First Impressions of the Persian *Other* in Aeschylus and Herodotus

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the characterization and representation of the Eastern Other for a Greek audience in the introductory sections of two works of 5th century Greek literature. In particular, I will examine the parodos of Aeschylus' *Persae* and Book 1 of Herodotus' *Histories*. As these two sections serve as the beginnings of each work, the audience crafts their first impressions of the non-Greek Other based solely on what the author has written and how they frame these peoples in the narrative. It is my belief that these first impressions must be carefully considered in order to gauge the author's intent for the role(s) that their "barbaric" characters play. Overall, this project demonstrates that Aeschylus' and Herodotus' portrayals of the Persians and Lydians were not static and stereotypical representations of the non-Greek Other.

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Introduction

The purpose of this project is to gauge the role of the introductions of two works of 5th-century Greek literature in establishing the Eastern Other for a Greek audience. Aeschylus begins his *Persae* with a 154-line parodos that establishes the context of the tragedy, notifying the audience that the play is set in the final moments of the Greco-Persian Wars. Herodotus opens his *Histories* with a preface which reveals that he will record the accomplishments of both the Greeks and the barbarians. Both works deal heavily with the interactions between the Greek West and the barbaric East as a result of the Greco-Persian Wars and were instrumental in crafting the definitive non-Greek Other. As the audience creates their first impressions of these Othered peoples based on the introductions of these respective authors, I believe that more attention should be given to these beginnings in order to view the sentiments Aeschylus and Herodotus intended for the audience to develop concerning the Eastern Other.

The Other constitutes a defined and dissimilar entity opposite to the Self, thus creating a sharp contrast and division focused on the differences between two individuals or two sets of people, one of which corresponds to the subject while the other corresponds to those alien and foreign to the subject. In the 5th century, the Greeks established what group constituted their Other by way of the first major military invasion of the Greek mainland: the Greco-Persian Wars. During the years following the Greek victory over the Persian Empire, authors began celebrating the Hellenic way of life in contrast to the characteristics of the Eastern Persians that were viewed as contributing factors to their loss. In this exercise of self-definition, the Greeks not only defined what it meant to be Greek, but they also established the features of their barbaric Other, commonly represented by the Persians. Although the main feature separating the Greeks from the barbarians was their different languages, the 5th century saw the development of

many conflicting stereotypes, such as Greek bravery, austerity, and how they are mastered only by their own laws as opposed to Eastern effeminacy, extravagance, and their subjection under a king. While foundational scholars on the topic of Otherness in antiquity, such as François Hartog[1] and Edith Hall,[2] have focused on the differences between the Greeks and their Other, more recent scholarship, such as that of Erich Gruen,[3] has been devoted to chipping away at the boundaries between the Greek West and the barbaric East by reexamining the similarities between the cultures that have been contrasted with each other for millennia. As Thomas Harrison has recently synthesized, scholarship about alterity in antiquity has been slowly shifting towards a better integration of the non-Greek perspective concerning the Greek-barbarian division.[4]

The first chapter examines the opening parodos of Aeschylus' *Persae*. As the only extant tragedy based on a historical event rather than a mythological narrative, the *Persae* features an all-Persian cast with a Chorus comprised of royal advisors. By opening the tragedy with a parodos performed by such a Chorus, Aeschylus transported his audience from the Theater of Dionysus to the Persian capital city of Susa, the political center of their very recent enemy. Not only is the audience, who would have been predominantly Athenian, watching a play set in Persia, but they are also viewing a dramatized conclusion of the Persian Wars through the enemy's perspective. The *Persae* was in a tetralogy of plays that won first prize at the City Dionysia of 472. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that Aeschylus' victory reveals some extent of approval by the Athenian audience, despite the *Persae* showcasing the sentiments of Persian aristocracy written by an Athenian tragedian. Two schools of thought have developed

[1] *The Mirror of Herodotus*, 1988.
[2] *Inventing the Barbarian*, 1989.
[3] *Rethinking the Other in Antiqui*ty, 2011.
[4] "Reinventing the Barbarian," 2020.

in attempts to rectify this apparent cultural dissonance. One camp argues that the *Persae* is a patriotic celebration of the Greek defeat of the Persians, while the other camp argues that the play provides a sympathetic eulogy of the defeated Persians. While the combating perspectives and interpretations will be dealt with in the chapter, I seek to develop the sympathetic reading of the *Persae* by investigating how Aeschylus, by way of the Chorus, frames the Persian people in the opening parodos. Although the playwright includes a number of notorious stereotypes about the Eastern Other, such as extravagant wealth, that should promote a division between them and the Greeks, I will argue that Aeschylus crafts his Persian characters in a manner that makes them familiar, and therefore sympathetic, to the Athenian audience.

In the second chapter, my focus will turn towards Herodotus and his *Histories*, the first book in particular. Just as the Chorus' parodos serves as an introduction to the *Persae*, the preface and first five chapters of Book 1 establish Herodotus' reasoning and desired goal for this massive undertaking in literature. Within these early chapters, Herodotus seeks to explain the causes of the enmity between the Greek West and the barbaric East as he recounts various mythological rapes. The first part of this chapter will be devoted to the extended introduction into the *Histories* proper. Special attention will be given to the "learned men of the Persians" who serve as Herodotus' sources for the Persians' beliefs regarding the origins of their hostility against the Greeks. As I will argue, Herodotus' use of a pro-Persian source such as the Persian *logioi* in the introductory section of the *Histories*, long before the Persians appear as actors in the narrative, prepares the audience to view the Greeks as the main cause for the East/West hostilities. The second half of the chapter will investigate the first episodic narrative of the *Histories*, which I will refer to as the *Croesus/Lydian Logos*. This logos spans roughly the first half of Book 1 before Herodotus then turns to the rise of the Persian Empire under Cyrus. The

Lydian king Croesus is the focus of this section of the *Histories*, as his reign and conflict against the Persian Empire is chronicled. As the first protagonist that the audience accompanies for the first major episode of the text, Croesus offers us an interesting perspective. Although the Lydians are members of the non-Greek Other, they were in conflict with the Persians, meaning that two Othered peoples contended with each other. However, as the audience's perspective is filtered through Croesus and his Lydians, and the practice of Othering is commonly done from a Greek perspective, can the Lydians be considered the Other during the *Croesus Logos*? This will be the driving question behind my analysis of the *Lydian Logos* as I take into account the mingling of Greek culture and the mainland with Croesus' narrative as he prepares for war against the Persians. Although my analyses of the *Persae* and the *Croesus Logos* are fundamentally independent of one another, the results nevertheless reveal that the representation of Easterners by a Greek and for a Greek audience did not produce a static portrayal of the stereotypical non-Greek Other.

First Impressions: Aeschylus' *Persae*

Aeschylus' *Persae* has the distinction of being the only extant Greek tragedy to feature a historical event as its subject matter rather than a mythological theme.[5] First produced in 472 BCE, only eight years after the Greeks' victory over Persia, Aeschylus' *Persae* presents a dramatized version of the final acts of the Persian Wars through the eyes, mouths, and, to some extent, the sentiments of the Persians, the very enemy that various Greek city-states united against at the beginning of the 5th century. The *Persae* certainly had an emotional impact on the Athenian audience watching a tragedy based on the Battle of Salamis in the Theater of Dionysus situated on the southern slope of the Acropolis, which still showed signs of destruction at the hands of Persians when they invaded and sacked Athens during the Persian War in 480. Despite the emotional trauma brought on by the subject matter and setting of the *Persae*, a play featuring an all-Persian *dramatis personae* claimed first prize at the City Dionysia of 472. What is it about this tragedy, which features the same group of Easterners that recently invaded and ravaged the Greek mainland, that resonated so deeply with its audience and elicited an emotional response that led to a tetralogy featuring a tragedy from the enemy's perspective winning first prize at a Panathenaic festival? While we might not ever have a definitive answer to this question, I posit that Aeschylus crafted his Persian characters to reflect a similar image of the Athenian audience back onto themselves during the Chorus' opening parodos, prompting the audience to sympathize with their Eastern enemy.

There are two pervading traditional readings of the *Persae* that might help us consider the ancient audience's reaction while viewing the tragedy. The first reading, prevalent in the nineteenth century, treats the tragedy as a "patriotic expression" that celebrates and

[5] Although the only extant "historical" tragedy, the *Persians* was by no means the first. Prior to Aeschylus, the tragedian Phrynichus staged the plays *The Sack of Miletus* and *Phoenissae* (*Phoenician Women*).

commemorates the Greek victory over the Persians entirely from the "Greek perspective."[6] Scholars who subscribe to this view have argued that the play is not "truly tragic."[7] According to this "patriotic" reading, we can assume that the Greek audience would have rejoiced at the many misfortunes of the all-Persian cast as they lamented for the future of their kingdom after learning about Xerxes' defeat at Salamis. In the *Frogs*, Aristophanes celebrates the "historical tragedy" by having his Aeschylus claim that he "taught [the Athenians] to always desire to defeat the enemy" in reference to the *Persae*.[8] Could Aristophanes' sentiment concerning the impact the *Persae* had on the Athenians be taken as the earliest example of a "patriotic" reading of the play?[9] The scholars who subscribe to this perspective agree that Aeschylus drew a distinction between the morals of the Greeks and the Persians, especially regarding the theme of hubris.[10] As Edith Hall argues, "Aeschylus implies not that all men are subject to the same human laws, but that the barbarian character, in contrast with the free and disciplined Hellene, is luxuriant and materialistic, emotional, impulsive, and despotic, and therefore especially liable to excess and its consequences".[11] Following Hall's perspective that the Greeks' writing about barbarians is an exercise of "self-definition" that produces the opposite of the ideal Greek, these contrasting characteristics separate the Greeks' newly defined "Greekness" from the Eastern Persian's "Otherness" that became deeply polarized due to the Greco-Persian Wars.[12]

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[6] Hall 1989, 71.
[7] Blomfield 1818, Prickard 1879, Murray 1939.
[8] Aristoph. *Frogs* 1026ff, ἐπιθυμεῖν ἐξεδίδαξα | νικᾶν ἀεὶ τοὺς ἀντιπάλους
[9] As Haywood noted in his 2017 article, "it is important to be mindful here that Aristophanes' comedy was produced in 405, near the end of the Peloponnesian War. A considerable time had thus elapsed between Aeschylus' and Aristophanes' works; this sole passage can hardly be interpreted as authoritative evidence of the audience's response to the drama in 472." Page 32, note 11.
[10] Lattimore 1943, Podlecki 1966, Goldhill 1988.
[11] Hall 1989, 71.
[12] Hall 1989, 1.

Recent scholars have favored a new interpretation which has largely supplanted the canonical "patriotic" reading. This perspective views the *Persae* as a "true tragedy," arguing that "the Greek theological and moral infrastructure" found in most Greek tragedies was present throughout this particular tragedy and that the Persians were portrayed as "notably sympathetic,"[13] especially the chorus that represented the unfortunate Persian people as a "collective tragic 'hero'" that was at the center of attention throughout the tragedy. Combining aspects of both approaches, Hall has proposed that the Greek audience viewing the Persians could have enjoyed "patriotic pride and a sense of ethnic superiority" over the defeated Persians, while also releasing their own powerful emotions as they watch them projected onto their barbarian Other.[14] As Munteanu has summarized, the *Persae* would have allowed the Athenians the opportunity to mourn their own losses from the war indirectly as they saw the misfortunes that came upon their enemies, suggesting that the Greek spectator felt pity similar to the act of mourning when he sensed similarities between the Other (tragic character) and the Self.[15] In this reading, Aeschylus expresses sympathy for the people of Persia, represented by the chorus of Persian elders, following their military defeat at Salamis and provides a "universalist perspective that transcends national sentiment or ethnic antagonism."[16] In keeping with this "truly tragic" reading of the *Persae*, I believe that the chorus' parodos can illuminate Aeschylus' underlying sympathetic portrayals of the Persians, despite their status as the "barbaric Other" and the "panhellenic enemy."

Although these two interpretations are the polar opposites of each other, as the "patriotic" reading eliminates any semblance of pity as a possible response to the Persians while the

[13] Hall 1989, 71.
[14] Hall 1996, 19.
[15] Munteanu 2012, 152.
[16] Gruen 2012, 10.

"sympathetic" reading emphasizes that emotional effect, nevertheless both readings are valid and invaluable in the study of the *Persae* as a literary work. For instance, one could interpret the appearance of Xerxes in the final act of the play as a clear example of either reading. The Persian king returns to Susa defeated with his royal clothing torn and tattered. The costume itself is a visual representation of Xerxes', and to some extent Persia's, downfall.[17] It is easy to imagine that the Athenian audience would have felt a sense of pride when seeing the extravagant "King of kings" reduced to such a state. However, the tattered costume can also be interpreted as a manifested representation of grief and loss. Prior to Xerxes' arrival, Darius' ghost has notified the Chorus of the appearance of Xerxes' clothes, which have been made tattered through his grief (Aes. *Pers*. 835-6). As Wyles has argued, this information given to the Chorus offers direction to the external audience for how they should perceive the clothing when the Persian king does appear.[18] As the chorus learns that Xerxes' distressed appearance is due to his own grief, it is equally reasonable that a sense of *pathos* could have elicited a sympathetic response from the audience. Therefore, the debate regarding a definitive interpretation of the *Persae* could continue with no clear conclusion in sight.

The *Persae* opens with a parodos performed by the chorus which was composed of elderly Persian royal advisors. Immediately, the vast wealth and luxury of the Persian Empire is mentioned by the chorus, as they are the "guardians of the wealthy and gold-rich palaces."[19] In the first four lines, Aeschylus perpetuates the "luxuriant Persian" stereotype of Easterners living in sumptuous and excessive wealth.[20] The tragedian has already colored our first impression of the Persian people by superimposing this stereotypical portrayal onto his cast. In the parodos

[17] Thalmann 1980, 269.
[18] Wyles 2011, 51.
[19] Aes. *Pers*. 3f. καὶ τῶν ἀφνεῶν καὶ πολυχρύσων | ἑδράνων φύλακες.
[20] For more about gold in the *Persae*, see Hall 1989, 80ff.

alone, the chorus mentions "gold" in relation to the Persian Empire a total of 4 times.[21] As Hall notes in her commentary, the gold of Asia is a common signifier of the barbarian peoples in the *Persae*.[22] Furthermore, other scholars, such as Thalmann,[23] argue that Aeschylus' focus on the Persians' wealth and luxury in the beginning is meant to sharply contrast with the fall of the empire's power at the end of the play following Xerxes' defeat at Salamis and his humiliating return to Susa. The reiteration of the wealth of Persia in the opening scene of the play shows Aeschylus' intention to establish his characters within the "luxuriant Persian" stereotype only to showcase that same fortune reversed as a result of a Greek victory. Therefore, I argue that Aeschylus' continuation of this particular stereotype was meant to immediately establish a clear division between the luxuriant Persian characters on the stage and the Athenian/Greek audience members. Thus, the Greek audience was primed to view the characters as the non-Greek Other.

Later in the parodos, the chorus, on the one hand, appears to be anxious both for the Persian forces and for the future of the Persian Empire and rule in Asia, should the expedition against mainland Greece fail, but, on the other hand, sings praises for the same Persian forces they are simultaneously worried for and celebrates their strength (Aes. *Pers*. 8-154). Immediately after introducing themselves, the chorus makes it known that the "heart within me is very much troubled" concerning the return of Xerxes and his army.[24] The chorus even describes their hearts (θυμός) as "evil predicting" (κακόμαντις), suggesting that the chorus is already expecting the worst for their king and his forces. As the Persian elders continue, they remark that "all the strong Asian-born men have departed,"[25] and that they have "left behind Susa and Ecbatana and

[21] Lines 3, 45, 53, 80.
[22] Hall 1996, 107.
[23] Thalmann 1980, 267ff.
[24] Aes. *Pers*. 11f., … ἄγαν ὀρσολοπεῖται | θυμός ἔσωθεν.
[25] Aes. *Pers*. 12f., πᾶσα γὰρ ἰσχὺς Ἀσιατογενὴς | οἴχωκε

the ancient walls of Kissia."[26] In these lines, it is revealed that many, if not all, of Persia's inhabitants fit for fighting have departed from Asia to invade Greece. At first glance, this could be seen as a grand boast exalting the great quantity and strength of the Persian soldiers fighting in the war.

Next, the chorus begins a catalogue of sorts detailing the commanders, fighters, and contingents from various kingdoms under Persian rule (such as Lydia and Egypt),[27] which inflates the Persian numbers greatly:

> οἷος Ἀμίστρης ἠδ᾽Ἀρταφρένης
> καὶ Μεγαβάτης ἠδ᾽Ἀστάσπης
> ταγοὶ Πεσῶν,
> βασιλῆς βασιλέως ὕποχοι μεγάλου,
> σοῦνται, στρατιᾶς πολλῆς ἔφοροι,
> …
> ἄλλους δ᾽ὁ μέγας καὶ πολυθρέμμων
> Νεῖλος ἔπεμψεν· …
> …
> ἁβροδιαίτων δ᾽ἔπεται Λυδῶν
> ὄχλος, οἵτ᾽ἐπίπαν ἠπειρογενὲς
> κατέχουσιν ἔνθος, …
> …
> στεῦνται δ᾽ἱεροῦ Τμώλου πελάται
> ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλεῖν δούλιον Ἑλλάδι,
> Μάρδων, Θάρυβις, λόγχης ἄκμονες,
> καὶ ἀκοντισταὶ Μυσοὶ· Βαβυλὼν δ᾽
> ἡ πολύχρυσος πάμμεικτον ὄχλον
> πέμπει σύρδην, …
> …
> τὸ μαχαιροφόρον τ᾽ἔνθος ἐκ πάσης
> Ἀσίας ἔπεται
> δεινᾶς βασιλέως ὑπὸ πομπαῖς.
>
> (Aes. *Pers*. 21-55)

Men like Amistres and Artaphrenes, and Megabates and Astaspes, commanders of the Persians, kings subjected to the great King, are set in motion, overseers of the

[26] Aes. *Pers*. 16-17, οἵτε τὸ Σούσων ἠδ᾽ Ἀγβατάνων | καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν Κίσσιον ἔρκος
[27] Aes. *Pers*. 21-55

> enormous army, … The great and all-nourishing Nile sent others: … And a crowd of luxuriant Lydians follow, who control the entire continental-born race, … And those near sacred Tmolus promise themselves to cast the yoke of slavery around Greece, Mardon, Tharybis, thunderbolts of the spear, and the javelin-hurling Mysians; and Babylon, rich in gold, sends forth a mixed crowd in a long line, … And the knife-bearing race from all of Asia follows at the dreaded summons of the King.[28]

This focus on so great a mass of forces opposing the Greeks was perhaps threatening to the Greek audience. With not even a decade between the end of the war and the staging of the *Persae*, surely the audience remembered the massive army that invaded and destroyed many of the mainland city-states, Athens included. As the Persian army is described as "a terrifying sight to behold" (φοβεροὶ μὲν ἰδεῖν, Aes. *Pers*. 27), the Chorus likely stirred painful memories in the Athenian audience as they are forced to recall the not-so-distant past of the Persian invasion.[29] Therefore, the audience, once again, should be primed to view the Persians as their enemy, a very powerful and frightening enemy at that. The catalogue of so great an invading force should also, however, prompt the audience to remember that, perhaps against all odds, the Greeks managed to defeat such an armada. While lauding the vast numbers that fought on the Persian side, the chorus is also reminding the Athenians of the peoples they successfully defended mainland Greece against. While possibly eliciting a "patriotic" response from the audience, Aeschylus is already alluding to the end of the war, which ends poorly for the side represented by the chorus.

Despite the explicit praise, once the chorus finishes recounting the Persians' assembled forces, their tone switches once again as they begin to comment on the emptiness of their land now that Xerxes has invaded the Greek mainland:

[28] All translations are my own unless stated otherwise.
[29] Munteanu 2012, 158.

τοινόδ᾽ἀνθος Περσίδος αἴας
οἴχεται ἀνδρῶν,
οὕς πέρι πᾶσα χθῶν Ἀσιῆτις
θρέψασα πόθῳ στένεται μαλερῷ,
τοκέες τ᾽ἄλοχοί θ᾽ἡμερολεγδὸν
τείνοντα χρόνον τρομέονται.

(Aes. *Pers*. 59-64)

Such was the flower of the men of the Persian land that has departed, for whom the entire Asiatic land, which nurtured them, grieves with soft yearning, and parents and wives, counting the days, tremble at the stretching time.

Previously, in lines 16-17, the chorus remarked that the warriors have departed from the Persian cities. Left behind in the country are those who would have been considered on the periphery of society like the women and the elderly men of the chorus.[30] In these lines, the chorus reiterates this departure, but also frames their absence in a sympathetic light, both for the land of Persia itself and the warriors' own family members. The land of Asia is described as having nurtured or raised the men. Furthermore, the land is personified by the chorus as it grieves for the men who have now departed. Perhaps the chorus is projecting their collective anxiety concerning the war effort onto the homeland itself. The feeling of the earth towards the warriors abroad is followed by the same type of longing, this time belonging to the parents and wives of the soldiers. The family members are waiting for the return of their loved ones. It is certainly possible that the Greek audience would have felt sympathy in this particular selection, not specifically for Persia as a state, but more likely for the Persians as a people. No matter on which side someone fell, the Persian Wars would have been equally traumatic for both the Greeks and the Persians and their allies, thanks in part to the widescale invasion of the Greek mainland and the massive loss of lives on both sides. The lines above, I believe, transcend that physical animosity that would have most likely permeated the Greeks, particularly among the Athenians, in the few years following

[30] Kantzios 2004, 16.

the war and appealed to the emotions of the audience members. Many of the Greeks would have been familiar with that sense of yearning for the return of a loved one from war, not unlike what the Persian chorus is narrating.

Additionally, the chorus' description of the men who have left Persia behind in the lines above these lines are rife with plant imagery. The Persian warriors are spoken of as the "flower" of the Persian land (ἄνθος Περσίδος αἴας). As Dué posits, "the depiction of the Persian army as an ἄνθος of the land is reminiscent of Athenian traditions in which soldiers who have died fighting for their city are consistently imagined to be at the peak of their youth."[31] If Dué's conclusion is to be accepted, the Athenian audience watching the *Persae* would have been able to recognize some similarities between their conception of their own citizen warriors in relation to Aeschylus' representation of the Persian warriors. Taking the plant metaphor further, the chorus continues on, saying that the "flower" was "nurtured by the entire Asiatic land" (…πᾶσα χθῶν Ἀσιῆτις | θρέψασα…). With these lines in mind, I would like to point out a similar sentiment from Book 18 of the *Iliad* as Thetis laments with her fellow Nereids as she hears Achilles wailing after learning about the death of his companion Patroclus:

> … ὅ δ᾽ἀνέδραμεν ἔρνεϊ ἶσος·
> τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ θρέψασα φυτὸν ὥς γουνῷ ἀλωῆς
> νηυσὶν ἐπιπροέηκα κορωνίσιν Ἴλιον εἴσω
> Τρωσὶ μαχησόμενον· …
>
> (Hom. *Il*. 18.56-59)
>
> … and he shot up like a sapling; I nurtured him like a plant on the hill of an orchard and I sent him off on the beaked ships to Ilion in order to fight with the Trojans; …

Here, Achilles, not unlike the Persian army, is likened to a plant, first as an ἔρνος and then as a φυτόν. The similarities continue as Thetis brings up the manner in which she "nurtured" (θρέψαι)

[31] Dué 2006, 64.

her son Achilles before promptly sending him off to war. Alternatively, the Asiatic land, not their mothers or fathers, "nurtured" the Persian warriors before they go off to war, which leads the land itself to grieve for the Persian men it raised. According to the chorus in the *Persae*, the land of the empire has taken on the role of rearing the Persian children which, as we saw with the relationship between Thetis and Achilles in Book 18 of the *Iliad*, was a task usually performed by the parents of the children. In fact, the Persian parents are relegated to a secondary position when it comes to the remembrance of the men who left to fight. First, the Asiatic land yearns for the warriors it once raised, and then the parents, alongside the wives, of the men are described as waiting for their loved ones' return. I would even argue that the parents do not participate in any sort of lament, while the Asiatic land does lament. The land is described as "groaning with soft yearning" (πόθῳ στένεται μαλερῷ) for the men. Groaning was an integral part of lamentation practices in the Greek world, even during the Bronze Age. On the other hand, the parents and wives are left to "tremble at the stretching time" (τείνοντα χρόνον τρομέονται) while "counting the days" (ἡμερολεγδόν).

With that in mind, I would like to propose a new interpretation of these lines that has major implications for the sympathetic reading of the *Persae*. It is well known today that the Athenians believed themselves to be an autochthonous group of people.[32] The word autochthonous means they were born from the land itself, and the Athenians used local myths relating to Attic figures such as Cecrops and Erechtheus as proof of their ancient ancestry. Some scholars argue that the importance of autochthony as an Athenian nationalistic motif was at its peak in the 430s at the outset of the Peloponnesian War against Sparta. The Greek word αὐτόχθων does not appear in extant Greek literature until the tragedies of Aeschylus in the 460s

[32] For a general introduction to the concept of autochthony, please see James Roy's chapter "*Autochthony in Ancient Greece*" in McInerney's "*A Companion to Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean*."

and 450s, about two decades after the *Persae* debuted.[33] As Forsdyke notes, "this word signals a shift in the basic orientation of the Athenian myth of origins. Rather than focusing on the Athenians as a population rooted in Attica on the basis of their descent from earthborn kings, the Athenians now stress their continuous habitation of Attica."[34] Blok, in particular, uses Pericles' Funeral Oration in Thucydides' *Histories* (2.36), and interprets the beginning to mean that "the Athenians lived in Attica from the earliest times and consequently grew strong."[35] While I do agree with Blok and other scholars who put the prime of Athenian autochthony belief at this time, I would argue that the concept of autochthonous origins was present in Athens during the Persian Wars and the years following when the *Persae* was staged. Herodotus records this noteworthy statement as the Athenians argue in favor of their leading the navy against the Persians:

> μάτην γὰρ ἂν ὧδε πάραλον Ἑλλήνων στρατὸν πλεῖστον εἴημεν ἐκτημένοι, εἰ Συρηκοσίοισι ἐόντες Ἀθηναῖοι συγχωρήσομεν τῆς ἡγεμονίης, ἀρχαιότατον μὲν ἔθνος παρεχόμενοι, μοῦνοι δὲ ἐόντες οὐ μετανάσται Ἑλλήνων: τῶν καὶ Ὅμηρος ὁ ἐποποιὸς ἄνδρα ἄριστον ἔφησε ἐς Ἴλιον ἀπικέσθαι τάξαι τε καὶ διακοσμῆσαι στρατόν. οὕτω οὐκ ὄνειδος οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἐστι λέγειν ταῦτα.' (Hdt. 7.161.3)
>
> 'For it would be in vain that we, having procured for ourselves, are the greatest seafaring army of the Greeks, if we, the Athenians, yield our command to the Syracusans, we who are the oldest race, and the only ones of the Greeks who did not migrate: and from which (stock) the poet Homer said that the best man to marshal and arrange the army came to Ilion.'

Here Herodotus explains how the Athenians pointed to their autochthony as an argument for their naval leadership. We cannot be entirely sure whether this was truly expressed during the preparations of an upcoming naval excursion or was simply a product of the mid-fifth century

[33] Forsdyke 2012, 131.
[34] Forsdyke 2012, 132.
[35] Blok 2009, 254f.

sentiments regarding Athenian autochthony inserted retroactively by the author. Herodotus could very well be inserting the myth anachronistically here. Regardless, it is worth noting that an autochthonous origin is being used as supporting evidence by the Athenians in this particular situation, insinuating the importance the Athenians placed on their mythological origins. The Athenians argue that they are the best candidates to lead the fleet against the Persians for two reasons:[36] Firstly, they are the oldest of races and "the only Greeks to not migrate."[37] The Athenians are contrasted with the Syracusans who migrated to Sicily as colonists. While Herodotus does not delve into the details of the origins of the Syracusans, Thucydides describes the cites of Sicily as "populated by a commingled crowd (ὄχλοις ξυμμείκτοις) and easily accept changes and additions to their citizens (τῶν πολιτῶν)" (6.17.2). More specifically for the people of Syracuse, the Greek historian and geographer Strabo records their origins from colonists coming from Corinth and Tenea (8.6.22). Therefore, it would be a valid counterargument for the Athenians to use their autochthonous origins against a people who are comprised of migrants and foreigners.

The second reason the Herodotean Athenians believe that they are the best candidates to lead the fleet against the Persians comes from the words of Homer concerning the Athenians and their leader in the *Iliad*:

> οἳ δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ Ἀθήνας εἶχον ἐϋκτίμενον πτολίεθρον
> δῆμον Ἐρεχθῆος μεγαλήτορος, ὅν ποτ᾽ Ἀθήνη
> θρέψε Διὸς θυγάτηρ, τέκε δὲ ζείδωρος ἄρουρα,
> κὰδ δ᾽ ἐν Ἀθήνῃς εἷσεν ἑῷ ἐν πίονι νηῷ:
> …
> τῶν αὖθ᾽ ἡγεμόνευ᾽ υἱὸς Πετεῶο Μενεσθεύς.
>
> (Hom. *Il*. 2.546-52)

[36] Pelling 2009, 481.
[37] Such a statement falls into Forsdyke's observation that the "continued habitation of Attica" now supersedes the Athenians' belief that they are "rooted in Attica based on the decent of earthborn kings".

> And those that held Athens, the well-built citadel, the land of great-hearted Erectheus, whom Athena, the daughter of Zeus, once raised, whom the grain-giving earth bore, and she placed him in Athens in her own rich sanctuary: … again, Menestheus, the son of Peteos, led them.

In the Catalogue of Ships, the Athenian contingent is described prominently in apposition as having the land (δῆμον) that bore the mythical hero Erechtheus. This mythic ancestor is "born from the earth," meaning that he is an autochthonous figure. I believe that these lines in the *Iliad* serve as evidence that the Athenians had connections to earth-born figures long before the sentiments of autochthony became prominent features of Athenian propaganda in the mid-5th century following the Persian Wars.[38] If the Athenians asserted their autochthony as vehemently as they did in the mid-5th century in years before, it is not attested. However, one must not dismiss that Athenian belief in their own autochthony and supporting myths were very ingrained in their society and date back at least to the eighth century. In fact, as Forsdyke claims, the Athenians' claim to the region of Attica is based on their connection to earthborn kings, such as Erechtheus and Cecrops.[39] Therefore, I would suggest that autochthony played a role in the Athenian identity long before the extant sources, such as Herodotus and Thucydides, openly describe the Athenians with overt autochthonous descriptors. As such, the latent autochthonous sentiment was present for the Athenians before, during, and shortly after the Persian Wars.

Now that the case of Athenian autochthonous self-identification prior to the Persian Wars can be made, I propose that Aeschylus alludes to autochthony in the chorus lines 59-64. I must take the time to note that I am not suggesting that the peak of popularity regarding autochthonous identification occurred earlier than the mid-5th-century window that modern scholarship has generally agreed upon. What I am suggesting, however, is that Aeschylus is simply engaging

[38] Rosivach 1987, 294-295. For more about the figure of Erechtheus/Erichthonius (the two are often conflated together in early Greek myth), I suggest the first chapter of Nicole Loraux's seminal *The Children of Athena*.
[39] Forsdyke 2012, 129.

with an early form of Athenian autochthony in his early-5th-century tragedy, in particular the belief that the Athenians had a connection to the land of Attica based on descent from earthborn kings, and this passage in the *Persae* should be viewed as a later example of the earlier version of autochthony as it soon develops into the version of autochthony that is based on continued habitation of Attica. Since the Persian Empire is comprised of various kingdoms ranging from Asia Minor through the Levant to Egypt, there is no way the Achaemenids could have successfully framed the Persian people as an autochthonous race when considering their subjugation under the Medes prior to Cyrus' revolution. Although the Persians could not make any claim of autochthony in Asia Minor, Aeschylus uses the language of the land as nurturer in a way that Athenians might relate to, given their own mythology. The Persian warriors were raised by the earth itself, referred to as the χθών, which is in the word autochthony itself. The land is the primary lamenter for the absent men, not their own parents or wives. The people of Persia do not have a strong mythology of autochthony, and in their introduction in the *Histories*, Herodotus does not even suggest it.[40]

Therefore, due to the lack of a substantial autochthonous mythology or lineage, I argue that, as the chorus remarks that the land is groaning for the men it raised, Aeschylus is actually crafting an autochthonous mythology for the Persian people in order to present them in a familiar manner to his Athenian audience. Since the Athenians would have had views of their own autochthonous mythology by 472, they surely would have been primed to recognize similar sentiments of being entirely native to an area or region. In this manner, Aeschylus consciously has his Persian characters mirror a cultural aspect of the Athenians. While it is impossible to definitively state the reasoning behind Aeschylus' inclusion of this detail, I would not rule out

[40] Herodotus' account of the rise of the Persian Empire at the hands of Cyrus begins at 1.95.

the possibility that sympathy for the Persian people played a part, either an intentionally sought-after response by the tragedian or a simple byproduct of this mirroring.

After the lines dedicated to yearning for the warriors from the Asiatic land, their parents, and their wives, the chorus begins its first strophic lyric system (Aes. *Pers*. 65-139).[41] In the first two sets of strophes/antistrophes, the chorus praises the strength of the Persian army and their commander-king Xerxes. We see an immediate change in the content of the chorus' song, from a soft lament for the warriors to a sweeping exaltation of those same forces and men leading their cause. In the first strophe, the extraordinary might of the army is the main focus, where it is described as an army that "annihilates cities" (περσέπτολις).[42] The yoking of the Hellespont is also referenced as a further praise of the army's strength. The praise of the army continues into the antistrophe alongside praise for Xerxes:

> πολυάνδρου δ᾽Ἀσίας θούριος ἄρχων ἀντ. α
> ἐπὶ πᾶσαν χθόνα ποιμανόριον θεῖον ἐλαύνει
> διχόθεν, πεζονόμοις ἔκ τε θαλάσσας,
> ὀχυροῖσι πεποιθὼς
> στυφελοῖς ἐφέταις, χρυσογόνου γενεᾶς ἰσόθεος φώς.
>
> (Aes. *Pers*. 74-80)
>
> The rushing leader of many-maned Asia drives his divine army against every land from both sides, commanding over the earth from the sea, trusting in his strong and tough commanders, a man equal to the gods, born of the golden race.

In these lines, both the army and Xerxes himself are described as being "equal to gods" or "divine." These descriptions are the ultimate praise of strength, going as far to raise up the army and Xerxes to the status of gods or, at the very least, near-gods. Following the first strophe describing the yoking of the Hellespont, a feat never before accomplished, the way the chorus is

[41]For a short discussion of the meter in these strophes and antistrophes and how they helped to create a more "eastern" atmosphere, see Hall's 1996 notes on these lines.
[42] Hall 1996 notes etymology of περσέπτολις and likely an exercise in word play, as the "pers- element is connected with πέρσαι" and the term may also suggest the place-name Persepolis, 113.

praising the army and Xerxes is somewhat supernatural, and most likely would have chilled the Greek audience.

Regardless of the chorus' exaltation of the Persian army, the Persian elders shift tone in the epode:

> δολόμητιν δ'ἀπάταν θεοῦ ἐπῳδ.
> τίς ἀνὴρ θνατὸς ἀλύξει;
> τίς ὁ κραιπνῷ ποδὶ πηδήματος εὐπετέος ἀνάσσων;
> φιλόφρων γὰρ ποτισαίνουσα τὸ πρῶτον παράγει
> βροτὸν εἰς ἀκρύστατ᾽Ἄτα·
> τόθεν οὐκ ἔστιν ὑπὲρ θνατὸν ἀλύξαντα φυγεῖν.
>
> (Aes. *Pers*. 93-100)
>
> But what mortal man can escape a cunning trick of the god? Who, with a swift foot, is a king of an easy leap? For kindly Atë, fawning at first, leads a mortal into her nets; from under which it is not possible for a mortal man, who escaped, to flee.

This epode changes the direction of the chorus' strophic lyric system, from one of praise and certainty in the military strength of the empire to one of uncertainty concerning the outcome of the war and leads to a lament comparable to one from the same chorus in lines 59-64.[43] While both Xerxes and his army were described as being similar to gods in antistrophe A, here in this epode, it appears that the chorus is suggesting that Xerxes and the men of his army are only similar to gods, not actual gods, and are still susceptible to the whims and deceits of the actual gods. Suddenly, the high and mighty Persian soldiers and their king-commander have plummeted in status and are now no more special than any other mortal men. Perhaps the epode served as an open-ended warning ultimately hinting that the Persians would be victims of Atë or other divinities. One thing that we can be sure of is that in the span of this epode, Aeschylus, by way

[43] Note about the issues in placing the lines of the epode in the manuscripts, Garvie 2009, 46ff.

of the chorus, has managed to lift the veil shrouding the mortality of the supposedly divine king Xerxes and his Persian army.

The strophic system continues as the chorus focuses on the once-great exploits of the Persians in war:

θεόθεν γὰρ κατὰ Μοῖρ᾽ἐκράτησεν στρ. γ.
τὸ παλαιόν, ἐπέσκηψε δὲ Πέρσαις
πολέμους πυργοδαΐκτους
διέπειν ἱπποχάρμας τε κλόνους πόλεών τ᾽ἀναστάσεις.

ἔμαθον δ᾽εὐρυπόροιο θαλάσσας ἀντ. γ.
πολιαινομένας πνεύματι λάβρῳ
ἐσορᾶν πόντιον ἄλσος,
πίσυνοι λεπτοδομοις πείσμασι λαοπόροις τε μαχαναῖς.

ταῦτα μοι μελαγχίτων φρὴν ἀμύσσεται φόβῳ, στρ. δ.
“ὀᾶ Περσικοῦ στρατεύματος”, τοῦδε μὴ πόλις πύθη-
ται, κένανδρον μέγ᾽ἄστυ Σουσίδος·

καὶ τὸ Κισσίων πόλισμ᾽ἀντίδουπον ᾴσεται, ἀντ. δ.
“ὀᾶ”, τοῦτ᾽ἔπος γυναικοπληθὴς ὅμιλος ἀπύων,
βυσσίνοις δ᾽ἐν πέπλοις πέσῃ λακίς.

(Aes. *Pers*. 101-125)

For Fate, ordained by the gods, long ago prevailed, and commanded the Persians to conduct wars which destroy walls, the turmoil of horse-fighting, and the storming of cities. But they learned to look upon the precinct of the ocean, the broad-pathed sea which whitens by the violent wind, trusting in their slender cables which give passage to their army. Because of these things, a black cloak tears my heart with fear, “*oa* the Persian army”, lest the city learn this, that the great city of Susa is empty of men; and the buildings of Kissia will sing in response, “*oa*”, this is the word a crowd of women will call out, and tatters will fall from the linen robes.

In these lines, the chorus acknowledges the role that fate and the divine supposedly played in the rise of the Persian Empire, as the elders cite the martial prowess of the Persians being somewhat ordained by the gods. In the following antistrophe, however, the chorus notes what appears to be a limitation of that divine ordinance that will perhaps lead to a downfall.

Initially, the manner of warfare the Persians were allowed to be successful in was that which destroyed walls (πυργοδαΐκτους), involved the calvary (ἱπποχάρμας), and resulted in the storming of cities (πόλεών τ᾽ἀναστάσεις), which could all be broadly categorized under land warfare, especially when considering the inclusion of the cavalry. However, it is soon revealed that the Persians have also become adept at waging war on the sea. The antistrophe begins with the conjunction δέ, which I interpret as a "but," indicating a related, but ultimately opposite, set of circumstances. Similarly, the main verbs introducing the strophe and antistrophe can be viewed as conflicting. Fate is the actor which "commanded" (ἐπέσκηψε) the Persians to wage such wars as described above. Conversely, the Persians took it upon themselves to "learn" (μάθειν) the art of naval warfare. When it comes to naval warfare, the Persians were the active party in taking up this particular method of war, which was not ordained by any higher power. Is it possible that this antistrophe hints at a leading theme regarding the downfall of Xerxes in this tragedy, namely hubris?

I have made the case that these lines establish land warfare as the method of war granted to the Persians by Fate and the gods, while naval warfare was not ordained, instead taken up solely by the will and desires of the Persians. The following strophe (δ) acknowledges the adoption of naval warfare as a reason why the chorus' hearts are now in distress (ταῦτα μοι μελαγχίτων φρὴν ἀμύσσεται φόβῳ). At this point in the play, the chorus has no knowledge about the Battle of Salamis, a major naval victory for the Greeks, which is narrated by the Messenger to Queen Atossa later in the tragedy.[44] However, the subsequent reaction to the Messenger's speech treats Salamis as the ultimate defeat of the Persians at the hands of the Greeks and hardly makes mention of the Battle of Plataea, which is considered to be the true final battle of the

[44] Narration of the Battle of Salamis and the resulting outcome by the Messenger occurs at lines 353-514.

Persian Wars. In establishing the adoption of naval warfare as a possible cause of distress for the chorus of elders, I believe that Aeschylus had foreshadowed the outcome of Salamis in order to plant the seeds of a tragic reversal of fortune due to the hubristic actions of the Persians in taking up sea battles. Taking into account this interpretation, as the Athenian audience watched the play, perhaps they also realized this example of foreshadowing to the Battle of Salamis, which surely was a source of pride for the *polis*.

If the chorus had ended here, it would have been valid to assume the audience saw the Persians to blame for their own inevitable downfall, which might lead to a lack of sympathy regarding the people characterized on the stage. However, the chorus continues on with their lyric section and ends with a deep lament for the Persian army:

> λέκτρα δ᾽ἀνδρῶν πόθῳ πίμπλαται δακρύμασιν· ἀντ. ε.
> Περσίδες δ᾽ἀβροπενθεῖς ἑκάστα πόθῳ φιλάνορι
> τὸν αἰχμάεντα θοῦρον εὐνατῆρ᾽ἀποπεμψαμένα
> λείπεται μονόζυξ.
>
> (Aes. *Pers*. 134-139)
>
> Marriage-beds are filled with the tears from the yearning for husbands; each Persian woman, having sent their spear wielding husband, is left in a lonely marriage-yoke with sad, loving longing for him.

Here, the Persian elders are narrating a consequence of the departure of the empire's forces, focusing on the impact of the wives left behind. As Dué notes, this lament is heavily erotic in nature as the chorus remarks upon the emptiness of the marriage bed apart from tears and the longing of a wife for her husband.[45] Much like the similar sentiment in the stanza in lines 59-64 discussed above, the chorus interacts with the universal image of the wife yearning for the return of her husband from war. As the Athenian audience surely could relate to this lamentable side

[45] Dué 2009, 75. Dué draws upon an interpretation of the *Epitaph for Adonis* by the Hellenistic poet Bion. For more on her reading, see pgs. 67ff.

effect of disastrous war, I believe that this sentiment would have emotionally affected the audience as it recalled past memories, leading to sympathy, if not for the Persian people as a whole, then at least for the Persian women.

In conclusion, the parodos of Aeschylus' *Persae* is rife with examples of sympathetic, or at least empathetic, portrayals of the Persian people, despite the tragedy being intended for an Athenian/Greek audience. By imposing an Athenian-esque autochthonous reading on top of the chorus' lament for the Persian youth, I have argued that Aeschylus employed common Athenian sentiments with regard to the framing of the Persian Wars, as detailed by the chorus. Therefore, the *Persae* as a text lies within the middle-ground of a sharp contrast between the Greek West and the barbaric East and the compassion which the playwright holds for the defeated Persians as a people.

First Impressions: Herodotus' *Histories*

At the very beginning of his *Histories*, Herodotus makes it clear that there is a long-standing dichotomy between the Greeks and "non-Greeks," commonly and collectively referred to as "barbarians," a derivative of the word βαρβάρος, which the author himself employs in the preface of his work.[46] At the onset of the text, he clarifies that the subject of the *Histories* will not be focused on the deeds of the Greeks alone, but that of the "barbarians" as well.

> Ἡροδότου Ἁλικαρνησσέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, τά τε ἄλλα καὶ δι᾽ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.
>
> (Hdt. 1.0.)
>
> The following is the result of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that the accomplishments of men do not become faded in time, nor the great deeds and wonders, both those accomplished by the Greeks and by the barbarians, become inglorious, and other matters as well as by what reason they waged war against each other.

As Herodotus sets out to record the results of his ἱστορίης (inquiry), he does so in a way that is arguably impartial and encompasses many races and cultural groups throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. While this approach can be considered a hallmark of Herodotus in his *Histories*, he was not the first author to do so.[47] Herodotus was also not the first Greek author to write about non-Greek peoples. Hecataeus of Miletus was an early Ionian logographer who wrote a geography and ethnography of the ancient Mediterranean world known as the *Periodos Ges* ("Journey Around the World"), in which he offered information about the places and peoples throughout the Mediterranean and included digressions into Scythia, Persia, and other inland kingdoms. Unfortunately, there are only about 300 fragments of Hecataeus' work that have survived into the modern day, leaving Herodotus with the distinction of being one of the earliest

[46] Hdt. 1.0. …τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα…
[47] Homer's treatment of both the Achaeans and the Trojans in the Iliad was arguably impartial as sympathy was shown to both sides regardless of race or ethnicity.

prose logographers whose writing is fully extant and who gives his modern-day readers a multicultural account of the ancient Greek world. Whether this multicultural approach is a product of Herodotus' aim in recording his "inquiry" or not, I cannot definitively say, but it is worth noting that other authors across genres at this time do not interact with and display the perspectives of numerous groups of people as Herodotus does as he records his findings of various groups, spanning from the Lydians, to the Persians, Scythians, Egyptians, Greeks, etc. while also shifting between just as many points of view. Thus, as the subjects of various books and sections change from one group to another, I would argue that this inconsistent focus leaves most of the *Histories* without an explicit and everlasting ethnic group that serves as the "Other," which represents the antithesis of another ethnic group, usually the Greeks.

Commonly, the collective term "barbarian," comprised of numerous Near Eastern ethnic groups including the Persians, will often represent the Other for the Greeks in much of Greek literature. However, as the *Histories* is not necessarily focused on one singular group to the contrast of another, there is no set group of people that serves the role of the Other until perhaps the last 3 books, which depict the Greco-Persian Wars and are told primarily from the Greek perspective. In those books, the Persian enemy is clearly defined as the Other. As Erich Gruen has argued in his *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*, the Persian Wars served as a catalyst for the creation of such stark dichotomies between the Greeks and the Persians, which have expanded to represent the differences between the Greeks and the generic barbarian.[48] While the formerly dominant opinion in scholarship favored a strong separation between the Greeks and the Other, Gruen argues conversely that there is no straight antithesis between the two groups and that the denotation of the Other is rather complicated and nuanced. While I very much agree with

[48] Gruen 2011.

Gruen's conclusion, I would additionally argue that the classic dichotomies between the Greeks and Persians, which have been the foci of earlier scholarship, will culminate into a large-scale military invasion after what I consider to be a substantial amount of hinting at throughout the *Histories*, especially in Book 1. In the preface of the *Histories*, no singular Eastern entity is named in contrast to the Hellenes, rather, the collective "barbarian" is put at odds with the Greeks. Through the course of Book 1, however, the Achaemenid Persian Empire will rise to serve as the figurehead of the collective barbarians as they will often clash with the Greeks, sowing the seeds for the grand finale so to speak, that comes in the form of the Greco-Persian Wars.

At the beginning of Book 1 and of the *Histories* proper, Herodotus seeks to explain the reason why the Greeks and non-Greeks fought each other, which was hinted at in the preface:[49]

> Περσέων μέν νυν οἱ λόγιοι Φοίνικας αἰτίους φασὶ γενέσθαι τῆς διαφορῆς·
>
> (Hdt. 1.1.1)
>
> The learned men of the Persians say that the Phoenicians were the reason for the disagreement.

It is worth noting that Herodotus opens his account with the words of the "learned men (*logioi*) of the Persians." Already, Herodotus is working within a non-Greek perspective as a result of his supposed source. According to the Persian *logioi*, it was the Phoenicians who were at fault and were the catalyst for the longstanding enmity between the Greeks and their Near Eastern neighbors. The Persian *logioi* place the blame not on the Greeks, but on the Phoenicians, a group of people who inhabited the coast of the Levant. The Persians accuse the Phoenicians of committing the first wrong against the Greeks in the form of the mythological kidnapping of the Argive princess Io and other Argive women, whom they took to Egypt. Although Herodotus

[49] Hdt. 1.0. τά τε ἄλλα καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.

claims that the Greeks have an alternate account of Io's rape and how she arrived at Egypt, he does not explain or narrate that version (1.2.1). Perhaps this is because his audience, who arguably would have been comprised mainly of Greeks or Greek speakers, more than likely would have known the myth of Io's wandering around the Mediterranean after she was transformed into a cow by Zeus and were less familiar with the Persian account. Regardless of the reasoning, Herodotus continues to focus on what the Persian *logioi* record about the early relationship between the East and the West. They say that the Greeks retaliated against the Phoenicians by abducting the Tyrian princess Europa, which then prompted a series of mythological rapes of Eastern women by Greek men, and vice versa, which culminates in the abduction of the Spartan Helen by the Trojan Paris.

The role of the Persian *logioi* must be considered. The word *logioi* often refers to people who are wise and are "well versed in tales or stories." The individuals who make up the λόγιοι Περσέων, or any of the other *logioi* in the *Histories* for that matter, are never named by Herodotus, thus leaving his sources unknown. While it may be impossible to know who exactly these *logioi* were, we can infer that they were most likely individuals living in the provinces of Persia, rather than in the heartland of the empire, due to Herodotus' own status as a "provincial" Carian. Regardless of a definitive answer, Gregory Nagy offers an interesting perspective as he argues that the term *logioi* refers to "masters of prose," including Herodotus himself, as opposed to masters of poetry, such as Pindar.[50] However, Nagy also argues that the identifier Περσέων does not necessarily mean that the *logioi* are, in fact, Persian. Instead, he argues that the Asiatic Greeks comprised the Persian *logioi* who "represented the world view of the Persian Empire," as opposed to Herodotus, who Nagy argues is a *logios* for the Hellenes.[51] Nagy comes to this

[50] Nagy 2020,185.
[51] *op.cit*., 188.

conclusion based on the distinction that the Greek city-states in Anatolia would be considered Aeolian, Ionian, or Dorian states, and not referred to as a part of Hellas, or mainland Greece, as demonstrated by Herodotus' own language. With all that said, how are we supposed to view the account of the λόγιοι Περσέων? If we follow Nagy's conclusion that they are not Persian, but instead are Eastern Greeks, does that make the account more biased against the mainland Greeks for their various kidnappings of Eastern women? I believe that this question is important to keep in mind as we continue through the opening of the *Histories*, especially since Herodotus continues this "Persian" account with critiques of the mainland Greeks' actions and the fact that the *logioi*, as Nagy argues, are supposed to represent a Persian perspective.

While Nagy has offered an interesting insight into the Persian *logioi* as sources, other scholars, such as Fehling and Rood, have argued that these quotations or citations in the beginning chapters are an entirely fictional device.[52] According to Rood, Herodotus was not seeking more credibility to his writing when he attributed the proem's mythological reasoning for the longstanding conflict between the East and the West. Rather, while composing this introduction, Herodotus actively framed it so that the audience views the Greeks in a negative light through a story told from a Persian perspective. Thus, Herodotus is suggesting an immediate differentiation between the two peoples, which has been apparent throughout the entire proem thus far. Regardless of whether the Persian *logioi* were real sources, as Nagy has argued, or fictional sources, in Fehling and Rood's perspective, their inclusion as the named "sources" are worth our attention due to the manner in which Herodotus employs them. Therefore, there must be a deeper meaning for their incorporation into the proem that primes the reader to view the Greeks and the Persians in stark polarity.

[52] Fehling 1989, 50ff; Rood 2010, 63.

The Persian *logioi* view the Greek retaliation on account of Helen's abduction as the next step in increasing the hostility between the Greeks and the Near Easterners:

> μέχρι μὲν ὦν τούτου ἁρπαγὰς μούνας εἶναι παρ᾽ἀλλήλων, τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου Ἕλληνας δὴ μεγάλως αἰτίους γενέσθαι· προτέρους γὰρ ἄρξαι στρατεύσθαι ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην ἢ σφέας ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην.
>
> (Hdt. 1.4.1)
>
> Up to this point, it was only kidnappings from each other, but from this time the Greeks were the greatest cause: for they begun to wage war against Asia before they (the Asians) waged war against Europe.

After arguing that various retaliatory abductions among the Greeks, Phoenicians, Trojans, et al. were the etiological origins of the West vs. East conflict that is the focus of this work, Herodotus makes it clear to the reader that out of all the reasons contributing to this hostile relationship, the Persian *logioi* consider the many kidnappings as irrelevant (1.4.2). The action that truly stands out to the Persian *logioi* as the greatest factor leading to the Persian's hostility against the Greeks was the Greek invasion of Asia Minor in order to wage war against the Trojans.[53] Seemingly, as the Persian *logioi* relate, what made this war all the more ridiculous and unnecessary was that the Greeks initiated what would be a ten-year long war over the kidnapping of a single woman, especially when considering that many other women had been raped in previous years and the people of Asia never retaliated with an army in order to take back their stolen women (Hdt. 1.4.3). Herodotus manages to summarize the sentiments of his Persian *logioi* with regard to the Greeks following the explanation of their long-standing enmity:

> ἀπὸ τούτου αἰεὶ ἡγήσασθαι τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν σφίσι εἶναι πολέμιον. τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίην καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνεα βάρβαρα οἰκιεῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἤγηνται κεχωρίσθαι.
>
> (Hdt. 1.4.4)

[53] This "greatest cause" is very reminiscent of the reason for the first Persian invasion of the Greek mainland, namely to punish the Athenians and Eretrians for assisting the Ionians in their revolt against the Achaemenids in 499.

> From this point, they always considered the Greeks to be their enemy. For the Persians claim Asia and the barbarians inhabiting within as their own, and they have considered Europe and the Greeks separate.

Herodotus makes the claim that the Trojan War was the catalyst that prompted the Persians to regard the Greeks as their opposition. In addition to this, the author also gives us insight into the Persians' perspective regarding ethnicity. According to the Persians, there is very much an apparent dichotomy between the people of Asia and of Europe, so apparent that the Persians readily accept the other "barbarian" peoples living within Asia as their own while also being prepared and somewhat eager to distinguish themselves from those living in Europe. The readiness of the Persians to accept this "pan-Asian" (as in Asia Minor/Near East) identity is noteworthy as Herodotus argues that it was the wrong done to an Asian race that led to their considering the Greeks as the enemy. This identity is especially interesting when we know that the Greco-Persian Wars will be won by a coalition of Greek city-states that could be considered "pan-Hellenic."[54] However, we must be mindful of Persia's practice of conquering other Near Eastern kingdoms and subsuming them into their own empire. Therefore, this appeal to a "pan-Asian" identity could very well be a result of imperialistic tendencies of the Persians. It is worth recalling that Herodotus has been using the Persian *logioi* as his main source of information up to this point of the *Histories*. Therefore, it would be reasonable to believe that Herodotus has deduced this strong statement of division between the Near East and the West from the Persians themselves or from those representing the Persian perspective.

Before the audience even encountered the Persians as actors in the *Histories*, we have gained an incredible amount of insight regarding them as Herodotus employs them, or those

[54] Thuc. 1.3.1. claims that the Achaean coalition in the Trojan War was the first instance of a Panhellenic military operation, thus putting the mythological Trojan War.

associated with them, as his main source of information in this introductory section. As there have not been what we could consider "protagonists" in the main narrative thus far, I would argue that our constant companions during these first four sections (besides Herodotus, the narrator) would be the λόγιοι Περσέων who provide the bulk of information. Therefore, I would argue that the narrative stemming from the Persian informants would have influenced the opinions of the ancient audience into having a somewhat negative view of the Greeks, more so against the Greeks of the Trojan War than the Greeks of the Greco-Persian Wars, although it may be the case that the two were not differentiated much. All the information that has been provided to the audience thus far is without a doubt biased and explicitly blames the Greeks for incurring the Persians' enmity. As the only perspective thus far has come from Persian *logioi*, the reader is shown a singular viewpoint that is both consistent and fully prepared to blame the Greeks for beginning the hostilities as they were the first to invade and wage war against Asia.

Herodotus begins the narrative proper by explaining that he will lay out the account of things leading up to the Greco-Persian Wars, beginning with the man who first wronged the Greeks:

> ταῦτα μέν νυν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου…
>
> (Hdt. 1.5.3)
>
> Now, the Persians and the Phoenicians say this. Concerning these things, I will not begin to say whether they happened in this way or some other way, but I do know the first man who began the unjust deeds against the Greeks, and having shown this I will proceed with the rest of my account…

The man in question was Croesus, the king of Lydia. Herodotus relates his account of the history of both Lydia and Croesus himself at chapter 5 through chapter 94 in what has commonly been referred to as the *Croesus Logos*, spanning roughly the first half of Book 1. Since Lydia is the

subject of the first "historical" treatment in his narrative, I would argue that Herodotus frames both the kingdom of Lydia and the Lydian king Croesus as the first major "protagonist" in the *Histories*. The historian spends approximately less than half of the first book detailing the political history of Lydia, ending with its subsumption into the Persian Empire. At that point, Herodotus shifts his focus onto the political history of Persia, thus creating a narratological pattern of concentrating on one particular geographical or political unit before moving on to another. Additionally, I would argue that Herodotus is using Croesus as a surrogate narrator to offer a Lydian perspective, as he is the first major and long-lasting protagonist of the *Histories*. However, as I will demonstrate, this perspective is not entirely Lydian as Greek sentiments permeate through the *Croesus Logos*.

As Herodotus allows his narrative to unfold through a Lydian lens for an extended amount of time, the reader is primed to find some element of *pathos* with Croesus and his people, meaning that their enemies or allies are simultaneously the enemies or allies of the audience. Following this line of reasoning, a question of Otherness now comes into play. The central idea of the Other has largely come from a Greek perspective, as Edith Hall based it on self-definition within the tragic realm, while François Hartog has focused on "systemic differentiation" and how that separates the Greeks from the Other, particularly in the *Histories*.[55] The approaches of both scholars have effectively encompassed those peoples who are not Greek and would be considered the Other, all through a "Hellenic lens." But what if we are not in a purely Greek perspective? Who is the Other now? These questions will form the basis of my discussion going forward as we navigate the *Croesus Logos* and move towards a proper introduction of the Persians.

[55] See Hall's '*Inventing the Barbarian*', 1989, and Hartog's '*The Mirror of Herodotus*', 1988.

Before proceeding to Herodotus' account of Croesus and his kingdom, I believe that it is worthwhile to turn our attention, briefly, to Lydia. Why did Herodotus begin his *Histories* by focusing on Lydia as his first major historical and ethnographical subject? While it might be impossible to have a definitive answer to this question, we must take into account Lydia's physical placement as an intermediary between the Greek West and the "barbaric" East. As Christopher Pelling has noted, despite Lydia's situation in the East, it is by no means a purely "Eastern kingdom," especially during Croesus' reign.[56] Croesus' *Logos* is marked with numerous appearances of the Greek world, thanks to the Lydian king's apparent fascination with Greece, some of which will be discussed later.[57] While Croesus has been shown to have a deep interest in the Hellenic world, the customs of Lydia have been noted by Herodotus to be rather similar to those of the Greeks (Λυδοὶ δὲ νόμοισι μὲν παραπλησίοισι χρέωνται καὶ Ἕλληνες, Hdt. 1.94.1), suggesting that the connection between Lydia and Greece was not a product of only Croesus' "philhellenic" attitude.

Therefore, Herodotus is beginning his inquiry with a kingdom that Pelling has described as the peripheries and margins of the East/West division, thus blurring the boundaries of the Greek/barbarian discourse right from the start.[58] If this was an intentional act on Herodotus' part, which I believe it to be, the *Croesus Logos* becomes all the more interesting as the first historical and ethnographical narrative of the *Histories*. In the remainder of this chapter, I will argue that the Lydian lens of Book 1, produced by Hartog's "double mirror," frames the Persian/Lydian conflict as a precursor of the Greco-Persian Wars. As the Persians are a constant factor in both wars, that suggests that Croesus and his Lydians are in a position analogous to the Greeks. As I

[56] Pelling 1997 and 2006.
[57] Pelling 1997 notes many examples, such as Croesus' hosting of Solon and other Greek sages (Hdt. 1.27 and 1.29).
[58] Pelling 1997.

will show, the Greek mainland and culture makes multiple appearances during the *Croesus Logos* as the Lydian king actively seeks both the Greek perspective and aid. While Herodotus does make several connections uniting Croesus and the Greeks of his time, the Lydians are not, as I will show, perfect precursors for the Greeks of the 5th century as they will inevitably lose to the Persians and be subsumed into the Achaemenid Empire. Just as he created subtle connections between Lydia and Greece, Herodotus also sowed the seeds of Croesus' defeat by making the Lydian king an exemplum for a stereotype of Eastern Otherness: barbaric hubris.

Throughout the *Croesus Logos*, Herodotus narrates the reigns of Croesus and his predecessors and ends with Lydia's defeat at the hands of Cyrus' Persian Empire. Despite the great amount of detail Herodotus delves into regarding Croesus, the Lydian king is initially introduced as the man who committed the first wrongs against the Greeks. The crimes Herodotus refers to are Croesus' subjugation of various Greek city-states in Asia Minor, beginning with the Ephesians and then spanning all of the Ionian and Aeolian city-states (1.26). After the λόγιοι Περσέων claim that they consider all those living within Asia as their own and explain why they are the explicit enemies of the Greeks, the reader could assume there would be some sort of alliance or sympathy between the Persians and the Lydians. This would prove highly inaccurate for two reasons. First and foremost, Croesus and the Lydians wage war against the Persians in retaliation of Cyrus' subjugation of the Medes, with whom the Lydians shared an alliance with. Immediately, the Persians are shown to be imperialistic, regardless of the "Asian status" their future subjects held. Secondly, Croesus sought the help of Sparta, a Greek city-state on the mainland, as he prepares to wage war against Cyrus and his empire, further insinuating the lack of a common Asian perspective as the Lydians look to the Greek West for aid.

In one of the earliest episodes in Book 1, the Athenian lawgiver Solon visited Sardis, the capital of Lydia, and imparted, or at least attempted to impart, Greek wisdom on a rather dismissive Croesus (1.29-33). During the visit, Croesus sent Solon on a tour of his treasuries to show his extravagant wealth. As Solon was known to be well-travelled and has presumedly met many people across the Mediterranean, Croesus saw this visit as an opportunity to question the Athenian about the happiest man he has met, fully expecting that the answer would be himself:

> ‘ξεῖνε Ἀθηναῖε, παρ᾽ ἡμέας γὰρ περὶ σέο λόγος ἀπῖκται πολλὸς καὶ σοφίης εἵνεκεν 1 τῆς σῆς καὶ πλάνης, ὡς φιλοσοφέων γῆν πολλὴν θεωρίης εἵνεκεν ἐπελήλυθας: νῦν ὦν ἐπειρέσθαι με ἵμερος ἐπῆλθέ σε εἴ τινα ἤδη πάντων εἶδες ὀλβιώτατον.’ ὃ μὲν ἐλπίζων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ὀλβιώτατος ταῦτα ἐπειρώτα: Σόλων δὲ οὐδὲν ὑποθωπεύσας ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐόντι χρησάμενος λέγει ‘ὦ βασιλεῦ, Τέλλον Ἀθηναῖον.’
>
> (Hdt. 1.30.2-3)
>
> ‘My Athenian guest, a great word has come to us concerning you on account of your wisdom and your wanderings: as a lover of wisdom you have come to many lands for the sake of sight-seeing: and so now a desire came to me to ask you if you know who is the happiest of all.’ He asked this expecting him to be the happiest of men, but Solon in no way was flattering him, but using what was, he said: ‘Oh king, it is Tellus the Athenian.’

Relying on his vast amount of wealth, Croesus believed that he was the happiest of all men. Much to his shock and dismay, Solon revealed that an Athenian named Tellus, completely unknown to Croesus, was in his opinion the happiest. Surprised, Croesus asked what made Tellus the happiest, to which Solon replied that Tellus was blessed with fine sons and that he died in battle while defending Athens. For his sacrifice, the Athenian state put on a public funeral for Tellus and they honored him greatly (Hdt. 1.30.4). After hearing the story of Tellus, Croesus presses Solon further and asks who the second happiest man is, again expecting that he would be the answer. As was the case for first place, Solon reveals that the second happiest men are the

Argive brothers Cleobis and Biton, who were seemingly killed by the gods in order to preserve the glory they gained after providing so great a service to their mother (1.31).

Upon hearing Solon's answers, Croesus becomes angry and believes that the Athenian sage is mocking his own happiness and fortune. He questions why Solon would place the prosperity of Lydia before ordinary citizens, to which Solon responds that human matters are often complicated both by divinities and the precarious nature of human life spans and concludes that human life is entirely a matter of chance (1.32).[59] Ultimately, Solon delivers this piece of wisdom to the Lydian king:

> πρὶν δ' ἂν τελευτήσῃ, ἐπισχεῖν, μηδὲ καλέειν κω ὄλβιον ἀλλ' εὐτυχέα. … σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτήν, κῇ ἀποβήσεται: πολλοῖσι γὰρ δὴ ὑποδέξας ὄλβον ὁ θεὸς προρρίζους ἀνέτρεψε.'
>
> (Hdt. 1.32.7-9)
>
> Refrain from calling him blessed up to this time, before he should die, but call him lucky. … It is necessary to see the end of every matter in what way it will turn out: for the god promises happiness to many people but utterly ruined them.

Solon is advising that Croesus should not consider himself lucky until all is said and done, since the fortunes of men are often reversed. Not understanding the moral of Solon's advice, Croesus completely dismisses these sentiments and calls the Athenian lawgiver ignorant or unlearned (*ἀμαθέα*) (1.33).

Conversely, through his reactions within the Solon-Croesus episode, the Lydian ruler shows himself to be ignorant (ἀμαθέα). In rejecting the universal wisdom of Solon, he has also disregarded Herodotus' own sentiments regarding the mutable nature of mankind. Croesus did not have the foresight to see the implication Solon's words could have on his own life. Previously, Croesus readily accepted the advice of other Greek sages that had ventured to his

[59] Solon's conclusion is reminiscent of Herodotus' own purpose in recording the "great deeds and wonders:" "For many states that were once great have now become small; and those that were great in my time were small before. Knowing that human prosperity never continues in the same place, I shall mention both alike" (1.5.4).

court, shown when Bias of Priene (or Pittacus of Mytilene) successfully convinced him to cease from building a navy in order to attack the islands off the coast of Anatolia (1.27). Bias/Pittacus advised that if he waged naval warfare on the islands, Croesus would surely lose. In that instance, Croesus was able to readily grasp and understand the advice given by a Greek. This is apparently not the case with Solon's wisdom. Ultimately, the Lydian logos is as much about the reversal of Croesus' own fortune as much as it is a history of Lydia. In fact, Croesus' dismissal of Solon's words is suggested to have had an immediate effect on the Lydian king's life:

> μετὰ δὲ Σόλωνα οἰχόμενον ἔλαβέ ἐκ θεοῦ νέμεσις μεγάλη Κροῖσον, ὡς εἰκάσαι, ὅτι ἐνόμισε ἑωυτὸν εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ἁπάντων ὀλβιώτατον.
>
> (Hdt. 1.34)
>
> But after Solon left, great vengeance from the god fell upon Croesus, as I guess, because he considered himself to be the most blessed of all men.

Herodotus himself interjects that he believes Croesus fell out of favor with the "god" (most likely Apollo) because of his assumption that he was the happiest of all men, showing that he has completely disregarded Solon's message due to his own hubristic nature. This can be seen as the beginning of Croesus' reversal of fate. The first step comes in the form of a dream revealing the death of a son to Croesus (1.34).

Before continuing on with the narrative, I must acknowledge the chronological issues that have plagued the Solon-Croesus episode. The scholarly consensus for the dates of Croesus' reign have traditionally been 560-546 or 561-547, based mainly on a cuneiform text known as the Nabonidus Chronicle which records the date of Cyrus' conquest of Lydia to 547 or 546, and Herodotus 1.86.1, which states that Croesus ruled for 14 years.[60] However, as Wallace has noted, Herodotus frequently includes prominent men of the early decades of the 6th century in Croesus'

[60] Wallace 2016, 168.
ἄρξαντα ἔτεα τεσσερεσκαίδεκα καὶ τεσσερεσκαίδεκα ἡμέρας πολιορκηθέντα, Hdt. 1.86.1.

narrative, such as Solon.[61] In the Solon-Croesus episode, the Lydian king met the Athenian lawgiver after Solon left Athens for 10 years after passing his laws so that the Athenians could not change them (Hdt. 1.29). Solon served as a lawgiver and archon in 594/3, which would place his visit, using Herodotus' chronology, between 593/2 and 583/2. In utilizing the traditional dates of Croesus' reign, which employs Herodotus' chronology, there is an approximately 30-year gap between Solon's visit and the beginning of Croesus' reign. This incongruent chronology prompts the questions: Why would Herodotus include a visit from Solon during the early years of Croesus' reign if such a visit was not chronologically possible?[62]

I would argue that Herodotus purposefully included Solon's visit in order to further ingrain Greek sentiment into the *Croesus Logos* despite the impossibility of it occurring. In his rebuttal against Croesus' anger, Solon stresses the themes of uncertain fortune and learning the truth after it is too late while also warning against hubris, all of which makes a return in the final chapters of Croesus' narrative. Solon's visit is a major hinge point, not only for Croesus' story, but also for Cyrus' as the next narratological protagonist that Herodotus employs. While Solon's departure marks the arrival of divine vengeance upon Croesus due to his dismissal of Solon's wise words, the transition from the *Croesus Logos* into the *Cyrus Logos* features the Persian king receiving Solon's wisdom from Croesus on the pyre, wisdom which he automatically understands and employs. Therefore, the inclusion of Solon's visit is crucial to the beginning of Book 1, despite the fact that the traditionally accepted chronology of Croesus' reign suggests that it did not happen.

[61] Wallace 2016, 172.
[62] Wallace 168-76 offers a rather convincing redating of Croesus' reign that begins in the 580s rather than in the 560s based on Herodotus' apparent use of "formulaic numbers" and other passages in Herodotus that place Croesus' reign among other historical events that certainly occurred in this time span. While I do find Wallace's redating possible and perhaps more historically accurate, I will be keeping with the traditional chronology of Croesus' reign.

Cyrus and his Persian Empire are introduced by Herodotus as the enemy of Croesus and his Lydian kingdom, whose rise to power and sphere of influence has been the primary subject of the *Histories* thus far. Following the death of his son Atys during a hunting accident, which was revealed to Croesus in a dream before it occurred, Croesus enters into a period of mourning that lasted two years (1.46). Herodotus writes that it was the growing Persian presence that served as the catalyst that prompted Croesus to end his period of mourning:

> μετὰ δὲ ἡ Ἀστυάγεος τοῦ Κυαξάρεω ἡγεμονίη καταιρεθεῖσα ὑπὸ Κύρου τοῦ Καμβύσεω καὶ τὰ τῶν Περσέων πρήγματα αὐξανόμενα πένθεος μὲν Κροῖσον ἀπέπαυσε, ἐνέβησε δὲ ἐς φροντίδα, εἴ κως δύναιτο, πρὶν μεγάλους γενέσθαι τοὺς Πέρσας, καταλαβεῖν αὐτῶν αὐξανομένην τὴν δύναμιν.
>
> (Hdt. 1.46.1)
>
> After this, the rule of Astyages, the son of Cyaxares, which was destroyed by Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, and the growing affairs of the Persians stopped Croesus from his mourning, and he entered into thought, wondering if he could seize the growing power of the Persians before they become great.

The very first mention of the Persian Empire as an active force serves to introduce the upcoming conflict between the Lydians and the Persians. Unbeknownst to the audience, while Croesus was mourning the death of his son, Cyrus was overthrowing his grandfather Astyages, the king of Media, and subsuming his kingdom into the Persian Empire.[63] Now that his ally and neighboring kingdom has been overthrown, Croesus must retaliate in order to ensure the same outcome does not fall upon Lydia. Immediately, the reader is primed to view both Cyrus and those making up his Persian Empire in a negative light, as the Persians are now the mysterious enemy of Lydia, which has been the subject matter of the past forty sections, and that Cyrus represents a threat looming over Croesus. Since the Persians are displayed as the enemy of the Lydians, I argue that this now places the Persians in the role of the Other from the Lydian perspective, not unlike how

[63] Herodotus writes about Cyrus' rise to power and the growth of his empire later in Book 1, beginning at section 95. The fall of the Median Empire occurs in section 129.

the Greeks view the Persians as the quintessential Other due to their long-standing hatred following the Persian Wars.

My previous argument raises an interesting point made by Hartog that deals with the same "shifting" or "unstable" depiction of the Other. Throughout *The Mirror of Herodotus*, Hartog focuses on the Scythians as he develops his structure of, in the words of Christopher Pelling, "systemic differentiations" through a "single mirror" that separates the Greeks from the barbaric Other, which were the Scythians in his case.[64] However, when the polarity shifts and the perspective is not entirely Greek, then a "double mirror" is needed to gauge the differences. As Pelling explains, in terms of Greek versus Persian, the Persians are automatically cast into the role of the Other.[65] However, when the scene shifts to the Persians facing off against the Scythians in Book 4, two races that would be considered fitting for the role of the Other if the Greeks were involved, one group must be placed in a "normal people" role, as Pelling calls it.[66] In a way, one of the Others must be boiled down in order to give a more palatable perspective for Herodotus' Greek audience. Therefore, there can only be one polarity in play at a time. While the Persian mirror reflects the Scythian Other at one point, in turn it will become the Other when contrasted with the Greek mirror.[67]

Developing upon what Hartog and Pelling have argued, I argue that a similar effect is occurring with Croesus and the Lydians in Book 1. As we learned at the beginning of the *Croesus Logos*, the Lydian king himself was the man who subjugated so many of the Greek city-states on the coast of Anatolia. Therefore, when reflected in the Greek mirror, the Lydians are automatically subsumed into the role of the Other. For example, Lydian Otherness is exemplified

[64] Pelling 1997, 51.
[65] Pelling 1997, 51ff.
[66] For Hartog's discussion of the Persians placement into this role, see pages 49-57.
[67] Pelling 1997.

by Herodotus' claims that the Lydians "prostitute their daughters," presumedly before marriage (1.94.1), despite many of the customs being similar to the Greeks'. However, when it comes to the Lydians facing off against the Persians, as I have argued previously, it appears that the mirror must be transferred to a group who represents the perspective of the Other, thus "normalizing" that perspective for the Greek audience. While the Persians served that role in Book 4 against the Scythians, here in Book 1, the Lydians are in possession of the double mirror in order to reflect and shine a bright light on the Otherness of the Persians. Additionally, as I will show, the double mirror is somewhat strengthened as the Greek world becomes intertwined with the story of Lydia and Croesus and the Lydian king prepares for his conflict against Cyrus and his Persian Empire.

Before committing himself and his kingdom to war against the Persians, Croesus devises a plan to consult various oracles in order to test their wisdom. It must be noted that out of the seven oracles[68] Croesus dispatched his men to, six of those are described as being "Greek" oracles. [69] The Lydian king tests the oracles by having his embassies ask what he was doing approximately one hundred days after they were dispatched from Lydia. Only a truly prophetic oracle would have been able to correctly answer this question, as Croesus boiled a tortoise and lamb flesh in a bronze cauldron.[70] When his "test" was completed and the various emissaries reported the oracular responses, Croesus himself decided that the oracle at Delphi was the "only true oracle";[71] although, Herodotus does note that Croesus believed that the oracle of Amphiaraus also gave him an "accurate response" (1.49). After learning the oracular responses, Croesus and the Lydians began to propitiate the oracle of Delphi with sacrifices and other

[68] The seven oracles are Delphi, Abae (in Phocis), Dodona, Amphiaraus, Trophonius, Branchidae (in Miletus), and the oracle of Ammon (in Libya).
[69] Hdt. 1.46.3 Ταῦτα μέν νυν τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ μαντήια…
[70] The Delphic response in dactylic hexameter is recorded at 1.47.3.
[71] Hdt. 1.48.1 νομίσας μοῦνον εἶναι μαντήιον τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖσι

offerings, before sending another embassy asking whether or not Lydia should go to war against the Persians.

In having the Lydians seek advice and guidance from a Greek oracle, and one of the most famous "panhellenic" oracles at that, I believe that Herodotus is introducing Greece as a key factor, not only in Croesus' struggle against Cyrus, but also in the larger narrative of the *Histories*, which culminates in the Greco-Persian Wars. Alternatively, Croesus' test for the oracles indicates that he is interacting with the gods in a manner opposite of tradition in two respects, as Julia Kindt has argued.[72] First, Croesus already knows the correct answer to the question he asked of the various oracles. Second, Croesus is testing the oracle with obscurity, rather than being tested by the obscure oracles. The Lydian king is attempting to speak to the Delphic god on equal terms, both ignoring and transgressing the differences between the mortal and divine spheres. In not knowing his rightful place as a mortal and by testing the wisdom of the gods, I would also argue that Croesus is acting in a rather hubristic manner.

After the Lydian embassies asked the two "true" oracles as to whether they should go to war with Persia or make them allies, the responses also appear to go out of their way to entangle the Greeks in Croesus' upcoming campaign:

> οἱ μὲν ταῦτα ἐπειρώτων, τῶν δὲ μαντηίων ἀμφοτέρων ἐς τὠυτὸ αἱ γνῶμαι συνέδραμον, προλέγουσαι Κροίσῳ, ἢν στρατεύηται ἐπί Πέρσας, μεγάλην ἀρχήν μιν καταλύσειν· τοὺς δὲ Ἑλλήνων δυνατωτάτους συνεβούλευόν οἱ ἐξευρόντα φίλους προσθέσθαι.
>
> (Hdt. 1.53.3)
>
> They inquired these things, and the judgement of both oracles agreed with one another, proclaiming to Croesus that if he waged war against Persia, he would destroy a great empire; and they advised him to discover who was the most powerful of the Greeks and to ally himself with them.

[72] Kindt 2006, 37.

By advising Croesus to ally himself with the most capable Greek city-state, the oracles have implicated "Westerners" in what could be considered a conflict between two entirely Eastern forces. After receiving what he believes to be confirmation that he would destroy Cyrus' empire should the two forces go to war, Croesus then consulted the Delphic oracle for a third time, which results in Croesus' infamous "Mule" prophesy.

> Ἀλλ᾽ ὅταν ἡμίονος βασιλεὺς Μήδοισι γένηται,
> καὶ τότε, Λυδὲ ποδαβρέ, πολυψήφιδα παρ᾽Ἕρμον
> φεύγειν μηδὲ μένειν μηδ᾽ αἰδεῖσθαι κακὸς εἶναι.
>
> (Hdt. 1.55.2)
>
> But whenever a mule becomes the king of the Medians, just then, oh tender-footed Lydian, flee by the pebbly Hermus and do not stay, and do not be ashamed to be a coward.

As was the case with Croesus' previous oracles, he interprets them to reflect what he wishes them to be rather than in careful consideration.[73] In this case, he believes that a mule will never rule over Media, therefore, his sovereignty would not be at risk should he wage war against the Persians. However, the oracle was referring to a metaphorical mule in the form of Cyrus, who is both half Persian and half Mede, making him a ἡμίονος in that sense, which Croesus failed to consider. According to Croesus, these oracles indicate that he will be victorious over Cyrus, ending the growing Persian threat. However, as the *Histories* will show, Croesus' interpretations would be proven to be completely wrong, and it would be his empire that falls due to his hubristic assumptions of the oracle's meanings.

Inspired by what he assumed to be victorious predictions from the oracles, Croesus then began his search for the "most powerful (city-state) of the Greeks" whom he should ally himself with against the Persians. After an undisclosed amount of time spent inquiring (ἱστορέων),

[73] Kindt 2006, 40.

Croesus discovered that the Spartans and the Athenians were the two most powerful city-states in Greece. After this discovery, the narrative is disrupted as Herodotus delves into the current situations of both Athens and Sparta in order to gauge their fit as Lydian allies. However, before examining the current happenings of the two Greek city-states, Herodotus expands upon their early histories and lineages.

According to Herodotus, the Spartans are descended from the Dorians and are of "Hellenic stock" (τὸ δὲ Ἑλληνικὸν ἔθνος), while the Athenians are descended from the Ionians and are of "Pelasgian stock" (τὸ δὲ Πελασγικόν ἔθνος) (Hdt. 1.56.2). As Munson has argued, it appears that here Herodotus has created an ethnic divide between the Spartans and the Athenians by situating them into two distinct ἔθνη, although he could have referenced their linkage to the of Hellen, the eponymous ancestor of all the Hellenes, including Dorians, Ionians, and Aeolians.[74] This stark separation between the two city-states is deepened when Herodotus notes that the Pelasgians (i.e. the ancestors of the Athenians) did not speak a Greek language (ἦσαν οἱ Πελασγοὶ βάρβαρον γλῶσσαν ἱέντες) (Hdt. 1.57.2). Thus, Herodotus is placing the Pelasgians into the barbarian category when compared to the Hellenes, who are noted as having spoken the same language (Greek) since their beginning.[75] Although the Athenians appear to have come from a barbarian stock, that is most certainly not the case at the time Herodotus as the author hypothesizes some internal transformation on the part of the Pelasgians who would later become the Athenians:

> εἰ τοίνυν ἦν καὶ πᾶν τοιοῦτο τὸ Πελασγικόν, τὸ Ἀττικὸν ἔθνος ἐὸν Πελασγικὸν ἅμα τῇ μεταβολῇ ἐς Ἕλληνας καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν μετέμαθε.
>
> (Hdt. 1.57.3)

[74] Munson 2014, 344ff.
[75] Hdt. 1.58.1. τὸ δὲ Ἑλληνικὸν γλώσσῃ μέν, ἐπείτε ἐγένετο, αἰεί κοτε τῇ αὐτῇ διαχρᾶται, ὡς ἐμοὶ καταφαίνεται εἶναι·

> If the entire Pelasgian race was the same sort, the Attic people, who were Pelasgian, learned the (Greek) tongue alongside with their transformation into Greeks.

As many scholars have noticed, such as Pelling and Fowler, this brief ethnography calls into question the longstanding and deeply ingrained beliefs of an autochthonous origin help by the Athenians of mid-5th century.[76] In chapter 56, Herodotus tells us that the Pelasgians never migrated while the Hellenes were well-travelled. If the Athenians were descended from the Pelasgians, this statement supports an Athenian myth of autochthony. In chapter 57, however, Herodotus reveals that he believes the Pelasgians spoke a non-Greek language, using the present-day Pelasgians living north of Tyrrhenia as evidence, thus insinuating that the Athenians had a "barbarian" ancestry. As if the history of the Pelasgians was not enough of a paradox, in Book 2, Herodotus states that Pelasgians became "fellow inhabitants of the land occupied by the Athenians," prompting a complicated "chicken-egg" paradox. As Fowler concluded, "Herodotus has made a muddle of this question, or at least has not won through to perfect clarity."

While I am not able to reach a suitable conclusion regarding this Athenian/Pelasgian conflict, I believe it is worthwhile to bring up this discussion of the Pelasgians and the Hellenes because it lays the groundwork for the discussion of the Athenians and the Spartans during Croesus' search for a Greek ally during his upcoming war with Cyrus. Following the end of his inquiry into both city-states, we learn that Croesus chose to offer an alliance with the Spartans. Although this is not the direct reason for Croesus' decision, it is worth pointing out that Croesus chose the *polis* whose ancestors have supposedly spoken Greek from the very beginning, especially since speaking the Greek language is a clear defining attribute of the Hellenes that separate them from the barbarians. Even while taking a digression from Lydia into the Greek

[76] Pelling 2009; Fowler 2003. For a brief tracing of autochthonous sentiments in Athens, see previous chapter.

mainland, Herodotus is continuing to frame the inquiry in terms of Greek/the Other, which has been an important perspective thus far in the *Histories*.

Following this brief account of Spartan and Athenian ancestry, Herodotus begins his accounts of the current politics of both city-states which serve as an intermission for the brewing war between Lydia and Persia. Herodotus begins with Athens:

> Τούτων δὴ ὧν τῶν ἐθνέων τὸ μὲν Ἀττικὸν κατεχόμενόν τε καὶ διεσπασμένον ἐπυνθάνετο ὁ Κροῖσος ὑπὸ Πεισιστράτου τοῦ Ἱπποκράτεος τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον τυραννεύντος Ἀθηναίων.
>
> (Hdt. 1.59.1)
>
> Of these peoples, Croesus learned that the Attic one was oppressed and fragmented by Peisistratus, the son of Hippocrates, who was ruling as tyrant of Athens at that time.

Herodotus then recounts the story of how Peisistratus assumed control of Athens three times and the current political situation, noting that the Alcmeonids were now exiled from the polis (1.59-64). With Athens under the control of a tyrant and experiencing multiple waves of civil and political strife, Croesus makes the decision that Athens was not the best choice to ally with, although that claim is not explicitly made. Instead of giving a definitive answer of Croesus' decision, Herodotus only notes that Croesus learned of the situation of Athens and then his inquiry turns towards Sparta.

> Τοὺς μέν νυν Ἀθηναίους τοιαῦτα τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον ἐπυνθάνετο ὁ Κροῖσος κατέχοντα, τοὺς δὲ Λακεδαιμονίους ἐκ κακῶν τε μεγάλων πεφευγότας καὶ ἐόντας ἤδη τῷ πολέμῳ κατυπερτέρους Τεγεητέων.
>
> (1.65.1)
>
> And so Croesus learned that the Athenians were currently held in such situation, and he learned that the Spartans had escaped from great evils and were currently prevailing over the Tegeans in war.

In ending his account of the current situation in Athens on a rather negative note, as it is currently held under the control of a tyrant, Herodotus begins his account of Sparta's

circumstances on a more positive note, opening with the Spartans turning the tide against the Tegeans in a long-standing conflict resulting in multiple wars. While the previous engagements between the two people never went well for the Spartans, Herodotus makes the note that matters started faring better for the Spartans during Croesus' time.[77] Immediately based on the introductions of the two city-states' current circumstances, I would argue that Herodotus is making Croesus' decision of an ally known to his audience before the decision is actually made a few chapters later (which is explicitly laid out at 1.69).

As previously discussed, the narrative of Croesus' upcoming war against Cyrus and the Persians is interrupted by these two accounts of situations in the Greek mainland. While the subjects of Greece and its people have been a constant reoccurrence thus far in the *Croesus Logos*,[78] I would consider these discussions of Athens and Sparta to be the first accounts in this book that are spatially removed from Lydia, which has been the main setting thus far, but having occurred at the same time temporally. The circumstances in Athens and Sparta are completely removed from the situation in Lydia and are only related to the main narrative by Croesus inquiring about Greece as he attempts to find a strong ally against the Persians. Compared to the stories of the Tellus and the brothers Cleobis and Biton told by Solon, which both took place on the Greek mainland at an undisclosed time, the situations unfolding in Athens and Sparta are happening concurrently during Croesus' reign. Compared to the stories of Solon, the circumstances in Athens and Sparta are the results of an official inquiry (ἱστορέων) and has been proven to be historically accurate. Therefore, there is a greater grounding in reality in these two accounts which then creates a sharper boundary between what is happening in Greece versus

[77] Hdt. 1.67.1. Also alluded to in chapter 65 quoted above.
[78] Some examples include Solon's visit to Lydia at 1.29 and multiple appearances and references to Greek oracles, especially Delphi.

what is happening in Lydia. Additionally, as I have previously discussed, the possibility of Solon's visit is highly questionable.

During the explanation of Sparta's current situation with the Tegeans, Herodotus includes multiple visits to the Delphic oracle, three to be exact, one of which served as the catalyst for the Spartans to gain the upper hand. The first visit to Delphi explained how the Spartans were able to improve their system of government and constitution under Lycurgus (1.65.2). The second visit was done in preparation for a military campaign against the neighboring region of Arcadia (1.66). The Pythia advised the Spartans to instead turn against the Tegeans, resulting in a lengthy war in which the Spartans were often defeated. As mentioned before, during the third visit, the Pythia advised the Spartans to return the bones of Orestes to Sparta if they ever wanted to overcome the Tegeans. The Spartans visited Delphi three separate times, and, perhaps coincidentally, Croesus sent a Lydian embassy to Delphi at least three separate times, from what Herodotus has recorded.[79]

Although it might be purely coincidental, I would argue that, by writing the Spartan account with the same number of visits to the same Greek oracle, Herodotus created a link between Lydia and Sparta, which became fully realized when the two form an alliance. Let us not forget the great importance Croesus has placed specifically on the Delphic oracle, as he claimed that it is the "only true oracle" [80] and subsequently made several lavish offerings to the site. It is quite possible that the inclusion of the Spartan visits to Delphi played a role in Croesus' decision to ally with the Peloponnesian city-state. In keeping with the similarities between the role of Delphi for both the Spartans and for Croesus, at least one of the oracles on both sides are

[79] The first visit occurred when Croesus was making a test of various oracles (Hdt. 1.47). The second visit advised Croesus that he will destroy a great empire if he goes to war with Persia and that he should ally with the strongest of the Greeks (Hdt. 1.53). And the third visit resulted in the infamous "Mule Prophesy" (Hdt. 1.55).
[80] Hdt. 1.48.1 νομίσας μοῦνον εἶναι μαντήιον τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖσι

misunderstood. During the second visit to Delphi, the Pythia says that the Spartans will be able to measure out the land of Tegea.[81] Thinking that this meant that they would have control of Tegea, the Spartans invaded, taking chains with them in order to reduce the Tegeans to slavery. However, the Spartans lost the battle, and many of them were led off in the chains they themselves brought, now serving as laborers for the Tegeans and measuring out their land with rope. Herodotus goes as far to call this a "deceitful oracle" (χρησμῷ κιβδήλῳ) when he reveals what happened to the Spartans after their invasion. This ambiguous oracle is very similar to Croesus' second oracle that prophesizes that he will destroy a great empire if he goes to war with Persia. Not unlike the Spartans, Croesus believes that the oracle is revealing his would-be success and that Persia would be the ruined empire. Ironically however, it is Lydia that will be destroyed by Persia. Neither the Spartans nor Croesus are shown to have the foresight to consider the possibility that the oracles are not in their favor, thus creating another link between the two.

The Spartans, however, are able to correctly decipher their next oracle, when a Spartan official named Lichas realizes that the Pythia was referring to a blacksmith's yard as the location of Orestes' bones. This correct interpretation allowed the Spartans to gain the upper hand against the Tegeans. Conversely, Croesus makes the same mistake with his next oracle in believing that it is in his favor when the Pythia decrees that he does not need to worry about the security of his power until a mule sits on the Median throne. Croesus assumes that this means he does not ever need to worry, since it is impossible that a literal mule will ever rule over the Persians. It is not until Croesus' final questioning of the Delphic oracle after his defeat that he learns the oracle was speaking of a figurative mule in the form of Cyrus. So, while the Spartans were able to redeem themselves when it came to correctly interpreting their Delphic oracles, Croesus on the

[81] Hdt.1.66.2. δώσω τοι Τεγέην ποσσίκροτον ὀρχήσασθαι | καὶ καλὸν πεδίον σχοίνῳ διαμετρήσασθαι. I will give you Tegea to beat with your feet in dancing, and its fair plain to measure with a rope.

other hand did not get that same redemption. Ultimately, his constant incorrect interpretations and hubristic assumptions reflected what he wanted the oracles to foretell rather than carefully considering all possible outcomes led to his and Lydia's defeat against the Persians.

After hearing the results of his inquiry, Croesus decides to ally himself with the Spartans and sends an embassy to Sparta:

> οἱ δὲ ἐλθόντες ἔλεγον· Ἔπεμψε ἡμέας Κροῖσος ὁ Λυδῶν τε καὶ ἄλλων ἐθνέων βασιλεύς, λέγων τάδε· Ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, χρήσαντος τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν Ἕλληνα φίλον προσθέσται, ὑμέας γὰρ πυνθάνομαι προεστάναι τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ὑμέας ὦν κατὰ τὸ χρηστήριον προκαλέομαι φίλος τε θέλων γενέσθαι καὶ σύμμαχος ἄνευ τε δόλου καὶ ἀπάτης.
>
> (Hdt. 1.69)
>
> Having arrived, they (the embassy) said: 'Croesus, king of the Lydians and of other peoples, sent us, saying the following: "Oh Lacedaemonians, the god advised that I make the Greek my friend, I learned that you are the leading people of Greece, and so, based on the oracle, I want to call you friends and to become allies without treachery or deceit."'

Not only is Croesus proposing that the two peoples come together in friendship (φιλία), he is also asking for a military alliance (γενέσθαι σύμμαχος). While the concept of a military alliance (σύμμαχια) is clear to understand, the creation of φιλία is perhaps more nuanced, but generally requires reciprocal aid and benefit among the φίλοι.[82] Croesus' desire for Sparta to become his military ally obviously stems from the Pythia's advice to make a strong Greek ally before instigating a war with Persia. However, the oracle did not advise Croesus to make a Greek city-state his military ally, although the Lydian king did explicitly ask if he should make another group of people his military ally (εἴ τινα στρατὸν ἀνδρῶν προσθέοιτο σύμμαχον, (1.53.2). The

[82] Blundell 1989, 32. For more on φιλία, see Blundell's second chapter of "*Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics*."

disconnect between the actual oracle and what Croesus believes the message to be continues the motif of Croesus not fully understanding his oracles, which will inevitably lead to his downfall.[83]

An interesting feature of Croesus proposal for an alliance with the Spartans is a condition of the proposed partnership. Croesus says that their friendship and military alliance will function "without both treachery and deceit" (ἄνευ τε δόλου καὶ ἀπάτης, (Hdt. 1.69.3)). This condition is meant to hold both sides on equal footing and ensures trust between the two. As Blundell has argued, trust is crucial to the success of relationships such as φιλία and σύμμαχια, and treaties (such as the one between Lydia and Sparta) are meant to cement that trust between states.[84] This condition also appears in another proposal of alliance that occurs much later in the *Histories*, well into the narrative of the Greco-Persian Wars. After the Battle of Salamis the Persian military commander Mardonius sent Alexander I, ruler of Macedon, to the Athenians in order to secure an alliance between the Greek city-state and the Near Eastern empire, a proposal that includes the following:

> μὴ ὦν βούλεσθε παρισούμενοι βασιλέι στέρεσθαι μὲν τῆς χώρης, θέειν δὲ αἰεὶ περὶ ὑμέων αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ καταλύσασθε· παρέχει δὲ ὑμῖν κάλλιστα καταλύσασθαι, βασιλέος ταύτῃ ὁρμημένου. ἔστε ἐλεύθεροι, ἡμῖν ὁμαιχμίην συνθέμενοι ἄνευ τε δόλου καὶ ἀπάτης.
>
> (Hdt. 8.140)
>
> Do not desire to make yourselves equal to the King, for it will result in you losing your land, and you will always be on the run from us, but make peace instead; and it is very easy for you to make peace, with the King already urging this, be free, and join yourself in an alliance with us, without both treachery and deceit.

The condition that the alliance be free from treachery and deceit occurs in both Croesus' proposal to the Spartans and Mardonius' proposal to the Athenians. While these conditions could possibly be explained away as formulaic language, I believe that it cannot be a coincidence that

[83] For more on Croesus' misreading of oracles, see Kindt 2006, 39ff..
[84] Blundell 1989, 34.

these two proposals have the exact same language and condition, especially since the phrase "ἄνευ τε δόλου καὶ ἀπάτης" occurs only three times in the *Histories*, two of which I have discussed, and the third time in Book 9 when the Athenians relate Mardonius' proposal to the Spartan ephors. This specific condition occurs in only two alliance proposals, despite many alliances quoted in the *Histories*. If this was a common formulaic condition for alliances, then it would arguably be found in the multitude of other Herodotean alliances. Based on the similar language and unique condition in the proposal, I argue that Herodotus created a link not only between the two offered alliances but also the two different conflicts involving the Persians. While the Persians are responsible for the second proposal, the language recalls that of their former enemy now turned subjects. However, the similarities end when it comes to the acceptance of the alliances. The Spartans accept Croesus offer, while the Athenians reject Mardonius':

> Κροῖσος μὲν δὴ ταῦτα δι᾽ἀγγέλων ἐπεκηρυκεύετο, Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ἀκηκοότες καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ θεοπρόπιον τὸ Κροῖσῳ γενόμενον ἥσθησάν τε τῇ ἀπίξι τῶν Λυδῶν καὶ ἐποιήσαντο ὅρκια ξεινίης πέρι καὶ συμμαχίης·
>
> (Hdt. 1.69.3)
>
> Croesus sent these proposals through the messengers, and the Lacedaemonians, having already heard the oracle that came to Croesus, were pleased at the arrival of the Lydians and made the solemn oaths of friendship and alliance.

As the Persians have not yet made an official appearance thus far in the first book, we have not been able to make a judgement on how Herodotus has represented them. Instead, we have been alongside the Lydians as they prepare to wage war against the Persians. This means that our first impression of the Persians in the narrative is filtered through a Lydian lens. As Croesus' story unfolds in this book, Greece constantly reappears in the narrative, from the consultation of various Greek oracles (especially Delphi), the intermission of Croesus' war

preparations with the details of the current circumstances in two city-states on the Greek mainland, and to the formation of an alliance between Lydia and Sparta. This recurring interaction between Lydia and Greece links the two together. Therefore, I argue that not only Sparta, as an ally, can be viewed as an extension of the Lydian kingdom in the upcoming conflict against Persia, but all of Greece as well, especially when we take into account the panhellenic force that will defeat the Persian Empire. As I argued previously, the Lydian lens of the first book leads the audience to view the Persians as the Other, urged on by the violent dispute arising between the two Near Eastern kingdoms and following in Hartog's notion of the "double mirror" effect. Although the Lydians would have been viewed as the Other by the Greeks, I argue that the Lydians would have viewed the Greeks as similar to themselves against the Persian threat, a perspective strengthened by the newfound relationship of φιλία and συμμαχία between them and the Spartans. Therefore, the Lydians share with the Greeks a distinct difference that separates them from the Persians, culminating in the Persians being viewed as the Other by both the Lydians as well as the Greeks. This conclusion is crucial to our understanding of the portrayal and representation of the Persians through this Lydian lens which is the initial impression of this group of people that the audience receives in the *Histories*.

The narrative continues with a newly solidified relationship and alliance between the Lydians and the Spartans. This military alliance with the Spartans is highly important because it brings a Greek perspective into a war to be fought between two Near Eastern powers. Thus, via the Spartan alliance, a Greek city-state from the mainland has the potential to enter into war against the Persian Empire long before the Greco-Persian Wars of the 5th century take place. Feeling more confident now that this partnership has been established, and still believing that he would destroy the Persian Empire based on the Pythia's oracles, Croesus went on the offensive

and invaded the region of Cappadocia, which was subjugated under the Persian's control. The description of Croesus' undertaking is worth noting:

> … Κροῖσος δὲ ἁμαρτὼν τοῦ χρησμοῦ ἐποιέετο στρατηίην ἐς Καππαδοκίην, ἐλπίσας καταιρήσειν Κῦρόν τε καὶ τὴν Περσέων δύναμιν.
>
> (Hdt. 1.71.1)
>
> …And Croesus, misunderstanding the oracle, made a campaign into Cappadocia, hoping to destroy both Cyrus and the power of Persia.

Based solely on Herodotus' language here, the audience is primed to view this invasion as a mistake detrimental to Croesus as he continues to misunderstand the oracles. Thus, the author is foreshadowing the Lydian's defeat at the hands of Cyrus and his empire in part due to his misunderstanding of the oracle, which is exactly what happens.

Soon after his invasion of Cappadocia, Croesus and his army had their first battle against Cyrus and his army in the region of Pteria (1.76-7). According to Herodotus, the battle lasted a day, with both sides facing substantial casualties and no clear winner. On the second day, the Persian army did not engage with their opponents. Noticing this, Croesus pulled out his army so that they could return to Sardis, intending to summon help from his allies (Egypt, Babylon, and Sparta) and assuming that Cyrus would not march on Sardis after their first battle showed that they were evenly matched. Much like Croesus' conclusions about his various oracles, this assumption would ultimately prove to be incorrect. Cyrus and his army besieged Sardis, and after fourteen days, the Lydians were defeated, and Croesus became a political prisoner of Cyrus.

Although this episode marks the end of Croesus' rule over Lydia, he has one final realization to make. For an unknown reason, although Herodotus does relate many possibilities, Cyrus intended to burn Croesus alive on a funeral pyre.[85] While he was facing his own death,

[85] Wallace 2016, 178f concludes that Croesus' survival and transformation into Cyrus' advisor was completely fictional and included to benefit Herodotus' narrative.

Croesus supposedly thought back to Solon's visit earlier in the *Histories* and his wise words. On the pyre, Croesus shouted Solon's name three times, which prompted Cyrus to ask who he was calling upon. Croesus recounted Solon's visit:

> λιπαρεόντων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ ὄχλον παρεχόντων, ἔλεγε δὴ ὡς ἦλθε ἀρχὴν ὁ Σόλων ἐὼν Ἀθηναῖος, καὶ θεησάμενος πάντα τὸν ἑωυτοῦ ὄλβον ἀποφλαυρίσειε οἷα δὴ εἶπας, ὥς τε αὐτῷ πάντα ἀποβεβήκοι τῇ περ ἐκεῖνος εἶπε, οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον ἐς ἑωυτὸν λέγων ἢ οὐκ ἐς ἅπαν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς παρὰ σφίσι αὐτοῖσι ὀλβίους δοκέοντας εἶναι.
>
> (Hdt. 1.86.5)
>
> But when they persisted and formed a crowd, he said how at first Solon the Athenian came and, after seeing all of his wealth, he dismissed it as nothing, saying something similar, and how everything had happened just as he said it would, speaking nothing more of him than of every human being, especially those who believe themselves to be happy.

Now that Solon's advice and words of wisdom are producing a palpable effect, Croesus realizes that the Athenian sage was right all along. As was the case with the Delphic oracles, Croesus failed to fully reflect on Solon's message, and it appears that those failures contributed to his downfall. While it took Croesus the majority of his rule to finally understand Solon's wisdom, Cyrus appeared to have immediately grasped it after hearing the abridged version from Croesus. Realizing the damage that he is committing against another human being, and fearing divine retribution for his actions, Cyrus promptly freed Croesus from the pyre.

Throughout the *Croesus Logos*, Herodotus has framed the Lydian king in a manner reminiscent of Lydia's own geographic position and location, namely stuck in the middle between the Greek West and the Persian East. There are many instances where the Greek mainland has ingrained itself in Croesus' story. Towards the beginning of Croesus' reign, it seems that multiple Greek sages, such as Solon, visited Lydia and were hosted by Croesus, who had the opportunity to learn valuable insight and wisdom from them. Croesus sent several embassies to Delphi in order to consult and propitiate the oracle after deeming it a "true oracle."

Croesus also involved the Greek mainland in his war against Persia after he secured an alliance with the Spartans, although they were never able to receive the help against the Persians that was agreed upon. Each of these examples show that Herodotus carefully intertwined the Greeks with Croesus' narrative as he prepares to face off against a neighboring empire. As a product of Hartog's "double mirror" effect, the narrative unfolding through a Lydian lens has seemingly connected the Lydians to the Greeks while simultaneously placing both peoples against the Persian Other.

As Croesus constantly looks towards Greece in the lead up to his battle against Persia, I argue that the war between Lydia and Persia was written by Herodotus in order to foreshadow the Greco-Persian Wars. While the Lydians mirror the position of the Greeks during their conflict against the Persians, they are not exact proxies for the Greeks, as the Lydians lose to the Persians while the latter are victorious. Despite the efforts of Croesus to gain Greek wisdom, through both wise men and divine oracles, and Greek allies, ultimately, the Lydian king does not make proper use of these tools. Croesus has disregarded the words of Solon, has improperly interpreted many oracles, and was not able to fight alongside the Spartans in the terms agreed upon in their alliance. As much as Herodotus linked the Lydians with the Greeks in Book 1, he also framed Croesus as an exemplum of Eastern hubris. Croesus dismissed Solon from his court believing that the Athenian was foolish, but as his life was coming to an end, Croesus realized Solon was right all along. After Cyrus spared his life, Croesus sent an embassy to Delphi to ask why the god sent untrue oracles that led to his kingdom's demise. The Pythia replied that Croesus was to blame for his downfall as he misinterpreted the oracles and did not follow up with a second inquiry. In both cases, Croesus' hubris impeded the state of his own rule and homeland, ending with Lydia's defeat and subsumption into the Persian Empire. Despite

Croesus' many attempts to align himself with the Greeks and Greek culture, his hubris shows that regardless of what oracles he consults and where his allies are from, he is still a member of the non-Greek Other and is subjected to Eastern stereotypes.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have shown that the depictions and characterizations of the non-Greek Other by both Aeschylus and Herodotus were not the traditional and stereotypical representations that have been the norm in the field for quite some time. Instead, these two authors, whose works relevant to this thesis focused on the Greco-Persian Wars, carefully crafted their Persian and Lydian characters in a manner that expresses familiarity between, and integrations of, the East and the West. Therefore, this research builds upon the recent trend of scholars focusing on Otherness in antiquity as the focus shifts ever so slightly from the differences towards the similarities.

As stated in the introduction, my analyses of the *Persae's* parodos and Book 1 of the *Histories* are completely independent of one another, but both serve as proof of their respective author's nuanced portrayals of the Other. In the first chapter, my focus was on the opening parodos of the *Persae*, performed by a chorus of Persian elders. Through my analysis of this introduction, I have emphasized the characterization of the Persian warriors as having been "nurtured by the entire Asiatic land" (πᾶσα χθῶν Ἀσιῆτις | θρέψασα, Aes. *Pers*. 63-4). Based on this sentiment and others similar to it, I argue that the "nurturing land" motif found in the chorus' parodos has framed the Persians as autochthonous beings, although the Achaemenids did not propagate autochthonous sentiments during their regime. The concept of an "autochthonous" Persian becomes important due to the external audience of the *Persae*. Since the play was staged during the City Dionysia, the majority of the audience would have been Athenian citizens, who themselves claim to be autochthonous. Therefore, I conclude that Aeschylus crafted his Persian characters as autochthonous in order to present them in a manner familiar to his Athenian audience. Thanks to this mirrored origin and cultural identity, I argue that the Athenians would

have felt sympathy towards Aeschylus' Persians, thus adding more evidence supporting the "sympathetic reading" of the *Persae*.

While the first chapter focused on the Eastern Other in poetry, the second chapter was concerned with the Other in prose. My discussion of the first book of the *Histories* was two-fold. The preface and first five chapters of the *Histories* explained Herodotus' intentions for his work and the mythological background to the East/West hostilities. The first major argument of this chapter centered on Persian *logioi* who served as Herodotus' unnamed sources for this section of the *Histories*. Overall, the precarious inclusion of information from individuals who are likely to hold some pro-Persian beliefs frames the beginning of the Histories in favor of the Persian/Eastern Other as the Persian *logioi* seemingly place the blame squarely on the Greeks for causing the hostilities.

Following an examination of the preface and introductory chapters, my analysis then turns to the first extended narrative of the Histories, namely the *Croesus*/*Lydian Logos*. Based on this section of the work, I argue that Herodotus crafted this narrative with intentionally placed incursions and integrations of the Greek mainland in order to frame Croesus and the Lydians as a much more palatable Other than Cyrus and the Persians. Throughout this *Logos*, Croesus intertwines himself with Greek peoples and customs in three major ways. First, the Athenian sage Solon visits Croesus' court and delivers Greek wisdom upon the Lydian king who then fails to realize its importance. Second, during his preparation for war against Persia, Croesus sought the wisdom and prophecies of the Delphic oracle for guidance, which he then failed to correctly interpret, relying instead on his own misguided interpretations. Finally, Croesus made an alliance with the Spartan city-state in the hopes of fighting alongside them against the Persians. Based on these three facets of Croesus' narrative, I argue that Herodotus has foreshadowed the upcoming

Greco-Persian Wars by situating Greece so heavily in the Lydian-Persian conflict. Despite this analogous mirroring of the Lydians as Greeks against the Persians, the Lydians are not perfect substitutes for the Greeks. At the end of the *Croesus Logos*, the Lydian king recounts Solon's wisdom to Cyrus. While Croesus was unable to grasp the meaning during the sage's visit, he now understands the unstable nature of fortune as he faces death on the pyre. Conversely, Cyrus is able to immediately understand Solon's wisdom, thus suggesting that the Persians are more apt for Greek wisdom. Despite framing the Lydians as a precursor for the Greeks in terms of their respective Persian conflicts, ultimately, they are imperfect substitutes due to Croesus' negligence of Solon's advice. At the end of the *Croesus Logos*, the audience comes to realize that Croesus is still an Easterner subjected to their stereotypical hubristic nature.

In conclusion, Aeschylus and Herodotus created a more nuanced depiction of their Near Eastern protagonists than the stereotypical representations of the Other that has long been considered the norm. The Persians and Lydians in the *Persae* and *Histories* have similar features and connections to the Greeks, who are also the external audiences of the respective works. Perhaps these Othered groups of people are not the polar opposites of the Greeks that traditional alterity scholarship has painted them to be.

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