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The Manipulation of Signs in Herodotos' *Histories*

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SUMMARY: Herodotos' *Histories* contain many tricksters who are able to think quickly, outwit others, and get what they want using techniques that are not always honest. This paper explores how the skill of these manipulators often resides in their ability to use and abuse signs and hijack the process of signification. It is suggested that Herodotos' interest in and admiration of these manipulators of signs is connected with his narrative persona as master presenter and interpreter of signs.

HERODOTOS' *HISTORIES* CONTAIN MANY FIGURES who by a certain cunning turn unfavorable situations to their own advantage. These figures have in common an ability to think quickly and outwit others, and they make use of techniques that, when evaluated in strictly ethical terms, are unscrupulous, deceitful, and dishonest. They are figures of the trickster type, familiar to audiences of Herodotos and of Greek literature more generally. Among their earliest manifestations are the Homeric Odysseus and Penelope and the Hermes of the Homeric Hymn. The tricksters of the *Histories* have been examined by Camerer, Lateiner 1990, Dewald 1993, and in particular by Bencsik, and as a general phenomenon in Greek literature by, for example, Detienne/Vernant and Pratt. The fact that to a large degree the trickster's skill lies in the use and abuse of signs of various types has not been explored, except in Dewald's important study of significant objects in the *Histories*, which makes the connection between the trickster figure and the ability to read objects.[1] Bencsik groups together instances of oath-breaking (55–58), the deceptive use of clothing (46–49), and secret messages (59–62), but does not consider as a com-

[1] 1993: 59 n. 8. She speaks in several places of the "manipulation of significant objects" by figures in the *Histories* (59, 63–65, 67, 70).

mon denominator among them the use and abuse of signs. Lateiner, though sensitive in previous work to semiotic aspects in the *Histories* (cf. Lateiner 1987 on non-verbal communication and the useful appendices there), does not consider the manipulation of signs as a factor in his article on deceptions (1990). The present study looks beyond the field of significant objects to other sign systems, explores the means of manipulation in more detail, and comes to different conclusions about the role of the manipulation of signs in the *Histories*.

Of the 69 instances of trickery I have identified in the *Histories*, 33 involve a manipulation of signs (see Appendix 1). By the latter expression I mean an attempt to interfere with or hijack the process of signification, and, in so doing, to achieve a result favorable to one's own ends. Trickery will naturally often involve the use of signs, but this may be only incidental to the essence of the trick, for example when persuasive or lying speech is used, such as when Kleomenes tricks the Argives he has surrounded in a wood into coming out of hiding. He calls each man by name, claiming he has received ransom for him; when the man emerges, he is killed (6.79.1–2). Contrast this instance of trickery with one that immediately precedes it in Herodotos' narrative, where the Argives penetrate the Spartan system of military signals, so that they are able to anticipate Spartan actions (6.77.3). Once the Spartans find this out, however, they change their code, confound their enemy, and kill a large number of them (6.78.1–2). Here the trick consists precisely in manipulating the system of signs.

In what follows I explore how signs are manipulated and how Herodotos presents the manipulators. I will suggest that Herodotos' interest in and admiration of these manipulators of signs is connected with his narrative persona as a master presenter and interpreter of signs, and that this is part of his distinctive and authoritative "voiceprint." There has been a tendency in recent scholarship to see in Herodotos an overly pessimistic, postmodern figure who broods over the indeterminacy of meaning and the myriad possibilities for disconnection between signifier and signified.[2] A re-appreciation of instances of interpretation, taking into account the status of the interpreter (professional vs. lay interpreter, Greek vs. non-Greek) as well as the type of

[2] Cf., e.g., Lateiner 1987: 100 on the limitations of human knowledge and ability in the *Histories* when it comes to signs and symbols, and Dewald 1993: 63–64 on the problems faced by figures in the *Histories* in the use and abuse of significant objects; both authors are cited below. Braund stresses the "problematics of reciprocity" and cross-cultural communication in the work (169, 172), yet is careful (177) to emphasize that the *Histories* equally show the possibility of overcoming these difficulties, in particular with the help of Herodotos himself. On Herodotos as master reader of signs see below.

sign communication (e.g., oracle, dream, portent) suggests that Herodotos celebrates the triumph of human ingenuity (including his own) in both the use and abuse of signs.

The model of the sign used here is a triadic one, made up of *signifier* or *sign vehicle* (e.g., a word, object, or gesture), *signified* (the meaning or sense conveyed by this word, object, or gesture), and *referent* (what the signified ultimately refers to).[3] The signifier and signified together make up a unit, which may be termed the sign, but by common convention "sign" is also used of the signifier alone. What constitutes a sign? The definition I use is a broad one: anything, whether object, sound, action, or event, capable of standing for something in some respect. Anything can be a sign, but, as the semiotician Charles Peirce put it, "nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign."[4]

Sign systems in Herodotos include portents, dreams, oracles, other forms of *mantikê*, *ainos* and ainetic speech, names and naming, action, ritual and gesture as signs, significant objects. In addition to terms such as τέρας, φήμη, κληδών, οἰωνός, φάσμα (all referring to portents), μαντήϊον, θεοπρόπιον, χρησμός, λόγιον (of oracles)[5] used to refer to specific kinds of signs, Herodotos also uses more general terms for the sign, including σημήϊον and ἐπίσημον, σύμβολον and συμβόλαιον, τεκμήριον and μαρτύριον. More frequently, however, Herodotos uses verbal forms referring to various stages in the process of signification (see Appendix 2 for the vocabulary of signs).[6]

Signification is the process of communication during which a sender first encodes a message by combining signified with signifier and then transmits the resulting sign or collection of signs. The recipient decodes the communication, reading the sign against a code and thus determining the message.[7] According to this model, the process of signification falls into two halves: the production, encoding, and transmission of signs on the one hand, and their

[3] Thus, for example, in an oracle given to the Athenians they are told to call upon their brother-in-law for help (7.189.1). The *signifier* here is the word "brother-in-law," what is *signified* by this arrangement of phonemes is "brother of one's sister," but the task faced by the Athenians is to find out the *referent*, namely, which brother-in-law is meant. The terms *signifier* and *signified* go back to Saussure's distinction between *signifiant* and *signifié*, which resembles the Stoic distinction between τὸ σημαῖνον and τὸ σημαινόμενον (S. E. *M*. 8.11–12); on ancient theories of the sign see Manetti. On the triad see Nöth 89–91.

[4] As quoted by Nöth 42.

[5] For distinctions among these terms as used by Herodotos see Lévy 357–61.

[6] E.g., there are some 70 instances of σημαίνω, but only 9 of σημήϊον.

[7] The model outlined here and the terms "encode," "decode," "message," and "code" follow the standard analysis of the process of signification by the so-called Prague school of linguistics and its leading exponent, Roman Jakobson.

reception and decoding on the other. Herodotos makes use of a vocabulary of sign transmission and reception that corresponds well to this model. The verb σημαίνω, for example, is employed extensively to refer to the encoding and transmission of signs of various types. Another verb used in the context of sign transmission is φράζω. For the process of the reception, decoding, and interpretation of signs, the following verbs are used: συμβάλλομαι, συνίημι, συλλαμβάνω, ἐννοέω and νόῳ λαμβάνω/ἔχω, εἰκάζω, φράζομαι, τεκμαίρομαι.

At each step in this chain of communication there are opportunities for interference and manipulation, and the Herodotean manipulators of signs examined in this paper make full use of these moments. For this reason I have chosen the process of signification as a framework to structure my investigation. The majority of these Herodotean manipulators take advantage of the process of encoding and transmission, while there are by my reckoning only five instances where sign manipulation takes place during the process of reception and decoding. The instances I discuss below illustrate particular types of sign manipulation and are drawn from the various sign systems found in the *Histories*.

1. ENCODING AND TRANSMISSION

1.1 Oracles

I begin with the process of encoding and transmitting signs and, in particular, the manipulation of signs through appropriation of the means of sign production. This type of manipulation involves simply seizing the source of sign transmission and making it produce signs favorable to one's own objectives. It is a tactic (characterized as a scheme or μηχανή at 5.90.1 and 6.123.1) used by Kleisthenes and the Alkmeonidai, who bribe the Pythia so that she will produce oracular responses enjoining the Spartans to liberate Athens and expel the Peisistratidai (5.63.1). For the Spartans, the Pythia simply relays the words of the god and they never suspect that she may transmit the words of men. Their respect for the oracle is so strong that it overcomes their ties to the Peisistratidai, their ξεῖνοι. As Herodotos puts it, "they considered the affairs of the god of more importance (πρεσβύτερα) than those of men" (5.63.2), which may be read as a comment either on Spartan piety or on their credulity. The Spartans are presented by Herodotos as not particularly talented in the field of sign interpretation, although individuals among them such as Likhas (1.67.2–1.68.6) and Kleomenes and his daughter Gorgo (7.239.2–4, discussed below) do demonstrate ability in this area.

The commander of the second Spartan campaign against the Peisistratidai is in fact Kleomenes, who resorts to precisely the same kind of manipulation when trying to depose Demaratos from the other kingship. Through the services of Kobon, an influential citizen of Delphi, he corrupts the Pythia, who, when doubt is thrown on Demaratos' legitimacy and the oracle is approached to resolve the issue, gives the reply that Demaratos is not the son of Ariston (6.66.1–3).

The Alkmeonidai and Kleomenes achieve their ends by seizing control of the source of signs in the form of the Pythia, but there are other ways of manipulating oracular signs at their source.[8] Onomakritos, arranger (διαθέτης) of the oracles of Musaios and χρησμολόγος,[9] inserts a spurious oracle into the collection but is caught in the act (7.6.3). While the Alkmeonidai and Kleomenes must convince the Pythia to produce the message they need, Onomakritos needs no intermediary and as poet-performer can himself clothe the message in its appropriate form.[10] His patrons, the Peisistratidai, who are themselves potential manipulators (5.90.2, 5.93.2), expel him from the city, since he has usurped their control.

Onomakritos is equally adept at manipulation by means of the selective transmission of oracles. As "arranger" he legitimately practices selection in admitting or rejecting oracles, but when brought to the court of Xerxes by the Peisitratidai, who have meanwhile been expelled from Athens themselves, he illegitimately engages in selective transmission of *parts* of an oracle, suppressing predictions unfavorable to the Persians and relating only those parts favorable to their endeavors, for example, "'that the Hellespont would be yoked

[8] Cf. the *theôros* (official sacred messenger) in Theognis 805–10, who must be straighter than a carpenter's rule and not add anything (807 οὐτέ τι ... προσθείς) to what the Pythia indicates (808 σημήνῃ). Discussion by Nagy 1990b: 165–66 and Dillery.

[9] There is a tendency to translate χρησμολόγος as "oracle-monger," a word with largely negative connotations, but the Greek word does not necessarily imply corrupt practices and charlatanry, despite the mercenary χρησμολόγοι of Aristophanes' *Peace* and *Birds*: see Bowden. On the role and status of the χρησμολόγος see further Pritchett 3.318–21, Smith, Shapiro, Garland 82–85, and Dillery.

[10] Cf. Nagy 1990b: 170 and Dillery on this passage. The former thinks it likely that Onomakritos was caught by one Lasos of Hermione while reciting the spurious oracle in the midst of a performance rather than while writing it into the collection (cf. Dillery's interpretation of the term *diathetês*). Following Privitera 48 and Nagy 1990b: 172–73, Dillery envisages the occasion as a competition between the two. He points out that there is a tradition (Athenaios 8.338b–c, Hesykhios s.v. λασίσματα) that presents Lasos as a well-known expert in manipulating language, and that he is thus a worthy opponent for Onomakritos.

by a Persian,' explaining [this as] his invasion" (7.6.4). Onomakritos' manipulation lies not in the interpretation of words but rather in his control of them: by acting as a secondary transmitter with a filter that allows through the positive but not the negative, he produces a reaction in the King in favor of invasion, which is in the interests of Onomakritos' masters, the Peisistratidai, and ultimately his own.

1.2 Dareios and the Horse's Whinny

The device of a sign artificially created and, like Onomakritos' forged oracle, designed to be indistinguishable from a sign produced according to legitimate and recognized means is also seen in the account of Dareios' rise to the throne. The seven Persian conspirators agree amongst themselves to leave the selection of a king from their number to the random appearance of a sign: the one whose horse is the first to whinny at dawn will be king (3.84.3). Dareios, with the help of his cunning groom Oibares (described as ἀνὴρ σοφός, 3.85.1), produces this sign artificially.[11] During the night, Oibares brings Dareios' stallion's favorite mare near him and eventually allows him to mount her in the place where the test is to happen in the morning (3.85.3). At dawn, when the horses are led forth to this place, Dareios' horse catches a trace of the mare's scent and whinnies (3.86.1). As an ironic contrast to this wholly manipulated sign comes a sign impossible to produce by human means (3.86.2): ἅμα δὲ τῷ ἵππῳ τοῦτο ποιήσαντι ἀστραπὴ ἐξ αἰθρίης καὶ βροντὴ ἐγένετο, "As soon as the horse did this, there was a lightning flash from a clear sky and a clap of thunder." It is read by the other Persian nobles as a confirmation and fulfillment (ἐτελέωσέ μιν) of the first sign.

Herodotos comments that the second sign followed upon the first "as if by some kind of arrangement" (ὥσπερ ἐκ συνθέτου τευ), and the word σύνθετος itself mirrors the verb συντίθεμαι, used to describe the agreement of the Persian nobles about the sign of the whinnying horse (3.86.1 συνεθήκαντο). The idea of agreement and arrangement suggests also the notion of convention as the basis of the link behind signifier and signified and what determines the meaning of a sign. Dareios' success and the fact that the heavens seem to wink at his deception show that the circumstances of the sign's production do not matter, merely the fact of its appearance. What is artificially produced may so resemble the natural as to be indistinguishable from it.[12]

[11] Herodotos' narrative here is full of the vocabulary of trickery: see Appendix 1 ad loc.

[12] Harrison 99 groups this passage with 7.43.1 (thunder as Xerxes approaches Troy) and 8.64 (earthquake heralding beginning of battle at Salamis): "The implication of some significance to natural phenomena is often no more than a matter of narrative timing."

It has been suggested on the basis of Vedic parallels that an actual (though unattested) Iranian kingship ritual could lie behind the Herodotean account.[13] The parallels are particularly instructive in that a key part of these rituals is the carefully stage-managed production of what is "supposed" to be a naturally occurring sign. In the ritual called the *aśvamedha*, designed to renew the king's power, a horse is let loose and left to roam on its own, returning after a year, after which time it is sacrificed. But the horse is carefully observed the whole time and made to return, so that the same fiction of an arbitrarily arising sign is present.[14] The *vājapeya* ritual also involves horses, but this time in a chariot race in which the king competes against competitors from other social classes and always wins.[15] In part of the *rājasūya* ritual, the consecration of the king is confirmed by a particular throw of dice in a game played by the king and certain of his subjects. Again, we have here the production of what appears to be a sign impossible for humans to control and thus presumably indicative of the will of the gods. But the game is rigged, and the king who throws the dice always throws the winning combination and is confirmed as true king.[16] Herodotos may have been reacting to a similar combination of the arbitrary and manipulated in Persian kingship ritual, reflected in the myth of Dareios' ascent to the throne.

1.3 Oaths

Dareios finds a way to preserve the outward integrity of the sign, and this concern for the formality of the sign system even while subverting it, thus enabling the manipulator to obtain his own aims, is especially seen in an important category of verbal signs in the *Histories*, namely, oaths. By the very utterance of certain words framed in a certain format a binding effect is produced on both those who swear and those who receive the oath.[17] The oath-

[13] Most recently Dumézil on the Vedic rituals of the *vājapeya* and *aśvamedha* as parallels. Cook 54–55 collects other suggestions about possible ritual backgrounds.

[14] Dumézil does not make this point about arbitrarily occurring signs. He does however draw attention to the importance of neighing and whinnying in the Vedic ritual (144–45), which is a vital component in the Herodotean story.

[15] See Dumézil 146–47, who describes it as a "course truquée."

[16] I owe this observation about the manipulation of the arbitrarily occurring sign of the dice game to an unpublished paper by Stephanie Jamison. The "dice" are in fact identical nuts from the *vibhitaka* tree (or imitations thereof). The aim appears to be to produce a throw containing a certain number of nuts divisible by the number four. See Heesterman 143–57, who collects and compares the relevant Vedic texts.

[17] See later discussion of the speech acts in 3.128.2–5. Metaphors of binding and possession in the context of oaths appear at 1.29.2 (ὁρκίοισι ... κατείχοντο) and 3.19.2 (ὁρκίοισι ... ἐνδεδέσθαι).

making may be accompanied by tangible and physical signs: cutting of the body, for example, as described by Herodotos in the ethnographic chapters of his work.[18] But, as Burkert 170 reminds us, the institution of the oath is inevitably accompanied by that of the false oath.

The Persian general Amasis, after nine months of besieging the city of Barke in Libya, takes the city by the simple stratagem of an oath. Herodotos introduces his account with an expression that invariably acts as a sign to the audience that a manipulation is about to occur—what Bencsik 11 terms a *Signalsatz*—"he contrives the following" (4.201.1 μηχανᾶται τοιάδε).[19] Amasis invites the inhabitants of Barke to swear to an agreement that they will resume paying tribute to the King and that, for their part, the Persians will not visit them with any consequences for their previous disobedience (4.201.2). As with many oaths, the verbal signs of this oath are combined with a visual symbol to ensure irreversibility: the conditions agreed to will be binding "as long as this earth is as it is" (4.201.2 ἔστ᾽ ἂν ἡ γῆ αὕτη οὕτως ἔχῃ).[20] The seeming impossibility of the ground under their feet ever vanishing acts as a guarantee of the oath, and the people of Barke agree to the terms. But, unknown to them, they are standing only on a thin layer of earth, since Amasis has had a ditch dug and then covered with boards and soil to simulate the appearance of earth (4.201.1). Once the oath is sworn and the city gates have been opened, Amasis quite literally removes the oath's foundation by pulling up the boards and revealing the gaping hole over which they have been standing, then orders his soldiers to seize the city (4.201.3).[21] Through his physical manipulation of the earth Amasis thus manipulates the sign system by which the oath is constituted by removing the agreed-upon symbol of the oath's validity and artificially creating conditions that render it inapplicable.

[18] 1.74.6 (the Lydians and Medes cut their arms to the quick and lick each other's blood), 3.8.1 (Arabs), 4.70 (Scythians). Cf. the expression ὅρκιον τάμνειν (4.70 (middle), 4.201.2, 4.201.3, 7.132.2, 9.26.4). On expressions of binding and cutting and connections with Near Eastern rituals see Faraone, esp. 76, and Knippschild, index s.v. *Blutsbruderschaft*.

[19] See Appendix 1 for examples of μηχανάομαι used in connection with tricksters.

[20] On touching the earth while swearing an oath see Knippschild 85.

[21] Herodotos mirrors the removal of the foundation by a play on words: he says that Amasis and his men break up the planking "in order that their oath might remain firm" (4.201.3 ἵνα ἐμπεδορκέοιεν). The irony of keeping an oath "on steady ground" (ἔμπεδος = ἐν πέδῳ) by *removing* the ground on which it was sworn is surely intended by Herodotos, and draws attention to his own role as a talented shaper and presenter of signs. A similar play on ἔμπεδος in the context of signs is already present at *Od.* 23.202–4, where Odysseus' bed is described as ἔμπεδον; the σήματα Odysseus provided Penelope were likewise ἔμπεδα (22.205–6).

The oath extracted by the Cretan ruler Etearkhos from Themison (4.154.2–4) demonstrates two kinds of manipulation, one involving manipulation by means of oath, the other manipulation of the oath itself. Etearkhos, hard pressed by his "all-scheming" (4.154.2 πᾶν ... μηχανωμένη) second wife to get rid of his daughter, tricks a visiting merchant from Thera, Themison, into agreeing to throw her into the sea (4.154.4). To do so he uses the device of the open-ended oath, in which one party gets the other to swear to do whatever he requests him to do (4.154.3), revealing the request only after the oath is sworn. The scheme is seen elsewhere in the *Histories* (further examples below), but only here does the deceived respond with a deception of his own. Once Themison realizes that he has sworn to drown Etearkhos' daughter, he protests and dissolves his guest-friendship with Etearkhos, but nevertheless takes her on board his ship, sails out to sea, and throws her into the water—after having tied a rope about her middle. The girl is submerged and then hoisted back on board. In this way Themison replies to Etearkhos' manipulation with a counter-manipulation, fulfilling the literal terms of the oath (καταποντῶσαι "submerge in the sea"), if not Etearkhos' intention.

The open-ended oath is also used by the Spartan king Ariston, who obtains his friend's wife thereby. Herodotos introduces his account with the usual vocabulary of trickery and deceit (6.62.1–2):

> μηχανᾶται δὴ τοιάδε· αὐτός τε τῷ ἑταίρῳ, τοῦ ἦν ἡ γυνὴ αὕτη, ὑποδέκεται δωτίνην δώσειν τῶν ἑωυτοῦ πάντων ἕν, τὸ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνος ἕληται, καὶ τὸν ἑταῖρον ἑωυτῷ ἐκέλευε ὡσαύτως τὴν ὁμοίην διδόναι ... ἀναγκαζόμενος μέντοι τῷ τε ὅρκῳ καὶ τῆς ἀπάτης τῇ παραγωγῇ ἀπιεῖ ἀπάγεσθαι.
>
> [Ariston] contrived the following: he undertook to give his companion, who was the husband of this woman, any one item of his entire property he chose as a gift, and he bade his companion grant precisely the same to him ... [The companion], forced however by his oath and by the misleading deception, went off to fetch [his wife].

In another case involving erotic passion (ἔρως), invariably a destructive emotion in the *Histories*, the open-ended oath figures not just once but twice. Xerxes promises his mistress, Artaynte, any gift she likes. She asks for the multicolored cloak he is wearing (his wife's gift), and though Xerxes tries to wriggle out of the request (9.109.3), he is forced to give her the cloak. His wife's suspicions of his infidelity are confirmed when she sees Artaynte wearing the cloak. Amestris is the master manipulator of signs in this scene: her weaving of the variegated cloak (9.109.1) seems to go hand in hand with her cunning in weaving a plan in which to ensnare her husband and destroy her rival. The cloak

itself becomes invested with meaning when it acts as a sign of Xerxes' betrayal. It is Amestris who makes use of the second open-ended promise in this story as a manipulative device to extract from Xerxes an undertaking to send her the wife of Masistes (and mother of Artaynte), whom she regards as her true rival (9.110.1). Herodotos gives the device a particularly Persian flavor by explaining that this occurred at the King's birthday feast, an occasion on which Persian *nomos* demands that the King grant any favor asked of him (9.110.2–111.1). Her use of signs does not end here: she has the wife of Masistes horribly mutilated, slicing off her breasts, nose, ears, and lips, and cutting out her tongue (9.112).

1.4 Bodies

Mutilation of the body may be regarded as a semiotic act, especially in a Persian setting, where the mutilations act as a kind of text of the victims' offences against the King.[22] Peisistratos' first attempt to seize power is based on the semiotic potential of mutilation. In order to obtain a bodyguard from the *dêmos*, Peisistratos inflicts wounds on himself (and his mules), then runs into the *agora* claiming that his enemies have tried to kill him (1.59.4). The scheme is successful: with the armed men voted him by the *dêmos* he seizes the acropolis and becomes ruler of Athens. Peisistratos' body becomes in effect a text, with the wounds as bearers of meaning that the gullible Athenian populace is ready to interpret at Peisistratos' prompting as signs of his mistreatment at the hands of his enemies. As with Dareios' horse-whinnying trick, Peisistratos' ruse succeeds because the possibility that such a sign may have been produced artificially does not occur to the recipient.[23]

The most extreme manifestation of this is the tactic of the Persian Zopyros, who is so determined to win the honor of being the captor of Babylon that he mutilates himself, slicing off his nose and ears, in order that the Babylonians believe he is a genuine defector from the Persian side and admit him into the city, where he will be able to sabotage the Babylonians' defenses (3.154.2). Zopyros' self-inflicted mutilations are read against a specifically Persian code, in which wrongdoers and those who have offended against the King are in-

[22] Other instances of the Persian use of the human body as signifier: 3.69.3–6 (the earlessness of the false Smerdis, the result of an earlier transgression against the King, tips Otanes off), 5.25.1–2 (Kambyses has judge's throne upholstered with the skin of Sesamnes to act as a reminder to the latter's son, Otanes, of his father's transgressions and punishment), 7.39.3 (two halves of bisected body of Pythios' son act as a warning sign to the Persian army as they march between them).

[23] As with Dareios, here too luck is combined with cunning: cf. the favorable oracle that Peisistratos receives through Amphilytos and that he interprets and acts on immediately; see Lavelle.

scribed with indelible signs, ever-present and ever-speaking tokens of their crimes.[24] Zopyros' ability at manipulating signs goes hand in hand with an ability to recognize them, since the realization that Babylon is susceptible to capture is suggested to him by a combination of signs (3.153.1–2). The first sign comes in the form of a φήμη, a chance utterance pronounced by a Babylonian soldier and intended as a taunt ("What are you sitting here for, Persians? Why don't you go home? You'll capture us when mules give birth!" 3.151.2), but one that Zopyros subsequently interprets as having a divinely inspired meaning (3.153.2 σύν ... θεῷ). The second sign comes in the form of a *teras*: a mule does in fact give birth some months later.[25] Zopyros is able to read the two signs against each other, and his combined reading is a secret weapon that he guards jealously (3.153.1):

> ὡς δέ οἱ ἐξηγγέλθη καὶ ὑπὸ ἀπιστίης αὐτὸς ὁ Ζώπυρος εἶδε τὸ βρέφος, ἀπείπας τοῖσι ἰδοῦσι μηδενὶ φράζειν τὸ γεγονὸς ἐβουλεύετο.
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> After it had been reported to [Zopyros] and he, not believing it, had seen the offspring for himself, he forbade those who had seen it to report the event to anyone and began to think up a plan.

1.5 Clothing

Like the body, that which surrounds the body, clothing, may also act as a signifier, providing information about ethnicity, status, sex, and identity, as is evident from Herodotos' ethnographic excursuses in which dress is an important category in describing a people.[26] As a marker and bearer of signs, clothing may be made to convey a deceptive message. Peisistratos makes use of it when he installs himself as tyrant for a second time with the help of Megakles. He finds a particularly tall and striking village girl named Phye, dresses her up in the panoply of the goddess Athena, places her on a chariot,

[24] Dareios in the Behistun inscription (§32) describes this punishment being given to the rebel Fravartiß, who is then displayed so that all the people may see him. The conventional meaning of these signs within the Persian penal system is precisely what Otanes and his daughter rely on in determining the identity of the false Smerdis. When Otanes' daughter discovers that the pseudo-Smerdis has no ears, this is testimony to a previous offence against the King and proves that he is not Smerdis, the brother of Kambyses (3.69). Xenophon (*Anab*. 1.9.13) describes this system of punishment being used by Kyros the Younger.

[25] Bencsik 39 comments that the appearance of a *teras* in connection with a σοφὸς ἀνήρ is common in the *Histories*: 1.59.1 (Peisistratos), 3.76.3 and 3.86.2 (Dareios), 2.162.1 (Amasis), 8.64.2 (Themistokles). For the double portent, which has a Homeric pedigree, see above on Dareios' scheme.

[26] E.g., 1.135.1, 1.202.3, 2.37.3, 4.78.4, 4.106, 4.111.1, 4.168.1, 4.189–90.

and then sends messengers ahead to announce that the goddess herself is bringing Peisistratos back from exile (1.60.4). To the vast discredit of the Athenians, who pride themselves on being first among Greeks in intelligence, the scheme actually works (1.60.3):

> μηχανῶνται δὴ ἐπὶ τῇ κατόδῳ πρῆγμα εὐηθέστατον, ὡς ἐγὼ εὑρίσκω, μακρῷ (ἐπεί γε ἀπεκρίθη ἐκ παλαιτέρου τοῦ βαρβάρου ἔθνεος τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐὸν καὶ δεξιώτερον καὶ εὐηθίης ἠλιθίου ἀπηλλαγμένον μᾶλλον), εἰ καὶ τότε γε οὗτοι ἐν Ἀθηναίοισι τοῖσι πρώτοισι λεγομένοισι εἶναι Ἑλλήνων σοφίην μηχανῶνται τοιάδε.
>
> For Peisistratos' return from exile [Peisistratos and Megakles] engineered by far the most simpleminded scheme, as I find (since long ago Greeks have been set apart from the barbarians in terms of being cleverer and more removed from foolish simplemindedness), if they were then able to contrive such a scheme amongst the Athenians, reputed to be first among the Greeks in *sophiê*.

The episode and Herodotos' comments on it illustrate an important feature of Greek descriptions of trickery and the manipulation of signs, namely, that the cleverness of the scheme reflects not only on the perpetrator but equally on those it is designed to deceive.

As Pratt 1993: 60 puts it:

> Because of the close association of lying and deceiving with a certain kind of intelligence, the failure to recognize a lie or the succumbing to an act of deception may be seen as failure of intelligence.

Clothing as conveyor of information about identity and gender plays a role in two other passages in the *Histories*.[27] In one, the wives of the Minyai, a people descended from the Argonauts and Lemnian women and now settled in Sparta, use dress to free their husbands from prison. While on a prison visit to their husbands, the wives swap clothes with their husbands. Thanks to this δόλος the husbands are able to escape by assuming a female identity (4.146.2–4). The same technique is used by Alexandros, son of the Macedonian ruler Amyntes, but in a deadly fashion. In order to prevent his Persian guests from imposing themselves sexually on the Macedonian women whom they have insisted be present at the symposion, Alexandros removes the women on the pretext that they must have a bath before proceeding any further, and then

[27] Cf. also 3.1.3 (daughter of Apries dressed to look like daughter of Amasis in order to fool Kambyses), 7.15.3 (Artabanos wears Xerxes' clothing in order that the same dream appear to him). Lateiner 1990: 233 mentions as an instance of deception by dress 8.24–25, where Xerxes attempts to pass off 4000 of his own dead at Thermopylai as Spartans, though Herodotos does not talk of the use of clothing in this deception.

secretly dresses the same number of smooth-skinned Macedonian men in feminine attire and sends them into the dining room (5.20). When the Persians begin to paw them, they draw out daggers and kill them. The manipulation of these visual signs is accompanied by a manipulation of verbal signs, since when Alexandros invites the Persians to enjoy the women, he uses language that works on two different levels. He tells them that the Macedonians are lavishing their mothers and sisters upon them "so that you may know completely that you are being honored by us with the things that you deserve" (ὡς παντελέως μάθητε τιμώμενοι πρὸς ἡμέων τῶν πέρ ἐστε ἄξιοι) and asks them to "tell the King who sent you that a Greek, ruler of the Macedonians, entertained you well with both food and bed" (5.20.4). The phrase "the things you deserve" amounts to a code that works on two planes: a surface level, on which the words are a conventional expression of flattery and subjection, and a hidden, deeper level, on which the phrase is a sinister forewarning of the punishment Alexandros is about to inflict on them for their insulting behavior.

1.6 Coded Utterances

Manipulation by coded utterance is used by the Persian Artayktes. Appointed commander of the Hellespontine region by Xerxes, he decides to appropriate the sanctuary of the hero Protesilaos, the first Greek casualty in the Trojan war, as well as the considerable property attached to it. He does so by a request to Xerxes, framed in such a way as to establish a claim to the sanctuary and its contents (9.116.3):

> δέσποτα, ἔστι οἶκος ἀνδρὸς Ἕλληνος ἐνθαῦτα, ὃς ἐπὶ γῆν τὴν σὴν στρατευσάμενος δίκης κυρήσας ἀπέθανε. τούτου μοι δὸς τὸν οἶκον, ἵνα καί τις μάθῃ ἐπὶ γῆν τὴν σὴν μὴ στρατεύεσθαι.
>
> "Master, there is a house of a Greek here who marched against your land, got his due, and died. Grant me this man's house, so that in the future people may learn not to invade your land."

Artayktes' words, taken on a surface level, appear to Xerxes as a reasonable request, but read on another level they reveal what Artayktes is really asking for. "House" (οἶκος) has two referents, one unmarked ("house") and one marked ("house" in the sense of *hêrôon*), and, as Herodotos points out, Artayktes' use of the term "your land" turns on the fact that the Persians regard all of Asia as the King's property (9.116.3).[28] The coded utterance is in

[28] For a hero's sanctuary as dwelling: cf., e.g., Oidipous' coded description of himself as a οἰκητήρ "inhabitant" (S. *OC* 627) of the place where his tomb will eventually be.

ainetic form, a variety of speech that uses the ability of words to function on two levels, a surface level and a deeper level that is concealed yet open to those with the necessary *noos* to decode them.[29] The message of the *ainos* is generally decoded by those whom it is designed to advise, help, warn, or admonish. Artayktes' use of this kind of encoding, however, is motivated by the desire for personal profit.

1.7 Concealment of Signs

Artayktes' ainetic speech is a cloaking device in which a deeper meaning is overlaid by a surface meaning. The cover is provided by the sign itself in that the signifier (the word οἶκος, "house") has two meanings, one of which, the signified, conceals the other, the referent. The concealment of signs may also be achieved by physical means (steganography), a technique that does not rely on the sign's own polysemic ability but merely on its removal from the human gaze. Herodotos presents three clever variations on this principle, all involving the concealment of written signs from the watchful eyes of Median and Persian guardians of the royal roads, who will not allow a message through (σημῆναι, 5.35.3; 7.239.3).

Harpagos, who is plotting to depose the Median ruler Astyages and put Kyros the Persian on the throne, gets his message through in an ingenious fashion (1.123.4):

> ὁ δὲ ἐπιτεχνᾶται τοιόνδε. λαγὸν μηχανησάμενος καὶ ἀνασχίσας τούτου τὴν γαστέρα καὶ οὐδὲν ἀποτίλας, ὡς δὲ εἶχε, οὕτω ἐσέθηκε βυβλίον, γράψας τά οἱ ἐδόκεε.[30]
>
> He contrived the following: he prepared a hare and made a slit in its belly, and without pulling any of its fur off, but [leaving it] just as it was, he inserted into it a letter, having written down what he wanted to say.

Discussion of Herodotean passage in Nagy 1990b: 268–69. On the hero's "possession" of his tomb and use of terms κατέχειν ("possess") and ἔχειν ("hold") see Henrichs 1993: 175. Henrichs 1976: 278 (with references) discusses οἶκος in the sense of temple.

[29] Cf. Nagy's (1990b: 148) definition of the *ainos* as "... a code that carries the right message for those who are qualified and the wrong message or messages for those who are unqualified" and in particular 1990b: 215–338 for his theory that Herodotos' work is the prose counterpart to the *ainos* of the Pindaric epinicians. Other definitions of *ainos* in van Dijk 78–82. See also Munson 2001: 5–8, 13, 50, 251–54, 265, 271.

[30] Powell (*Lexicon to Herodotus*) maintains that here and at 1.94.6 μηχανάομαι means simply "procure," but the notion of resourcefulness and craft must still surely be present.

The hare becomes a literal bearer of signs, proceeding without suspicion owing to its status as a gift-object.[31] (Harpagos disguises his messenger as a huntsman, giving him nets for the sake of verisimilitude: 1.123.4.) The hare thus hides the message it carries, both physically and in the sense that its external appearance as a gift masks its actual function.[32]

In a second passage, Histiaios uses a human as sign-bearer to convey his secret message to Aristagoras: a slave becomes the text when Histiaios tattoos the message onto his shaven head and dispatches him once his hair covers the letters (5.35.3).

Finally, Demaratos, deprived of his right to the Spartan kingship and now a member of Xerxes' entourage, uses perhaps the ultimate method of concealment, a sign-bearing surface that bears no signs. He sends a message to his compatriots in Sparta warning them of the imminent Persian invasion and, in order to avoid its interception by Persian spies, devises the scheme (ὁ δὲ μηχανᾶται τοιάδε) of writing not on the wax of a writing tablet but directly on the wood, which he then covers with wax (7.239.3). The tablet thus presents the appearance of a *tabula rasa* and reaches its destination unhindered. But there remains the crucial step of detection and decoding by the recipient. Harpagos (1.123.4) and Histiaios (5.35.1) give instructions to their respective messengers so that the recipient will know where to look for the message, but this is not the case with Demaratos' dispatch. As I will suggest below, this is for reasons other than concern about the safe passage of the message. When the Spartans receive the tablet, they see only an empty surface, and, as Herodotos says, they are unable to "put it together" (7.239.4 οὐκ εἶχον συμβαλέσθαι).[33] They can find no signifier to join together with any signified, and are rescued from their *aporia* only by Gorgo, daughter of Kleomenes, who finds meaning in the absence of signs and interprets the lack of signs as a kind of sign itself (7.239.4[34]):

> ... Γοργὼ ὑπέθετο ἐπιφρασθεῖσα αὐτή, τὸν κηρὸν ἐκκνᾶν κελεύουσα, καὶ εὑρήσειν σφέας γράμματα ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ.

[31] For other hares as sign-bearers see 4.134.1–2 and 7.57.1.

[32] For gifts as signifiers cf. 3.20–23.4 (gifts of Kambyses to Long-lived Ethiopians), 3.21.3 (gift of bow from Ethiopian king to Kambyses), 3.130.4 (gift of golden fetters from Dareios to Demokedes), 4.162.4–5 (gift of golden spindle and distaff from Euelthon to Pheretime), 4.131.1 (Scythian "gifts" to Dareios), 5.17–21, 5.73.2–3, 6.48–49, 6.94.1, 7.32, 7.131, 7.133.1, 7.163.2, 7.233.1 (gift to Persians of earth and water).

[33] On συμβάλλεσθαι in contexts of sign decoding see Appendix 2.

[34] The use of ἐπιφράζομαι as a verb of decoding is also seen at 4.200.2 (blacksmith of Barke detects siege-tunnels), discussed below.

> ... Gorgo herself came up with a suggestion after figuring it out, telling them to rub off the wax and they would find the letters on the wooden surface.

The issue is to *find* the signifier in the first place.[35] Similarly, in the episode of Thrasyboulos' famous non-verbal message to Periandros in which he strolls through a field of wheat cutting down those stalks that project above the others, the messenger does not recognize that this constitutes a message (5.92.ζ.1–3), but Periandros using his *noos* (5.92.η.1 νόῳ σχών) correctly realizes that the actions function as signifiers and decodes the message.[36] As was observed earlier about the manipulator and his audience, the manipulation reflects equally on the competency of those who are manipulated. Herodotos presents us with two possible motives behind Demaratos' communication, either good will (εὐνοίῃ) or *Schadenfreude*, a sense of pleasure (καταχαίρων) at the Spartans' misfortune (7.239.2). There is after all good reason for Demaratos to dislike the Spartans, since they have wrongfully deprived him of his kingship. Viewed in this light, Demaratos' μηχανή is more than a method of getting his message past the Persians: it is a means to mock and test the Spartans, an additional barb to the already disturbing contents of his message. The Spartans come very close to failure and are saved only by the intervention of a talented individual who is able to match Demaratos' skill in encoding with her skill in decoding.[37]

1.8 Written Signs

Writing as a means of deception is illustrated by Herodotos' account of Bagaios, the Persian who kills the troublesome governor Oroites on Dareios' behalf. The theme of concealment is present here again, but in a different sense from that in the examples considered above, in which writing is concealed. In the present instance, (unconcealed) writing itself forms part of the plan of concealment. Dareios wants the capture or killing of Oroites to be carried out not by brute force (*biê*) but by intelligence (*sophiê*, 3.127.2), and Bagaios undertakes to do the job on these terms. His method is to test the loyalty of Oroites' bodyguards to the King through a series of letters purporting to be from the King. The bodyguards react to two types of signs: firstly, the letters themselves, physical objects sealed with the King' *sphrêgis*, act as tokens of the

[35] Cf. the blank shield of Amphiaraos in Aiskhylos' *Seven against Thebes*, which acts as a sign though it bears no actual *sêma*. See Steiner 56, Zeitlin 115.

[36] See Appendix 2 on *noos* and sign interpretation.

[37] *Pace* Steiner 151, the pattern observable here is one in which signs ensure that the message is decoded by a worthy audience.

King's presence, so that the bodyguards pay them the devotion (σεβομένους) they pay to the King himself, and, secondly, the contents of the letters (τὰ λεγόμενα) are signs purporting to convey the King's voice and will, which produce even more reverence in the bodyguards (3.128.4).

Encouraged by this reaction, Bagaios has another letter read out, which orders them to cease protecting Oroites, and when they throw down their spears, he produces a final letter in which the King orders them to kill Oroites (3.128.5). Once again, the reaction is instantaneous, and the bodyguards promptly draw their Persian daggers and kill the very person it is their job to protect. There are a number of interesting features in this account: most striking is the manner in which signs, functioning here as speech acts, are translated directly into action.[38] True, the signs must be converted from written to auditory form via mediation of the *grammatistês* or scribe, a figure whose sole function here is essentially to act as a transcription and playback machine (3.128.3):

> He undid the letters one by one and handed them over to the royal *grammatistês* to read out loud (for all the governors have royal *grammatistai*).[39]

But once the *grammatistês* has pronounced the last syllable, the words produce an instantaneous effect on the bodyguards, and they act like automata.

The Persian system of administration, with its reliance on writing as a means of conveying commands and its hierarchy of command filtering down from the King as ultimate authority, produces an environment where judicious manipulation may have enormous consequences and where the sign is mightier than the sword, *sophiê* greater than *biê*.

1.9 Military Signals

The capacity of signs to act as stimuli productive of an automatic response is also at the base of military signals, which are assigned a conventional mean-

[38] On the concept of the speech act see Austin. On speech acts and authoritative utterances in the *Histories* see Hollmann 2000.

[39] Translators (ἑρμηνεῖς) in Herodotos likewise transfer signs from one language to another in mechanical fashion. They are on hand, for example, at Kroisos' pyre: yet though they can translate Kroisos' words about Solon, the words are ἄσημα for them (1.86.4). Their presence thus stresses the initial distance in language and comprehension between Kroisos and Kyros, but ends up emphasizing their meeting of minds across this gap: *they* can understand each other, but their interpreters cannot. For the general failure of professional interpreters of signs in Herodotos see below; for language in the *Histories* as a barrier, but not the most fundamental one, to cross-cultural understanding see Braund 173 on Dareios' anthropological experiment with the Greeks and Kallatians (3.38). Other *hermeneis*: 2.125.6, 2.154.2, 2.164.1, 3.38.4, 3.140.3, 4.24.

ing, and by which commanders pass along orders (σημαίνω) to their troops to advance, retreat, and, as will be seen, eat.[40] The signs and the code according to which they are interpreted are naturally intended only for their users, but are susceptible to discovery by the opposing side, who may then use the information to their own advantage. This is what happens when Kleomenes leads his campaign against the Argives. The two armies take up a position near each other. The Argives, wary of being taken by deception (6.77.1 δόλῳ), attempt to guard against this by noting whatever the Spartan soldiers do whenever the Spartan herald gives a signal (6.77.3 προσημαίνοι) and performing exactly the same action. But Kleomenes detects this, and counters with a manipulation of his own: he takes advantage of the purely conventional connection between signifier and signified and changes the code of the system, so that the signal for taking a meal now constitutes a command to arm and to attack (6.78.1).[41] When this signal is given by the Spartan herald, the Argives, following the old code, sit down to eat, but the Spartans, in accordance with the new code, attack, killing a large number of them (6.78.2).

2. RECEPTION AND DECODING

So far I have looked at the manipulation of signs with respect to their production and encoding: how signs are produced artificially and how they are appropriated or hijacked. I next consider manipulation of signs at a different point in the chain of communication: the decoding stage, when the sign or complex of signs is interpreted by the recipient.

2.1 Mykerinos and the Oracle

The manipulator may by interpretation twist a set of signs in such a way as to serve his own interests, as when Mykerinos the Egyptian king receives an oracle that tells him he has six years left to live (2.133.1). Mykerinos is enraged with the oracular utterance and determined to disprove it. He does so by manipulating the terms "day" and "night," taking "day" as meaning a period of light, and "night" as the absence of light: at nightfall he lights lanterns and spends his nights in drinking and dissipation, wandering through the marshes and frequenting

[40] See Appendix 2 for similar instances of σημαίνω.

[41] The motif of trick and counter-trick is also found at 4.200.2: Amasis and Persians tunnel underneath Barke, but a blacksmith detects the attempts by the judicious interpretation of signs (cf. Appendix 2 s.v. ἐπιφράζομαι). The inhabitants then dig opposing tunnels and kill the Persian sappers. This counter-trick is answered by Amasis' manipulation of an oath (4.201.1–3, discussed above), which also involves digging of a sort. Cf. also 2.121 for the sequence of trick and counter-trick between the master thief and Rhampsanitos.

places of enjoyment (2.133.4), doubling his "days" by this machination (2.133.5 ταῦτα δὲ ἐμηχανᾶτο) and making 12 years out of 6. His manipulation cannot of course make his life longer in any real sense, but he is able to show in a limited fashion that the oracle has not been fulfilled (2.133.5 ψευδόμενον).

2.2 Perdikkas and the Sun

Manipulation at the stage of decoding may also take place when existing signs are interpreted according to a different sign system. This is how Perdikkas, founder of the Macedonian dynasty, seizes power. He and his two brothers, Gauanas and Aeropos, work as hired hands for the king of Lebaia (8.137.2). Because of what the king considers to be a disturbing *teras* (when the king's wife bakes bread for the laborers, the loaf destined for Perdikkas always turns out to be double the normal size), he decides to dispense with the brothers' services (8.137.3). When they ask for their wages, the king points to a patch of sunlight on the floor (8.137.4):

> ὁ βασιλεὺς ... εἶπε, θεοβλαβὴς γενόμενος· "Μισθὸν δὲ ὑμῖν ἐγὼ ὑμέων ἄξιον τόνδε ἀποδίδωμι," δείξας τὸν ἥλιον.
>
> The king ... struck with divine madness said: "I give you this wage, which is what you deserve," pointing to the [patch of] sunlight.

The elder brothers are dumbfounded (8.137.5 ἐκπεπληγμένοι), but Perdikkas knows what to do (8.137.5):

> ὁ δὲ παῖς, ἐτύγχανε γὰρ ἔχων μάχαιραν, εἶπας τάδε· "Δεκόμεθα, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ διδοῖς," περιγράφει τῇ μαχαίρῃ ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος τοῦ οἴκου τὸν ἥλιον, περιγράψας δέ, ἐς τὸν κόλπον τρὶς ἀρυσάμενος τοῦ ἡλίου, ἀπαλλάσσετο αὐτός τε καὶ οἱ μετ' ἐκείνου.
>
> But the boy, who happened to have a knife, said the following: "We accept, o King, what you give us," and traced [the outline of] the sun on the floor with his knife, and, after outlining it, poured the sun into his lap three times and left, both he and his brothers.

What the king intends as a gesture of contempt, Perdikkas converts into a sign of a different kind. His reply plays on two meanings of the verb δέκομαι, the first in the general sense of accepting wages or presents, the second in the more specific sense of the recognition and acceptance of a portent.[42] The word that

[42] Examples in the *Histories* of the use of δέκομαι as technical term in the context of sign recognition: 1.63.1, 4.15.3, 7.178.2, 8.115.1, 9.91.2. Burkert 159 also draws attention to Perdikkas' appropriation and interpretation of the sign and to the use of δέκομαι in the context of signs.

the king uses in a slighting and ironic sense of the brothers' wages, "worthy" (ἄξιον), is interpreted by Perdikkas in a sense favorable to himself. The patch of sunlight is decoded not as a contemptuous gift of something worth nothing (sun as an element, like air, common to all and hence worthless) but as the bestowal of something valuable (sun as gold and symbol of kingship). When one of the king's advisors conveys (σημαίνει) to the king that Perdikkas' strange action has meaning (σὺν νόῳ) and what this meaning is (8.138.1), he orders his men to pursue the brothers and kill them. The verb σημαίνω, here used to describe the transmission of a decoded message (see Appendix 2), underscores the advisor's point that Perdikkas' actions and words constitute a meaningful set of signs that cannot be ignored. The term σὺν νόῳ stresses the importance of *noos*, used elsewhere in the *Histories* in sign-related contexts both in the sense of the message behind the encoded form (e.g., 4.131.2) and the ability to encode and decode signs (see Appendix 2). These two aspects of *noos* are related: one must have *noos* to detect the *noos* of the message.

Perdikkas' appropriation and re-interpretation of signs make the situation true in some magical way and confer on him a power that makes the king uneasy; the gesture of pouring the sun into his lap three times has the solemnity of ritual. The manipulation of signs on a human level (Perdikkas' mixture of speech and action) works in harmony with a set of signs originating on the divine level. There is first the *teras* of the loaf of bread, then another incident that may equally be regarded as showing the hand of the divine: when the brothers are pursued by the king's horsemen, they cross a river that mysteriously rises after their crossing and prevents their pursuers from riding across after them. This river, Herodotos tells us, is sacrificed to as "savior" (σωτῆρι) by the descendants of the brothers, the royal house of Makedonia (8.138.2). The situation is in this respect comparable to the manipulation of Dareios and Oibares (3.86.2), where the divine, "as if by arrangement" (ὥσπερ ἐκ συνθέτου), confirms with its own method of signification a sign produced by human agency.

2.3 Artayktes' Second Manipulation

We continue this theme of the human manipulation of signs and interaction with signs of divine origin by returning to Artayktes the Persian. The latter, successful in his efforts to gain control of the sanctuary of Protesilaos by the manipulation of language, incurs the wrath of the inhabitants of Elaious when he appropriates all the goods kept in the shrine, turns the sacred enclosure over to cultivation and pasturing, and sleeps with women in the sanctuary (9.116.3). He is eventually captured by the Athenians, and while being kept

under guard, observes a strange spectacle of preserved fish (τάριχοι) over a fire suddenly coming to life and flopping about. Artayktes immediately takes it upon himself to provide an interpretation of this *teras* (9.120.2):

> Ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, μηδὲν φοβέο τὸ τέρας τοῦτο· οὐ γὰρ σοὶ πέφηνε, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ σημαίνει ὁ ἐν Ἐλαιοῦντι Πρωτεσίλεως ὅτι καὶ τεθνεὼς καὶ τάριχος ἐὼν δύναμιν πρὸς θεῶν ἔχει τὸν ἀδικέοντα τίνεσθαι.
>
> Athenian stranger, do not be alarmed at this *teras*: for it is not to you that it has appeared, but it is to me that Protesilaos who lies in Elaious is sending a sign that even though he is dead and a *tarikhos*, he has power from the gods to take vengeance upon the one who does him wrong.

Not only does Artayktes appropriate the portent, putting himself forward as recipient (ἐμοὶ σημαίνει), he constructs a reading based on the double meaning of the term *tarikhos* ("preserved"), which may refer to fish preserved by salting (cf. 2.77.4–5, 4.53.3), but also to a corpse treated with preservatives (e.g., 2.86–90 *passim*).[43] The portent is in itself remarkable, but even more remarkable is the fact that Artayktes interprets it as he does, since it seems to aggravate his already precarious position. He offers exorbitant restitution (9.120.3):

> νῦν ὦν ἄποινά μοι τάδε ἐθέλω ἐπιθεῖναι, ἀντὶ μὲν χρημάτων τῶν ἔλαβον ἐκ τοῦ ἱροῦ ἑκατὸν τάλαντα καταθεῖναι τῷ θεῷ, ἀντὶ δ' ἐμεωυτοῦ καὶ τοῦ παιδὸς ἀποδώσω τάλαντα διηκόσια Ἀθηναίοισι περιγενόμενος.
>
> I wish to present the following as my ransom: in recompense for the money that I took from the shrine, (I shall) deposit one hundred talents for the god, and in exchange for myself and my son I shall give two hundred talents to the Athenians if I survive.

The people of Elaious will have none of it, nor will the Athenian commander, Xanthippos (Perikles' father), who orders Artayktes to be impaled on the spot where Xerxes began his bridge across the Hellespont (9.120.4). It seems that Artayktes produces his interpretation either under the influence of some kind of *atê*, a divinely-induced destructive folly, becoming like Perdikkas' employer θεοβλαβής (8.137.4), or as a conscious tactic, an acknowledgement of guilt designed to obtain clemency and absolution on easy terms. I would argue that the narrative presents both possibilities. Artayktes' reading of the omen, though he may not have believed it himself and though it is an appropriation and manipulation of the divine sign, turns out to be correct in an ironic fashion: the dead Protesilaos may indeed be said to have come alive like the writh-

[43] On the *tarikhos*, with interesting late-antique parallels, see Nagy 1990b: 269–73.

ing *tarikhoi* and to have "power from the gods to avenge himself against the one who has done him injustice," since the townspeople of Elaious, who clamor for Artayktes' execution, are described as taking vengeance on Protesilaos' behalf (9.120.4).[44] Artayktes may have thought himself in control through his interpretation, but his very interpretation can be seen as part of Protesilaos' plan of revenge. There is a suitable symmetry in the fact that Artayktes should be punished by the fruits of his own manipulation.

As in the accounts of Dareios and Perdikkas, human manipulation of signs here receives confirmation from the divine. The difference in this case, of course, is that the manipulator does not enjoy the fruits of his manipulation. Artayktes is impaled by order of Xanthippos, and his son is stoned to death in front of his eyes (9.120.4), the former a punishment striking not just in its form (impalement is generally perpetrated by non-Greeks) but highly significant in terms of its location, precisely where Xerxes yoked the Hellespont. He is the only manipulator to come to so awful an end, and the only one to be characterized in such strongly negative terms by Herodotos, who calls him δεινὸς δὲ καὶ ἀτάσθαλος (9.116.1), "clever and wicked." To be δεινός is a quality in itself not necessarily negative,[45] but ἀτασθαλίη cannot be perceived as anything but extreme turpitude, involving hubris, excess, and transgression. Themistokles, for example, calls Xerxes ἀνόσιόν τε καὶ ἀτάσθαλον ("impious and wicked" 8.109.3) because of his destruction of the shrines and images of the gods.[46] Artayktes' ἀτασθαλίη, like that of Xerxes, lies not in his manipulation but in his desecration of divine property (7.33).

3.1 Herodotos' Presentation of Sign Manipulation and Manipulators

Apart from the passage just discussed, Herodotos does not comment on the morality or immorality of manipulators or their actions. Rather, actions are presented in such a way as to invite evaluation in terms of the perpetrator's

[44] Dewald 1997: 71 and n. 22 sees, as do I, Artayktes' interpretation of the jumping fish as a tactic, but is unwilling to grant that his interpretation is validated by the narrative: "The divine portent that ... Artayctes claims to see ... is ... mildly comical, and the narrative does not support Artayctes' own desperately self-interested claims to have seen a portent."

[45] Camerer 50 n. 50 notes the closeness and ethical neutrality of the terms δεινός and σοφός (cf. Megabazos' characterization of Histiaios as ἀνδρὶ Ἕλληνι δεινῷ τε καὶ σοφῷ, 5.23.2).

[46] The term ἀτασθαλίη has strong associations with the Homeric poems, where it is also associated with greed, ritual transgression, and desecration: cf. the ἀτασθαλίη of Odysseus' companions (eating of cattle of Sun, *Od.* 1.7) and the suitors (e.g., *Od.* 24.458). Cf. Mikalson 193–94 on *atasthaliê* and *hubris* in the *Histories*.

(or victim's) resourcefulness, intelligence, and ingenuity, and questions of morality are not allowed to overshadow the achievement itself.[47] Key terms in Herodotos' descriptions are μηχανή, τέχνη, and σοφίη, which signal to the audience an upcoming action of ingenious deception, and also signal that the action is to be looked at in the way I have just described.[48] These terms are in themselves ambivalent, having in certain contexts positive connotations but in others negative ones. Solon the sage may be credited with *sophiê* (1.30.2), while Dareios' cunning groom can equally be called an ἀνὴρ σοφός (3.85.1). Herodotos can use the verb μηχανάομαι to refer to Kyros and his benefactions for the Persians (3.89.3 ἀγαθά σφι πάντα ἐμηχανήσατο), but equally of Psammenitos and his evil deeds (3.15.4 νῦν δὲ μηχανώμενος κακὰ ὁ Ψαμμήνιτος ἔλαβε τὸν μίσθον). Respectable trades and crafts may be referred to as τέχναι (e.g., the office of herald, playing the *aulos*, cookery [6.60]), but Demokedes' false avowal that he knows nothing of medicine is also described using the verb τεχνάζω (3.130.2).[49]

If we are asked to admire the manipulators of signs, this is not to say that their actions and their consequences are morally neutral. It is clear that the perpetrator is in some way bending the rules, and it is partly in this that the interest and astonishment induced in the audience lie.[50] If there were no transgression to speak of, the manipulation would not be thrown into relief and the manipulator's skill would have no suitable arena in which to be appreciated.[51]

[47] Cf. Harrison 109 n. 24 on the oath of Themison: "There is interestingly no implication that oaths should not be used for unjust ends: the narrative is rather shaped around Themison's ingenious fulfilment of the oath."

[48] Bencsik 11. See Appendix 1 for these words in connection with trickery and manipulation of signs.

[49] The positive and negative sides of these terms are interconnected, as Pratt 70 notes: "Figures in archaic poetry who are characterized by the kind of practical knowledge that gives rise to *technai* are virtually always also presented as exemplary liars or deceivers. ... Hermes can shape both a lyre and a lie." Bencsik 5 shows this for *sophiê* in the *Histories.*

[50] Instances of trickery and manipulation may be the object of wonder (θῶμα) as much as any deed of bravery or great building. Bencsik 145–48 discusses σοφίσματα in Herodotos as part of the category of "great and wondrous works" (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, proem), and cf. Bakker 28 on Herodotos' *apodeixis* itself as a *mega ergon*. Astonishment as a reaction to acts of cunning is described several times in Herodotos' nar-rative, e.g., in the story of the Egyptian master thief (ἐκπεπλῆχθαι 2.121.γ.1, 2.121.ζ.1, θωμάσαι 2.121.ζ.2). For Munson 2001: 232, "[expressions of *thôma*] tend to announce special semiotic challenges and occasionally mark the highest philosophical level of the inquiry."

[51] Cf. Pratt 71: "Tricksters can certainly speak *alêtheia* if they wish to—it is not a lack of ability that prevents their speaking the truth—but tricksters are characterized by the speaking of lies and misleading statements, because only through these can their *technê* be revealed."

I say "bending" rather than "breaking" the rules because the manipulation of signs derives its effectiveness precisely from working *within* a sign system and following its rules, even if only in the most tenuous and superficial fashion. This should be distinguished from the lie built on a false premise, e.g., saying that something is so that is not, and from other transgressions that make no attempt to operate within a system. The distinction is clear when one looks back at the examples discussed above. Amasis does not simply break his oath but goes to elaborate lengths to show that the oath has no foundation and is thus invalid (4.201.3). Themison preserves intact the fabric of the oath and fulfills it (4.154.4 ἀποσιεύμενος τὴν ἐξόρκωσιν), but without drowning the daughter of Etearkhos. The oath of Leotykhides, by contrast, who swears that Demaratos is not the legitimate child of Ariston, is based on a lie (6.65.3). Artayktes' claim to the shrine of Protesilaos (9.116.3) has a logic to it and is predicated on a mythological basis and the Persian title to all of Asia.

3.2 SUCCESS OF SIGN MANIPULATION AND SIGN INTERPRETATION

As we have seen with the examples of Dareios, Perdikkas, and the portent of the jumping fish, there is a very real sense in which manipulation may turn out to be a legitimate and successful use of signs. In fact, almost all of the manipulations of signs in the *Histories* are successful, a point worth highlighting given the emphasis Dewald and Lateiner put on the difficulty of correctly fitting signifier and signified together. According to the former, the symbolic use of objects "very often backfires" on those who exploit them (1993: 63–64). This does not seem to me to be the case. There are, to be sure, instances of failed manipulation—Onomakritos' attempt to add to the oracles of Mousaios (7.6.2), Artayktes' interpretation of the portent of the jumping fish (9.120.1–4)—but they are not frequent enough to justify this conclusion, which is connected with Dewald's assertion that "objects in Herodotus often mislead because it is inherent in the nature of things that they do so" (1993: 63). For example, she interprets Amasis' manipulation of the terms of the oath at Barke as superficially successful, but ultimately a failure: "... his army flees in panic at Cyrene, and Pheretime, the queen of Cyrene, who has called in the Persians in the first place, dies a horribly lingering death, living but 'boiling over,' Herodotus says, with maggots (4.205)." But Herodotos does not actually link the failure of Amasis' campaign to his false oath, and he makes it clear that Pheretime's death is because of her excesses in taking vengeance for the death of her husband and because such excesses excite divine envy (4.205). Like Dewald, Lateiner also tends to problematize the interpretation of signs in the *Histories* (1987: 100):

> The distance between the signifying message, the signifier, and what it is meant to signify, the signified, encourage the original recipient—and the reader—to err, to misinterpret. Indeed the reader is forced to participate in history as it happens, and Herodotus warns us not to relax in comfortable hindsight. Human knowledge, always partial and provisional in Herodotus, shows its limitations most clearly when forced to deal with signs and symbols. Men ignore them, misread them, and suffer.

My survey, however, suggests that the interpreters of signs, with some interesting exceptions, generally overcome the problem of the distance between signifier and signified. Among these exceptions are professional interpreters of signs in the *Histories*: either they produce an incorrect interpretation, or their interpretation is not heeded or comes too late.[52] But this is often a matter of their ethnicity or that of their masters and clients: the *magoi* and *oneiropoloi* of the Persians produce readings that flatter the king and look to their own security. A major exception to the exceptions are the *manteis*, who are all Greek: generally, a Greek army in the *Histories* will not fight unless the omens are favorable, and when Herodotos describes the omens as favorable, the outcome of the battle is usually favorable too.[53]

Lay interpreters, individuals, or communities who must decode for themselves the signs with which they are confronted are depicted more frequently by Herodotos and enjoy greater success than professionals. Their success depends in part on the sign type: in the case of oracles, the majority are in fact deciphered correctly by their recipients, despite the notorious and fatal ambiguity of the oracle given to Kroisos, for example, which admittedly looms large in the narrative and functions together with other oracles as a structur-

[52] Noted by Darbo-Peschanski 81. Incorrect interpretations by professionals: 1.107.1, 1.108.1, 1.128.2 (dream interpreted by *magoi* and *oneiropoloi*); 7.19.1 (dream interpreted by *magoi*); 7.37.2 (*teras* interpreted by *magoi*); 7.113.2 (divinatory sacrifice interpreted by *magoi*); 7.142.3–7.143 (oracle interpreted by Greek *khrêsmologoi*). Interpretation by professionals unheeded: 5.56.2 (dream interpreted by Greek *oneiropoloi*); 9.37.1 (divinatory sacrifice for non-Greeks by Hegesistratos). Interpretation by professional arrives too late: 1.78 (*teras* interpreted by Telmessians). Cf. Mikalson 195 n. 18.

[53] Interpretations by *manteis*: 7.219.1 (divinatory sacrifice by Megistias: correct); 9.37.1 (divinatory sacrifice for non-Greeks by Hegesistratos: correct, but ignored); 9.92.2 (divinatory sacrifice by Deiphonos: correct). On the high correlation between prediction of outcome and actual outcome, note Jameson's (198) instructive remark: "Modern commentators, after a period when sceptical rationalism prevailed, have tended to be impressed by the Greeks' faith, their strict adherence to the signals they received through sacrifices and the rarity of cases in which the gods' advice was ignored or proved false. However, examples of successful action *contrary* [emphasis Jameson] to negative signs are not likely to be reported in our sources."

ing device for Herodotos' extended *logos* on Kroisos' rise and fall. Of the some 64 oracles referred to in the *Histories*, I find only 11 that are misinterpreted.[54] Of the over 25 portents described by Herodotos, only 3 go completely ignored and unrecognized by the persons in whose vicinity they occur.[55] The dreams of the *Histories*, however, present a different picture. Out of 18, only 3 have favorable outcomes or "happy endings," while in the case of another 3, the content is not mentioned, only the dreamer's ensuing actions in carrying out the directives of the dream, nor is it possible to judge the effectiveness of the dreamer's actions.[56] All other dreams are ignored, misinterpreted, or followed by the dreamer to his doom.[57] This may be a function of the status of these dreamers, who form something of an exclusive club: only Persian kings, their relatives, and high officials, as well as Greek tyrants dream in the *Histories*, figures whose high positions and arrogance make them vulnerable to the classic concatenation of excess, hubris, and disaster. Apart from these instances of misinterpretation, there are plentiful examples of triumphs and successes in the field of interpretation, including those of Herodotos himself.[58] In short,

[54] Failures in interpretation of oracles: 1.53, 1.55, 1.85.2 (oracles to Kroisos); 1.66.2 (oracle to Spartans about Arcadia and Tegea); 2.152.3 (oracle of Bouto to Psammetikhos); 3.57.3–4 (oracle to Siphnians); 3.64.4 (oracle of Bouto to Kambyses); 4.163.2 (oracle to Arkesilaos III); 6.76.1 (oracle to Kleomenes); 8.20.2 (Euboians do not pay attention to oracle of Bakis); 9.33.2 (oracle to Teisamenos). Saïd 122 notes: "Deceptive oracles do not always have a tragic outcome in the *Histories*."

[55] Unrecognized portents: 4.79.1 (Skyles' town house struck by lightning); 7.57.1–2 (portent of mare giving birth to hare, portent of mule giving birth to mule with double set of genitalia).

[56] Successful interpretations and outcomes of dreams: 2.139 (dream of Sabakos); 2.141 (dream of Sethon); 6.131 (dream of Agariste, mother of Perikles). Unclear: 3.149 (Otanes resettles Samos after dream and illness); 6.118.1 (Datis restores statue of Apollo after dream); 8.54 (Xerxes makes offerings on Athenian akropolis possibly because of dream). Cf. Mikalson 195, who makes a distinction between Herodotean oracles, *manteis*, and omens on the one hand, whose warnings can allow one to escape disaster, and Herodotean dreams, which "announce ... an inescapable future."

[57] 1.34 (Kroisos and Atys); 1.107 (Astyages and Mandane); 1.108 (Astyages and Mandanes: second dream); 1.209 (Kyros' dream of Dareios); 3.30 (Kambyses' dream of Smerdis); 3.124 (dream of Polykrates' daughter); 5.55–56 (dream of Hipparkhos); 6.107 (dream of Hippias); 7.12 (first dream of Xerxes); 7.14 (second dream of Xerxes); 7.17 (same dream appears to Artabanos); 7.19 (Xerxes' third dream).

[58] As a sample, consider the following list of individuals, both non-Greek and Greek, male and female, tyrant, despot, and citizen, who make successful use of signs, whether as encoder or decoder, "straight" user or manipulator: Kyros (1.125.1–2, 1.126, 1.141.1–2), Harpagos (1.123.4), Dareios and Oibares (3.85.1–3.86.2), Otanes (3.68–69), Bagaios (3.127.2–3.128.5), Gobryas (4.132.2–3), Zopyros (3.153–158), Amasis (the Persian,

successes and failures of sign interpretation in the *Histories* are not so much a function of the nature of signs, the distance between signifier and signified, but have to do with qualities of the interpreter (hubris, excess, etc.). Those who are not subject to these disadvantages are more often than not able to bridge the distance between signifier and signified and even to exploit it to their advantage.

4. HERODOTOS AND SIGNS

Where does Herodotos' interest in signs come from? Is it a creation of Herodotos himself, to be located in the personality of the historical Herodotos, or do its roots lie elsewhere, in a tradition or traditions which Herodotos draws upon? A strong interest in signs is found in a number of areas and genres of Greek literature, both antedating and contemporary with Herodotos. Signs and their interpretation feature prominently already in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, where prophecy, portent, dream, *ainos*, gesture and behavior as signifiers (e.g., crazed laughter of suitors, *Od.* 20.346), the body as sign vehicle (e.g., Odysseus' scar, *Od.* 19.393, 21.221, 23.73), and name-play all appear and have an important role.[59] Herodotos is directly influenced by the form and vocabulary of the Homeric dream,[60] and the double portent, seen when the whinnying of Dareios' horse is answered by a simultaneous bolt of lightning and thunderclap from a clear sky (3.86.2), recalls the double portent that Zeus

4.201.1–3), Artaphrenes (6.1.2), Artayktes (9.116.3), Amestris (9.109–112), Amasis (the Egyptian, 2.172.3–5), Mykerinos (2.133.4–5), Sabakos (2.139.1–3), Psammetikhos (2.2.1–5, 2.151–2), Kheops' daughter (4.126.1), Ariantas (4.81.5–6), the king of the Long–lived Ethiopians (3.21.2–22.4), Solon (1.30.3–32.9), Thrasyboulos (1.20–22.1, 5.92.ζ.1–η.1), Peisistratos (1.59.4, 1.60.4), Periandros (3.51.2, 5.92.ζ.1–η.4), Lykophron (3.50.1–3), Kleisthenes of Sikyon (5.68.1–2), Kleisthenes of Athens (5.69.1–2), Perdikkas (8.137.5), Alexandros (5.20.3–5), Tellias (8.27.3–4), Megistias (7.219.1), Histiaios (5.35.3), Themistokles (7.143.1–3, 8.22.1–3), Likhas (1.68.3–4), Khilon (1.59.1–2), Kleomenes (6.66.1–3, 6.77.3–78.2, 6.82.2), Demaratos (7.239.2–4), Gorgo (7.239.2–4). One should also consider successful interpretations made by groups: the Thebans (5.79.1–81.3), the Paiones (5.1.2–3), and the Athenians (7.189.1–3, though cf. 1.60.3–5, discussed above), for example. On Herodotos as interpreter see below.

[59] See Appendix I in Lateiner 1987 for categories and illustrative lists of nonverbal communication in Homer (including objects, tokens, and clothes) and cf. Nagy 1990a: 202–22 on *sêma* and *noêsis* in the Homeric poems. Recent discussion of the general relationship between Homer and Herodotos and shared mythical patterns in Boedeker 2002.

[60] Cf., e.g., the dream-figure that stands over Kroisos (1.34.1) as he sleeps (αὐτίκα δέ οἱ εὕδοντι ἐπέστη ὄνειρος) with *Il.* 10.496 (κακὸν γὰρ ὄναρ κεφαλῆφιν ἐπέστη) and the similar conventions of large and beautiful dream figures and "seeing" a dream. See further Kessels.

sends to Odysseus in the form of a thunderclap from a clear sky and the φήμη uttered by a woman grinding corn (*Od*. 20.102–21).

The Athenian tragedies of the fifth century and their plots studded with oracles, dreams, portents, and tokens of recognition may also have had their influence on Herodotos and at least provide evidence for the prominence of certain types of signs in a genre other than epic.[61] Much in Herodotos' confident persona is reminiscent of the figure of the archaic poet who proudly declares his own ability (*sophia*), sings of his superiority over his competitors, demonstrates his knowledge of alternate versions, and addresses himself to those who are *sophoi* and discriminating enough to decode his message.

Among the fragments of Herodotos' predecessors and contemporaries in the field of history there are also traces of an interest in signs and the interpretation of signs. A fragment of Kharon of Lampsakos (whom Fowler 67 believes to be a contemporary, not a successor, of Herodotos) has a fascinating description of a manipulation of signs (*FGrHist* 262 F 1). Having learned that the people of Kardia have trained their horses to rear up and dance to certain tunes on the *aulos*, even beating out the time with their forelegs, Naris, leader of the Bisaltai, who have previously been unsuccessful in the field against the Kardianoi, gets hold of an *aulos*-player from Kardia and has her teach the appropriate *aulos* melodies to other *aulos*-players. These *aulos*-players then form part of a new military campaign against Kardia, and at a critical moment play the *aulêmata* they have learned, inducing the horses of the enemy to rear up and dance and thus throw their riders (cf. the Argives' cracking of the Spartan code of military signals and the Spartans' counter-manipulation, 6.77–78, discussed above).[62] There is another familiar pattern in the introduction to this story: Naris conceives the idea of an attack on the Kardians after he hears about an oracle while in enslavement in Kardia. The oracle tells the Kardians that the Bisaltai will attack them. The knowledge of one set of signs gives Naris the impulse to use another set of signs to attack his enemy by cunning, much as Herodotos' Zopyros conceives of his plan of deceptive self-mutilation after putting together the chance remark of a Babylonian soldier (3.151.2) and the *teras* of a mule giving birth (3.153.1, discussed above).

The controlling, self-confident, and assertive narrative voice, disdainful of predecessors, is not unique to Herodotos but already present in Hekataios of

[61] On Herodotos and tragedy see, e.g., Fohl, Egermann, Stahl, Snell, Chiasson, Saïd.

[62] For Herodotean horses trained or used in a manipulation cf. the horse of Artybios the Persian, trained to rear up and attack with its forelegs, whose μηχαναί (5.111.4) are overcome by Onesilos' squire (5.111–12), as well as the story of Dareios and his groom Oibares (3.85–87), discussed above.

Miletos,[63] and seems to be *de rigueur* for early writers, including the Presocratics and the medical writers. Among the Presocratics the figure of Herakleitos of Ephesos is notable for his use of sign vocabulary familiar to us from Herodotos: there is his famous remark about the Delphic oracle (Diels-Kranz [henceforth D-K] 22 B 93 ὁ ἄναξ οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει, ἀλλὰ σημαίνει, "The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither speaks nor conceals but indicates with signs"), which turns on the idea of language as a coded system demanding decoding before it can be understood. Again, in D-K 22 B 107 (κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὦτα βαρβάρους ψυχὰς ἐχόντων, "The eyes and ears of those who have barbarian [i.e., imperfectly understanding and speaking] souls are bad witnesses"), Herakleitos stresses the importance of correct interpretation and reading of the signs of language (and his *Logos*), which produce only babbling for those who do not know how to see and hear properly, just as in Herodotos Kroisos' words on the pyre are ἄσημα for the interpreters who translate them literally but are ignorant of what they refer to (1.86.4).[64] Another fragment of Herakleitos contains the verb συμβάλλομαι, rarely found in the middle in authors besides Herodotos and the medical writers (D-K 22 B 47): μὴ εἰκῇ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων συμβαλλώμεθα, "Let us not conjecture carelessly about the most serious things."[65] The context of the fragment is not clear.[66] Like Herodotos, Herakleitos uses φράζω for the transmission of an interpretation, and he projects the same air of competency, knowledge, and control (e.g., D-K 22 B 1).

The writers of the Hippocratic corpus provide important parallels for Herodotos' arguments based on signs and analogy, using external signs to deduce information about internal conditions.[67] Visible signs may reveal the invisible, as Anaxagoras of Klazomenai puts it (D-K 59 B 21a): ὄψις ἀδήλων

[63] *FGrHist* 1 F 1: "The accounts of the Greeks are many and ridiculous, as it seems to me."

[64] Following the interpretation of Kahn 107, who groups together with this fragment D-K B 55 and 101a (cf. Hdt. 1.8.2).

[65] Hohti 5 suggests that the use of the middle form in this sense may be peculiarly Ionic. Its occurrence in the Hippocratic corpus (see below), a source not considered by Hohti in his investigation, would seem to confirm his theory.

[66] Kahn 106 groups it with D-K A 23 (=Kahn XI) and D-K B 74 (=Kahn XIII), which both reject taking poets and storytellers as witnesses for things unknown and acting and speaking "like children of our parents." He views the three fragments as expressing "a critical attitude towards traditional or current practice and belief."

[67] On signs and semiosis in Greek medicine see Manetti 36–52 and Thomas 168–212. For signs used in the *Histories* to draw inferences see Appendix 2 s.vv. τεκμήριον, μαρτύριον, συμβάλλομαι, εἰκάζω; Corcella, Darbo-Peschanski 137–57, Manetti.

τὰ φαινόμενα, "Appearances are the vision of unseen things" (cf. Hdt. 2.33.2 καὶ ὡς ἐγὼ συμβάλλομαι τοῖσι ἐμφανέσι τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα τεκμαιρόμενος, "as I conjecture on the basis of *tekmêria*, putting together things unseen with things apparent"). The corpus is rich in instances of σημεῖα, μαρτύρια and τεκμήρια, often in combinations found in the *Histories*: the writer of *On Ancient Medicine* (17), for example, uses the expression τοῦτό μοι μέγιστον τεκμήριον, "this I consider the most important indication" (cf., e.g., Hdt. 2.104.4 μέγα μοι καὶ τόδε τεκμήριον). Highly instructive is a passage from the writer of *Prorrhetic* II (1) in which he says he will not work by divination (οὐ μαντεύσομαι) but describe the signs (σημεῖα) according to which one should conjecture (τεκμαίρεσθαι) which people will recover, which will die, and the speed with which they will recover or die. The author of *On Seed, the Nature of the Child, Diseases IV* in attempting to prove that all winds are ultimately the result of water even uses συμβάλλομαι in the same fashion as Herodotos (25):

> τὰ δὲ πνεύματα ἡμῖν ἐστι πάντα ἀφ' ὕδατος· τούτου δὲ πέρι πάρα συμβάλλεσθαι, ὅτι οὕτως ἔχει, ἀπὸ γὰρ τῶν ποταμῶν πάντων πνεύματα χωρέει ἑκάστοτε καὶ τῶν νεφέων, τὰ δὲ νέφεα ἐστὶν ὕδωρ ξυνεχὲς ἐν ἠέρι.[68]
>
> All winds come about from water: on this point one may conjecture that it is so, for in every case winds proceed from all rivers and from clouds, and clouds are water held together in the air.

The persona of the writers, polemical, defiant, and self-confident (cf. for example the beginning of *On Ancient Medicine*: "All those who have tried to speak or write about medicine ... are manifestly wrong") also reminds one of Herodotos. In particular, their use of the future of φράζω to introduce an explanation of phenomena, seen also in the fragments of Herakleitos discussed above, strikes a reader of the *Histories* as familiar (see Appendix 2 for instances of Herodotos' first-person usage). The author of *Airs, Winds, and Places* is particularly fond of this construction, using it 6 times in all, e.g., 3 ὅκως δὲ χρὴ ἕκαστα τῶν προειρημένων σκοπέειν καὶ βασανίζειν, ἐγὼ φράσω σαφέως, "I will clearly show how one should observe and test each of the above-mentioned things."[69]

[68] Cf. also *On Sensations* (1): "As for those things that it is reasonable for practitioners to know, apply, and manage, concerning these ideas and actions the layman [ought] to be able to come up with a conjecture (ξυμβάλλεσθαι) using his judgment (γνώμῃ τινί)." Kühn and Fleischer (s.v. συμβάλλω III.2) list 7 instances in the *Corpus*.

[69] On Herodotos and the Ionian scientific tradition and the medical writers see further Barth, Müller, Manetti 36–52, Thomas, Raaflaub.

Herodotos' interest in signs and the particular narrative persona that he cultivates in this regard—which I call "the master of signs"—thus find antecedents in a number of areas. Jacoby's image of him as a *Januskopf*, looking simultaneously back to the archaic period and forward to his own world of the second half of the fifth century, is appropriate here: the contemporary language of the Ionian scientific tradition and the medical writers rubs up against older patterns of sign interpretation and manipulation.[70]

5. Herodotos' interest in sign manipulation and manipulators

Herodotos' interest in signs, then, is part of a more general cultural phenomenon. But why is he interested specifically in manipulation and the manipulators of signs? Perhaps because this kind of manipulation involves the victory of intelligence over force, or at least the harnessing of brute force to cunning intelligence, an opposition that is central to much of Greek literature and thought, as the Detienne/Vernant study of *mêtis* has demonstrated. In terms used by Herodotean figures, this is the triumph of *sophiê* over *biê*. In several instances in the *Histories* a sharp distinction between the two qualities is drawn, where it is clear that the path of *sophiê*, often involving the manipulation of signs, is assigned a higher value than the use of *biê* alone. These are the terms in which Dareios presents the assignment to kill Oroites (3.127.2 σοφίῃ καὶ μὴ βίῃ), and the stratagem of the Persian general Amasis is framed in a similar way, as a choice between δόλος and τὸ ἰσχυρόν (4.201.1).[71] Both Camerer and Bencsik have concentrated on the political importance of this cunning intelligence, *praktische Klugheit*, and its connection with the seizure and maintenance of power (*Schelmentum und Macht* is the title of Bencsik's work). As Dewald 1993: 70 puts it,

> The person who knows how to read objects in the world, and extract from them the meanings they hold in context, succeeds in uncovering something significant and does so by using the same kind of canny general attentiveness that Herodotus himself displays as an investigator.

[70] Jacoby's *Januskopf* is invoked by Dewald and Marincola 9 in the context of Herodotos looking back at "an oral and archaic past" and forward to "history as we know it." As Bakker 11 remarks, as a result of the present debate on Herodotos' cultural affiliations, "Herodotus could hardly have been pulled in two more different directions," the two poles being represented by the "modern scientific Herodotus, firmly rooted in contemporary intellectual debate" (ibid.) of Thomas 2000 and Nagy 1987's "conception of a prose storyteller who subsumes the preceding epic tradition." Bakker shows that the two are not mutually exclusive.

[71] Compare also the opposition between δόλος and σθένος at 3.65.6.

The latter part of Dewald's statement brings us to another vital factor behind Herodotos' interest in these manipulations: the relationship between trickster, audience, and Herodotos. The actions of the trickster call forth a certain reaction in the audience, a feeling of wonder, admiration, and amusement. The admiration of the manipulator's *sophiê* and *tekhnê* is experienced by two kinds of audience, the first being the immediate audience of the trick, the second being the audience of Herodotos' work. In this way the manipulator's *tekhnê* and *sophiê* become in a sense Herodotos', too, and Herodotos as narrator and conveyor of manipulations receives a share of the audience's admiration. This is not, however, to say that Herodotos himself is a manipulator of signs or trickster,[72] only that he presents himself as a master reader of signs.[73] Pratt has observed this identification of artist and trickster with regard to archaic poets and the tricksters depicted in their works (71):

> Poetic fictions become a revelation of the artist's *techne*, *sophia* and *metis*. By calling attention to them or suggesting an affinity between the bard and an Odysseus or a Hermes, the poets make the creative intelligence of the trickster an essential component of their art.[74]

As was the case for the archaic poets, so for Herodotos his depiction of manipulation is a demonstration of his skill, and this is an aspect of his distinctive narrative persona. This persona or "voiceprint" is marked by its confidence, control, and authority: Dewald has termed it the "expert's persona" (2002: 268, 288).[75] Apart from presenting the semiotic activities of others, Herodotos acts as transmitter and reader of signs, providing interpretations of oracles, dreams, portents, human behavior, and objects alike, transmitting these to his audience. He gives an interpretation of the oracle given to the Siphnians that they themselves could not understand (3.58.1),[76] becoming in

[72] Cf. the critical remarks of Harrison 1: "Herodotus has been growing increasingly ingenious in recent years ... [H]e has emerged as a figure almost sinisterly clever, creating patterns of reciprocity, setting up expectations which he then subverts, manipulating his characters and their preoccupations like puppets."

[73] Cf. Hollmann 1998 on Herodotos as "master of signs."

[74] Cf. Winkler 129–61, who makes a connection between Penelope's cunning and Homer's. Pratt 71 stresses the connection with the agonistic nature of poetry. For Herodotos' polemical stance see now esp. Thomas 214–21.

[75] The term "voiceprint" is taken from Fowler 70. On the narrative persona of Herodotos see Dewald 1987 (now superseded by Dewald 2002), Marincola, Lateiner 1989, and in particular Thomas 214–27 on its polemical character.

[76] On Herodotos as interpreter of oracles cf. Darbo-Peschanski 81: "C'est alors que l'enquêteur apparait comme un chresmologue, mais du passé, herméneute paradoxal de

effect the φράδμων ἀνήρ (3.57.4) that the Pythia calls for, and supplying his audience with the key to the "wooden ambush" and "red herald" by explaining that in previous times ships had prows colored with ocher. It is also Herodotos in his own right who decodes the "easily interpretable" (7.57.1 εὐσύμβλητον) portent of a mare giving birth to a hare, a *teras* that Xerxes on his way to cross the Hellespont ignores. He provides an interpretation of how the dream of Polykrates' daughter corresponds to the circumstances of his death (3.125.4), and gives a detailed reconstruction (1.68.4 κατὰ τοιόνδε τι εἰκάζων) of how the oracle about the bones of Orestes relates to the surroundings of the bones discovered by Likhas (1.67.4–1.68.4). As transmitter and decoder he frequently uses in the first-person singular verbs connected with the transmission of signs.[77] Also highly characteristic of this approach is the argument based on signs, phenomena in the real world that are taken as manifestations of the unseen. A persona thus emerges of one who is involved in every aspect of the transmission and interpretation of signs, one who both admires and celebrates the ingenuity of figures engaging in this activity within the *Histories* and who proudly draws attention to his ability.[78]

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prévisions portant sur des faits révolus et dont l'interprétation prend, par là même, la force de l'évidence."

[77] On Herodotos' first person use of σημαίνω, φράζω, and συμβάλλομαι see Appendix 2. On Herodotos' use of the first person in general see Thomas 235–48, Dewald 1987, Marincola, Lateiner 1989. On Herodotos as narrator and the verb σημαίνω see Hartog 355 n. 140, 366, 377, Nagy 1990b: 233, 259.

[78] As Hartog 370 puts it in his aretalogy of Herodotos, "He is the master of seeing, the master of knowing, the master of believing, through his use of all the figures and procedures of a rhetoric of otherness set in motion by the deployment of all the indicators as to the source of the utterance. It is he who names, who lists, who classifies, who counts, who measures, who surveys, who sets things in order, who marks out limits, who distributes praise and blame, who knows more than he lets on, who remembers: he knows. He makes things seen, he makes known, he makes us believe." Cf. also Nagy's (1990: 221) application of the term "master of speech" to Herodotos.

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APPENDIX 1. INSTANCES OF TRICKERY IN HERODOTOS' HISTORIES

Trick	*Trickster Vocabulary*	*Manipulation of Signs?*	*Successful?*	*Sign Type*	*Stage of Signification Process*
1.21.1–22.3 Thrasyboulos tricks Alyattes into thinking Miletos has plenty of food	μηχανᾶται 1.21.1	no	yes		
1.59.3–6 Peisistratos mutilates himself as if attacked	μηχανᾶται τοιάδε 1.59.3 ὁ δὲ δῆμος...ἐξαπατηθείς 1.59.5	yes	yes	object (body as signfier)	transmission
1.60.3–5 Phye and Peisistratos	μηχανῶνται 1.60.3	yes	yes	object (body and clothing as signifiers)	transmission
1.80.2 Kyros' trick of using camels against Lydian cavalry		no	yes		
1.96.2–98.2 Deiokes' ruse to get power	ἀνὴρ σοφός 1.96.2	no	yes		
1.123.4 Harpagos and message in the hare	ἐπιτεχνᾶται τοιόνδε1.123.3	yes	yes	object (gift)	transmission
1.125.1–6 Kyros' rise to power —forges letter from Astyages	ἐφρόντιζε ὅτεῳ τρόπῳ σοφωτάτῳ Πέρσας ἀναπείσει ἀπίστασθαι 1.125.1	yes	yes	object (seal, writing)	transmission

1.187.1–5 Babylonian Nitokris and the trick grave	ἀπάτην τοιήνδε τινὰ ἐμηχανήσατο 1.187.1	no	yes		
1.191.1–6 Kyros takes Babylon by trick of diverting river		no	yes		
1.207.6–7 Kroisos' advice to Kyros to trick Massagetai with wine	τοιούτῳ φαρμάκῳ δολώσας 1.212.2 (Tomyris)	no	yes		
2.100.2–4 Egyptian Nitokris and flooding chamber	δόλῳ διαφθεῖραι 2.100.2	no	yes		
2.121.α.1 Architect of Rhampsinitos' treasury	τὸν δὲ ἐργαζόμενον ἐπιβουλεύοντα τάδε μηχανᾶσθαι 2.121.α.1	no	yes		
2.121.δ.1–6 Master thief tricks guards to retrieve his brother's body	ἐπιτεχνήσασθαι τοιάδε 2.121.δ.1	no	yes		
2.121.ε.1–3 Rhampsinitos devises way to trick master thief		no	yes		
2.121.ε.3–5 Master thief outwits Rhampsinitos again	πολυτροπίῃ 2.121.ε.3, πολυφροσύνῃ, τόλμῃ 2.121.ζ.1	no	yes		
2.133.1–5 Mykerinos and the oracle—M. makes 6 years into 12 by making nights into days with light	ταῦτα δὲ ἐμηχανᾶτο 2.133.5	yes	?	oracle	reception

APPENDIX 1. INSTANCES OF TRICKERY IN HERODOTOS' HISTORIES (continued)

Trick	*Trickster Vocabulary*	*Manipulation of Signs?*	*Successful?*	*Sign Type*	*Stage of Signification Process*
2.162.1 soldier places helmet on Amasis' head, declares him king		yes	yes	object, gesture	transmission
2.172.1–5 Amasis and golden *podaniptêr*	μετὰ δὲ σοφίῃ αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἄμασις, οὐκ ἀγνωμοσύνῃ, προσηγάγετο 2.172.2	yes	yes	object	transmission
3.1.3–5 Amasis tricks Kambyses by passing off Apries' daughter as his own	διαβεβλημένος 3.1.4	no	yes		
3.4.1–2 Phanes outsmarts Amasis' guards by getting them drunk	σοφίῃ γάρ μιν περιῆλθε ὁ Φάνης 3.4.2	no	yes		
3.16.6 Amasis' final trick—has someone else's corpse placed in his tomb to foil Kambyses		no	yes		
3.61 Pseudo-Smerdis		yes	yes (but see next entry)	object (body), name	transmission
3.69.3 Otanes uses absence of ears to identify pseudo-Smerdis		no	yes		

3.85.1–3.86.2 Dareios and groom artificially produce agreed-upon sign: horse neighs	σοφίην, μηχανῶ 3.85.1 φάρμακα, σόφισμα, μηχανᾶσθαι 3.85.2.	yes	yes	portent	transmission
3.123.2 Oroites tricks Maiandrios, messenger of Polykrates, into thinking he has great wealth		no	yes		
3.128.2–5 Bagaios, bodyguards, and killing of Oroites	τάδε ἐμηχανήσατο, σοφίῃ καὶ μὴ βίῃ 3.127.2	yes	yes	object, writing	transmission
3.130.1–2 Dareios and Demokedes			no	yes	
3.153.1–158.2 Zopyros mutilates himself	δόλον...ἐξέφαινε 3.158.2	yes	yes	object (body)	transmission
4.134.3 Dareios' scheme (following Gobryas) to leave Scythia secretly		no	yes		
4.139.2 Histiaios tricks Scythians into thinking Ionians are destroying bridge over Istros.		no	yes		
4.146.4 Wives of Minyai exchanging clothes with husbands to get them out of jail	δόλον 4.146.3	yes	yes	object (clothing)	transmission
4.154.3 Etearkhos uses open-ended oath on Themison	ἀπάτῃ 4.154.4	yes	yes	oath	transmission

APPENDIX 1. INSTANCES OF TRICKERY IN HERODOTOS' HISTORIES (continued)

Trick	*Trickster Vocabulary*	*Manipulation of Signs?*	*Successful?*	*Sign Type*	*Stage of Signification Process*
4.154.4 Themison's counter-manipulation reception		yes	yes	oath	
4.201.1–3 Manipulation of oath by Amasis the Persian.	δόλῳ 4.201.1	yes	yes	oath	transmission
5.12.1–13.3 Two Paionian brothers aim for tyranny, device of sister		no	no		
5.20.1–5 Alexander dresses men as women, who kill Persians at banquet		yes	yes	clothing	transmission
5.24.1–25.1 Dareios tricks Histiaios into leaving Miletos and coming to Sardis and Susa		no	yes		
5.35.3 Histiaios and the tattooed head of the messenger		yes	yes	object (body)	transmission
5.49.1–50.3 Aristagoras tries to deceive Kleomenes with map	σοφός, διαβάλλων 5.50.2	yes	no	object	transmission
5.63.1 corruption of Pythia, Alkmeonidai and Kleisthenes (cf. 5.66.1)	μηχανή 6.123.1	yes	yes	oracle	transmission

5.106.3–107 Histiaios tricks Dareios	διέβαλλε 5.107	no	yes		
6.62.1–2 Ariston's manipulation of oath	μηχανᾶται δὴ τοιάδε 6.62.1 τῆς ἀπάτης τῇ παραγωγῇ 6.62.2	yes	yes	oath	transmission
6.65.3 Leotykhides swears falsely in public oath		no	yes		
6.66.1–3 Kleomenes and Kobon corrupt Pythia		yes	yes	oracle	transmission
6.77.3 Argives detect and make use of Spartan signals		yes	yes	military signal	reception
6.78.1–2 Kleomenes' counter-manipulation and change of code		yes	yes	military signal	transmission
6.79.1–2 Kleomenes tricks Argives into coming out of hiding		no	yes		
6.125.3–5 Alkmeon and gold dust		no	yes		
6.115, 6.121–124 flashing shield		no	no	military signal	
7.6.3 Onomakritos inserts false oracles into collection of Musaios		yes	no	oracle	transmission
7.6.4 Onomakritos at Susa recites oracles selectively		yes	yes	oracle	transmission
7.15.3 Artabanos wears Xerxes' clothing in order that the same dream appear to him		yes	yes	object (clothing)	transmission

APPENDIX 1. INSTANCES OF TRICKERY IN HERODOTOS' HISTORIES (continued)

Trick	*Trickster Vocabulary*	*Manipulation of Signs?*	*Successful?*	*Sign Type*	*Stage of Signification Process*
7.239.3 Demaratos and the wax tablet	μηχανᾶται τοιάδε 7.239.3	yes	yes	object	transmission
8.5.1–3 Themistokles tricks Eurybiades and Adeimantos into staying, keeps remainer of money for himself		no	yes		
8.22.1–3 Themistokles uses inscription to invite Ionians to desert		yes	yes	writing	transmission
8.24.1–25.2 Xerxes' ruse to conceal true number of dead		no	no		
8.27.3 Tellias uses chalk on Phocians for mutual identification	σοφίζεται...τοιόνδε 8.27.3	yes	yes	object (body)	transmission
8.28 Phocians devise trap for Thessalian cavalry		no	yes		
8.75.1–3 Themistokles' secret message to Xerxes		no	yes		
8.87.2–4 Artemisia sinks an allied ship to fool Greek pursuer and Xerxes		no	yes		

8.109.1–5 Themistokles talks Athenians out of immediate pursuit of Persians to Hellespont	διέβαλλε 8.110.1	no	yes		
8.137.5 Perdikkas and the circle of sun		yes	yes	gesture	reception
9.33.4–5 Teisamenos gets Spartans to make him and brother citizens		no	yes		
9.34.1–2 Melampous gets the Argives to give him and brother part of kingdom		no	yes		
9.94.1–3 People of Apollonia cheat Euenios out of full compensation		no	yes		
9.98.2–4 Leotykhides imitates Themistokles (8.22.1–3) re Ionians		no	yes		
9.110.2–112 Amestris' manipulation of traditional Persian birthday promise		yes	yes	oath	transmission
9.116.2–3 Artayktes uses ambiguous words: pays lip service to truth	διεβάλετο 9.116.2	yes	yes	ainetic speech	transmission
9.120.2–4 Artayktes interprets portent—attempts to secure own release		yes	no	portent	reception

APPENDIX 2: SIGN VOCABULARY IN THE *HISTORIES*

σημήϊον: signs sent by the gods, portents (6.27.1,3); design on shield or ship (1.171.4, 8.92.2; cf. ἐπίσημον of design on staff, ship, or shield: 1.195.2, 8.88.2, 9.74.2); particular marking on animal (2.38.2, 3.28.3); marker (2.41.4); military signals (7.128.2, 9.59.2). σῆμα in Herodotos refers exclusively to grave markers and graves (1.45.3, 1.93.1–3, 2.169.5, 4.34.1–2, 4.72.5, 4.172.3).

σύμβολον: physical token indicating identity and claim to property (6.86.α.5, β.1).

συμβόλαιον: coded message from Melissa acting as token of identity (5.92.η.3).

τεκμήριον: sign, token used as evidence: 2.13.1 (flood level of Nile in reign of Moiris proves land level has risen); 2.43.2 (Egyptian lineage of Amphitryon and Alkmena, absence of Poseidon and Dioskouroi act as evidence that Greeks got Herakles from the Egyptians); 2.58 (relatively recent appearance of processions among Greeks mean they must have borrowed this from Egyptians); 2.104.4 (fact that Phoenicians do not practise circumcision when living with Greeks shows they learned it from Egyptians); 3.38.1 (Dareios' anthropological experiment shows relativity of *nomos*); 7.238.2 (Xerxes' mutilation of Leonidas' corpse is sign of his great wrath); 9.100.2 (φήμη and mysterious presence of κηρυκήϊον indicate divine involvement at Mykale).

μαρτύριον: sign, token used as evidence: 2.22.2 (warm winds from south show Nile can't come from melted snow there); 4.118.4 (fact that Dareios invades all Scythian lands shows this is not just a war of revenge against one Scythian tribe); 5.45.1 bis (sanctuary of Athene shows Dorieus must have been present); 5.45.2 (land given to Kallias and not Doreius shows latter was not present); 5.92.η.2 (Melissa's enigmatic utterance proves it is really her); 7.221 (Leonidas' dismissal of Megistias shows he sent other allies away); 8.55 (olive tree and saltwater spring as *marturia* of contributions of Athena and Poseidon); 8.120 (golden *akinakês* and gold-sprinkled headdress show presence of Xerxes). Cf. μαρτυρεῖ [μοι]: 2.18.1 (χρηστήριον evidence for extent of Egypt); 4.29 (line of Homer evidence that horns grow in heat); 5.24.3 (Dareios' riches show a clever and well-meaning friend is valuable).

σημαίνω: I.a. used of the encoding and transmission of message through medium of signs: 1.34.2 (dream conveys to Kroisos impending death of son); 5.92.η.2 (dead Melissa refuses to communicate through oracle of dead to Periandros); 9.120.2 (hero Protesilaos sends *teras* to Artayktes); προσημαίνω 4.113.2 (young Amazon and Scythian use sign-language to communicate); 6.123.2 (corrupted Pythia); 7.142.2 ("the god" indicate ships by means of the expression "wooden wall"); ἀποσημαίνω 1.78.2 (*teras* of snakes and horses indicates arrival of enemy); 5.20.2 (Persian guests signal which women they want). I.b. used of the relaying or retransmission of an already transmitted message: 1.108.2 (dream-interpreters of Astyages); 1.209.3 (Kyros relates proof from dream); 2.2.4 (herdsman relates to Psammetikhos the first word of children in cave); 2.53.2 (Homer and Hesiod relate εἴδεα of gods); 3.14.8 (Psammenitos' strange behavior reported to Kambyses); 3.69.6 (Otanes' daughter relays signs of fake identity of Smerdis); 4.76.5, 4.79.5 (Scythian spies relate strange behavior and clothing of Anakharsis and Skyles); 5.51.3 (Aristagoras not able to use his map to indicate closeness of Sardis and Susa); 7.18.3 (Artabanos relays

dream); 8.37.2 (Delphic *prophêtês* relays *teras*); 8.41.3 (priestess relays omen of snake that refuses to eat offering); 8.138.1 (king's advisor relays Perdikkas' significant action of circling the sun's image on the floor). II. more general, extended use of simply relaying, reporting, indicating: 1.43.3; 2.109.2; 3.72.3; 7.173.3; 7.192.1; 7.219.1; 8.8.3; 8.21.1; 8.62.1; 8.75.3; 8.79.4; 8.80.2; 8.111.1; 9.1; 9.33.4; 9.49.1. In this connection, first-person use by Herodotos: 1.5.3 (H. will indicate the one responsible for beginning unjust actions against the Greeks); 1.75.1 (H. will indicate the reason why Kyros overthrew Astyages); 2.9.2 (H. will indicate distance from sea to Thebes); 2.20.1 (H. will indicate theories about flooding Nile); 3.37.2 (H. will indicate appearance of Phoenician Pataikoi); 3.106.2 (H. indicates how gold is taken from Indian ants); 4.99.2 (H. will indicate measurement of Scythian coastline); 5.54.1 (H. will indicate exact measurement of distance from coast to Susa); 6.39.1 (H. will indicate manner of Kimon's death elsewhere); 7.77 (H. will indicate description of Cilician σκευή elsewhere); 7.213.3 (H. will indicate another αἰτίη for murder of Ephialtes elsewhere); 9.71.2 (H. unable to mark out [ἀποσημήνασθαι] outstanding group at Plataiai).

φράζω: used of the transmission of signs: 1.65.4 (Pythia reveals to Lykourgos new *kosmos*); 1.86.4 (Kroisos communicates things that seem ἄσημα to the interpreters); 4.113.2 (Amazon uses sign language; cf. σημαίνουσα in same passage); 5.92.η.4 (*eidôlon* of Melissa reveals location of money; cf. σημανέειν in same passage, 5.92.η.2); 6.50.3 (Krios gives his name); 9.93.4 (response of *prophêtai* of Delphi and Dodona). Used of retransmission of signs: 1.68.5 (Likhas relays his decoding of oracle about bones of Orestes); 7.219.1 (Megistias tells the Greeks the meaning of the sacrifice); 8.55 (witness tells of omen of regenerated olive tree. Herodotean first-person use (cf. first-person use of σημαίνω): 1.194.1 (H. will relay *thôma* of Babylonian coracles); 2.10.3 (H. able to relay names of rivers that show *megala erga*); 2.24.1 (H. will relay his own theory of why the Nile floods in summer); 3.6.1 (H. will relay what few other Greeks know: what happens to empty wine jars in Egypt).

συμβάλλομαι: used of decoding and interpretation of signs: Of oracles: 1.68.3 bis (Likhas decodes oracle about Orestes' bones, realizes its fulfillment); 5.1.3 (Paiones realize fulfillment of oracle); 6.80 (Kleomenes realizes fulfillment of oracle); 7.142.2 (some Athenian elders interpret oracle as referring to hedge around Akropolis); 7.143.1 (Themistokles says χρησμολόγοι do not understand oracle at all); 7.189.2 (Athenians realize oracle about their brother-in-law refers to Boreas). Of portents: 7.57.1 (*teras* of mare giving birth to hare is εὐσύμβλητον); 8.94.2 (sudden appearance of ship calling on Adeimantos to return interpreted as θεῖον πρῆγμα). Of dreams: 6.107.2 (Hippias interprets dream of sleeping with mother positively); 6.108.1 (Hippias realizes dream has been fulfilled). Of human behavior: 3.68.2 (Otanes realizes pseudo-Smerdis is not the real Smerdis); 4.111.1 (Scythians cannot make out who Amazons are); 7.209.1 (Xerxes cannot understand Spartan practice of exercising and combing out hair before battle). Writing (or lack of writing): 7.239.4 (Spartans cannot make sense of blank wax tablet).

H. uses the verb in the first person when presenting conclusions and information arrived at after a process of deduction. As with his use of σημαίνω and φράζω in the first person, these instances show H. involved in the same process figures in his work use: 2.33.2 (H. compares known facts about the Nile with the Istros to derive information about

unknown parts of the Nile: καὶ ὡς ἐγὼ συμβάλλομαι τοῖσι ἐμφανέσι τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα τεκμαιρόμενος); 4.15.1 (H. works out relative period of Aristeas' disappearance by comparison of different accounts: συμβαλλόμενος ... εὕρισκον); 4.45.2 (H. cannot reconcile having three names for one land: οὐδ' ἔχω συμβαλέσθαι); 4.87 (H. determines site of Dareios' crossing of the Bosphoros); 4.101 (H. measurement of average daily journey); 7.24 (H. deduces (ὡς μὲν ἐμὲ συμβαλλόμενον εὑρίσκειν) Xerxes' excavations at Athos must arise from μεγαλοφροσύνη); 7.187.2 (H. calculates food supply needed for army: εὑρίσκω ... συμβαλλόμενος); 8.30.1 (H. deduces (ὡς ἐγὼ συμβαλλόμενος εὑρίσκω) that the only reason the Phokians did not medize is out of hatred of the Thessalians).

συνίημι: used of oracles: 5.80.1 (anonymous Theban understands who are meant by "nearest"); 5.92.γ.1 (Bakkhiadai interpret two oracles relating to Aetion). Language in general: 1.47.3 (Delphic oracle understands the dumb); 3.46.1 (Spartans do not understand Samian exiles); 4.113.2 (Scythians and Amazons do not understand each other); 4.114.2 (Scythians and Amazons now understand each other); 5.19.2 (Amyntas hardly understands his son's speech). Non-verbal communication: 5.92.η.1 (Periandros understands the message behind Thrasyboulos' cutting down of the tallest ears of wheat).

συλλαμβάνω: used of oracles: 1.63.1 (Peisistratos understands Amphilytos' oracle); 1.91.4–5 bis (Kroisos misinterprets two oracles); 3.64.5 (Kambyses understands true sense of oracle too late); 7.143.2 (correct understanding of oracle). Language in general: 2.56.3 (priestess at Dodona learns Greek); 4.114.1 (Amazons understand Scythian language).

ἐννοέω: 1.68.3 (Likhas understands oracle about bones of Orestes); 1.86.6 (Kyros understands Kroisos' message behind calling out Solon's name). **νόῳ λαμβάνω**: 3.51.1 and 3.51.2 (younger son of Periandros cannot understand message behind grandfather's question; Periandros can). **νόῳ ἔχω**: 5.92.η.1 (Periandros understands the message behind Thrasyboulos' actions in the wheatfield). In 4.131.2 H. makes a connection between *sophiê* and *noos*: the Persians are told by Scythian messengers that if they are *sophoi* they will understand the *noos* behind their puzzling gifts.

εἰκάζω: 1.68.4 (Likhas interprets part of oracle about bones of Orestes); 4.31.1 (Scythians interpret snowflakes metaphorically as feathers); 4.132.1 and 4.132.2 (Dareios and Gobryas interpret the gifts of the Scythians). First-person usage by Herodotos: 2.104.2 (H. interprets common appearance of Colchians and Egyptians as arising from their relatedness).

φράζομαι: as imperative in oracular context: 3.57.4 (Siphnians instructed to look out for sign of wooden ambush and red herald); 5.92.β.3 (Corinthians instructed to look out for sign of eagle giving birth to lion); 8.20.2 (oracle of Bakis instructs recipients to look out for sign of barbarian casting papyrus yoke into sea). Non-verbal signs: 7.46.1 (Artabanos perceives Xerxes crying but cannot interpret his behavior). ἐπιφράζομαι 4.200.2 (blacksmith at Barke detects tunnels using sound); 7.239.4 (Gorgo "reads" blank tablet). On φράζομαι as associated with the quality of *mêtis* see Detienne/Vernant 18 n. 32, and for its common occurrence as an imperative in oracles cf. Parke-Wormell 2.xxviii, Fontenrose 170–71. Cf. also Hesiod's instruction to look out for the crane as a *sêma* that

it is time to plough: φράζεσθαι δ' εὖτ' ἂν γεράνου φωνὴν ἐπακούεις (*Works and Days* 448).

τεκμαίρομαι: 1.57.1–2 bis (H. uses language to determine non-Greek status of Pelasgian language); 2.33.2 (H. uses known things to τεκμαίρεσθαι and συμβάλλεσθαι about the unseen); 7.16.γ.2 (Artabanos says dream will not determine identity on the basis of clothing); 7.234.1 (Xerxes determines Demaratos is a good man on basis of the latter's successful predictions).