ON ATOMICS ONOMASTIC AND METARRHYTHMIC TRANSLATIONS IN HERODOTUS[1]

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᾿Ερξίη, πῇ δῆτ᾿ ἄνολβος ἀθροΐζεται στρατός;

Erxies, wherefore musters again the unfortunate host?[2]
Archilochus fr. 62 Diehl

Herodotus was the first great parent of discovery, as between nation and nation he was the author of mutual revelation. . . . He was the first general interpreter, the common dragoman to the general college of civilisation that now belted the Mediterranean, holding up, in a language already laying the foundations of universality, one comprehensive mirror, reflecting to them all the separate chorography, habits, institutions and religious systems of each.
Thomas De Quincey, "The Philosophy of Herodotus," 1853.122–23

So runs the opinion of the English essayist and opium eater Thomas De Quincey on Herodotus' status as what he calls "the leader amongst

1 This long article started life as an even longer manuscript. Victoria Wohl, Mary Leblanc, and Arethusa's anonymous referee were kind enough not only to read it, but to take it seriously, and to offer both helpful suggestions and intellectual encouragement, for which I thank them.

2 All translations are my own.

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philosophical polyhistors" (1853.120). François Hartog has more recently shown us that the "mirroring" De Quincey describes is not a simple matter of direct reflection; rather, it is achieved through the distortions and interferences which are produced by a "rhetoric of otherness," a set of preconceived categories this interpreter, inquirer, and historian uses for talking about foreign peoples.[3] A central component of such a rhetoric is a confrontation with, and an interpretation of, the languages of other cultures—above all with their *names* for the things in their world (which are sometimes, though not always, things in the interpreter's world too);[4] and whilst Hartog sketched out some of the complications to be found in this confrontation,[5] much remains to be said and understood about the Herodotean attempt, in Derrida's terms, "to seek to know oneself through the detour of the language of the other."[6] Our task here will be to take up this neglected

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3 Hartog 1980.212. For similar terminology, see Lateiner 1989.13–51.

4 Burkert 1985.127: "Theorie der Sprache, die eben damals auftritt, versteht sich nämlich primär als eine Theorie über ὀνόματα, über deren 'Richtigkeit' und ihre Beziehung zu den 'Dingen,' πράγματα." My paper is, amongst other things, a meditation on the importance of edges and limits in Herodotus' narrative; unfortunately it is not without its own limits. I concentrate on Herodotus' translation practices, but leave much unsaid about important other roles played by names and naming in the *Histories*. In particular, it is worth noting that names often have a mystical power in Herodotus, a power which is not quite connected with their speakers and which makes them rather more important than the things they name. Hence Herodotus shows reluctance to tell or write certain names (1.51.4, 2.102.4, 4.43.7; cf. 2.122.3), and, in his narrative, names can "make an accusation" (4.189.2) or inspire the fear that should go with the thing named (6.111.2). Similarly, *historiê* may concern itself with names in the stead of things—the "name of *isonomia*," for example (3.80.6; cf. 3.155.3), or the "name of slavery" (4.128.1); or it may interpret a name as a pretext for a thing (7.138). Names define the *limits* for Herodotus' inquiry in many ways: the *Histories* begin with the name of Io (1.1.3), for example, and when his report reaches the sandy southern edges of the known world, it finds the Atarantes, the only men we know of without individual names (4.184.1).

5 "If it is true that naming is one of the mainsprings in the writing of a traveler's tale, it is also true that translation, naming in translation, affords double the pleasure of naming," Hartog 1980.248. See also 247 and 212, where the rhetoric of otherness is conceived specifically as a kind of translation: "That is the problem facing the narrator: a problem of translation."

6 Derrida 1981.121. Derrida is talking about Socrates' advice to his friends at *Phaedo* 78a–b, but much of what he says in "Plato's Pharmacy" can fruitfully be applied to Herodotus' confrontation with language and writing. Many of my arguments in this paper could be elucidated retrospectively from Plato's work (above all the *Cratylus*) and, indeed, from Derrida's interpretations of that work; but I have tried on the whole to resist this temptation as doubly anachronistic and as tending to divert one's attention from the remarkable originality of Herodotus' work. For an overview of the *Cratylus'* relation to its literary antecedents, meanwhile, see Levin 1995 and 1997; and for the most Cratylan production of this Saussurean "era," see Genette 1995.

but vital inquiry and to examine at length two particularly rich and revealing instances of Herodotus' representation of the language of the other: instances where the reader of Herodotus' text trips up on his interpretive rhetoric of names and translation.

These instances are passages where Herodotus' authority and qualifications as a "common dragoman" can be (and have been) called into serious question, dealing as they do with the fundamental logic of names, translation, and philological inquiry. Eduard Meyer set the tone for criticism in the last century and a half when he wrote that Herodotus took his Egyptian translations from Hecataeus, knew not a word of Persian or Scythian, and was in sum entirely dependent on his informers and interpreters for his knowledge of other languages.[7] In this essay, I concentrate on two particularly perplexing instances of this apparent linguistic incompetence, using them to argue that, with a little rethinking, we can come to a better understanding of Herodotus' science of language; and I suggest that these passages are put forward by Herodotus as interpretive cruces for the reader, as moments when we have to make some important decisions of our own about how to read his text. The passages, each of which I read as something like a conundrum, are 1.139 and 6.98. The latter has, to my mind, been solved for some time now, but the solution is as puzzling as the conundrum and has therefore been largely ignored since its proposal ninety years ago. My task will be to explain how we can fit that solution (for it is the only one available) into a coherent understanding of Herodotus' work. To the former conundrum, the end of 1.139, still

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7 Meyer 1862.192–95. Meyer's point that a suspicious number of Herodotus' translations are found in the works of his predecessors (especially Hecataeus) is supported by Armayor 1978. For the idea of a "documentary core" behind Herodotus' Persian knowledge (despite borrowings from Hecataeus), see Lewis 1985.116–17 and then Fehling 1988.2–3 (for the danger of "shifting the problem" of inauthenticity from one author to another). Diels 1910 gives a more apologetic assessment of Herodotus' sense of language (e.g., p. 82: Herodotus' observations are to be seen as "ein im Altertum seltenes Beispiel von Sprachinteresse"), and Evans 1991.139 has shown a similar sympathy for him. Yet the negative impression persists: see Waters 1985.35 and 154, Lateiner 1989.101, and Rochette 1996.92–93 (Herodotus is at least allowed to have "swept the path, as it were" for the *Cratylus*). It is remarkable that Jacoby did not take up the matter in his 1913 study. Perhaps he regarded the contributions of Diels and Meyer as definitive; perhaps, however, he did not regard Herodotus' philology as relevant for understanding his history—an assumption which, I suggest, has set the tone for Herodotean criticism for the rest of this century. Only with the publication of Harrison 1997 (which appeared after the initial completion of this paper), did Herodotus' linguistic assertions receive any further detailed scholarly attention. More generally, on philology's nascent status in Herodotus' time, see Forbes 1933, Risch 1947, and Classen 1959 (especially 230–37 on Prodicus).

more complex and fascinating than the latter, no adequate solution has been put forward, though several acute readers have guessed at the significance of certain parts of the whole. The full answer, which we shall explore here, may strike the reader as yet stranger than the solution to 6.98, but it marks the path to a greatly enhanced understanding of the connections that obtain—for Herodotus and, in some senses, for us too—between prose narrative, scientific inquiry, and human history. It is, amongst other things, a partial answer to that point of Herodotean interpretation to which De Quincey himself made a vital if lately unacknowledged contribution: the question of what exactly *historiê* means in Herodotus' work.

Language is, for Herodotus, a tool that he uses to describe his world, yet it is also a part of that world, and therefore it is subject to the same methods of interpretation and representation he applies to, say, a Scythian bowl, a foreign army, or a tyrant's tragic life. It is divisible into manipulable, countable units, and, in some cases, certain of those units may have a weightier significance than others. In particular, language has an elusive but very real physical existence, which we can to some extent understand by applying Democritus' atomic conception of "flowing shape" (ῥυσμός, Attic ῥυθμός) to language. We might then say that Herodotus' practice with regard to translations, especially of names, and indeed the way he handles significant names generally, is *metarrhythmic*: a matter of changing a shape rather than detaching the word from its referent and substituting an altogether new sign. It is not unlike the immigrant Phoenicians' adaptation of their old alphabet to their new language (Greek), and the Ionians' subsequent revision of this adaptation, as Herodotus describes it in 5.58:

> μετὰ δὲ χρόνου προβαίνοντος ἅμα τῇ φωνῇ μετ°βαλλον καὶ τὸν ῥυθμὸν τῶν γραμμάτων. περιοίκεον δὲ σφ°ας τὰ πολλὰ τῶν χ≈ρων τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον ῾Ελλήνων ῞Ιωνες, οἱ παραλαβόντες διδαχῇ παρὰ τῶν Φοινίκων τὰ γράμματα, μεταρρυθμίσαντ°ς σφεων ὀλίγα ἐχρ°ωντο, χρε≈μενοι δὲ ἐφάτισαν, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ δίκαιον ἔφερε ἐσαγαγόντων Φοινίκων ἐς τὴν ῾Ελλάδα, Φοινικήια κεκλ∞σθαι.
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> Afterwards, when time had passed, they changed both the sound of their speech and the shape of their letters. Now, at that time, most of the surrounding territories were

> inhabited by Ionian Greeks, who learned the letters from the Phoenicians, took them over, and made use of them by changing the shapes of a few. When they started using them they customarily called them by the name "Phoenician Letters"—which was quite fair, since the Phoenicians had imported them into Greece.

In other words, it involves a very subtle manipulation of the edges and components of foreign discourse in order to turn it into something with significance in Greek—a simultaneous manipulation, moreover, of the spoken sound (φωνή) of the language and its written form (γράμματα). As we shall see, when confronted with a foreign word, Herodotus often changes it into Greek not by giving a different Greek word for the thing it refers to, but by altering the *form* (ῥυθμός) of the original word just barely enough to reveal its hidden Greek sense.

1. EARTHQUAKES AND KINGS' NAMES

No doubt this is a strange way of understanding language; yet Herodotus really does say some rather bizarre things about words and names, and it was only through my effort to make sense of that bizarreness that I came to read his philology, if we may call it that, in this odd way. We can begin with Herodotus' celebrated and notoriously inaccurate translations of the names of three great Persian kings in book six: the three kings that the mainland Greeks had been forced to come into contact with. In 6.98, Herodotus tells us how Delos, after being respectfully spared by the Marathon-bound Persian general Datis, was shaken by an earthquake for the only time in living memory. This was apparently (κου) a sign of the evils about to befall Greece during the reigns of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes—a sign reinforced, moreover, by a recorded oracle. At this point, Herodotus suddenly interrupts the flow of the historical narrative in order to let us know what these names "mean" (δύνανται) in Greek.[8] The Greek version of Dareios is Erxiês ("Worker?" "Doer?" "Protector?"), whilst Xerxes is Arêios ("Warlike"), and Artaxerxes is Megas Arêios

8 The aside is considered sudden enough to merit deletion by at least one critic (Peter Wesseling in his 1763 Amsterdam edition of Herodotus, cited by Meyer). Meyer 1862.194 dismisses the idea that it is an interpolation, presumably because he considers it to be quite in keeping with Herodotus' linguistic amateurism. See also Macan 1908 *ad loc.*

(literally "Big Warlike"). Then, with a μ°ν that characteristically introduces the last phrase of a digression, he concludes that "the Greeks would be right to name the kings like this in their tongue": τούτους μὲν δὴ τοὺς βασιλ°ας ὧδε ἂν ὀρθῶς κατὰ γλῶσσαν τὴν σφετ°ρην ΄Ελληνες καλ°οιεν.

The general feeling of commentators on this passage is that, for all the assertiveness of the pronouncement, it is quite misguided. Herodotus does, perhaps, come close with his first translation, since it is at least possible that Dareios (in Persian) means something like "protector"; though the possibility lies more in our lack of alternative evidence than in the natural plausibility of Herodotus' suggestion. Xerxes, however, seems to mean simply "King" (*Khshayârshâ*), though there may be a secondary link to the ferocity that is naturally ascribed to a dread king. Finally, with Artaxerxes, he makes a palpable slip,[9] a sign that his understanding of these translations is (so the argument goes) quite superficial. The word is not the compound of Xerxes that its Hellenised version makes it seem, but rather a compound of *arta* ("great") and *kshatra*, a different word for king.

There is a consistent and significant methodology at work in this important passage.[10] Perhaps our best clue to the way Herodotus' translations work is the unlikely choice of the Greek version of Darius' name, for Erxiês is hardly an everyday Greek word, and still less is it of the elevated diction appropriate to a king's name. It occurs in only one other place in literature[11] and is obscure enough to call forth a dubious gloss from the *Et. Magn.* (ὁ πρακτικός). If Herodotus wanted (for whatever strange reason) to say "worker," moreover, why could he not use the more common ἐργάτης? This odd choice alone should be enough to suggest to us that he is up to something special here, and one scholar has, at least in part, found out what that was. In 1907, A. B. Cook noted succinctly that "*il saute aux yeux*, and even more *aux oreilles*, that we ought to read: Δαρεῖος ἀρήιος, Ξ°ρξης

9 "Une erreur flagrante," Legrand 1955 *ad loc*. See also Legrand's *Introduction* 75 n. 1, Diels 1910.85, How and Wells 1957 *ad loc*. For more comprehensive lists of Persian names and etymologies, see Rawlinson 1926 and Armayor 1978.

10 The reference to Artaxerxes has made the passage something of a focus for historical and historiographical comment: the former because it may help us to date the publication of the work (see, for instance, Fornara 1971 and Cobet 1977), and the latter because it is a rare reference outside the very solid time frame of the *Histories* (see Darbo-Peschanski 1987, ch. 1; Jacoby 1913 §229; Cobet 1977; and Lateiner 1989.46–48).

11 Anonym. apud Hephaest. 6.2 = Archilochus fr. 62 Diehl (see my first epigraph). I must confess I find it tempting to take this fragment itself, with its mention of a gathering army, as a reference to Xerxes the Persian (authorship questions aside).

ἐρξίης, Ἀρταξ°ρξης κάρτα ἐρξίης."[12] He went on to suggest how, by "paleographic" corruption and glossing, the translations became transposed and κάρτα was transformed into μ°γας. This further explanation has its own problems (especially for those who believe in holding onto a *lectio difficilior*), and we shall be dealing with some of them later, but it is worth pausing for a moment to take in how startlingly obvious are the *formal* connections, phonic and/or alphabetic, between the words and their translations—obvious, at least, once the links have been pointed out to us. It is almost too evident, an insult to the critic's intelligence. This may account in part for the rapid disappearance of Cook's insight from the critical literature. In Legrand's commentary, for instance, the hypothesis is briefly noted, without even the ascription to Cook ("comme on l'a suggeré"), and the continuation of the series to μ°γας ἐρξίης is pronounced "trop hardi"; presumably because the idea of a "Big Doer" as a Persian king is even sillier than that simply of a "Doer."

The kernel of Cook's idea refused to go away and was rediscovered (apparently of his own intuition) by Wood sixty-five years later:

> These *etyma*, insofar as they are supposed to be Persian, are incorrect, but Herodotus does not really state that they are Persian *etyma*, but Greek. . . . The ETYMOLOGIES are arrived at simply by removing the initial letters of names Darius and Xerxes . . . and then modifying slightly the form of the latter.[13]

The tone of this exegesis, with its sudden capitals and italics, suggests again the glaring obviousness of the connections once they have been noticed; and Wood goes on to point out that if Herodotus used the Athenian alphabet of the time, where E would stand for E, H, and EI, the transposition would be that much easier. Even so, from the very start, there is something disingenuous about the too-much-protesting explanation ("simply" is surely an understatement), and the reader senses a certain critical discomfort which, perhaps, led to the marginal status of Wood's interpretation within

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12 Cook 1907. According to Diels, a similar observation was made by Nestle four years before Cook's piece appeared, but Diels' citation (*Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift* 1903.1115f.) seems to be mistaken, and I have not as yet been able to track the reference down.

13 Wood 1972.142 n. 55 (italics and small capitals in original).

his work: it is a digression within a footnote about a digression (the Delian earthquake). In particular, we are within our rights to ask how Herodotus can sensibly propose a "Greek etymology" for a Persian name and, further, to wonder *why* exactly "the forms obtained in this manner were switched." Wood puts forward both of these suggestions as if they are natural and transparent aspects of the historian's art, but we may feel that we have received from Wood—and from Cook—a brilliant yet hardly sufficient explanation of Herodotus' treatment of these names.

Let me try to explain what Herodotus has done with language here. The main clue that he is indeed up to something lies in the interweaving of the first two pairs of names/translations—a chiastic transposition that primes us for the letter juggling that goes on within the names themselves. To each name is assigned the metarrhythmic translation of the other: son to father and father to son. Now we might see in this a suggestion that the sense of a Persian name in Greek reveals the qualities of the father, much as Greek names themselves tend to do, but though there may be a grain of truth here, Herodotus seems if anything to be parodying the Greek convention, for how can a father's name express the qualities of his son?[14] The addition of Artaxerxes and Megas Arêios as a third pair, moreover, complicates matters further, spoiling any neat explanation of the relation of the first two pairs. If we accept that Arêios is a metarrhythmic translation of Xerxes—and one that will only make sense in context with the first two pairs—we must still account for the metarrhythmic derivation of *megas* from *arta*. We might opt for Cook's apparently traditional philological solution: it is a manuscript corruption of κάρτα. But there is something to be said for Legrand's doubt, his suggestion that the sense of the words is "trop hardi." The corrupting transposition Cook proposes (Xerxes/Erxiês, Dareios /Arêios becomes Xerxes/Arêios, Dareios/Erxiês) is vaguely plausible as a scribal error, and so is the change from κάρτα to μ°γας. Both together, however, begin to look like the work either of an especially confused succession of copyists—or perhaps, rather, of a particularly devious original author? If we imagine Cook's putative original, after all, we cannot help wondering what would turn such a salient *lectio facilior* into so odd a *lectio difficilior.* As often, it seems better to attribute the difficulty to the original.

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14 On the father's qualities in the son's name, see Sulzberger 1926. This two-way resemblance between father and son does, however, make sense if it is conceived as a kind of analogy; see Derrida 1981.82.

As we read through Wood's note, moreover, we may be impressed by his initial statement of the case, but soon begin to doubt as we try to follow his explanation of the "simple" processes of translation and transposition involved. However certain our basic insight about the link between the names and their translations, the way Herodotus *presents* them to us is far from simple. I suggest, in fact, that we can see part of the motivation for this cryptic passage if we remember that the names and their translations are given immediately after an oracle (and a written one at that, γεγραμμ°νον) which marked the Delian earthquake as a sign of the troubles that would (says Herodotus) befall Greece during the reign of the named kings.[15] The transition is so quick that the text seems almost to present the names and translations as following logically from the reporting of the oracle; and indeed Herodotus' translations do mirror oracular discourse's cryptic wordplay. The oracle's anaphoric play draws our attention to the way one letter at the limit of a word, an *alpha* privative, can reverse its meaning and produce an effect of paradox: οὕτως οὐδὲν Σν ἀεικὲς κινηθ∞ναι Δ∞λον τὸ πρὶν ἐοῦσαν ἀκίνητον. [Καὶ ἐν χρησμῷ Σν γεγραμμ°νον περὶ αὐτ∞ς ὧδε· κινήσω καὶ Δ∞λον ἀκίνητόν περ ἐοῦσαν.] The word "unshakable" is itself a subtle reinterpretation or translation of the name Delos: the oracle plays on the mythical origin of the name, where the island became "Clear" to those who would name it only when it stopped moving around.[16] Like the island, both during the earthquake and in the time before it gained its name, the cryptic oracular discourse shakes and moves around, resisting definitive naming.[17] The translations that follow—translations of the names of the

15 There is some doubt about the security of the reading here: the text of the oracle (καὶ . . . ἐοῦσαν) is missing from the stronger MS tradition (ABC), and the words of a gloss may have been included in the other. See Macan and Legrand *ad loc*. Stein suggests that the idea of a "written oracle" is itself alien to Herodotus. Even if this is a gloss, however, the rest of the text is no less enlightening: Herodotus himself plays on the same words (especially with the double negative οὐδὲν Σν ἀεικὲς), and if we're smart readers we know he's doing it in a poetic and indeed an oracular way—he may be provoking the reader to seek after a gloss of the very kind that has, possibly, crept into his text. On the historical authenticity of the earthquake, in particular the likelihood that it was a unique event, see Fehling 1988.91.

16 In Pindar fr. 33c Snell l.4, Delos is a χθονὸς εὐρείας ἀκίνητον τ°ρας. Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* 34ff. makes clear the mythological background.

17 For ἀκίνητος as an "ironic" word in Herodotus—a word only applied to things that are in fact doomed to catastrophic movement—see Lateiner 1983.98: "Herodotus, indebted to the presocratics and not least to Heraclitus, shows *inter alia* that 'everything moves and nothing keeps still'" (= Plato's *Cratylus* 402a). The Delphic oracle also, apparently, played upon the same word in an intensive alliteration with "Kamarina," see Parke and Wormell 1956 #127 (p. 56).

men who are the human cause of this latest shaking of Greek soil—mimic this oracular play with a subtle chiastic arrangement of translations shaken free of their anchors. The words, moreover, are prone to the same kind of significant alteration at their edges as the oracle's words: an additional *alpha* reverses a meaning in the oracle, and the subtraction of initial letters in the names makes them (almost) transparent to a speaker of a completely different language. The addition of a third translation, then, like the insertion of an *iota* into one of the near-transliterations, makes interpretation even more unstable: the *iota*, like the third term interrupting the neat chiasmus, and like Artaxerxes himself,[18] is a superfluous, foreign element extraneous to the interlocked pair of the chiasmus; and the chiasmus itself is like the homegrown strife between rival powers that shakes Greece during Artaxerxes' reign: τὰ δὲ ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν τῶν κορυφαίων περὶ τοῦ ἀρχοῦ πολεμεόντων. The four words of the chiasmus are, after all, fighting a losing battle in Herodotus' text for their own ἀρχαί, their first letters.

I have dwelt at some length on these interpretations in order to hint at the kind of reaction this bizarre text provokes in an interpreter: an initial sense of clarity and discovery, followed by a second stage which is characterised by frustration at the text's refusal to fit exactly with that obvious explanation and, perhaps, by a certain amount of intellectual pushing and pulling in an attempt to force it to fit. I'm suggesting, moreover, that part of the process of metarrhythmic translation is the deliberate provoking of just such an interpretive experience. Herodotus warns us that we need to pay minute attention to the shape of his report, on several different levels (the word, the letter, the phrase)—the same kind of attention we would expect to pay to a punning and enigmatic oracle.

2. EGYPTIAN GODS

It is no accident that Herodotus' text engages the reader in this fashion; when we look at 1.139, it will become clear that the interpretive methodology this engagement provokes is, quite simply, what it means to do history. Before we can reach this point, however, it may be helpful to deepen our understanding of what I have been calling metarrhythmic translation. As I have said, the term is borrowed from Herodotus' description of the invention of Greek writing: the Phoenicians who settled in

18 As a figure from outside the limits of the *Histories*, see n. 10 above.

Greece "changed the shape" of their letters to fit the new language they were speaking. Though we might regard this adaptation as a sign of the contingent relation between script and language, Herodotus draws quite a different conclusion. If the meaning of a script can be interpreted and applied correctly by different speech communities with only an adaptation of shape, then so can the meaning of the spoken languages associated with that script.

This observation can go a long way to explaining many of the more perplexing linguistic observations in Herodotus. To be sure, he is quite aware of what would be for us a more familiar notion of translation. He does, for instance, give foreign equivalents for several Greek gods' names. Aphrodite is not only Mylitta, but also Alilat and Mitra in 1.131.3, Zeus is Ammon (2.152.5), Linos is Manerôs in 2.79.2, and so on.[19] In fact, giving exotic equivalents for Greek words is an important part of his ethnographic project, an interest that takes many forms, but which does not always yield the odd kind of translation we see in 6.98. He even notes the fact that Greek *dialects* differ in the words and names they use to describe the same things. The Ionians, for instance, refer to books (i.e., papyrus rolls) as "skins" (διφθ°ρας) because they had been forced to use goat and sheep skins during a shortage of papyrus (5.58); and, in 7.197, we learn that the descendants of Athamas in Achaea must keep their eldest son out of the "People's House" (Λπτιον), which, Herodotus explains, is what they call the Prytaneum.[20] Not only does he give a multitude of foreign words, some translated, some not, he even tells us about archaic or obsolete usages.

These are not, however, what Herodotus would really call translations. In very few of these cases does he say that one word "means" another (δύναται).[21] Rather, in virtually every instance, he tells us what people "call" something (καλ°ουσι, and occasionally ὀνομάζουσι). They choose different words for the same thing, that is, but these words need not be

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19 For the foreign names of Greek gods in Herodotus, see Diels 1910.83, 86.

20 For Greek dialectal variations or words only found in other dialects, see also 1.67.5 (ἀγαθοεργοί), 4.18.1 (᾽Ολβιοπολίτας), 7.176.3 (Χύτροι), 7.188.2 (᾽Ελλησποντίη), 8.52.1 (᾽Αρήιον πάγον), 8.124.3 (ἱππ°ες). Note also foreign words given but not explicitly translated with a Greek word (often because there clearly is no Greek equivalent): 1.192.2, 2.32.6, 2.77.4, 2.81.1, 2.94.1, 2.96.5, 2.125.1, 3.89.1, 4.23.3, 4.199.1, 5.9.3, 5.16.4, 6.119.3, 7.54.2, 7.188.3, 8.85.3, 8.98.2.

21 Other uses of δύναται as "means": 2.30.1 (ἀσμάχ), 4.110.1 (Οιόρπατα)—but for both of these see below p. 278f.), 4.192.3 (ζεγ°ριες). On one occasion (2.143) Herodotus uses ἐστί for "means."

especially incomprehensible to the observer's ear. In fact, the dialectal variations show us how this notion of what other people "call" something differs from the idea of translation (δύνατται). These are all Greek words, and they make etymological sense to any speaker of the language even though their *usage* may call for some explanation. Interestingly enough, after giving us his "translations" for Xerxes, etc., Herodotus does go on to conclude that the Greeks would be correct to "call" the Persian kings by these names, and it is precisely because he has converted the names into transparently Greek versions that Herodotus considers them ready for *use* in "calling." As common as this more familiar notion of translation is in Herodotus, then, it is only one form of translation, and it is with few exceptions applied only to unfamiliar words whose *usage*, not meaning, needs to be explained.[22]

Since Herodotus so often tells us the names that another people use for the gods, moreover, it is worth noting that the notion of metarrhythmic translation can help us understand his assertion that the Greeks imported their gods' names from Egypt (much as they imported their script from Phoenicia).[23] Ivan Linforth and Richmond Lattimore came to a mutual impasse on this issue: for the former, the Greeks obviously used Greek names for their gods, so Herodotus must mean simply that they took over the Egyptian *system* of gods and applied their own names to them.[24] Lattimore (1939.359) convincingly rejoins that "doubtless ὄνομα can mean something *more* than name, but I cannot see how it can mean anything less . . . If Herodotus means to tell us that the Pelasgians derived from Egypt everything about the gods *except* their names, he is deliberately emphasizing the most misleading of all possible terms." Lattimore is undoubtedly right to insist that Herodotus' words, especially his use of οὔνομα, "must mean what they appear to mean" (1939.358), but that "meaning" doesn't make much sense to us. If we understand the taking over of the names as *metarrhythmic*, however, the problem goes away. That Greeks and Egyptians could share the same (or almost the same) names for their gods was, for Herodotus, no more surprising than that Greeks and Phoenicians could

22 For a full list of Herodotus' references to other languages and dialects, I refer the reader to Harrison's admirable appendices (Harrison 1997).

23 2.50.1. The exceptions are Poseidon, the Dioscuri, Hera (but not Heracles!), Hestia, Themis, the Charites, and the Nereids.

24 See, for example, Linforth 1940.301; also Burkert on the Derveni papyrus, Burkert 1985.130.

have an alphabet composed of very similar letters—or indeed than the idea that the meaning of a Persian king's name could be transparently (if also obliquely) available to a Greek speaker.[25]

We noted that in instances where Herodotus gives a foreign or dialectal word that is genuinely different from one he regards as more familiar, he isn't really translating. What kind of thing, then, *is* translation? Though I doubt we can entirely pin it down, I want now to sketch out three different metarrhythmic techniques used by Herodotus: translation as exchange, transparent translation, and reflecting translation. Ultimately, we'll try to place Herodotus' practice in some sort of historical context, since this kind of metarrhythmic philology would certainly have made more sense to his original audience than it does to us.

3. EXCHANGE

One way we can understand how such a notion of translation might make sense to Herodotus is to look at the very word he uses for "means," as in "Xerxes means Arêios." There is (perhaps appropriately) no easy English equivalent for this use of the Greek verb δύναται. We might start to explore its implications by noting its basic relation to a notion of power or strength, for it certainly seems as if the foreign words in 6.98 have proven too strong for Greek to be able to do more to them than lop off their initial letters and insert one paltry *iota*. The Egyptian words, too, have in effect invaded Greece like many another powerful, marauding tribe. The *meaning* of the names, meanwhile, or at least their etymologies, their archaeological connections to what they denote, are taken to be evident to the speakers of both languages and to assert themselves outside of any individual language.[26]

This word actually plays a rather more complicated (and more interesting) role in Herodotus' rhetoric of otherness. As he uses it, the verb δύναται normally suggests economic exchange: it signifies the worth of an object to be exchanged for another or to be paid for in money (as it does in

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25 Compare Linforth's suggestion (1940.301): "That the Greeks used Greek names for these divine persons, however they came by them, would be no more surprising to him than that they used a language different in all respects from the Egyptian." As should be clear by now, both propositions would be decidedly surprising to Herodotus.

26 For this "powerful" sense of δύναμαι, cf. (for example) 7.5.1 and 9.9.1, where the participle is used absolutely, as "having power or influence" in a place or with a person.

other authors too),[27] especially when the currencies or exchange systems of two communities or cultures are being compared. We should note, moreover, that objects whose exchange value is signified in this way are always in some sense divisible or countable objects. Hence, at 3.89.2, Herodotus informs us that the Babylonian *talent* is "worth" (δύνατα) eight Euboean ones plus seventy *minae*.[28] The similarity of this idea of economic exchange value to verbal translation is clear, especially when we consider 2.6.3 and 2.142.2, where Herodotus uses this verb to tell us that a Persian *parasang* is equivalent to thirty *stades* (cf. 5.53.1) and that 300 generations of men equals 10,000 years. There is, in the idea of counting and measuring, an irresistible slippage between thinking about names and thinking about what they name, where the idea of a measurable or countable referent for the name is the determining factor in the correctness of the name. Once we give way to this slippage, the notion of translation becomes problematic, even superfluous. If the name "Xerxes" refers to and gives a full account of the individual Xerxes, piece by piece, then Greek must render unto Persian the *exact* exchange value for that name—and so it ends up producing something which is (almost) identical to "Xerxes."

4. TRANSPARENCY

There is a further hint of this strange approach to translation in two instances where a Greek word (in one case a noun, in the other a name) seems to stand in for, or take the place of, a word in another tongue—the opposite process to what we observed above.[29] First, if we look again at the description of Egyptian practices in book two, we find that it is the Egyptian

27 Xenophon *Anabasis* 1.5.6.

28 Cf. also 6.86γ2, where consulting an oracle about a forbidden action and actually doing it are said to add up to the same effect: ἴσον δύνασθαι.

29 We might take these as extreme instances of a common phenomenon, where translations never quite escape the Greek language: the foreign word is as Greek as the translation and often differs very little phonically. It may be no surprise that this is the case with dialectal translations (4.48.2: Πόρατα / Πυρετόν; 4.53.3: ἀνάκανθα / ἀντακαίους; 7.73.1: Φρύγες / Βρίγες; and 9.39.1: τρεῖς κεφάλαι / Δρυὸς κεφάλαι), but that the Persians use the Homeric τυκτά of a full (i.e., τ°λεον) feast is stranger (9.110.2; cf. Arabic and Greek λάδανον / λήδανον, 3.112, where the vowel variation is one characteristic of Greek dialects). Herodotus is of course aware that words can be imported (e.g., "cinnamon" 3.111.2), but he still seems to regard them as meaningful in Greek, *as* Greek, whichever nation uses them.

custom to refer to foreigners as βάρβαροι: "barbarians," or literally "babblers."[30] Herodotus' observation forces us into a confusing game of perspectives, implying as it does that these foreigners (babblers themselves presumably) call "those who don't speak their language"[31] (including Greeks?) by that term. On first reading, moreover, it is easy to assume that he means that they have an equivalent word, but considering the onomatopoeic nature of the word, its special link with what it denotes, I doubt this. There is nothing specifically Greek about the word; indeed it achieves its function precisely by producing a sound which is *not* intelligible to a Greek speaker. What else could incomprehensible speech *sound* like except "bar-bar-bar . . ."? And so it seems possible that the Egyptians do quite literally call foreigners "barbarians."[32] In other words, translation is at its most transparent when it deals with the most extreme difference of languages: the confrontation between sense and nonsense.

The second example shows more about the dynamics of this special, transparent form of translation by placing a significant emphasis on the components or elements of the translated name, and also by reminding the reader of the important role played by the narrator in mediating these translations. In the lead-up to the battle of Plataea in book nine (9.19–25), Herodotus describes a preliminary skirmish near Erythrae where the Persian captain, a certain Masistios, leads a cavalry attack against the Greeks camped in the foothills. Masistios falls in the defeat, his horse pierced by an arrow, and the Greeks wheel his body around their ranks in a cart so that the men may admire his stature and his beauty (9.25.1). When Herodotus first mentions his name, he notes that the Greeks call him Makistios;[33] they change just one letter, a trick that should sound familiar to

30 2.158.5; cf. 9.11.2.

31 τοὺς μὴ σφίσι ὁμογλ≈σσους.

32 Compare also 2.57, where the sound made by foreign speech (ἐβαρβάριζε) is (mis)taken for the voice of a dove and is only accepted as "human speech" when the dove-woman learns to speak "comprehensibly" (συνετά, i.e., Greek). For the link between barbarian and animal sounds, compare Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* 1050f. On the Egyptian "Barbarians," see Werner 1992.10, Thissen 1993.243: "[D]er Satz ist deshalb bemerkenswert, weil die Ägypter tatsächlich für die Sprecher fremder Sprachen ein ebenso onomatopoetischen Wort benutzen, wie es βάρβαρος ist."

33 9.20: ἱππάρχεε Μασίστιος . . . τὸν Ἕλληνες Μακίστιον καλ°ουσι. Compare the phrasing of 1.7.2: Κανδαύλης, τὸν οἱ Ἕλληνες Μυρσίλον ὀνομάζουσι, "Candaules, whom the Greek name Myrsilos." Note also the similarity to 6.98: ὧδε ἂν ὀρθῶς κατὰ γλῶσσαν τὴν σφετ°ρην Ἕλληνες καλ°οιεν.

us by now. It is not hard to see the reason behind this interpretive change: the defining feature of the man for the Greek soldiers is his size, and their adaptation of his name makes it mean something like "Tallest One." Herodotus himself, moreover, plays on the authentic version of the name: as Armayor puts it (1978.56), "Masistios, a most upright, [sic] was all the more cheering to the Greeks as he lay there dead in his cart . . ." If this seems farfetched, we might note that it is supported by some intensely assonant wordplay at the crucial moment of the battle narrative. As his horse is struck, it "stands up straight and shakes off Masistios": ἵσταταί τε ὀρθὸς καὶ ἀποσείεται τὸν Μασίστιον (9.22.1).

This passage well illustrates the two notions we have been grasping at: the occasional transparency of one language from the point of view of another (especially from the Greek point of view), and the role played in that transparency by minimal phonic changes. Herodotus' own participation in the wordplay of translation, moreover, reminds us that this kind of translation represents not just a cultural practice that happens to be reported in his text (how the Greeks deal with foreign names), but is a constitutive element of his own narrative—that it plays a formative role in the composition of his text as a piece of language awaiting interpretation. As we move closer to the strange observations of 1.139, we can narrow down the focus further and examine one more instance of just this kind of translation-by-components. In the following examples, the actual translation of a foreign word (what it means) seems less important than the clever and manipulative way the interpreter comes by it. Not only is this exactly what we see in the translations of Persian kings' names, it is indeed what lies behind his observations on the endings of *all* Persian names.

5. REFLECTION

In book four, Herodotus makes an occasional attempt to come to grips with the Scythian language, and he does so in the same offhand, anecdotal manner that characterises his treatment of Persian and Egyptian. In 4.27, he notes that "we, the others" (≤μεῖς οἱ ἄλλοι) call the Arimaspoi by that name because we learned it from the Scythians and that, in that language, it means "the one-eyed men." Once again, then, we are presented not simply with a foreign word, but with a foreign word for other foreigners—the rhetoric of otherness is doubled, as it were, or taken to the limit—and, by apparently including the reader as one of "we the others," Herodotus finds another way to call our attention to the play of interpretive

perspective in his observation. But he explains that the word is divisible into two further names: *arima* is what the Scythians "call" (καλ°ουσι) *one*, and *spou* is what they call *eye* (ὀφθαλμόν). The idea that the Arimaspoi were in fact one-eyed is probably not Herodotus' invention: we see them as the μουνῶπα στρατὸν / 'Αριμασπὸν ἱπποβάμον' in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*.[34] But it is not unlikely that the etymology *is* original to Herodotus, and it should come as no surprise at this stage to find that all the evidence suggests that he is wrong again. *Arima* does not mean one and *spou* does not mean eye—in fact, his very segmentation of the word is mistaken.[35] This is not the only time Herodotus gives us a dubious translation by splitting a Scythian word into two components; he also tells us that their word for the Amazons, *Oiorpata*, corresponds to "man-killers" (yet another instance, we should note, of a foreign word for foreigners).[36] It may be possible, however, to discern some logic behind Herodotus' translation of Arimaspoi, a motivation that goes beyond a brute determination to make the name fit with the people's most salient feature. Remember first that the one-eyed being has a name in Greek too, he is the Κύκλωψ of the *Odyssey*. Now note, too, that this name is divisible into κύκλος and ὤψ, "round eye."[37] Finally, consider the letters of that second word. Even when finding it written in the Ionic alphabet, or when hearing it pronounced, the Greek reader or listener would be conscious that it contains phonemes which are the same as, or very similar to, those of the "Scythian" *spou*, but in reverse

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34 Lines 804–05. Of course, if the play is not by Aeschylus and was produced late in the century, its author might have been influenced by Herodotus.

35 Eustathius *Ad Dion.* divides it differently (Ari-maspoi). For modern (or modernish) opinion on the etymology, see Meyer 1862.195: "sondern einer der vielen mit *aspa* 'Pferd' zusammengesetzen Stammnamen . . ." One wonders if Aeschylus' epithet (ἱπποβάμον') is used with any consciousness of this: as Griffith notes (1983 *ad* l. 805): "none of our other early sources specify that the Arimaspians ride horses."

36 4.110.1. He is wrong again, see Meyer 1862.196 (it means "Männerherrinen"). It is harder to discover any special significance in these two components, and there may not be any. It is worth noting, anyhow, that he does use the word δύναται here: *Oiorpata* "means man-killers" (ἀνδροκτόνοι) as if the two components of the Greek render back the exact value of the two parts of the Scythian; and that he avoids the obvious, equally divisible translation ἀ-μάζων ("without breast"), the syllables of which fail to correspond so nicely with the Scythian.

37 Hesiod *Theogony* 143–45 spells out the name's significance with the same word used by Herodotus here (εἷς ὀφθαλμός): μοῦνος δ' ὀφθαλμὸς μ°σσῳ ἐν°κειτο μετ≈πῳ / Κύκλωπες δ' ὄνομ' Ϝσαν ἐπ≈νυμον, οὕνεκ' ἄρά σφεων / κυκλοτερὴς ὀφθαλμὸς ἔεις ἐν°κειτο μετ≈πῳ.

order. If Herodotus used the Attic alphabet, moreover, his readers would probably have found the Greek word ὄψ written as ΟΨ or ΟΠΣ and the Scythian *spou* as ΣΠΟ.[38] I cannot say whether there is some special significance in *arima*, but it does seem that we have in this second word a rather special use of the Scythian "mirror of Herodotus."[39]

Herodotus' Egyptian translations in 2.30 and 2.69 present us with a still more perplexing example of this mirror translation. When one reads in the latter passage that χάμψαι means "crocodiles," one wonders if Herodotus is repeating himself—hasn't he already translated this word? As it turns out, not quite: when we leaf back, we find that the letters of what would for a Greek be the singular of that Egyptian word (χάμψα), when reversed (ἀσμάχ: the π could not pronounceably remain before μ, but even the accent takes its part in the palindromic rendering), refer to the people "we" call the "deserters" (αὐτομόλοι), though it *means* (δύνανται) in Greek "those who stand at the King's left hand." Meyer, it should be noted, cites these as Herodotus' rare linguistic successes, since he considers them to be close enough to Egyptian *mshu* (crocodile: "die Aspirata durch eine Art Metathesis an den Anfang des Wortes geraten ist") and *smhi* (left).[40] Of course, if I am right about the palindromic equivalence of χάμψα and ἀσμάχ, I have made my picture of Herodotus' translations even more complicated: for here we have Greek translations of words that already have a bizarre relationship of form *in the original language*. The Greek versions ("crocodile" and "those who stand at the left hand of the King"), I suspect, are far from innocent of a similar attention to form (note in particular the spatial prod in the latter; a hint to the reader about how to read the words, perhaps?). Herodotus is indubitably intensifying the metarrhyth-

38 See, amongst others, Woodhead 1967.16–19. Even if Herodotus did not use the Attic alphabet, the fact that O represented all three sounds (ο, ω, and ου) in most Greek alphabets of the fifth century suggests that the difference in *sound* was not felt to be great—so if Herodotus is "talking phonetics" here (see below n. 80) the argument is just as strong if not stronger. As we shall see below, moreover, exact correspondence is not crucial to this kind of wordplay; in fact its absence or failure is part of the game.

39 The Greek reader may well have been more adept at seeing a word in more than one direction, as it were. Anne Carson (1986.59) notes that the practice of writing *boustrophêdon* implies a reader who makes no assumptions about the correct direction of reading; and my student Thomas Colligan reminds me of the reversible lettering on many vases, where a name placed to the left of a body will be written from right to left.

40 "Diese Wörter hat er durch die Dolmetscher richtig kennen gelernt," Meyer 1862.192. Something similar seems to be going on with the mountains Κρῶφι and Μῶφι at the source of the Nile, see Thissen 1993.243–44.

mic game here. The foreign language presents itself to the interpreter as *already* metarrhythmically structured and, therefore, as legitimately available to a kind of translation that pays attention to form as well as reference.

This kind of play with divisible names is not Herodotus' invention. This is not the time to examine the copious examples of significant names in Greek,[41] but for now let us note two which gain their significance in their particular context by this very divisibility and, in one case, reversibility. There is, first, Phoenix's crafty allusion to *Patro-klos* in his story of Meleager and *Kleo-patre* in book nine of the *Iliad*; and then, too, there is the play that Herodotus' contemporary (and friend?) Sophocles makes on the *multiple* divisibility of the name of *Oidi-pous.*[42] Indeed, this kind of play is almost inevitable in a culture where most names do in fact have two parts, but Herodotus' version of this game is special in two respects. First, he applies it to the interpretation of foreign words[43] and treats it not just as a way of drawing out a hidden significance, but as the method for determining a word's primary meaning. Second, he takes the process of verbal division to its logical conclusion: not just splitting words into two parts, but reversing, removing, or adding individual letters and thereby breaking words into the abstraction of what we might call literary atoms, the very letters and/or phonemes that compose them.

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41 For surveys of the use of significant names in literature before Herodotus, see Bury 1888 (for Pindar), McCartney 1919, W. D. Woodhead 1928, Fordyce 1932, Snyder 1980.52–56; and for a view of the role of etymologizing in the historical method of Herodotus and other early historians, R. L. Fowler 1996.72. For an analysis of the relevance of such name-play for *interpretation* of an ancient text, one might start with Nagy 1979 and Peradotto 1990, especially chapter 4 of the latter ("Polytropos: The Naming of the Subject" pp. 94–119). For Herodotus' own use of puns and wordplay in general, whether involving a name or not, see Powell 1937.

42 On Kleopatre and Patroklos see Nagy 1979.105. For Oidipous see especially Benardete 1966.111 and Hay 1979. In his remarkable, if rather vatic, essay on Plato's *Cratylus*, Benardete (1981.135) further notes that Oedipus is there *anagrammatised* into the "real" name of "Poseidon" by the removal of the apparently extraneous epsilon. If this observation is in any way relevant to the time of Sophocles and Herodotus, it may provide some support for my points about Herodotean anagrams above.

43 Which is not to say that he does not indulge in the usual version of the *nomen omen* game too; he alludes explicitly to the significance of Krios (6.50.3), Demaratus (6.63.3), and, the defining case, Hegesistratos (9.92.2): οἰωνὸν τὸ οὔνομα ποιεύμενος. One could argue further that he plays on or makes narrative use of the meanings of Phye (1.60.4), Polycrates (3.43.1 and 44.1), Gorgo (5.48.1), Labda and Cypselus (5.92), and Agariste (6.126). There are also other foreign names, besides those of 6.98, whose meaning he fairly explicitly explores or exploits: Kuno (1.110.1), Battus (4.155.1) (see Masson 1976, Dougherty 1993.105–07), and Perses (7.61.3).

6. ATOMIC LANGUAGE

This way of dealing with discourse is properly historical: it forms part of Herodotus' inquiry into the world and runs through his representation of other peoples and other times. It is also philosophical. The view of language as divisible matter is of a piece with a similar view of the physical world: the atomic philosophy developed by Herodotus' contemporaries Leucippus and Democritus (whom Bailey 1964.116 described as "in some respects a scientific Herodotus"). We know that the analogy between a view of the world as composed of indivisible atoms and a written language composed of alphabetic letters provided Democritus, for one, with a crucial set of metaphors for articulating his ideas; and one of those metaphors, the idea of the *rhythm* or dynamic shape of an atom, is particularly useful for coming to grips with what we might call Herodotus' atomic onomastics.

The notion of a special, non-contingent connection between the world and the linguistic realm that represents it is of course available in earlier presocratic philosophy. The power of that connection is perhaps most acutely felt by Heraclitus, whom Charles Kahn describes as (1983.118), "the first philosopher for whom *the written word* is the essential mode of communication." It is Heraclitus who draws our attention to the paradoxical relation of one set of letters (BIOΣ) to two very different referents (DK 150);[44] and it is Heraclitus who presents us with an analogy for the paradoxical nature of the world, composed as it is of opposite tendencies, which may well be a reference to the possibility of writing curved and irregular letters in straight lines (DK 50B).[45] For Democritus and Leucippus, however, this connection seems to stand as something more than a simple analogy, so thoroughly does it inform their theory of atoms.

A well-known fragment of Democritus (or perhaps Leucippus) observes that tragedies and comedies are composed of the same letters: ἐκ

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44 See also DK B48, B32, and B67. For the interpretation of these, see Vogtländer 1995, Kahn 1979.

45 This is fr. 59 in both Kirk and Robinson. This interpretation turns on the reading of γραφ°ων (either "letters" or "writers") instead of the stranger γναφ°ων ("carding comb?" "screw press?"), which is an emendation that seems to have arisen because of an interpolation into the manuscript of the doxographer Hippolytus, or a misreading by Hippolytus himself. For this interpretation, with copious support (above all of the suggestion that γναφ°ων would be an anachronism), see Kirk 1954.97–104. See also Robinson 1987.122, Ferguson 1964.18.

τῶν αὐτῶν γὰρ τραγωιδία καὶ κωμωιδία γίνεται γραμμάτων (Leucippus DK A9). In the same manner, runs Aristotle's exegesis, the varied matter of the world is formed by the different arrangements of individual, indivisible bodies or masses (σωμάτων ἀδιαιρ°των).[46] The analogy with letters is a felicitous one, and at least part of its success lies in its paradoxical nature: its ability to explain how there can be common components in opposite things. In this sense, it is not so different from the Heraclitean version, which was only one of several the Ephesian used to express what he saw as the oneness of opposites.[47] That the alphabetic example is a special one for Democritus, however, is evident from his description of the attributes of atomic matter, which differs, he says, only in terms of the "rhythm" (ῥυσμῷ), arrangement (διαθιγῇ), and orientation (τροπῇ) of its components (Leucippus DK A6). Aristotle goes on to use the alphabetic example to explain these terms. The first, which he calls σχ∞μα, is like the shape of an individual letter; the second (τάξις) is like the differing arrangement of more than one letter in a line; and the third (θ°σις) is like the orientation of a letter on a line (hence I and H, *iota* and *eta*, differ only in this respect—a fact worth bearing in mind when we wonder how an extra *iota* crept into Herodotus' transl[iter]ation "ΕΡΞΙΗΣ").

The use of letters as abstract, empty symbols, useful for thinking about difficult philosophical concepts, is nothing strange for Aristotle, but it has recently been emphasised that the alphabetic realm is no secondary or merely explanatory analogy for Democritus' world view. It provides him with the fundamental terms he needs to conceive of atoms, an emphasis that Aristotle's discussion of "bodies" tends to obscure, and one for which the understanding of the sense of ῥυσμός is crucial. Wismann puts the case most boldly (1980.71): "L'atome n'est pas un corps. Il ressemble plutôt au tracé indéfinement répété d'une même lettre, se propageant à travers le vide, sans début et sans fin." As G. A. Ferrari puts it in the same volume (1980.87–88), Democritus was probably thinking of "dynamic lines" (*tracciati dinamici*) rather than discrete bodies. Both authors reach this conclusion by noting that Democritus' language for describing atomic matter is, quite simply, the language used for describing alphabetic letters

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46 Aristotle *De Gen. et Corr. Anim.* 1–314a21.

47 The fragment is normally placed by editors near or next to B69 (= 60 in both Kirk and Robinson), which it immediately precedes in Hippolytus' text: ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὠυτή.

and writing. The apparently geometrical terms used to describe the individual atoms ("curved," "angular," etc.) are in fact two dimensional, "il contorno di figure piane";[48] and the three terms he uses of atoms as they are found in matter (ῥυσμός, διαθιγή, τροπή) all refer us back, as we have seen, to the writing of letters.[49]

Within this triad, moreover, there is one term whose meaning can only be made clear when we read it through, of all people, Herodotus. ῥυσμός, the Ionic form of ῥυθμός, seems a strange term to be applied to a material body, but Wismann explains as follows (1980.69–70):

> Le terme ῥυσμός . . . évoque d'abord le mouvement de l'eau, la succession régulière des ondes (voir le verbe ῥεῖν). Mais assez tôt déjà, il a servi de métaphore pour les hauts et les bas de la vie (cf. Archiloque fr. 67a Diehl) et l'alternance des humeurs (cf. Théognis, v.964), avant de désigner le mouvement structuré en tant que tel (p. e. Eschyle, *Choéphores*, v. 797). L'emploi le plus intéressant se rencontre chez Hérodote (V, 58), où le mot s'applique au déroulement de l'écriture.

The ῥυσμός of a letter evokes the process of its formation, the ups and downs, curves and turns of the strokes, rather than its static form. As we have already noted, the passage of Herodotus referred to (5.58, also mentioned by Ferrari 1980.87) concerns the importing of Phoenician letters into Greece. The word appears twice, once in a verbal compound (μεταρρυθμίζειν), and, in both cases, it refers to the *changing* of these letter forms during their adoption into Greek. As such it naturally brings to mind the idea of writing as a process rather than as a finished product. The commentators are content to gloss ῥυθμός here with Aristotle's σχ∞μα (see, for instance, Macan *ad loc.*), but Larcher seems to have had some inkling of a deeper significance: "ῥυθμός signifies the proportion borne by the parts to the whole" (Larcher 1844.136). Wismann adduces Democritus' treatise

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48 Ferrari 1980.83; cf. 85.

49 See also Hirsch 1996.43. For Lucretius' possible direct borrowings from or allusions to Democritus (and for the latter's strange puns), see Snyder 1980.46–51. For the atomic and alphabetic or phonic patterns of Lucretius, see Friedländer 1941 and (for a sceptical view) Dalzell 1987.

περὶ ἀμειψιρρυσμιῶν as evidence that ῥυθμός is naturally associated with changing rather than static form (DK68 fr. B8a).[50]

Most suggestive for our purposes is the use of the word in Theognis. Firstly, Theognis advises that one must get to know the ὀργὴν καὶ ῥυθμὸν καὶ τρόπον of one's friend (964). If, as Kurke suggests, the mention of "counterfeit" (κίβδηλον) nature in the next line is supposed to make us think of coinage, then how are we to take ῥυθμὸν here?[51] I suggest that the "rhythm" of a man shows his true nature because it allows the observer not only to understand how he appears at any moment, but to see his character synoptically: both to see the connection between surface and depth, or sign and material, and to know how the man will change (or preferably not change) over time. Genuine currency will not *turn out* to be worthless. This is particularly apposite for our reading of Herodotus, for as Schroeder (1918.327) shrewdly notes, Theognis' words are reflected in Herodotus 6.128, where the tyrant Cleisthenes tests the "manliness, temperament, education, and manners" of his daughter's suitors (διεπειρᾶτο αὐτῶν τ∞ς τε ἀνδραγαθίης καὶ τ∞ς ὀργ∞ς καὶ παιδεύσιός τε καὶ τρόπου). As it turns out, he is unable to predict the surprising end of this test: the strange dance-rhythms and bodily shapes exhibited by the favored Athenian, Hippocleides.[52] Even more striking, however, is the way these words are reflected in Democritus. Theognis, on the one hand, suggests we can reliably analyse a man's character in terms of ὀργὴν καὶ ῥυθμὸν καὶ τρόπον. Democritus, on the other hand, tells us that we can analyse *everything* in terms of ῥυσμός, διαθιγή, and τροπή. In Herodotus, meanwhile, we see a powerful figure's failed or rejected attempt to carry out Theognis' advice, and we see the author himself applying one of these key terms (ῥυσμός) to the medium of his ἀπόδεξις, written words, in a context

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50 See also Benveniste 1966, Allen 1973.96–98 ("the pattern assumed at a given moment by a mobile, changing medium"), Schroeder 1918 (arguing that the word's origins suggest waves rather than tides or flows). West 1992.243 suggests that both Herodotus and Democritus seem to have been students of musical metre and rhythm and that, in commenting on the metres of oracles (e.g., 1.12.2, 7.220.3), Herodotus was "showing off his knowledge of a modern art of metrical analysis."

51 Kurke 1995.49. On the text of these lines (particularly the reasons for *not* replacing ῥυθμόν with θυμόν) see Van Groningen 1966.364–65.

52 One could even argue that Hippocleides presents himself as a letter with the wrong τρόπη. The table provides the necessary horizontal rule, and his body forms the σχ∞μα of the letter (an inverted Oedipal lambda? or an upsilon?).

that reminds us inevitably of the text's fundamental concern with representing and *translating* the other. Herodotean translation, as we are beginning to see (and this will become clearer later), takes place at the edges and, above all, at the ends of his material, for it concerns itself not with what we would call the semantics of a word: the meaning that is represented by the sign, the word-coin's symbolic value; rather it deals with the ῥυσμός or synoptic shape of the word and, hence, with what other words it can be *exchanged* (δύναται). When Herodotus translates an important or significant word, therefore, what we end up with is an adaptation or transformation of its ῥυσμός—a *metarrhythmic* translation.

7. ALPHABET DANCE

To return to the basic point, it seems fair to say that for Democritus, at least, writing, when conceived of as an ongoing, dynamic process involving the combination of discrete, indivisible yet somehow flexible elements,[53] provided the key to understanding the atomic composition of the physical world. The role played in his theory by the idea of what we might call "rhythmic shape," moreover, provides one vital link to Herodotus. It is, of course, only one link, and it is not my aim to argue that Herodotus shared or expounded Democritus' atomic theory. If he knew of the theory (if, indeed, it was available to him or had even been formed when he wrote the *Histories*), then it would have given him ready support for the idea that there is a special connection between language and the physical world, and would have suggested to him (if he had not already considered it) that the connection resides at least in part in the "rhythm" or dynamic shape of written letters: in the manner in which the basic elements of language, that is, present themselves to inquiry. If Herodotus did not know of the theory, however, the fact that Democritus uses the vocabulary of the alphabet as he does—especially now that we see how his choice of words fits with the archaic terminology for judging character that Herodotus also draws on—is still significant for an understanding of Herodotus. It independently confirms that Herodotus' concern with letters and syllables, with the

53 I have, for fear of anachronistic comparisons, avoided introducing into the discussion the more familiar Greek word both for element and for alphabetic letter, στοιχεῖον. The word is not found before Plato, and Herodotus always uses γράμμα, even in circumstances where later literature prefers στοιχεῖον (e.g., learning or teaching how to write a language, ≤ μήτηρ αὐτὴ γλῶσσάν τε Ἑλλάδα καὶ γράμματα ἐδίδαξε, 4.78.1).

dynamic units and indeed shapes (rhythms) of language, must be understood as part of a larger interpretation and representation of the world (and, above all, of man) such as we do see in Herodotus' *Histories*. Both Herodotus and Democritus show us how to read the world.[54]

We need not, in any case, rely on a philosophical comparison to see why Herodotus might have thought in this way. The letters of the alphabet may not exactly have been a new technology by Herodotus' time, but neither were they taken for granted as an invisible part of the ground of everyday life. They were new enough and strange enough to capture the poetic imagination: in a famous fragment of Euripides' *Theseus*, an illiterate shepherd presents the audience with a kind of riddle as he spells out the letters of Theseus' name pictorially (TGF fr. 382). The description gains some of its effect from the likening of letters to more familiar, concrete objects—at times almost as if the name were a piece of woodwork, at others more like a part of the body (a βόστρυχος). There is a sense both of sturdiness and of precision, a circle "measured out as with a compass," which may well remind us of the spirit of Herodotus' metrical or economic translations. Anne Carson writes of this and other similar scenes:

> [T]he people to whom such theater appealed were people whose imaginations could be seized by the spectacle of *grammata* taking shape in air as if they were real. These are vividly pictorial imaginations and they evidently take some pleasure in the plastic contours of the alphabet.[55]

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54 In case this has not already become clear, my argument in this paper is meant, amongst other things, as a very literal support for Carolyn Dewald's imaginative interpretation of Herodotus, see Dewald 1993.

55 Carson 1986.58. "It must have been a scene that proved dramatically effective, for two other tragedians imitated it very closely, as our extant fragments show (Agathon, TGF Fr. 4 and Theodektes, TGF Fr. 6; cf. Ath. 10.454b). Sophokles is said to have staged a satyr play in which an actor danced the letters of the alphabet (TGF Fr. 156, Ath. 10.454f.). The Athenian comic playwright Kallias produced something known as 'The Alphabetic Revue' in which the twenty-four members of the chorus acted out the letters of the alphabet and imitated syllables by dancing in pairs of vowel plus consonant (Ath. 453c) . . ." (*ibid.*). I would add one further reference: as Benardete points out, in the Oedipus story, "the very name of the royal family, Labdacidae, contains within it λάβδα or *lambda* (λ), the letter which resembles an uneven gait" (Benardete 1966.111). This needs some modification, since comparison with the lower case letter would be anachronistic (unless he is referring to the version of the character with a perpendicular left stroke and diagonal right stroke), but the leg-like quality of the capital, along with its name, is enough to support the general point.

She goes on to draw our attention to two further aspects of the Greek alphabetic imagination. First, the easy reversibility of some Greek letters, twelve of which are symmetrical, along with their use in the *boustrophêdon* style of inscription, suggest "a writer who thinks of his letters as a series of novel, reversible shapes."[56] Then she points out that in pre-classical inscriptions we see a close attention to the division of groups of words and lines of text, which typically expresses itself in the placing of columns of dots between word groups and the use of different colours of ink for alternate lines of text. Behind these practices, we can discern an attitude to writing (and hence perhaps to language itself) which stresses the physical form of discourse as something significant in itself: complex, open to manipulation and varied performance, aesthetically enjoyable, and perhaps even beautiful.[57]

8. ENDING IN *-S*

Herodotus' translations, as we have discovered, often display an understanding of language that privileges form over meaning; we have called this a metarrhythmic sense of language. This much is explained by the special importance he clearly attaches to the forms and letters of foreign words: an emphasis that gives us our only sensible explanation for the name translations of 6.98; but there is something more involved in such translations: a special notion of the link between a word and its referent. We have already noted that the sense of this link is clearest when a translated word denotes a countable, measurable, or divisible object—attributes that are matched by the divisible nature of the word itself. It is this kind of atomic abstraction, combined with a view to the bond between word and thing, that

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56 As support for this, she quotes Jeffrey 1961.46 on the archaic Greek "pictorial conception of the letters as outlined figures which can be turned in either direction according to need."

57 As Carson concludes, "In writing, beauty prefers an edge" (1986.59). In case this way of dealing with translations seems altogether too odd, we might note that for one group of modern writers (the OULIPO), metarrhythmic translation can be regarded as one of a number of techniques for "true" translation. See Mathews 1996 §3: "These strange dislocations of the original may seem cavalier, but they are useful in drawing attention precisely to elements of language that normally pass us by, concerned as we naturally are with making sense of what we read. Nominal sense becomes implicitly no more than a part of overall meaning." For another perspective (theoretical rather than experimental) see Derrida 1987, esp. 38–39, on Joyce's bilingual wordplay "He war": "Il réfléchit, à l'état d'extrême concentration, toute l'aventure babelienne du livre: 'And shall not Babel be with Lebab?' Le palindrome renverse la tour de Babel. Il dit aussi le livre."

gives us a key to what Herodotus says in 1.139. Here, as in 6.98, Herodotus is sidetracked by a fascination with Persian names, but this time more explicitly with their form rather than their meaning:

> καὶ τόδε ἄλλο σφι ὧδε συμπ°πτωκε γίνεσθαι, τὸ Π°ρσας μὲν αὐτοὺς λ°ληθε, ≤μ°ας μ°ντοι οὔ. τὰ οὐνόματά σφι ἐόντα ὅμοια τοῖσι σ≈μασι καὶ τῇ μεγαλοπρεπείῃ τελευτῶσι πάντα ἐς τὠυτὸ γράμμα, τὸ Δωρι°ες μὲν σὰν καλ°ουσι, Ἴωνες δὲ σίγμα. ἐς τοῦτο διζήμενος εὑρήσεις τελευτῶντα τῶν Περσ°ων τὰ οὐνόματα, οὐ τὰ μ°ν, τὰ δὲ οὔ, ἀλλὰ πάντα ὁμοίως.
>
> The following also happens to be true about them—something they are unaware of, though we see it. Their names, which are similar to their bodies and their magnificence, all end in the same letter, which the Dorians call "san," while the Ionians call it "sigma." If you inquire into this, you'll find that all the Persians' names end in this letter—not that some do while others don't, but that all alike do so.

As with 6.98, this passage has given interpreters cause to doubt Herodotus' ability to do scientific philology. His suggestion that the Persians themselves don't notice this aspect of their own language, after all, seems somewhat of a giveaway. Even leaving aside the objection that he implicitly excludes *female* names, which he clearly thinks end in *-a*, the consensus of scholars is that he is quite wrong in his observation.[58] Just as his Persian *etyma* (to use Wood's word) are really Greek, so the *s* endings are a feature only of all the *Hellenised* forms of the names—forms which were presumably adapted specifically to look like Greek masculine names. In old Persian, it is only stems ending in *-i* or *-u* that have *s* added to them, while stems ending in *-a* (like *Khshayârshâ*: Xerxes) do not. Small wonder, then, that the rule escaped the Persians' notice.[59]

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58 See, of course, Meyer 1862.194 and Diels 1910.85. For the behavior of the different stems, see Kent 1953.

59 Two scholars have (independently) challenged this orthodoxy, suggesting that Herodotus might have been in a better position than we are to judge the pronunciation of a now long-dead language. All we know for sure is that the rule did not apply to *orthography*. Evans

This short passage, as it happens, holds a number of clues to the Herodotean *Sprachphilosophie*. Firstly, its way of talking about others' names is of a piece with the rhetoric of Herodotus' representation of others' customs—which is why it fits so well into its narrative position as a cap to the digression on Persian *nomoi*. Bloomer notes that "Herodotus describes the extremes of a people's *nomoi*,"[60] and this passage fits that observation in a remarkable number of senses. Secondly, it does provide an insight into Herodotus' notion of the relation that holds between an object and its name, word and world, which he designates here as a kind of "similarity" or ὁμοιότης. Finally, it draws our attention more than any other passage to the role played by individual letters in these ideas. We have already spent some time thinking about this last component of his use of language. Once we have a grip on the other two, we shall be in a position to make the truly revealing connection between this passage and the story of Solon and Croesus, a connection that leaves no doubt about the relevance of these rather odd philological observations (Herodotus' and mine) to a complete and coherent reading of the *Histories.*

Herodotus' use of the first-person plural, then, and his emphasis on the uniformity of the rule, mark this passage out as a characteristic report of the customs of a people. The first-person plural ("we don't fail to see this") defines the report as belonging to a specifiable community against which the other is measured. "We" are presumably the Greek-speaking readers of the text, who are all in a position to see something the Persians cannot. Secondly, and most importantly, if a custom belongs to such a specifiable community, then it must (by this logic) be practiced by *every* member of

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1991.139 n. 203 warns: "Our knowledge of the actual pronunciation of Old Persian is limited, and the practice of Ctesias, who should have known, supports Herodotus. It is possible that the Greeks believed they heard a sibilant pronounced at the end of Persian names with an *-a* stem as well . . . Herodotus was interested in foreign languages, and perhaps had a 'Berlitz phrase-book' knowledge of them" (cf. Legrand 1955 *ad* 1.139). Against the comparison with Ctesias' practice, we might argue that, in composing a work for Greek readers, he would have been subject to the same conventional and generalising transliteration practices as was Herodotus. For more sophisticated Hellenisations of a Persian name, we might look to Aeschylus' lyric treatment of Darius in the vocative (Δαριάν, *Persians* 663, 671; but compare the iambic Δαρεῖε, 787) and the accusative (Δαριᾶνα, 651), making it something like a third declension noun of the type ἀγ≈ν (perhaps to make it sound more exotic—see Hall 1989.78). It may also be significant that Aeschylus gives Xerxes the epithet of Ares: θούριος (73, 718, 754), see Stein *ad loc*.

60 Bloomer 1993.31. Herodotus describes, that is, the literal extremes (ends) of a linguistic custom (names) in 1.139, which is itself (almost) the end of the custom digression.

that community. Hence everyone who is descended from Athens and celebrates the Apatouria is an Ionian, and this functions implicitly as an exclusive definition: everyone who doesn't qualify in this way *is not* an Ionian (1.147.2).[61] *All* of the Egyptians, moreover, sacrifice in the same way: πάντες Αἰγύπτιοι νόμοισι τοῖσι αὐτοῖσι χρ°ωνται ὁμοίως ἐς πάντα τὰ ἱρά (2.39.4), which rather reminds us of the diction of 1.139: πάντα ὁμοίως.[62] We even hear the same emphatic negative formula "it's not that some do while others don't, but all of them do" used in 2.37.1 with respect to Egyptian drinking habits.[63] If a custom is to define the group, it can have no exceptions.[64]

9. SIMILARITY

Since a community's naming practices are part and parcel of its customs, we should not be surprised that Herodotus treats them with the same interpretive rhetoric. He notices something further, however; this is one custom that fits not only the system of customs, but actually fits the people themselves. All the names end the same way, ὁμοίως; they, and hence their bearers, resemble each other in this: they are similar or alike by virtue of their endings. But there is, as I say, a second level of similarity, and this one is much more perplexing for the interpreter: Persian names are "similar" (ὅμοια) to the Persians' bodies (σ≈μασι) and to their magnificence

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61 The reader may have noticed that I do not refer to Herodotus' statement that the names of the Ionian festivals all end in *-a* (1.147). This passage has been considered to be of dubious security, and while I incline to accept the transmitted text, this second assertion about word endings is neither necessary nor damaging to my argument.

62 Compare also 4.187.2, a kind of exception that proves the rule, since Herodotus feels obliged to admit there that he's not sure if the custom in question is universal in the culture. Note, too, that there are some customs practiced by *all humans*, regardless of culture (3.38.2; cf. 7.152.1), and some which are practiced by *nearly* all humans (2.64.1: "all others," but not the Greeks and Egyptians). In 3.38, in fact, Herodotus famously sums up this aspect of his ethnography by quoting Pindar, νόμον πάντων βασιλ°α φήσας εἶναι (Pindar fr. 169, see Bloomer 1993.30–31).

63 For this Stein also adduces Phokylides fr. 1.

64 Wolff 1934.161 cannot therefore be entirely right when he takes this regularity to be a sign of the Persians' characteristic uniformity, something that sets them apart from other peoples, and from the Greeks in particular: "dass sie alle ohne Ausnahme auf den gleichen Laut enden, ist für Herodot wohl ein Symbol für die geschlossene Einheitlichkeit ihrer Sitten. Auch hierin heben sich die Perser von den Griechen ab." This is not to say that it cannot be argued in other ways that uniformity is a Persian trait, see Konstan 1987.73, Immerwahr 1966.187.

(μεγαλοπρεπείη). This awkward observation has drawn its own share of comment. It is worth noting now that it forms a circumstantial participial phrase: ἐόντα ὅμοια τοῖσι σ≈μασι . . . Hence its meaning depends in some way upon the indicative statement that follows it—a fact that both Benardete and Immerwahr elide in order to make it the centre of Herodotus' observation on Persian names.[65] As we shall see, understanding the phrase's relation to its main clause is a crucial element in understanding the whole passage; it is in fact a concessive participial phrase. Yet it is worth looking at it in isolation for a moment, for the idea that a name can be related by similarity of form to the physical thing it denotes is an important part of Herodotus' transparent translations.[66]

Herodotus' suggestion that Persian names are similar to their bearers' bodies and magnificence has provoked its own share of confusion. Does it simply imply an etymological relation?[67] Gomperz points out, however, that Herodotus shows little interest in giving etymologies or Greek equivalents for Persian names (outside of 6.98, of course), and he asks emphatically, "Wie können Namen ähnlich sein τοῖσι σ≈μασι καὶ τῇ μεγαλοπρεπείῃ?" His answer, followed by most recent commentators,[68] is

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65 Benardete's slip is the more egregious, though his suggestive interpretation is not entirely vitiated by it: "So great a concern with speech (and hence with hearing) leads to a certain deprecation of sight and visible things. The Persians do not observe, though Herodotus does, that 'their names are like the magnificence of their bodies'" (Benardete 1969.71; cf. Immerwahr 1966.186). We should not assume that the participial phrase is to be included in what the Persians don't notice, it is rather a parenthetical statement of a supplementary ethnographic fact which they may or may not be aware of. For its exact circumstantial sense, which I take to be concessive, see below pp. 294. Though there are manifold examples in the *Histories* of this participle used in all kinds of roles, we might fruitfully compare the similar concessive sense of ἐόντα at 1.207.1, where Croesus tells Cyrus that his own sufferings, unwelcome as they have been, have given him a lesson. See also Lang's comments about the historian's ambiguous use of "motivational" participles: Lang 1984.13.

66 Bear in mind, moreover, that the word ὅμοιος is itself fair game for wordplay in Herodotus, see Shimron 1979.

67 Stein translates, "die Namen entsprechen in ihre Bedeutung den Individuen und ihrem vornehmen, edlen Wesen." See, however, Legrand 1955 *Introduction* p. 75 n. 1; McNeal 1986 *ad loc.*

68 See Immerwahr 1966.186 n. 111, Diels 1910.84, Wolff 1934.161 ("Die persischen Namen entsprechen ihrer μεγαλοπρεπείη und ihrer äusseren Erscheinung und, so dürfen wir am Ende der Nomoi sagen, der adligen Einfachkeit und Grossartigkeit ihres Ethos"). Johnson 1876 *ad loc*. gives a good survey of the ways translators try to avoid the problem here, since this ambiguous Greek is easily put into ambiguous English, and as he says, "What sense that?"

that the exotic names create an *impression* of magnificence in the ear of the Greek hearer.[69]

It is only fair to ask whether Gomperz has answered his own question: how can names, even their sounds, be similar to bodies? If we look at Immerwahr's rather tentative statement of the case we may discern a certain discomfort with the vagueness of the answer but also a sense of a stronger kind of similarity. "The passage is in agreement with ancient ideas of etymology. The statement should refer to the length and peculiar sound of the names, not to their meaning . . . All this is based on the idea that the sound of a word is somehow connected with its meaning."[70] Though Gomperz is right to emphasise the role played by the individual sounds of the names (their *Vokalreichtum* and *Konsonantenfülle*), and most especially right to connect this to the subsequent assertion about the names' endings,[71] Herodotus' statement has more to do with the connection of those sounds to the real world than a mere impression in the ear of the listener. This kind of similarity, or ὁμοιότης, is something which has a wider significance for our understanding of the Persians.

10. NAMING A BODY

We have already taken one cue from Armayor's list of significant names (Masistios). He also notes that Harpagus does "snatch away" the baby Cyrus, and that Zopyrus was a "flame kindler" when he delivered Babylon to Darius;[72] but there is no suggestion that the names came from these events—rather there seems to be an eerie *resemblance* in Herodotus' allusive narrative between the Greek meaning of the foreign name and the story that contains the individual. Smerdis, moreover, as Armayor suggests, really is "horrible," especially to the woman who has to feel for his non-existent ears in order to discover his identity. The connection between name and body is thrown into sharpest relief, however, by a joint reading of 1.139 with Solon's advice to Croesus in 1.30ff., and so now we turn our attention

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69 "Auf sein Ohr, welches an die lispelnde Sprache seines Volkes gewöhnt ist, machen Namen wie Ariamnes . . . uzw. mit ihrer Vokalreichtum und ihrer Konsonantenfülle einen ähnlichen Eindruck wie auf uns die Namen spanischer Hidalgos," Gomperz 1912.44.

70 Immerwahr 1966.186 n. 111.

71 "Und er gibt diesen Eindruck durch eine Bemerkung wieder, welche buchstäblich also zu ubersetzen ist . . . ," Gomperz 1912.44.

72 Armayor 1978.156.

directly to the intriguing resemblances between Herodotus' onomastic observations and the story of Solon and Croesus.

Each speaker, Solon in 1.30ff. and the narrator in 1.139, makes a weighty reference to the body (σῶμα), and it is this word that names what we are supposed to understand by all this attention to edges and ends. In 1.139, Herodotus says that Persian names, being similar to Persian bodies and Persian magnificence,[73] all end in *-s*. As we noted earlier, this is a somewhat ambiguous circumstantial phrase. If, as is quite possible, we read it as concessive ("*Although* their names are similar to their magnificent bodies, they all end in *-s*"), we hear an elusive resonance with Solon's words: "A land cannot be self-sufficient and support itself entirely . . . and no single human body is self-sufficient. Rather, whoever makes it through with the most and ends his life happily, he wins the name of 'blessed' from me. We must look to the end of everything, how it turns out." In each case, the ephemeral state of the body is contrasted with an ending, and it is the ending that allows the interpreter to understand the whole.[74] Perhaps we can go further: in 1.139, the magnificence of the body of a Persian name itself, its central mass of *Vokalreichtum*, is contrasted with its quiet, sibilant ending. This is the reason for Herodotus' awkward phrasing here (the ambiguous circumstantial participle) and for the strange idea that a name can "resemble" a body: the name itself has the attributes of a human body, including a kind of death in its ending.[75]

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73 Or, taking it as a hendiadys with Gomperz, "to their magnificent bodies."

74 Solon blurs the categories of space and time here, in that he seems to equate a man's material body with his temporal life span. No body is *materially* autarkic, and hence no man (the bearer of the body) is temporally so. This blurring does not spoil my argument, if anything it helps it, since it shows us the sage seamlessly applying the same criteria of measurement (be they economic, temporal, or spatial) to what appear to us to be very different objects of inquiry.

75 On the significance of the *khôra* (as we find it in Plato's *Timaeus*) for understanding anagrammatic language, see Derrida 1993. It might be possible, meanwhile, to excavate the significance of *sigma* (pun, of course, intended) from its etymology. Chantraine tentatively suggests a connection with σίζω "sizzle" (the sound made by the Cyclops' eye as Odysseus and his men burn it out—an ominous ending for him, at least: *Odyssey* 9.394). The fact that the letter has an onomatopoeic origin, if Herodotus senses it, is significant for our argument in itself: the Persians' names are "similar" to their individual bodies, but they all end in a letter that is similar to (i.e., imitates) a rather incongruous sound. On the other hand, perhaps the presence of the *gamma* would suggest to the amateur philologist a relation with σιγάω: for all the magnificence of the names, that is, they nonetheless end in silence (which is what I mean by a kind of death in the ending). On the etymology of

Solon's emphasis on the body, then, throws some light on the relation of similarity between a body and a name as we see it in 1.139. The latter passage itself, meanwhile, allows us to see the importance of names and naming in the story of Solon and Croesus. In Solon's words, it is the *ending* of anything that allows the interpreter to understand the whole: to *give it a name*, that is. The man who ends his life happily is "worthy of being called (κεκλ∞σθαι) happy"; and "this man can justly win this name (οὔνομα) from me"—the name being implicitly "ὄλβιος." Solon seems less to be advising Croesus on how to *be* happy and more to be showing him how to assign names to things correctly (much as Herodotus does for us in 1.139 and 6.98). This is not so surprising, he is responding directly to Croesus' question, "How do you judge (κρίνεις) Tellos to be most blessed?" (1.30); and, what is more, if we take his advice in this way we can make much better sense of his odd digression on the exact length of a man's life. Here (1.32) he shows the same concern with limits and measurement that we noted in Herodotus' translations of names—of counting up exactly the elements that compose the object which is to be given a new name. Solon says that he will "set forth the limit of a man's life": οὖρον τ∞ ζόης ἀνθρ≈πῳ προτίθημι. Having set it at seventy years, he proceeds to divide that finite unit up into its constituent months and then days, leading up to the observation that no one of those days brings the same fortune as the previous and that he will not give Croesus the answer he expects until he knows that he has "ended his life well" (τελευτήσαντα καλῶς τὸν αἰῶνα). Not only does both a human name and a human life have a body attached to it, then, each is also divisible and countable in some way that is meaningful for its interpretation. It is no accident that when Croesus later uses Solon's name on the pyre, we can literally count along with Herodotus: ἐς τρὶς ὀνομάσαι "Σόλων."[76]

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sigma, see Tichy 1983.122 n. 123, 123 n. 126. On the written letter itself as a kind of death, moreover, see Derrida 1981.91: "For it goes without saying that the god of writing must also be the god of death"—for writing is inanimate, unable to answer for itself; also 105: "The pharmakon and writing are always involved in questions of life and death."

76 Note that the three repetitions of the name correspond to the three examples of happiness given by Solon earlier. See Regenbogen 1961.106 on the three "Sphären der Auffassung und des Aussprechens" in Solon's examples.

11. NAMES FOR LETTERS

Herodotus' brief onomastic aside in 1.139 provides us with a rereading of the moral parable of 1.30ff., one that draws out the full sense of the final words of the parable. Croesus sent away Solon, "who advised that one should ignore present goods and look to the end of every thing." Every thing indeed, not just a life, or an event in that life, but every single thing in one's comprehension: πάντος χρήματος.[77] When we set the two passages side by side, we find this one idea insistently repeated: τ°λος, τελευτή, and verbal forms from the same word group appear eleven times in 1.30ff. (twelve if we count the name T°λλος as a pun on this idea),[78] and twice in the six OCT lines of 1.139. Two forms of knowledge or inquiry which we consider separate, moral wisdom and philology, are thereby linked and made available to the same sort of analysis: looking to an end which may well contrast with the body or whole that it defines. This means, moreover, a literal analysis: a dividing up into body and end, mass and edges; and it requires of the interpreter, be he sage, monarch, or inquirer, an ability to grasp disparate components jointly from the perspective of the end, to re-evaluate the whole once he has seen the end, the edge, or the limit.[79]

Though this methodology unites the moral realm with the linguistic, we must understand that the latter is fundamental here. It is the interpretation of *words* that gives Herodotus' inquiry its foundation, just as the images of letter shapes (ῥυσμός) and combinations gives Democritus his only way to conceive of physical atoms. The rules that govern Herodotus' telling of the story in 1.30ff. are also the rules the story puts forward as governing man's life. As we have learned, moreover, these are not just the rules of what we think of as linguistics; they have to do with the strange things that can happen to language, and what can be done to it by the experimenter, when it is conceived of as divisible into syllables and phonemes, and, above all, when it takes the form of alphabetic writing. There are many words in Herodotus' *Histories*, we might say, and not one behaves exactly like the last.

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77 Lateiner, for one, reads this as a key to the rhetoric of Herodotus' text, a kind of hidden instruction for the reader (as I take it): Lateiner 1989.44.

78 Immerwahr 1966.156 argues for this pun. See also Nagy 1990.245 n. 129.

79 For the idea of retrospective evaluation in this story, see Immerwahr 1966.154–61.

Herodotus does not say that Persian names all end in the same sound; rather, he says they end in the same *letter*, γράμμα. To be sure, one cannot assume from the use of this word alone that Herodotus is thinking of written signs: in Plato, the great critic of writing, there is (as David Gallop puts it) a kind of oscillation between "phonetics" and "graphology" in the use of that term: a γράμμα such as *alpha* or *beta* can be the name of a written sign *or* of a sound.[80] Still, in isolating individual sounds like this (what we would call phonemes to avoid the ambiguity), and in giving them names, the Greek author is already thinking of language alphabetically. The process is rather like the hypothetical naming of the gods in Burkert's analysis; naming is a matter of dividing things in order to define them; and, in this case, it is the idea of a written alphabet, with individual names for each letter, that underlies the way Herodotus, and indeed Plato, divides up language into its basic units. It is, moreover, hard to imagine that Herodotus does not have such written, *named* signs in mind, that he is not thinking of alphabets, when he goes on to remark that the Persian names end in the letter that the Dorians *call san* and the Ionians *sigma*. As we have seen, if Democritus' way of thinking about language and the world can be taken as in any way similar to Herodotus', the resemblance he sees between the one and the other must emerge from his concern with the shapes, edges, and orderings of written letters.

The mention of two names, and of two naming communities, for the same fundamental unit of language, however, introduces an element of confusion into the picture of an atomically interpretable discourse—and it is in this ambiguity that we can see the final and most important element of Herodotus' world of words. Herodotus' Newtonian science suddenly becomes relativistic. There is a moment in 1.139 when we become rather startlingly conscious of the presence of an interpreter; I mean the very rare use of the second person singular to address the reader of the text: ἐς τοῦτο διζήμενος εὑρήσεις . . . It is easy enough for the modern reader, used to this conspiratorial form of narrative intervention, to miss the significance of this locution; rarely in the *Histories* does Herodotus address his reader.

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80 Gallop 1963.374. Note also, on p. 372: "The alphabet is thus conceived as a 'language' for describing sounds." Gallop's piece is a balanced response to Ryle's attempt to show that when he mentions letters, Plato intends to refer *only* to sounds: that he is "talking phonetics and not graphology," Ryle 1960.437. See also Burkert 1959.171 n. 2 for the remark that γράμματα, when referring to a foreign language in Herodotus, refers to the language itself and not necessarily to a foreign *script*.

When he does so, it is as if he is relaying instructions for a journey, telling the reader what landmarks to look out for (e.g., 2.29: ἔπειτα ἀπίξεαι . . . ὁδοιπορίην ποιήσεαι . . . πλεύσεαι καὶ ἔπειτα ἥξεις . . .).[81] If we look back at 1.32.7, however, we do find Solon addressing Croesus in similar terms: ο τος ἐκεῖνος τὸν σὺ ζητ°εις ⟨ὁ⟩ ὄλβιος κεκλ∞σθαι ἄξιός ἐστι. In each case, the speaker (or narrator) addresses an interlocutor who is characterised not so much as a traveler, but rather as a "seeker" (διζήμενος, ζητ°εις) for whom the speaker acts as a kind of *intellectual* guide.[82] If we turn our attention back now to our original reactions to 1.139 and 6.98, we can see why the presence of this "you," the figure of the reader and apparently the ultimate arbiter of names, is so important to the Herodotean *Sprachphilosophie* we have been exploring.

We noted that the solution to 6.98 is at once (with hindsight) surprisingly obvious and (upon further reflection) disquietingly and frustratingly odd. The links between the Persian names and their Greek versions are so clear, and yet so very slightly twisted and deformed, that the passage seems to form a challenge to the reader's faith in his interpretation. This deformation of a link, or what William Levitan calls the "near miss," is part and parcel of the special relation of form and content, name and referent that Herodotus explores. Levitan's topic is Nicander's two acrostic passages: one of which spells his name correctly, but the other of which seems unable quite to achieve the feat.[83] Comparing this with Nabokov's sense of verbal play, he calls it "the near miss as confirmation, as evidence,

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81 Lateiner interprets thus: "Herodotus also draws his reader into his text by employing conversational second-person singular verb-forms," Lateiner 1989.30. He mentions 1.139 and 2.29 (for which he notes Longinus' approving comment that "All such appeals with a direct personal application set the hearer in the center of the action," *De Sublimitate* 26.2), and, perhaps most relevantly for his suggestion that this is a *conversational* style, 1.199.4 (of Babylonian temple prostitutes): ἐπεὰν δὲ μειχθῇ, ἀποσιωσαμ°νη τῇ θεῷ ἀπαλλάσσεται ἐς τὰ οἰκία, καὶ τὠπὸ τούτου οὐκ οὕτω μ°γα τί οἱ δ≈σεις ὥς μιν λάμψεαι. There is more to the use of the second person than a conversational "drawing in," as I hope emerges from my analysis. The matter requires more detailed study than would be appropriate here, however; for now, let me suggest two starting points, each from an opposite temporal perspective. For the complex Homeric precedents of this stylistic device (and, in particular, compare *Iliad* 4.223–25 with Hdt. 1.199.4), see Richardson 1990.170–78; and for an appreciation of just how powerful (and sophisticated) a tool it becomes in literary prose, indeed for its implication with the nature of prose writing, see Stewart 1996.

82 On the significance of Solon's use of the vocative and "Apostrophierung" in his conversation with Croesus, see Regenbogen 1961.114.

83 Nicander *Alexipharmaka* 11.266–74, *Theriaca* 345–53.

dim but irrefutable, that a whole pattern of sense does exist; a secret sign to those with a private longing for coherence."[84] A sign, in other words, that one must work to understand, one must feel one's way through the material of the text ("not text, but texture" in the words of Nabokov's fictional poet);[85] it is a sign above all that the pattern *is* there to be found.

There are aspects of each of our two main texts which make it especially clear that we are being issued this secret challenge. We noted above how the metarrhythmic translations of the kings' names in 6.98 give us a strange correlative for the "shaking" of Delos and for the wordplay in the very oracle that predicts the earthquake. Indeed, there is more to Herodotus' methodology here than a subtle oracular mimicry. Note how he draws attention to the authority of his own interpretation: "The Greeks would be correct to call them this in their own tongue." Does he really expect the Greeks to refer to Darius as Erxiês? If so, why does he not do so himself? In 1.139, he gives his insight a similar emphasis, and this makes it stand out from his other observations about foreign customs. Not only does he go to great lengths to assure us that *all* Persian names end in *-s*, but he notes that the fact is missed by the Persians themselves and only noticed by "us," their Greek observers. The reader has the impression that he is pointedly (though playfully) asserting the superiority of his own Greek (and Hellenising) viewpoint over the Persians' knowledge of their own tongue, indeed of their own names![86] The word he uses to denote this oversight, λανθάνει/λ°ληθε, frequently suggests the failed interpretation of an important but difficult sign such as a dream or an oracle (like the one that predicts the Delian earthquake), and it does so especially when it is used with a perfect aspect, as it is here.[87] It really does not matter to Herodotus whether or not the Persian versions of their own names do all end in *-s*; what he says hints that he, in fact, knows that they do not. What matters is that the Hellenised, metarrhythmically translated versions which "we" use,

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84 Levitan 1978.61. See also Lobel 1928. On the connection between etymology, poetics, and philosophy in Aratus (the main topic of Levitan's piece), see Prendergraft 1995.

85 Nabokov 1962.62.

86 As Meyer 1862.194 points out, the text presents this as a discovery "auf die er nicht wenig stolz ist." Cf. Stein *ad loc*.: ". . . sagt der Verfasser mit einigem Selbstgefühl . . ."

87 See, for instance, 1.39.1: λ°ληθ° σε τὸ ὄνειρον; 3.2.2: Egyptian *logioi* are "not unaware of" Persian customs; 3.40.1: the import of Polycrates' good fortune "did not escape Amasis' understanding"; and 8.96.2: the meaning of an oracle ἐλελήθεε πάντας τοὺς ΄Ελληνας.

are—in this text, and for us—the truer or more significant forms, since they reveal something hidden within the bodies of the Persian versions, and hence something obscure to the Persians themselves.[88]

Ironically, by showing us how a Hellenising interpretation of Persian names exerts a manipulative authority over its material, Herodotus provides us with a model for an interpretive relationship which makes him, in turn, subject to his reader's manipulative power. He teaches us how to read his text in a literally subversive manner: how to twist his words. He seems, moreover, to have some inkling of this—and here we return to the observation that started us thinking about his interpretive challenge to his reader. His categorical statement about the names' uniform ending, which we have read as a cryptic suggestion that their sense resides transparently in their letters, is immediately undercut by an observation that seems to re-establish the opacity of names, an opacity that itself resides at the level of the letter. No sooner has he said that all the names end in the same letter and that this is clear to "us," by which he apparently means Greek-speakers, than he remarks that the Dorians call this letter *san* and the Ionians call it *sigma*. At one stroke, he confuses the sense both of a uniform ending and of a single interpretive viewpoint: he introduces a secondary level of naming, so that this thing which terminates a name now has a name of its own; and he makes it clear that this kind of name varies not simply between Greeks and foreigners but between the Greeks them/ourselves.[89]

12. OH DESIROUS THEORIST

The sense of "we" as a uniform, culturally defined interpreting voice is quickly dispersed, then. But it is immediately replaced by the author's startling apprehensiveness about a "you" who will replicate his own inquiring activity and put his report to the test. When he introduces this

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88 For Nagy, Herodotus is like the sage Solon who "communicates in the mode of an *ainos*, a code that carries the right message for those who are qualified . . ." (Nagy 1990.244). And like an oracle, Herodotus σημαίνει (234–35). In our study, we have, in effect, compared each of our two main texts to the kinds of discourse Nagy mentions here: 1.139 is a Solonic re-reading of the very story of Solon and 6.98 is an oracular play upon the names associated with an oracular event.

89 Recall the similar combination of attention to viewpoint ("we") and a second level of naming for a name's components in Herodotus' treatment of *Arimaspoi* (4.27), above p. 278f.: "we the others call them *Arimaspoi* . . . the Scythians *call* one 'arima' and eye 'spou.'"

second level of naming, in other words, it is not to confound and contradict the points he has been so skillfully hiding in his discourse up to now, rather, it is to up the stakes of the interpretive challenge, to show how hard it is for a reader to pin down a name and use it for interpretation. When Herodotus most clearly shows us the link between the world he describes and the words he uses to describe it (a connection *we* can make in English by the subtraction of one very thin *l*etter), he also draws our attention to our own role as interpreters of his text and to the surprising degree of authority that resides with us as we read. This is the logical extension of his insights about his relation to his material: not only does Herodotus "read the world," as Carolyn Dewald puts it, but he produces a text which reflects the interpretable properties of that world. This is an inevitable reflection, considering that language is itself not only an object of his inquiry, a part of the world he writes about, but that part which provides the model for understanding the rest.

The ideas I have expressed here have some important implications for Herodotean scholarship: comforting ones, in fact, for much recent work. We can use the idea of atomic language, what we have learned about Herodotus' concern with the way the basic units of language bear its meaning, to re-examine the ongoing debate about the structure of the work as a whole. Two of the knottiest problems of that debate—the status of the digressions and "short stories" in relation to the framing narrative, and then the related problem of how to interpret the ultimate closure of the text (its ending)—look particularly different when viewed in this light. In a recent collection on the subject of classical closure, Don Fowler remarks that "closure itself is a special case of the question of segmentation, of how we divide up texts and the world they constitute. . . . The way a culture segments reality will depend on two factors: the types of boundary it recognizes, and above all its beginnings and endings, and what one might call its segmental ontology, what sorts of sort it recognizes."[90] The *Histories* is, in a sense, an exploration of what kinds of "segmental ontologies" might be appropriate for the new art of extended prose writing; an exploration that takes us from the *grand récit* of the Persian war all the

90 D. Fowler 1997.13; see also D. Fowler 1989 and Dewald 1997 (in the *Classical Closure* collection, she gives the most subtle account to date of how one might read the end of the *Histories*). On the connection between the λόγοι and the τ°λος, or rather the τελευτή, of Herodotus' work, see Focke 1927.23.

way down to the level of the individual letter. The structure is somewhat reminiscent of a fractal image: a graphic representation of the iterated structures of a simple differential equation, mathematical structures which seem to show us the infinitely fine grain of nature itself. One can observe an overall pattern in the frame one has been presented with, but when one focuses on individual elements, one becomes aware that the same pattern is repeated microscopically *ad infinitum*. Then again, when one focuses on a smaller area, one sees that its pattern is reflected in the larger structure that encloses it. In our case, when we focus on a word or a name, we see a pattern that helps us understand not only the individual narrative that contains it, but the larger themes of the whole work. We might call this the fractal theory of Herodotean prose.

If this comparison is accurate (and, given our discussions of resemblances, I suggest it is something more even than a comparison), any attempt to pin down the exact structure of the *Histories,* to define once and for all its segmental ontology, must be doomed to failure. The work is itself a meditation on and an experiment in structure at all levels. This is not to say, however, that we cannot learn from the experiment—far from it. We have found that when the text deals with structure at the level of the finest grain, the role of the individual letters and syllables of words, it specifically enlists not only our attention but also our participation. It offers us a challenge to put together the disparate parts (disparate both in textual location and in tone or subject matter) presented for interpretation.

Since the text issues this challenge, we have every right to answer it in kind. Several critics have already sensed this and have offered subtle analyses of individual episodes (one kind of segment) of the histories: analyses which rely a good deal on discerning obscure and delicate verbal structures. François Hartog's is perhaps the most ambitious of these, taking the whole of book four as such a segment and subjecting it to analysis both extended and minute. On a smaller scale, Deborah Boedeker has provided a similar analysis for the stories of Demaratus, Lichas the Spartiate, and Protesilaos; and Rosaria Munson has focused in on the story of Arion and the dolphin, and on the narrative of the crafty thief in 2.121.[91] All these analyses proceed by drawing out verbal patterns that many readers may find hard to discern, but the last takes the method to its logical conclusion, interpreting the passage in the light of its patterns of prospective pronouns,

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91 Hartog 1980, Boedeker 1987 and 1993, Munson 1986 and 1993.

and so giving a heavy weight of hermeneutic significance to a set of words that, in themselves, have no referential meaning and which appear to do little more than help the reader to an easy comprehension of the narrative.

The purest and most extended example of such fine-grain analysis is to be found in T. S. Long's book, *Repetition and Variation in the Short Stories of Herodotus* (1987). Taking Stahl's (1968) treatment of the Gyges story as a methodological model, and looking only at the patterns formed by the repetition or unexpected omission of significant words, Long gives subtle and imaginative expositions of several narratives in the first book of the *Histories*. Long has been found vulnerable to the charge of being "over-subtle,"[92] of having drawn attention to a repetition or a pattern that was simply unavoidable given the subject matter. Yet if the arguments presented here are felt to have any weight, it must be conceded that we have in Herodotus an author the depths of whose own subtlety we are only beginning to grasp—an author who openly challenges us to apply to him just the sort of sophisticated techniques used by Long, Munson, Boedeker, Carolyn Dewald, and several others. A. B. Cook, for one, would have found such approaches quite consonant with his own rather individual sense of Herodotus' text.

There is one final reason for looking at Herodotus in this way: he himself, in unambiguous terms, takes the same approach to his inquiry and characterises his work in the same way as we have done here. If my arguments give methodological support to the approaches of some modern interpreters of Herodotus' text, it is equally true that they allow us to grasp the significance of two of his own most famous pronouncements on the nature of his work. First, our minimalist approach, where we take the letter to be the basic unit of significance in the text, is in accord with Herodotus' stated method for choosing his material. He promises that he will "go through (ἐπεξι≈ν) great and small cities of men all alike (ὁμοίως); for most of those that were great of old have become small, and the ones that were great in my time were previously small" (1.5.3–4). It seems fair, given the nature of the text, to take this as a general statement of approach:[93] Herodotus will deal with the great themes of war, wisdom, and happiness,

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92 "Over-sensitive" is West's judgment in the *Classical Review* (S. West 1988.16). See also Harvey 1992.84 ("daft"), Bigwood 1989.172 ("he goes too far"), and, less critically, Evans 1990.

93 Bischoff, amongst others, notes the thematic and structural relevance of this phrase: see Bischoff 1932.78.

but he will also pay attention to the details of life in his report. Great and small, all is relevant. Not only relevant, however, but amenable to the same kind of inquiry (ὁμοίως): an inquiry that, in fact, attaches itself to the significant *resemblances* between its diverse objects.[94] The connection that I have been endeavouring to point out all along, between the author's treatment of quantitative mutability (usually involving words) and his representation of the fluctuations of human fortune, is already hinted at in the words that conclude this programmatic statement: "I shall talk about both kinds all the same, for I know that human happiness never remains in the same place."

Consider, moreover, the fact that the work is hardly concerned with taking the reader on a tour of cities, despite what Herodotus says here; rather, we follow the actions of important and powerful human figures (usually eastern monarchs) and, when they are associated with a particular town, Herodotus will tell us about it. Often, indeed, the areas they touch upon could hardly be called towns; they are countries, tribes, and peoples. Still, Herodotus mentions cities here for a reason: the image of a city, especially when conceived as a thing which can grow and diminish in scale, provides him with a rich metaphor for his text—or, shall we say, for the various segments of his text. The city, that is, with its network of streets and walls and houses and temples and gates, gives him a way of conceiving a very new kind of literary work, by no means the only way, but certainly a very useful and suggestive one.[95]

The image of an author "going through" the cities of his text, moreover, naturally conjures up a further image whose relevance to Herodotus' method is without question. I mean, of course, his description

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94 This is, in other words, a special case, indeed the defining case, of Herodotus' use of analogy as an interpretive tool. At 4.99.5, he makes his method explicit: λ°γω δὲ ὡς εἶναι ταῦτα σμικρὰ μεγάλοισι συμβαλεῖν (cf. also 2.33). The comparison of small and large is valid precisely because they both work in the same way and exhibit the same structure; and, in the case of human life, of cities, and now, too, of *words*, large can easily flip, as it were, to small, and vice versa, so that the categories large and small turn out to be unreliable ways of distinguishing the subjects of inquiry. See Lateiner 1989.191–96, Hartog 1980.225–30, G. E. R. Lloyd 1966.341–35. For analogy as a kind of translation, see Hartog 1988.230, Bannet 1993, and especially Bannet 1997, e.g., 657: "[D]ifferent kinds of analogy constitute different vehicles of translation, articulate different forms of movement, and build bridges in and between languages or regions of language in different ways."

95 See, for instance, Borges 1983 [1962], on which also Ahl 1985.54.

of his report as "roads of words": λόγων ὁδοί. The ways this image can help us read the work, at least insofar as it recalls older images of poetic roads, have been amply documented.[96] What the image of a road means for Herodotus in particular, however, is harder to pin down. I have a suggestion, a partial answer, at least. Herodotus' roads of words are like the paths of Heraclitus' writer: a continuing line of units that have their own shapes, their own curves and edges—a line both straight and crooked. If we look not at the straightness of the line, moreover, but at the individual units, the λόγοι, we find more roads to follow: the *tracciati dinamici*,[97] the wave-like ῥυθμός that is, for Archilochus at least, so like the ups and downs of fortune that influence a man's life:

> γίγνωσκε δὲ οἷος ῥυσμὸς ἀνθρ≈πους ἔχει.
>
> Recognize what sort of rhythm governs men.
> Archilochus 67a Diehl

Now, finally, we may be in a position to understand what Euripides means when he gives his version of Solon's wisdom:

> ὄλβιος ὅστις τ∞ς ἱστορίας ἔσχε μάθησιν
>
> Blessed is that man who has learned *Historia*.
> Euripides fr. 910 Nauck

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96 See Becker 1937, Dewald 1987.149 and 165, Nagy 1990.232–33.

97 See Ferrari, quoted above p. 283.

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