is nowhere near) and imminent death (22.297–300), the heroic character and his total commitment to *kleos* comes into its own: ‘let me not die ingloriously (ἀκλειῶς), without a fight, without some great deed done (μέγα ῥέξας τι) that future men will hear of’ (*Il.* 22.304–5). The resonance with not only the Thermopylae episode, but also the proem of the *Histories* and its programmatic ἀκλεῖα along with the historical narrator’s commitment to recording ‘great deeds’ (ἔργα μεγάλα), cannot be missed.

5. Conclusion

This discussion has revisited the old question of the absence of gory anatomical details of the wounded and dying body in combat in Herodotus’ *Histories*, as a feature which differentiates him sharply from his poetic archetype, Homer (§1).

We started our examination by considering the broader picture of reporting death in the *Histories*, beyond and outside of the battlefield (§2). It was observed that Herodotus does not shy away from rich and vivid descriptions of death and corporeal maltreatment in non-battle contexts, especially since these are often associated with the explanatory potential of ethnographic material. Nevertheless, when it comes to battle scenes his habits in describing the human body are different. In order to demonstrate this, we turned to Herodotus’ descriptions of death on the battlefield (which we named the ‘typology’ of death in battle), focusing on three vignettes, where the imagery of death and wounding is compressed and Homeric vestiges in them evoke models and large-scale examples in Homer. In §3, the scarce occurrence of the word ‘blood’ (αἷμα) in the *Histories* as a whole, and the word’s complete absence from battle scenes, were used as a means of observing Herodotus’ Homeric allusive practice, through meaningful absence and variation. In the final section (§4), we concentrated on the battle of Thermopylae in Herodotus. Building on the rich and important scholarship on the topic, we aimed at a fresh discussion of the Homeric resonances of the Thermopylae narrative, reading it against the poetics of *kleos* and key themes and institutions of archaic and classical Greece, such as individual and collective heroism and male nudity in athletic and military

contexts. In all this, Hector's and Achilles' combat in *Iliad* 22 was used as an illuminating comparandum.

This chapter suggested a new approach to Herodotus' Homeric intertextuality, using the notions of 'discursive presences' and 'meaningful absences', borrowed from the theoretical field of discourse analysis. It was argued that the resonance of the Homeric text in Herodotus can be sensed not only through tangible and explicit references (discursive presences), but also through meaningful absences. Herodotus' un-Homeric way of reporting wounds and death in battle was analysed as revealing of the interplay between discursive presences and meaningful absences and a broadened, cultural, sense of Homeric intertextuality. The absence from Herodotus' battlefield of blood and anatomical details of the human body were central in this intertextual discussion, and are associated, it was argued, with the reinvention of the ideology of *kleos* and the human body in the political and social realities of the Greek world in the fifth-century BCE.

APPENDIX

Appendix: Occurrences of αἷμα ('Blood') in Herodotus

	Hdt.	Extract	Context
I	1.74.6	<p>ὄρκια δὲ ποιέεται ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνεα τὰ πέρ τε Ἕλληνες, καὶ πρὸς τούτοισι, ἐπεὶ τὸν βραχίονα ἐπιτάμνεται εἰς τὴν ὀμοχροίην, τὸ αἷμα ἀναλείχουσι ἀλλήλων.</p> <p>These peoples formalise their treaties in the same way the Greeks do, with the extra feature that when they cut into the skin of their arms, each party licks the other's blood.</p>	<p>Non-military scene. Ethnographic: oath exchanges among Asiatic peoples, involving blood-rituals.</p>
2-5	1.212-14 x 4	<p>(1) ἀπληστέ αἵματος, Κύρῳ (1.212.2) 'Cyrus, insatiable for blood'</p> <p>(2) ἢ μὲν σε ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπληστον ἔοντα αἵματος κορέσω (1.213) 'Insatiable though you are for blood, I will quench your thirst'</p> <p>(3) ἀσκὸν δὲ πλήσασα αἵματος ἀνθρωπηίου Τόμυρις ἐδίζητο ἐν τοῖσι τεθνεώσι τῶν Περσέων τὸν Κύρου νέκυν (1.214.4) Tomyris filled a wineskin with human blood and searched among the Persian corpses for Cyrus' body</p> <p>(4) σὲ δ' ἐγώ, κατὰ περ ἠπέιλῃσα, αἵματος κορέσω (1.214.5) 'But I warned you that I will quench your thirst for blood, and so I shall'.</p>	<p>Non-military/post-battle scene. Ethnographic (related themes: ethics, characterisation): Cyrus' posthumous maltreatment at the hands of Tomyris, the queen of the Massagetans.</p>

6	3.8.1	<p>ἔπειτα λαβὼν ἐκ τοῦ ἱματίου ἑκατέρου κροκύδα ἀλείφει τῷ αἵματι ἐν μέσῳ κειμένους λίθους ἑπτὰ, τοῦτο δὲ ποιέων ἐπικαλεῖ τὸν τε Διόνυσον καὶ τὴν Οὐρανίην.</p> <p>Then he takes a tuft of material from each of their cloaks and smears seven stones, which have been placed between the two parties, with their blood, while calling on Dionysus and Urania.</p>	<p>Non-military scene. Ethnographic: blood-rituals of the Arabs (cf. 1.74.6 above).</p>
7	3.11.3	<p>διὰ πάντων δὲ διεξεληθόντες τῶν παίδων οἶνόν τε καὶ ὕδωρ ἐσεφόρεον ἐς αὐτόν ἐμπιόντες δὲ τοῦ αἵματος πάντες οἱ ἐπίκουροι οὕτω δὴ συνέβαλον.</p> <p>When they had finished with all the children, the mercenaries poured wine and water into the bowl, and when they had all drunk some of the blood they joined battle.</p>	<p>Non-military/pre-battle scene. Ethnographic: human sacrifice, blood-ritual.</p>
8	3.15.4	<p>νῦν δὲ μηχανώμενος κακὰ ὁ Ψαμμηνίτιος ἔλαβε τὸν μισθόν· ἀπιστὰς γὰρ Αἰγυπτίους ἦλω, ἐπίετο δὲ ἐπάϊστος ἐγένετο ὑπὸ Καμβύσειω, αἶμα ταύρου πῶν ἀπέθανε παραχρῆμα. οὕτω δὴ οὗτος ἐτελεύτησε.</p> <p>As things turned out though, Psammenitus conspired against the Persians and reaped the reward: he was caught inciting the Egyptians to rebellion, and when this was made known to Cambyses, he drank bull's blood and died on the spot. And that was the end of him.</p>	<p>Non-military scene. Death caused by drinking bull's blood, which was considered poisonous (one version about Psammenitus' death).</p>
9	3.157.1	<p>οἱ δὲ Βαβυλώνιοι ὁρῶντες ἄνδρα τὸν ἐν Πέρσῃσι δοκιμώτατον ῥινός τε καὶ ὠτων ἐστερημένον μᾶστιξί τε καὶ αἵματι ἀναπεφυρμένον, πάγχυ ἐλπίσαντες λέγειν μιν ἀληθέα ...</p> <p>The sight of one of the most distinguished Persians without his nose and ears, and covered with blood and welts from being flogged inclined the Babylonians to believe that he was telling the truth ...</p>	<p>Non-military scene. Blood loss caused by self-mutilation (Zopyrus' stratagem).</p>

<p>10-12</p>	<p>4.62, 4.64, 4.70 (x 3)</p>	<p>(1) ὅσους {δ'} ἂν τῶν πολεμίων ζωγήσωσι, ἀπὸ τῶν ἑκατὸν ἀνδρῶν ἄνδρα ἕνα ... ἐπεὶν γὰρ οἶνον ἐπισπείσωσι κατὰ τῶν κεφαλῶν, ἀποσφάζουσι τοὺς ἀθρώπους ἐς ἄγγος καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνενείκαντες ἄνω ἐπὶ τὸν ὄγκον τῶν φρυγάνων καταχέουσι τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀκινάκεος (4.62.3). One prisoner in every hundred is selected ... they pour wine over the prisoners' heads, cut their throat over a jar, and then carry the jars up on to the pile of sticks and pour the blood over the <i>akinakes</i>.</p> <p>(2) ἐπεὶν τὸν πρῶτον ἄνδρα καταβάλη ἀνὴρ Σκύθης, τοῦ αἵματος ἐμπίνει (4.64.1). When a Scythian kills his first man, he drinks some of his blood.</p> <p>(3) ὄρκια δὲ ποιεῦνται Σκύθαι ὡδε πρὸς τοὺς ἂν ποιέωνται· ἐς κύλικα μεγάλην κεραμίνην οἶνον ἐγχέαντες αἷμα συμμίσγουσι τῶν τὸ ὄρκιον ταμνομένων ... (4.70.2). The procedure in Scythia for entering into a sworn agreement with anyone is as follows. Wine is poured into a large earthenware cup, and then the people swearing the oath mingle their blood with the wine in the cup.</p>	<p>Non-military scenes. Ethnographic: Scythian customs. (1) Human sacrifice (4.62.3)</p> <p>(2) Custom of war (4.64.1)</p> <p>(3) Oath-taking involving blood-ritual (4.70.2)</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>7.88.6</p>	<p>πεσὼν δὲ αἷμά τε ἤμεε καὶ ἐς φθίσιν περιῆλθε ἡ νοῦσος After his fall he began to vomit blood and developed consumption.</p>	<p>Non-military scene. Consumption (spitting blood) caused by a fall from horse.</p>

14	7.140.3	<p>ὦ μέλαιοι, τί κάθησθε; λιπὼν φύγ' ἐς ἔσχατα γαίης δώματα καὶ πόλιος τροχοειδέος ἄκρα κάρηνα. οὔτε γὰρ ἡ κεφαλὴ μένει ἔμπεδον οὔτε τὸ σῶμα, οὔτε πόδες νέατοι οὔτ' ὦν χέρες, οὔτε τι μέσσης λείπεται, ἀλλ' ἄζηλα πέλει· κατὰ γάρ μιν ἐρείπει πῦρ τε καὶ ὄξυς Ἄρης, Συριηγενὲς ἄρμα διώκων. πολλὰ δὲ κάλλ' ἀπολεῖ πυργώματα, κού τὸ σὸν οἶον· πολλοὺς δ' ἀθανάτων νηοὺς μαλερῶ πυρὶ δώσει, οἳ που νῦν ἰδρῶτι ρεοῦμενοι ἐστήκασι, δείματι παλλόμενοι, κατὰ δ' ἀκροτάτοις ὀρόφοισιν αἷμα μέλαν κέχυται, προῖδὸν κακότητος ἀνάγκας.</p> <p>Fools, why sit you here? Fly to the ends of the earth, Leave your homes and the lofty heights girded by your city. The head is unstable, the trunk totters; nothing – Not the fleet below, nor the hands, nor anything in between – Nothing endures; all is doomed. Fire will bring it down, Fire and bitter Ares, hastening in an Syrian chariot. Many are the strongholds he will destroy, not yours alone; Many the temples of the gods he will gift with ranging fire, Temples which even now stand streaming with sweat And quivering with fear, and down from the roof-tops Dark blood pours, foreseeing the straits of woe.</p>	<p>Military context. Oracle in relation to the battle of Salamis (hexameter, epicising language) <i>Homeric intertexts:</i> Theoclymenus' prophetic vision (<i>Od.</i> 20.351-7): ἂ δειλοί, τί κακὸν τόδε πάσχετε; νυκτὶ μὲν ὑμέων εἰλύαται κεφαλαί τε πρόσωπά τε νέρθε τε γούνα, οἴμωγῇ δὲ δέδηε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί, αἷματι δ' ἐρράδαται τοῖχοι καλάι τε μεσόδμαι· εἰδώλων δὲ πλέον πρόθυρον, πλείη δὲ καὶ αὐλή, ἰεμένων Ἐρεβόσδε ὑπὸ ζόφον· ἡέλιος δὲ οὐρανοῦ ἐξάπόλωλε, κακῇ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν ἀχλύς.</p> <p>'Ah, wretched men, what evil is this that you suffer? Shrouded in night are your heads and your faces and your knees beneath you; kindled is the sound of wailing, bathed in tears are your cheeks, and sprinkled with blood are the walls and the fair panels. And full of ghosts is the porch, full also the court, ghosts hastening down to Erebus beneath the darkness, and the sun has perished out of heaven and an evil mist covers all.'</p> <p>μέλαν αἷμα: e.g., Hom. <i>Il.</i> 21.119; cf. αἷμα κελαινόν, e.g., <i>Il.</i> 11.829, 845, etc.</p>
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15	8.77.2	<p>χαλκὸς γὰρ χαλκῷ συμμίζεται, αἵματι δ' Ἄρης πόντον φοινίξει. τότε ἑλεύθερον Ἑλλάδος ἡμᾶρ εὐρύοπα Κρονίδης ἐπάγει καὶ πότνια Νίκη.</p> <p>Weapon shall clash with weapon, and with blood shall Ares Crimson the sea. Then freedom will dawn for Greece, Brought on by far-seeing Zeus and noble Victory.</p>	<p>Military context. Oracle, Salamis <i>Homeric intertexts:</i> χαλκός (synecdoche for 'weapon' in Homer): πλάγχθη δ' ἀπὸ χαλκόφι χαλκός, <i>Il.</i> 11.351 (the bronze spear rebounded from the bronze)</p> <p>Blood, Ares, and Water (Homeric Imagery): τῶν νῦν αἶμα κελαινὸν εὐρροον ἀμφὶ Σκάμανδρον ἐσκέδασ' ὄξυς Ἄρης, ψυχαὶ δ' Ἄιδόσδε κατηλθον, <i>Il.</i> 7.329-30 (Cruel Ares has darkened the banks of Scamander with the blood of our dead, whose souls have gone down to Hades)</p>
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