

Helen Tank 29001063

**Irony and Women in Herodotus**

A Dissertation submitted to the University of Wales Trinity  
Saint David in fulfilment of the requirements for MA Classics  
(pathway Greek)

CLCL7002

September 2012

Helen Tank

29001063

**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation  
Declaration Form.**

1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed Helen Tank

Date 20/09/12

2. This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MA Classics (pathway Greek)

Signed Helen Tank

Date 20/09/12

3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

A bibliography is appended.

Signed (candidate) Helen Tank

Date: 20/09/12

4. I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying, inter- library loan, and for deposit in the University's digital repository

Signed (candidate) Helen Tank

Date...20/09/12.....

.....

**Supervisor's Declaration.**

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the student's own efforts.

Signed: ..... .....
Date: ..... .....

**Appendix 3: E-thesis Deposit Agreement to be submitted with all taught Master Degree dissertations (electronic).**

**University of Wales: Trinity Saint David**

**E-Thesis Deposit Agreement**

**Details of the Work**

I would like to deposit the following item in the digital repository maintained by the University, and/or in any other repository authorized for use by the University:

**Title Irony and Women in Herodotus**

This item is a product of my own research endeavours and is covered by the agreement below in which the item is referred to as "the Work". It is identical in content to that deposited in the Learning Resources Centre, subject to point 4 below.

I agree that the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David may electronically store, copy or translate the Work to any approved medium or format for the purpose of future preservation and accessibility. The University is not under any obligation to reproduce or display the Work in the same formats or resolutions in which it was originally deposited.

### **UW: TSD Digital Repository**

I understand that work deposited in the digital repository will be accessible to a wide variety of people and institutions, including automated agents and search engines via the World Wide Web.

I understand that once the Work is deposited, the item and its metadata may be incorporated into public access catalogues or services, such as national databases of electronic theses.

#### **I agree as follows:**

1. That I am the author or have the authority of the author/s to make this agreement and do hereby give the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David the right to make available the Work in the way described above.
2. That the electronic copy of the Work deposited in the digital repository and covered by this agreement, is identical in content to the paper copy of the Work deposited in the Learning Resources Centre of the University, subject to point 4 below.
3. That I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the Work is original, and to the best of my knowledge, does not breach any laws including those relating to defamation, libel and copyright.
4. That I have, in instances where the intellectual property of other authors or copyright holders is included in the Work, gained explicit permission for the inclusion of that material in the Work, and in the electronic form of the Work as accessed through the open access digital repository, or that I have identified and removed that material for which adequate permission has not been obtained and which will be inaccessible via the digital repository
5. That University of Wales: Trinity Saint David does not hold any obligation to take legal action on behalf of the Depositor, or other rights holders, in the event of a breach of intellectual property rights, or any other right, in the material deposited.
6. That I undertake to indemnify the University of Wales: Trinity Saint David against all actions, suits, proceedings, claims, demands and costs occasioned by the University in consequence of any breach of this agreement

**Signature Helen Tank Date 20/09/12**

## Summary

This is a study of eight stories in Herodotus in which women play a significant role. We argue that these stories are characterised by an irony or ambiguity which unsettles a construction of women as 'other'. We question whether the concept of polar opposites (war and marriage, for example) is a helpful way to consider the respective roles of men and women.

We also test some of the generalisations made by scholars in this area, for example, that women are associated with *nomoi* that men transgress or that they function as observers rather than agents.

We consider the significance of Herodotus as a non-Athenian who brings an outsider's perspective to events and personalities and who introduces Athenians to themselves, from an ironic distance.

We conduct a detailed analysis of each text, using narratological tools to explore characterisation and focus and how Herodotus creates a distance between himself and his (self-interested) *logioi* through shifting focalisations.

We make a comparative study of particular words (e.g. *eros*, *andreia*, *pericharis*) as part of our study of Herodotean irony and explore how he shows women as well as men using rhetoric to influence events. We also consider women as agents as well as observers and the relationships between men and women in both the private and the public sphere.

We have selected texts which enable us to consider individual women and groups, Greeks and non Greeks, queens and slaves.

## **Introduction**

Before the battle of Salamis, Xerxes takes advice. He is told to avoid a sea battle ‘because at sea your men will be as far inferior to the Greeks as women are to men’.<sup>1</sup> The irony is that the person giving this advice is a woman who has just boasted of her own exploits in the sea battles off Euboea.

This is a study of irony in Herodotus using eight stories of women as individuals and as groups as case studies,<sup>2</sup> including the story of Artemisia, Xerxes’ advisor. We argue that an ironic perspective is essential to understanding and interpreting these stories.

## **Scholarship**

### **1. Irony**

Scholars identify a vein of irony that runs through the work of Herodotus. Dewald calls him a ‘talented, ironic onlooker’ in contrast with Thucydides who was embedded in Athenian society,<sup>3</sup> a view shared by Baragwanath who notes Herodotus’ stance of ‘deliberate noncommittal’ and whose ‘tendentious narratorial comment works against the picture he establishes in the wider narrative.’<sup>4</sup> For Flory, Herodotus’ view was

---

<sup>1</sup> Waterfield, 1998: 510.

<sup>2</sup> Hdt., 1.8-13; 1.30-32; 1.107-22; 3.118-9; 4.110-117; 5.87; 7.99, 8.68-9, 8.87-7, 8.101-3; 9.5; 9.108-13.

<sup>3</sup> Dewald, 1999: 248.

<sup>4</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 33.

‘supremely ironic and his intent in writing is to make his readers share that view.’<sup>5</sup>

Dewald also points out that some people (male and female) in the *Histories* succeed ‘by exploiting the conventional assumptions of other for their own ends - by looking at the world with an ironic, perhaps even cynical, detachment from conventional assumptions about power.’<sup>6</sup>

Scholars, therefore, highlight Herotodean irony in the dissonance between intention or expectation and outcome,<sup>7</sup> or between how things appear and the underlying reality. Pelling notes also that people say what they do not mean and events turn out ironically: ‘a sequel may fit paradoxically, even if all too explicably, with what precedes it.’<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Women

There has also been a considerable amount of scholarship on women in Herodotus, starting with Dewald’s seminal work in 1980-81. Some writers see women as defenders of the values of society against violations of *nomos*.<sup>9</sup> Dewald notes women’s loyalty, first to husbands and families by marriage, then to the cultures of their birth which necessitated reciprocity from

---

<sup>5</sup> Flory, 1987: 20.

<sup>6</sup> Dewald, 1990: 223.

<sup>7</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 8.

<sup>8</sup> Pelling, 2006: 117.

<sup>9</sup> Blok, 2002: 227; Dewald, 1981: 92-3; Fisher, 2002: 207; Flory, 1987: 33. Lateiner, 1989: 127,136; Gould, 1989: 130.

men.<sup>10</sup> Lateiner sees women as observers: ‘like the oracles, they provide an extra-political, reflective comment or control on the nearly all-male narrative,’<sup>11</sup> but he observes that powerful women signify disruption. Women, Dewald argues, also have a symbolic significance, illustrating the constraints of human existence.<sup>12</sup>

Others looks at women through the prism of ‘otherness,’ which, as Cartledge reminds us, does not just mean ‘different’, but a polar opposite, mutually exclusive.<sup>13</sup> Hartog, in studying the portrayal of the Scythians in the *Histories* uses ‘otherness’ as a way of analysing what at first seems a contradiction in terms, namely a nomadic power,<sup>14</sup> and considers the Amazons in this light. Flory uses the concept of extreme opposites,<sup>15</sup> for example, logic v accident and truth v fiction, but also creates a generic female character, the vengeful queen, who is ‘other’ from her male counterpart.

Gray<sup>16</sup> argues that the polarity between barbarian ruler and barbarian subject is more significant than gender differences. For Gould, the function of women is ‘to define the male role by opposition.’<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Dewald, 1981: 15-17.

<sup>11</sup> Lateiner, 1989: 137-8.

<sup>12</sup> Dewald, 1981: 17.

<sup>13</sup> Cartledge, 1993: 200.

<sup>14</sup> Hartog, 1988: xxiii.

<sup>15</sup> Flory, 1987: 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> Gray, 1995: 194-8.

<sup>17</sup> Gould, 1980: 56.



### **This study**

This study brings these two strands together. We accept Dewald's assertion that Herodotus is 'an important and generally neglected witness to fifth-century assumptions about women in society',<sup>18</sup> but this begs the question what was assumed and by whom.

Some may have agreed with Hesiod, who wrote that the gods 'made women to be an evil to mortal men with a nature to do evil' (δ'αὐτως ἄνδρεσσι κακὸν θνητοῖσι γυναῖκας Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης θῆκεν, ξυνήονας ἔργων ἀργαλέων, *Hes.Th.* 600-602). This is an extreme view of woman as 'other'. However, there is an obvious tension between an analysis based on irony and one based on 'otherness.' How can one pin down the 'other' if a writer is being ironic?

Others may have preferred the more nuanced view of Aristotle, who saw women as, by nature, more compassionate and tearful than men but also more jealous, discontented, abusive and liable to lash out (διόπερ γυνὴ ἀνδρὸς ἐλεημονέστερον καὶ ἀρίδακρυ μᾶλλον, ἔτι δὲ φθονερώτερον καὶ μεμψιμοιρότερον καὶ φιλολοῖδορον μᾶλλον καὶ πληκτικώτερον, *Arist. H.A.* 608b 8-11). This comparative view is more akin to the generalisations about women in Herodotus outlined above.

---

<sup>18</sup> Dewald, 1981: 10.

We argue that Herodotus subverts these generalisations, by highlighting the irony of a situation or the disjuncture between expectation and outcome. For example, a number of individuals in the stories we consider are tearful in a calculated way rather than out of compassion.

We also bear in mind, when considering whose attitudes are illuminated, that Herodotus was not an Athenian. He was born on the eastern fringes of the Greek world but travelled widely, giving him a point of view which was ‘ambivalent towards all sides.’<sup>19</sup> We argue that some of the stories (the story of Candaules’ wife, the story of the Amazons and the two stories of Athenian women) are particularly interesting because they are told from a non-Athenian perspective and raise the possibility of Athenian ‘otherness’, of assumptions that are more Athenian than Greek. The story of Artemisia raises questions about the concept of masculinity (*andreia*) itself.

This study will suggest a parallel with Herodotus’ presentation of the barbarian ‘other’ which is more subtle than a straightforward polarity. As Lateiner points out, Herodotus presents barbarians as different rather than stereotyping them, a ‘challenge to Hellenic complacency,’<sup>20</sup> and Pelling<sup>21</sup> illustrates the porous nature of the barbarian-Greek divide in the

---

<sup>19</sup> Munson, 2001: 271.

<sup>20</sup> Lateiner, 1989: 25.

<sup>21</sup> Pelling, 1997: 57; 2000:10-11.

Herodotean debates before Salamis: both Persians and Athenians combine self-interest with a travesty of *logos*.

We argue that the male-female divide is just as porous. Both men and women take revenge, mete out cruel and arbitrary punishment, deceive, trick and kill. They also both act on behalf of their marriages, children and extended families, for good and ill. They speak, argue, persuade (or fail to) or know when to remain silent.

### **Methodology**

It is a feature of the *Histories* that Herodotus tells us about people's mental as well as their physical activities; he tells us what they are thinking, feeling or seeing and he attributes motives to their actions. This study, therefore, will use the methodology of narratology,<sup>22</sup> using the term 'focalisation' to identify when Herodotus is conveying the thoughts and feelings of individuals in the stories and when he is telling us what he thinks. For example, when Herodotus writes that women would not be abducted if they did not want to be (εἰ μὴ αὐταὶ ἐβούλοντο, οὐκ ἂν ἠρπάζοντο, 1.4.2), he is expressing a Persian claim (λέγουσι, 1.4.3) not his own view.<sup>23</sup> The narratological tools of foreshadowing and narrative delay also help us to identify when Herodotus is anticipating later events

---

<sup>22</sup> De Jong, 1987.

<sup>23</sup> Plutarch attributes this view to Herodotus in *The Malice of Herodotus* (856 F): perhaps a specimen of his own malice?

and preparing us for a reversal of fortunes, which is, of course, a major theme in the *Histories*, explored first in the story of Solon and Croesus (1.29-32).

Because the irony is sometimes verbal, that is, words mean the opposite of what they say or contradict the accompanying narrative, this study identifies a number of words or phrases which, in the *Histories*, have an ironic or ambiguous meaning and relies on scholars who have done studies of particular words.<sup>24</sup> We conduct a detailed linguistic analysis of each case study, identifying how Herodotus uses particular words, both in the passage and elsewhere in the *Histories*. We also identify certain rhetorical tropes which he introduces into some of the speeches.

We also have to place the *Histories* in a historical context. The publication date for the *Histories* is probably 426 BCE<sup>25</sup> or 425BCE<sup>26</sup> by which time the Peloponnesian war had started and the Persian war was a memory for some, a story for others. It is inevitable, therefore that Herodotus' audience read or listened to the *Histories* with the benefit of hindsight, as do we.

There is, of course, a link here with dramatic irony, where a reversal in the action conforms to probability or necessity ( ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἢ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολή

---

<sup>24</sup> Chiasson, 1983; Cairns, 1996; Larson, 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Evans, 1968:12

<sup>26</sup> De Croix, 1977: 138.

καθάπερ εἴρηται, καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ὅσπερ λέγομεν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ ἀναγκαῖον, Arist.*Po.*,1452a24-25). Aristotle, however, points out that poetry deals with universals, history particulars (ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει, Arist.*Po.*1451b6-7). Nevertheless, he saw it as part of the dramatist's role to arouse a sense of wonder (τὸ θαυμαστὸν, Arist.*Po.*1452a5) which reminds us of Herodotus' stated purpose, to preserve the great and wonderful deeds (ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, Hdt.*Proem*) of Greeks and non-Greeks alike.

We draw parallels with two plays which had been produced by the date of the *Histories*, namely *The Persians* (c.472BCE) and *Medea* (c.431 BCE).

We have selected eight case studies. Some of these stories have been well researched by scholars, for example the story of Candaules' wife and the story of Amestris, both of whom are barbarian queens. We will consider and test the assertion that both symbolise 'otherness' and are defenders of *nomos* and the extent to which the two stories complement one another.

The Amazons have also been well studied <sup>27</sup> but the focus has been on whether they were mythological or historical figures and their place in the artistic as well as the literary tradition of

---

<sup>27</sup> Pembroke, 1967; Tyrrell, 1984; Lefkowitz, 1986.

Athens. This study will consider the extent to which Herodotus reflects or challenges that tradition.

We consider the story of Intaphrenes' wife because it tests the generalisation that women in Herodotus put loyalty to husbands and families by marriage first and poses interesting questions about how best to communicate with tyrants.

The story of the mother of Cleobis and Biton allows us to explore the tension between a Greek woman's public role as a priestess and her private role as a mother, and the ironies in her situation have, we argue, received insufficient attention from scholars.

Similarly, the two stories of the Athenian women have received little analysis. Pelling notes <sup>28</sup> that ideals of female behaviour are not clear cut either in court or in tragedy. In Herodotus, we learn of behaviour by Athenian women that is extreme, by Greek or non-Greek standards.

We consider the story of Cyno because her behaviour challenges her 'otherness' as slave, barbarian and woman but is also complemented by the ambiguities in Cyrus' position.

Finally we consider Artemisia because she is the one woman to whom Herodotus attributes *andreia*. We explore what this means and how she is presented as a foil to Xerxes who lacks this quality of manliness.

---

<sup>28</sup> Pelling, 2000: 195.

**Obsessive Love: Candaules, his wife and the bodyguard  
(1.8-13)**

We start with the story of Candaules. Herodotus introduces the story with the following information: ἠράσθη τῆς ἑωυτοῦ γυναικός (1.8.1). To translate this as ‘was in love with his own wife’<sup>29</sup> or ‘became enamoured of his own wife’<sup>30</sup> fails to give due emphasis to the meaning of the verb as used by Herodotus, who uses ἐρῶ only five times in the *Histories*.<sup>31</sup> It is used to describe Mykerinos’ feelings for the daughter he rapes (2.131.1), Cambyses’ for one of his sisters (3.31.2), and Xerxes’ for his brother’s wife and then her daughter (9.108.1, 9.108.2) and always indicates a transgressive passion.<sup>32</sup>

However the Candaules story is the only occasion when Herodotus uses the verb to describe the feelings of a man for his wife; in the world he writes about it is not just ‘an unusual occurrence’,<sup>33</sup> it is unique. Its consequence for Candaules is spelt out by Herodotus: ἐρασθεῖς δὲ ἐνόμιζέ οἱ εἶναι γυναῖκα πολλὸν πασέων καλλίστην (1.8.1).

The participle is used here in a connective sense; we are expected to understand his thought processes in the light of his transgressive passion. It is important to emphasise the

---

<sup>29</sup> Rawlinson, 1910: 7.

<sup>30</sup> Waterfield, 1998: 6.

<sup>31</sup> Powell, 1938: 143.

<sup>32</sup> Pelling, 1997: 56 who notes an ‘oriental pattern of transgressive *eros*’ in the Candaules story.

<sup>33</sup> Asheri, 2007: 82

focalisation here; Candaules begins to think that his wife is by far the most beautiful woman in the world but this is a subjective view of a man in the grip of an irrational obsession.

Herodotus comments that he exaggerated his wife's beauty (τὸ εἶδος τῆς γυναικὸς ὑπερεπαινέων, 1.8.1). The ὑπερ prefix is associated more generally in Herodotus with abnormal behaviour, for example, the Thracian chieftain who blinded his own sons for disobeying his orders (ἔργον ὑπερφυῆς ἐργάσατο, 8.116.1) or with an emotion that leads to an abnormal act, such as that which led Xerxes to order the beheading of Phoenicians during the battle of Salamis (ὑπερλυπεόμενός τε καὶ πάντα αἰτιώμενος, 8.90.3). Its association with barbarian excess is suggested in the narrative about the battle of Plataea. Lampon's description of the Spartan leader Pausanias' achievement in saving Greece (ἔργον...ὑπερφυῆς μέγαθός τε καὶ κάλλος, 9.78.2) is uncontroversial but his proposal to impale Mardonius' body is both condemned by Herodotus (ἀνοσιώτατον λόγον, 9.78.1) and by Pausanias himself (τὰ πρέπει μᾶλλον βαρβάροισι ποιέειν ἢ περ Ἑλλήσι, 9.79.1).

When used, however, of Greeks, the prefix suggests an emotion that is extreme rather than excessive, for example the Athenians' grief at the fall of Miletus (ὑπεραχθεσθέντες, 6.21.2) and the fear of Persian invasion by some Peloponnesian states before the battle of Salamis (ὑπεραρρωδέοντες τῇ Ἑλλάδι κινδυνεύουση, 8.72).



It can also be used in an ironic sense, as in Croesus' reaction (ὑπερήσθη, 1.54.1) to the oracle pronouncing he would destroy a great empire. The latter example may also be an example of Herodotus' humour as with the hermit who was also the strongest man in Greece (ὑπερφύντος τε Ἑλληνας ἰσχύϊ καὶ φυγόντος ἀνθρώπους, 6.127.2) and the guards who were too drunk to guard Rhampsinitus' wealth (ὑπερμεθυσθῆναι, 2.121.85).

Herodotus therefore gives a picture of a man who is irrational and excessive even before the explicit intervention at 1.8.2 (χρῆν γὰρ Κανδαύλῃ γενέσθαι κακῶς) and we miss the irony in what he subsequently says to Gyges if we too describe his wife as beautiful. It will turn out that Gyges is unaffected by her appearance; he responds to the queen's summons after he has seen her naked as if nothing has changed (ἔώθεε γὰρ καὶ πρόσθε, ὅκως ἢ βασιλεία καλέοι, φοιτᾶν, 1.11.1).

When Candaules repeats the proverb that ears are more unreliable than eyes (ᾧτα γὰρ τυγχάνει ἀνθρώποισι ἐόντα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν, 1.8.2), we reflect that, whilst this might be true in a forensic sense (hearsay is less reliable than an eye-witness account),<sup>34</sup> in Candaules' case his infatuation with his wife 'has a blinding effect on him'<sup>35</sup> and is his undoing more

---

<sup>34</sup> Hartog, 1988: 269.

<sup>35</sup> Hazewindus, 2004: 58.

than his failure to listen to Gyges' warning (μη δέεσθαι ἀνόμων 1.8.4).

Gyges replies with a proverb of his own (σκοπέειν τινὰ τὰ ἔωυτοῦ 1.8.4) and, as Baragwanath points out <sup>36</sup> this is ambiguous; is he acting out of pragmatic self-interest or acting as a foil to Candaules in declaring his compliance with *nomos*? There is also the irony that he will soon do exactly what he protests so vehemently against.<sup>37</sup> However, his spirited objection to Candaules' proposal makes it clear that Herodotus is not describing the king's behaviour as a Lydian trait, a function of the barbarian 'other'; rather it emphasises by opposition how extreme Candaules' proposal is.

At this stage in the story Candaules' wife is portrayed solely as an object to be displayed, a 'non-person, only an element in the interaction between the men'.<sup>38</sup> We know only her status in relation to each man: wife to Candaules, 'my mistress' to Gyges (δέσποιναν τὴν ἐμὴν 1.8.3) and the relationship described is not between her and either man but between Candaules and Gyges, who is special to the king (ἀρεσκόμενος μάλιστα, 1.8.1). The authorial intervention quoted above (1.8.2) allows us to predict that, when Candaules says that he will make sure that his wife does not find out that she is being looked at (μηδὲ μαθεῖν μιν ὀφθεῖσαν ὑπὸ σεῦ 1.9.1) that is

---

<sup>36</sup> Baragwanath, 2008:73.

<sup>37</sup> Hazewindus, 2004: 67.

<sup>38</sup> Hazewindus, 2004: 55.

exactly what will happen. However, we cannot predict her response.

We can reflect, however, on Candaules' proposal and Gyges' response. Gould is surely right when he describes Candaules' action as 'an outrageous breach of the rules of seclusion',<sup>39</sup> violating the boundaries between women and unrelated men, although we do learn from Herodotus that not all cultures have different quarters for men and women. Candaules and his wife share a bedroom (τὸ οἶκημα ἐν τῷ κοιμώμεθα, 1.9.2) and it is a point of difference between the Macedonians and the Persians that men and women are kept separate (νόμος ἡμῖν...κεχωρίσθαι ἄνδρας γυναικῶν, 5.18.3).

Nevertheless, the extreme act of voyeurism clearly goes beyond any cultural difference. Gyges spells out the consequence with a proverb: a woman strips off her modesty with her clothes (ἄμα δὲ κιθῶνι ἐκδυομένῳ συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ γυνή, 1.8.3).

Cairns defines αἰδώς as the 'force which inhibits improper behaviour'<sup>40</sup> whereas Larson prefers 'propriety' or 'reputation'<sup>41</sup>, and Waterfield<sup>42</sup> translates it as modesty; a wife is expected, indeed required to take her clothes off for her husband (whether in a shared bedroom or in her own quarters)

---

<sup>39</sup> Gould, 1980: 53.

<sup>40</sup> Cairns, 1996: 78.

<sup>41</sup> Larson, 2006: 237.

<sup>42</sup> Waterfield, 1998: 6.

but not before anyone else. Herodotus adds in parenthesis that in Lydia, in fact in most of the non-Greek world, it was a source of great shame for a man as well as for a woman to be seen naked (καὶ ἄνδρα ὀφθῆναι γυμνὸν ἐς αἰσχύνην μεγάλην φέρει, 1.10.3). This is one of five uses of γυμνός in this passage.<sup>43</sup> The only other reference in Herodotus to naked women is in Socleas' speech against tyranny when he condemns Periander for stripping the women of Corinth (ἀπέδυσσε πάσας τὰς Κορινθίων γυναῖκας, 5.92.η1) for the sake of his dead wife. This suggests that Herodotus wants to emphasise the transgressive nature of Candaules' proposal.

However there is another dimension to this. Later in Book 1 Herodotus observes that all the daughters of the Lydian *demos* worked as prostitutes (πορνεύονται, 1.93.4) to earn their own dowry, and arranged their own marriages. Herodotus reports this practice without condemnation as he does the Babylonian custom of prostituting children to provide relief from poverty (πᾶς τις τοῦ δήμου βίου σπανίζων καταπορνεύει τὰ θήλεα τέκνα, 1.196.5). This later information reveals that not all women in Lydia could avoid the male gaze. It also helps us to understand the specific nature of the insult to Candaules' wife; by treating her like a prostitute her husband demeans her status. In this respect, Candaules' wife is no different from a married Athenian woman. The degree to which she is seen by other men

---

<sup>43</sup> Powell, 1938: 71.

is a measure of her status in Lydia but this would be the same in Athens. As Davidson puts it ‘the extreme exposure of the brothel prostitute and the complete invisibility of the decent lady force all other women to dance a striptease on points in between’.<sup>44</sup> Apollodorus’ speech *Against Neaera* illustrates this well. Though Neaera, at the time of the speech, is living the life of a married woman with three children, she is still open to the taunt (admittedly made by a hostile prosecutor) that she had been a sex worker (ἠργάζετο τῷ σώματι (D. 59.20) in the past. The Greek makes it explicit that she had exposed her body. Candaules’ wife is not ‘other’, therefore, in her response to her exposure by her husband.

Once Candaules’ wife appears as an actor in the story she is anything but passive, submissive or ashamed. She is clear-sighted; she sees Gyges leaving her bedroom (ἐπορᾶ μιν ἐξιόντα, 1.10.2). As Hazewindus says,<sup>45</sup> the use of the historic present alerts the audience to the fact that her seeing him is of primary importance in the narrative. Had she not seen him there would be no violence, no change of dynasty and no Croesus.

She also understands that her husband is responsible for Gyges being in her bedroom (μαθοῦσα δὲ τὸ ποιηθὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρός, 1.10.2) and she holds him responsible for humiliating, dishonouring her (αἰσχυνθεῖσα, 1.10.2). Here we follow Flory

---

<sup>44</sup> Davidson, 1997: 128.

<sup>45</sup> Hazewindus, 2004: 61.

<sup>46</sup> in reading the participle in its passive rather than middle sense; she has been shamed rather than she was ashamed. Candaules' wife sees her exposure as something done to her, an external outrage.

We need to examine the nature of this shame because it is an area where Herodotus distinguishes between men and women. He uses the verb αἰσχύνω on four occasions,<sup>47</sup> and its meaning depends on gender and social status. When used of a woman it is associated with sexual exposure as with Candaules' wife and with Atossa when she was suffering from a breast abscess (ἐπὶ τοῦ μαστοῦ ἔφυ φῦμα...κρύπτουσα καὶ αἰσχυνομένη, 3.133.1). Herodotus describes the Babylonian custom of making women have sex with unrelated men (μειχθῆναι ἀνδρὶ ξείνῳ, 1.199.1) as their most shameful (αἴσχιστος τῶν νόμων, 1.199.1) but his observation that some of these women are too proud because of their wealth (πλούτῳ ὑπερφρονέουσαι, 1.199.1) to mix with other women is surely ironic.

When used of a man, shame means (a perception of) cowardice, as in the suicide by the sole survivor of Thermopylae (αἰσχυνόμενον...καταχρήσασθαι ἑωυτόν, 1.82.8) and the refusal by Amompharetus to retreat from the Persians (οὐκ ἔφη τοὺς ξείνους φεύξεσθαι οὐδὲ ἐκὼν εἶναι αἰσχυνέειν τὴν Σπάρτην, 9.53.2).

---

<sup>46</sup> Flory, 1987: 30.

<sup>47</sup> Powell, 1938: 9.

Candaules' wife's reaction, therefore would be recognised by Athenians as appropriate, indeed expected of a wife, in contrast to her husband, who is motivated by a transgressive passion, characterised as excessive and overbearing, and fails to listen to advice from Gyges.

However, her intention to take revenge (ἐν νόῳ ἔχουσα τείσασθαι, 1.10.2) marks her apart from the classical Athenian wife in that she becomes the agent of her own affairs. The same verb is used of Harpagus who desires to take revenge (τείσασθαι ἐπιθυμέων, 1.123.1) on Astyages for the peculiarly horrible murder of his son (ἀνόμῳ τραπέζῃ ἔδαισε, 1.162.1). Van de Veen comments <sup>48</sup> on the parallel between the two stories observing that both Astyages and Candaules are irrational and non-reflective in contrast with Harpagus and Candaules' wife and it is only in these two stories that Herodotus uses the word ἄνομος,<sup>49</sup> suggesting an extreme breach of law and convention.

The theme of *tisis*, the requirement to make someone pay for wrongdoing, is a common one in Herodotus,<sup>50</sup> whether by individuals or by countries. For example, Croesus wants to make Cyrus pay (τείσασθαι θέλων, 1.73.1) for the death of Astyages and the Scythians want to punish Darius (μεμονέναι μιν τείσασθαι, 6.84.2) for invading their lands. However, this is

---

<sup>48</sup> Van de Veen, 1996: 38.

<sup>49</sup> Powell, 1938: 29.

<sup>50</sup> Other examples include: 1.27, 2. 152, 3.128, 4.118, 7.8α, 8.76.

the only reference in Herodotus to a woman planning revenge and we should note that Candaules' wife has her mind directed towards vengeance whereas Harpagus acts out of passion, a challenge to a gender and barbarian stereotype which sees women/barbarians as emotional and uncontrolled and men/Greeks as rational.<sup>51</sup>

The notion of a woman planning revenge is an unsettling one and we should ask what other options were open to her. In Athenian society she would be expected to rely on a male relative,<sup>52</sup> as the man who is her *kurios* and is supposed to protect her is the man who has dishonoured her.<sup>53</sup> Her agency, therefore, marks her as different and Herodotus' audience might recall Medea, another woman who saw herself dishonoured, though in Euripides' play it is Jason who (impotently) promises revenge (φόνου τε παίδων τὸν δε τείσωμαι δίκην, *E.Med.*1316).

We need now to consider Candaules' wife's proposed remedy. When she encounters Gyges (1.11-12) we note first that she does not try to persuade him to kill her husband or himself, she forces him to make a choice. He is the one who has to rely on rhetoric (ἰκέτευε μή μιν ἀναγκαίη ἐνδέειν διακρίναι τοιαύτην αἴρεσιν, 1.11.3) but fails to persuade (οὐκ ὄν δὴ ἔπειθε,

---

<sup>51</sup> Pelling, 2000: 247.

<sup>52</sup> Gould, 1980: 43; Fantham, 1994: 111; Pomeroy, 1975: 62.

<sup>53</sup> Hipparete, who attempted to divorce her husband Alcibiades (*Plu. Alc.* 8.5; *Andoc.* 4.14) is the exception rather than the rule.



1.11.4). We reflect, however, on the irony that his failure leads to him becoming king whereas Candaules' success, in persuading him to become a voyeur, leads to his own death. Asheri observes <sup>54</sup> that Herodotus' repetition of ἀναγκαίη and ἀναγκαίην in 1.11.4 stresses the fatal course of events; the compulsion, however, is on the men in the story not the woman.

There is a parallel here with the law in relation to adultery in Athens. Carey <sup>55</sup> quotes Demosthenes as authority for the assertion that a man who kills another man at/near his wife (ἐπὶ δάμαρτι, D.25.53-4) commits justifiable homicide and notes that 'the presence of a man alone with a decent woman offers a *prima facie* case for assuming that illicit sex is intended or in progress'.<sup>56</sup> This makes Gyges an adulterer and in Athenian law, the legally guilty party.<sup>57</sup> Candaules' wife's ultimatum, therefore, that death must be the price to redeem honour does not mark her as different; rather, it reflects the similarity between Lydia and Greece that Herodotus himself observes (Λυδοὶ δὲ νόμοισι μὲν παραπλησίοισι χρέωνται καὶ Ἕλληνες, 1.94.1)

---

<sup>54</sup> Asheri, 207: 83.

<sup>55</sup> Carey, 1995: 409.

<sup>56</sup> Carey, 1995: 410n10.

<sup>57</sup> Pomeroy, 1975: 86.

It is argued that Candaules' wife has a normative function<sup>58</sup> illustrating the consequence of male transgression or is 'an innocent and unwitting cause of a catastrophic break of social continuity'.<sup>59</sup> These interpretations minimise her agency in the story. We think rather, with Dewald,<sup>60</sup> that she exploits both Candaules and Gyges' assumptions about her and her conventional role. Candaules takes it for granted that she will not see Gyges in the bedroom but it is his failure to keep his eyes open that leads to his assassination in the very same spot (μιν ἐκείνη ἐγχειρίδιον δοῦσα κατακρύπτει ὑπὸ τὴν αὐτὴν θύρην, 1.12.1). Gyges takes it for granted that she, as a woman, is the passive victim of a loss of αἰδῶς. She, however, holds him responsible for the breach of law and custom involved in her exposure (σὲ τὸν ἐμὲ γυμνὴν θεησάμενον καὶ ποιήσαντα οὐ νομιζόμενα, 1.11.3).

To conclude, all three actors in this story transgress a social norm but the wife acts to protect her honour, which had certainly been breached according to Athenian norms. The manner of her revenge, however, has uncomfortable parallels with female protagonists in tragedy and poses the same question to the audience; what was she to do?

---

<sup>58</sup> Lateiner, 1989: 135-6; Blok, 2002: 227; Dewald, 1981: 93.

<sup>59</sup> Gould, 1989: 53.

<sup>60</sup> Dewald, 1990: 223.

### **Tyrannical Excess: Amestris' revenge (9.108-13)**

There are unquestionably some parallels between the story of Candaules and the final story in the *Histories*, of Amestris' revenge for her husband Xerxes' adultery (9.108-113). In this story as well there is a specific authorial interjection warning us of the outcome for Artaynte and her family (τῆ δὲ κακῶς γὰρ ἔδεε πανοικίη γενέσθαι, 9.109.2); both she and Candaules display what is not theirs to show off. Artaynte not only wears the cloak made for Xerxes by his wife, she flaunts it (ἐφόρεέ τε καὶ ἀγάλλετο, 9.109.3); the use of the imperfect makes it clear that she does this repeatedly. The description of her feelings (περιχαρῆς ἐοῦσα τῷ δώρῳ, 9.109.3) is also an indication, as we will see in other stories, of joy that is excessive and that will be followed by disaster.

Both Candaules and Xerxes are motivated by *eros*, which, as noted above, is a rare emotion in Herodotus, associated with transgression. However, the word has a different connotation in the two stories; Candaules is obsessed with his wife's appearance, Xerxes desires sexually (ἦρα, 9.108.1; 9.108.2) first his brother's wife, then his niece. The text emphasises that *eros* in this context is associated with rape; all that protects Masistes' wife from being forced to have sex with Xerxes (βίην προσέφερε...βίης οὐ τευξομένη, 9.108.1) is his respect

(προμηθεόμενος, 9.108.1) for his brother. Even the king's written attempt to persuade her has a connotation of force (προσπέμποντι οὐκ ἐδύνατο κατεργασθῆναι, 9.108.1). In the Constitutional Debate, Otanes lists rape (βιάται γυναῖκας, 3.80.5) as one of the three things wrong with monarchy; to be safe from sexual assault you need status.

On two occasions, Herodotus uses *eros* in a metaphorical sense linking the word to desire to become a tyrant, as with Deiodes the Mede (ἐρασθεῖς τυραννίδος, 1.96.2) and Pausanias the Spartan (ἔρωτα σχῶν τῆς Ἑλλάδος τύραννος γενέσθαι, 5.32). This suggests that transgressing sexual boundaries is associated with a more general excess in tyrants,<sup>61</sup> whether the tyrant is barbarian or Greek.

Xerxes, in contrast with Candaules and Gyges, was a historical figure to Herodotus' audience. Some would have lived through the Persian wars, seen Aeschylus' play *The Persians* acted at Athens in 472BCE or heard of Xerxes' death in 465 BCE (Diodorus 11.69); others would have heard his story told. We propose, therefore, to compare the portrayal of Xerxes in *The Persians*, the one surviving 5<sup>th</sup> BCE play with a historical theme, with that in the *Histories*.

Xerxes' desire for world domination is noted by Herodotus in his speech to the Persians before he invades Greece (οὐ γὰρ δὴ

---

<sup>61</sup> Dewald, 1998: 734.

χώρην γε οὐδεμίαν κατόψεται ἥλιος ὁμουρέουσιν τῇ ἡμετέρῃ, 7.8.γ2). Aeschylus has Darius comment on his son's overweening and delusional arrogance (θνητὸς ὢν δὲ θεῶν ἀπάντων ᾧετ' οὐκ εὐβουλία, καὶ Ποσειδῶνος κρατήσιν, *A.Pers.* 749-50). We suggest, therefore, that Xerxes' *eros* has to be seen as part of his character of excess.

Another characteristic of monarchy which Otanes identifies in the Constitutional Debate is the subversion of custom (νόμια τε κινέει πάτρια, 3.80.5). We see this in the story of Amestris. Xerxes at first exploits the 'usual rites of marriage' (τὰ νομιζόμενα, 9.108.2) <sup>62</sup> to arrange a marriage which will give him greater access to his brother's wife, but is later forced by custom (ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἐξεργόμενος, 9.111.1) to accede to his wife's request for Masistes' wife.

In this story there is also the paradox that, whilst Xerxes has the nominal power of the tyrant he is subject to the actual power of women and this theme of lack of manliness (*anandria*) is common to Aeschylus and Herodotus. In *The Persians*, Atossa draws the contrast between Darius who enriched his family through war, and Xerxes who squandered that wealth through play-fighting at home (τὸν δ' ἀνανδρίας ὑπο ἔνδον αἰχμάζειν, πατρῶον δ' ὄλβον οὐδὲν ἀξάνειν, *A.Pers.* 755-6). In Herodotus we see Xerxes at court, unable to compel Masistes'

---

<sup>62</sup> Flower/ Marincola, 2002: 294 who note the irony in Xerxes performing these when he is acting *παρὰ νόμον*.

wife, unable to persuade Artyante (οὐ γὰρ ἔπειθε, διδοῖ τὸ φᾶρος, 9.109.3) and at his most impotent when he accedes to Amestris' request, though he nods consent (κατανεύει, 9.111.1) like a god.<sup>63</sup>

In both stories another man acts as a foil to the king. Gyges is characterised as special to Candaules, but fails to argue against the king's order, and is then astonished when the queen gives a command of her own (τέως μὲν ἀπεθώμαζε τὰ λεγόμενα, 1.11.3). Masistes too has proved himself loyal to his brother the king in castigating the Persian commander Artayntes for the defeat at Mycale (ἄξιον εἶναι παντὸς κακοῦ τὸν βασιλέος οἶκον κακώσαντα, 9.107.1) but is himself shocked at the king's order to divorce his wife (ἀποθωμάσας τὰ λεγόμενα, 9.111.3), horrified at her mutilation and ultimately attempts a coup in Bactria (ἀποστήσων νομὸν τὸν Βάκτριον καὶ ποιήσων τὰ μέγιστα κακῶν βασιλέα, 9.113.1), an ironic outcome in the light of his previous loyalty.<sup>64</sup>

Blok notes <sup>65</sup> that Masistes, unlike Xerxes, is faithful to his wife, is a good father, and is a successful soldier and leader whom the Bactrians and Sacians love (ἔστεργόν τέ μιν, 9.113.2) and whom Xerxes himself recognises as a good man (ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός, 9.111.2).

---

<sup>63</sup> Flower/Marincola, 2002: 297.

<sup>64</sup> Flower/Marincola 2002: 298.

<sup>65</sup> Blok, 2002: 312.

When we consider the parallels between the two stories from the perspective of the women involved, however, the differences stand out. Larson suggests <sup>66</sup> that Herodotus suppresses the names of both Candaules' and Masistes' wives out of 'concern for personal reputation that both blameless wives exhibit'. It is not accepted that Candaules' wife is 'blameless'. Rather, she upholds a notion of honour that is based on retribution (*tisis*). We now consider 'an eye for an eye' a primitive form of justice but it is based on a notion of fairness as long as the right person is punished. She does not collude in her own exposure and Lateiner is surely wrong, therefore to say she 'stands seductively at the threshold of decisive action, an entrance to a dangerous world'.<sup>67</sup> She holds both Candaules and Gyges responsible for dishonouring her and so one of them must die.

By contrast, Masistes' wife is the victim of an erroneous assumption by Amestris that she is to blame for her daughter's possession of the cloak (ἐλπίζουσα τὴν μητέρα αὐτῆς εἶναι αἰτίην, 9.110.1). Powell notes <sup>68</sup> that in all ten uses of ἐλπίζουσα in the sense of 'supposing' in Herodotus, the supposition is wrong; Masistes' wife is innocent but tortured nevertheless.

---

<sup>66</sup> Larson, 2006: 239.

<sup>67</sup> Lateiner, 1989: 140.

<sup>68</sup> Powell, 1938: 151.

As Gray says ‘Amestris’ mutilation of a woman who had protected her own marriage bed in the interests of Amestris’ marriage bed is a grim irony’.<sup>69</sup> It also fits with a concept of barbarian ‘otherness’ in being cruel and arbitrary. We recall that the third problem with monarchy according to Otanes is killing men without trial (κτείνει τε ἀκρίτους, 3.80.5). Xerxes’ whipping of the Hellespont, his injunction to his men (λέγειν βάρβαρα τε καὶ ἀτάσθαλα, 7.35.2) and his beheading of the bridge supervisors ( ἀποταμεῖν τὰς κεφαλὰς, 7.35.3) echo the threat he makes in *The Persians* to behead any Persian captain who let any Greek ships escape from the straits of Salamis (πᾶσιν στέρεσθαι κρατὸς ἦν προκείμενον, *A. Pers*, 831).

There is also a parallel between Xerxes and Amestris in that, whilst he is motivated by *eros*, she devises a sexual aspect to the mutilation of Masistes’ wife, cutting off her breasts, lips and tongue as well as her ears and nose. The use of the present tense in this passage (διαλυμαίνεται...ἀποπέμπει, 9.112) gives the narrative an immediacy which adds to the horror.

Dewald argues that both Candaules’ wife and Amestris ‘exploit conventional assumptions of others’<sup>70</sup> but this is not true in respect of the latter. We have already met her in the *Histories* in one of Herodotus’ digressions on Persian customs, having fourteen children buried alive as a gift to the god of the

---

<sup>69</sup> Gray, 1995: 199.

<sup>70</sup> Dewald, 1980:14.



underworld (7.114.2). We are told she does this as an old woman so this functions as a prolepsis which ‘heightens expectation’.<sup>71</sup> We, the audience, therefore already know that a gift is a dangerous request from Amestris.

Xerxes also knows his wife well enough (φοβεόμενος δὲ Ἄμηστριν, 9.109.3) to fear the consequences of giving Artaynte the cloak and understands why Amestris asks for Masistes’ wife as a gift (συνῆκε γὰρ τοῦ εἵνεκεν ἐδέετο, 9.110.3). Her mutilation of this woman comes as no surprise.

Amestris fits Flory’s definition of the barbarian queen.<sup>72</sup> She is clever, in exploiting the *nomos* of the royal feast which requires the king to accede to all requests,<sup>73</sup> she has a personal and family motive, she plans carefully and the nature of her revenge is horrible and bloody. Other women who show similar traits are Tomyris (1.205-14) and Pheretime (4.202-5).

However, men are also capable of mutilation and bloody revenge, as the story of Astyages and Harpagus shows, and as Xerxes himself displays in relation to Pythius (7.38-9). Amestris represents barbarian ‘otherness’ in an environment, the Persian court, which itself represents a contrast with the Greek *oikos*. Dewald is too generous in her description of

---

<sup>71</sup> De Jong, 2007: 3-4.

<sup>72</sup> Flory, 1987: 41-47.

<sup>73</sup> Munson, 2005 : 60.

Amestris as a family woman ‘who schemes to protect her own position and authority, in response to male outrage.’<sup>74</sup>

However, this story also illustrates a contrast in the marriage of Masistes and his wife, where the text emphasises compatibility (αὐτὴ τέ μοι κατὰ νόον τυγχάνει κάρτα ἐοῦσα, 9.111.3) and mutual loyalty. As we will see with Cyno and Mitradates (1.110-122), a relationship based on reciprocity serves to highlight the abnormality of one based on abuse of power and authority or on *eros*.

We conclude that the characterisation of both Xerxes and Amestris is one of barbarian excess, cruelty and arbitrariness. We are left with a sense of unfairness that both king and queen ‘get away with it’. There is a parallel with Euripides’ *Medea*, in which the innocent die but Jason, who has broken his oaths, survives and Medea departs triumphantly for Athens at the end of the play.

**Be careful what you wish for: the mother of Cleobis and Biton (1.31-2)**

In his conversation with Solon, Croesus (1.30-33) asks if he knew the happiest man in the world (εἴ τινα ἤδη πάντων εἶδες ὀλβιώτατον, 1.30.2), a question which prompts two stories. Solon first tells the story of Tellus of Athens, who was prosperous throughout his life (the repetition of the verb and

---

<sup>74</sup> Dewald, 1981: 107.

adverb εὖ ἤκω, 1.30.4, emphasises this), had fine, noble sons (καλοί τε κάγαθοί, 1.30.4) who themselves had children who survived, and who died a glorious death (ἀπέθανε κάλλιστα, 1.30.5) in battle and was honoured by the Athenians as a result (ἐτίμησαν μέγαν, 1.30.5). This is a conventional view of happiness <sup>75</sup> based on material wealth, family, a long life and an honourable death. It reflects the heroic code expressed by Sarpedon to the Lykians that, since death is inevitable, the best course is to seek glory in battle (ἴομεν ἠέ τῷ εὖχος ὀρέζομεν ἢ τις ἡμῖν, Hom. *Il.*12.328)

Solon's second example, of the two brothers Cleobis and Biton, is much more ambiguous. They have enough to live on and win prizes for their strength (βίος τε ἀρκέων ὑπῆν καὶ πρὸς τούτῳ ρώμη σώματος τοιήδε. ἀεθλοφόροι τε ἀμφοτέρω ὁμοίως ἦσαν 1.31.2). We cannot but reflect on the contrast with Tellus; their livelihood is adequate, his was good, they have won accolades at the games, he did so in battle, his sons earned praise as *kaloï kagathoi* when alive, the brothers have to wait till after their death to be honoured as people who have become the best of men (ὡς ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων γενομένων, 1.31.5). Moreover, the notion of a 'second prize' (δευτερεῖα, 1.31.1) does not fit the Homeric aspiration to be the winner (ἀιὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων, Hom. *Il.*6.208) <sup>76</sup> though we recall that Achilles himself questioned a heroic code that placed

---

<sup>75</sup> Asheri, 2007 : 98.

<sup>76</sup> Asheri, 2007: 100.

honour, or at least the possessions that symbolised it, over life which is irreplaceable (ἄνδρὸς δὲ ψυχὴ πάλιν ἐλθεῖν οὐτε λειστή οὔθ' ἐλετή, ἐπεὶ ἄρ κεν ἀμείψεται ἔρκος ὀδόντων, Hom. *Il.*9.408-9). As Fehling notes,<sup>77</sup> the story 'hardly accords with the positive attitude to life evinced by Tellos.' For some commentators<sup>78</sup> the point is to illustrate the pessimistic wisdom of the god that death is better than life for humans (ἄμεινον εἶη ἄνθρωπον τεθνάναι μᾶλλον ἢ ζῶειν, 1.31.3).

However, there is another layer to this story which illustrates quite a different point about the instability of good fortune, that happiness can be followed by disaster.<sup>79</sup> The actor in this story is the boys' mother and it is her feelings that are focalised, in particular her excessive joy at what they had done and the fame it would bring (περιχαρῆς εὐῶσα τῷ τε ἔργῳ καὶ τῇ φήμῃ, 1.31.4). This adjective is always associated in Herodotus with disaster, whether actual or pending.<sup>80</sup> It describes Harpagus' feelings when his son is invited to court by Astyages (1.119.2); little does he know that his son will be murdered and served up to him at a royal banquet. The word also is applied to Cambyses when he shoots an arrow into the heart of Prexaspes' son and congratulates himself on his accuracy with a bow (3.35); the emotion is a measure of his insanity. The Babylonians are delighted (περιχαρές ἐόντες, 3.157.3) when

---

<sup>77</sup> Fehling, 1989: 212.

<sup>78</sup> Lloyd, 1987: 24, 28; How & Wells, 1928: 68; Harrison, 2000: 35n9.

<sup>79</sup> Flory, 1987:172; Fehling, 1989: 211-2.

<sup>80</sup> Chiasson, 1983: 115-118.

Zephyrus leads their forces in a massacre of Persians, not realising that it was part of a plan to betray the city to Darius.

We have noted its consequences for Artaynte.

The mother's emotions are given added weight by the people who had come for the festival of Hera at Argos and witnessed her sons' achievements. The men congratulate (ἐμακάριζον, 1.31.3) the boys for their strength, the women congratulate their mother for having such children. The verb has an element of focalisation in that it conveys the audience's thoughts about what they had seen, thoughts that were entirely conventional; men respect and admire physical strength, women see it as a matter of good fortune to have sons with this quality.

There is, therefore, considerable irony in the outcome of the story. The woman who is so exceedingly proud of her sons causes their death through her prayer to Hera, whose priestess she is. She is not careful or precise enough in her request; instead she prays for the best outcome for a human being (τὸ ἀνθρώπῳ τυχεῖν ἄριστόν ἐστι, 1.31.4) and they die in the temple that night.

The outcome for the mother contradicts the message in the story of Tellus, which is that happiness lies in having children and grandchildren who survive. Croesus himself suffers the loss of his son Atys, the effect of which which Herodotus describes as devastating (τῷ θανάτῳ τοῦ παιδὸς

συντεταραγμένος, 1.44.1) and, as Lateiner points out<sup>81</sup> childlessness in Greek society was seen as punishment because it meant the end of the *oikos*. The happiness of the boys' mother was short-lived and her story, like that of Croesus, illustrates Solon's observation that one must look at the outcome of events before passing judgment on them (σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτὴν κῆ ἀποβήσεται, 1.32.9). Both she and her fellow Argives thought she was happy but they learnt the lesson that happiness can only be measured after death, not during life.

There is, however, a final twist to this story. Herodotus concludes his narrative by telling us that the Argives had statues made of Cleobis and Biton which were then erected at Delphi (1.31.5). Two *kouroi* known by these names greet visitors to the Delphi Archaeological Museum to this day and their story is told (with no hint of irony) in the guidebook.<sup>82</sup> Their fame, therefore, has endured since 580BCE. The statues, with Herodotus' text, have achieved one of his stated purposes, to prevent human events from fading away with the passage of time (ὥς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, *Proem*).

The irony in this story, therefore, is that the outcome for the woman is the opposite of what she expects, both as mother of

---

<sup>81</sup> Lateiner, 1989: 142-4.

<sup>82</sup> R.Kolonia, Athens, 2009: 18-20.

the boys and priestess to Hera. This gives the tale a complexity which complements well the wider story of Croesus. We reflect also on the contrast with Amestris, where bad deeds go unpunished. Here good character is not rewarded; in fact Solon warns Croesus to beware the jealousy of the divine (τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὸν φθονερόν, 1.32.1). In a wider historical context, however, it is her actions which ensure the enduring fame of her sons and Amestris, with Xerxes, become symbols of Persian defeat.

### **Children at risk – Cyrus and Harpagus’ son (1.107-122)**

The significance of the next woman we consider is entirely unpredictable. Cyno, who saves Cyrus as a baby from exposure and looks after him as a young boy, is ‘other’ in a number of respects,<sup>83</sup> as slave (συνδούλη, 1.110.1), barbarian (a point emphasised by Herodotus in giving both the Greek and the Median version of her name, Κυνὸ and Σπακὼ, 1.110.1)<sup>84</sup> and female.

For Gray, the key ‘otherness’ is the status of slave which she shares with her husband Mitradates: ‘they are there to produce a dialectic on the nature of royal barbaric power through their difference.’<sup>85</sup> This, argues Gray, is emphasised by the contrast between the wild mountainous region in which they live (ὄρεα

---

<sup>83</sup> Van de Veen, 1996: 46, 51; Gray, 1995: 204-5.

<sup>84</sup> Gray, 1995:205.

<sup>85</sup> Gray, 1995:206.

θηριωδέστατα, 1.110.1) and the flatlands where most Medes live (ἡ δὲ ἄλλη Μηδικὴ χώρα ἐστὶ πᾶσα ἄπεδος, 1.110.2), her desire to nurture rather than kill the baby Cyrus, and her barrenness which contrasts with Mandane's fecundity.

This last point, however, is a case of over-interpretation. There was a high mortality rate in all classes in the 5<sup>th</sup> BCE world<sup>86</sup> so Cyno's still birth would not be regarded as peculiarly unfortunate and Mandane's role as a symbol of 'female barbaric royalty'<sup>87</sup> is ambiguous. She is seen by her father Astyages as a threat (ἐφοβήθη, 1.107.1) following his dream of her flooding Asia with urine (1.107.1) but he then causes the event he fears by marrying her to her social inferior, the Persian Cambyses, a touch of dramatic irony.

As Pelling points out<sup>88</sup> Astyages' response to his first dream explains his reaction to the second, by which time Mandane is pregnant and he learns that her offspring will rule instead of him (ἀντὶ ἐκείνου, 1.108.2). Even though she fulfils her female role and produces a male heir, her son is at risk because of dynastic considerations and the creation of a divided *oikos* by Astyages himself<sup>89</sup> who married her to a foreigner.

She is also seen as a potential threat by Harpagus who calculates that, if she becomes tyrant and he has killed her son,

---

<sup>86</sup> Pomeroy, 1975: 69.

<sup>87</sup> Gray, 1995: 205.

<sup>88</sup> Pelling, 1996: 73.

<sup>89</sup> Pelling, 1996: 76.



he will be in danger (ἄλλο τι ἢ λείπεται τὸ ἐνθεῦτεν ἐμοὶ κινδύνων ὁ μέγιστος; 1.109.4).

This accords with a depiction of the barbarian ‘other’ as despotic and hierarchical which is evident also in Astyages’ command to Harpagus to kill Mandale’s baby (1.108.4) and Harpagus’ command to Mitrdates (1.109.3) to carry out the order. There is no attempt to persuade; orders are given, backed up by threats, unspecified in the case of Harpagus ( ἐξ ὑστέρης σοὶ αὐτῷ περιπέσης, 1.108.4) and all too specific in the case of Mitrdates (ὀλέθρῳ τῷ κακίστῳ σε διαχρήσεσθαι, 1.110.3).

It does not cross anyone’s mind, however, that wives might have any role to play. In fact, Harpagus’ wife makes it clear that she has none. When her husband tells her of his conversation with Astyages she says to him ‘What do you intend to do now?’ (Νῦν ὧν τί σοι ἐν νόῳ ἐστὶ ποιέειν; 1.109.2). She also expresses no feelings at the order to kill the child. She is the mere recipient of information, as she will be when her husband tells her that their son has been invited to meet the young Cyrus (1.119.2). We hear nothing of her reaction to his murder.

We reflect that there is no contrast between Greek and barbarian in respect of gender. The behaviour of both Mandale and Harpagus’ wife fits an ideology that sees women as passive and either silent or politically detached. Mandale’s marriage is

arranged by her father and she is defined solely in terms of her role as wife and mother.

Moreover, whilst she is a barbarian royal, her story also illustrates what Gould identifies as the ambiguity of ‘the masculine/feminine polarity in the Greek male imagination’.<sup>90</sup> Astyages’ two dreams reveal his fear and revulsion at the image of his daughter as incontinent and sexually threatening. However, she also has an essential role as guarantor of legitimacy and succession<sup>91</sup> which has its parallels in the Greek *oikos*, and which Astyages attempts to manipulate, with disastrous consequences.

Harpagus’ wife, too, is not dissimilar from the traditional Athenian wife who, in legal terms, is ‘incapable of a self-determined act’,<sup>92</sup> and who plays no role other than listener in the story.

Cyno, by contrast, both speaks and acts, and, whilst we agree with Gray that ‘she shares more with the men inside her class than with the women outside it’<sup>93</sup> that is to consider it only from her point of view. To everyone else, apart from Mitradates, she is invisible, a ‘nobody’,<sup>94</sup> and it is precisely this which she exploits, as a woman rather than as a slave. Unlike Candaules’ wife and Cleobis and Biton’s mother she has no

---

<sup>90</sup> Gould, 1980: 56.

<sup>91</sup> Gould, 1980: 57.

<sup>92</sup> Gould, 1980: 44.

<sup>93</sup> Gray, 1995: 205.

<sup>94</sup> Dewald, 1998: xi; Van de Veen, 1996: 52.

public function, she is not expected to voice an opinion, still less to act.

Herodotus draws a clear distinction between her and her husband whilst acknowledging that their relationship is based on mutual concern (ἦσαν δὲ ἐν φροντίδι ἀμφοτέρω ἀλλήλων πέρι, 1.111.1). He shows Mitradates' *aporia* in telling the story of how he came to bring the baby home from the Median court, using narrative delay,<sup>95</sup> use of the present tense and direct speech in which Mitradates is the focaliser, for emphasis. He is amazed (ἐκπλαγεῖς, 1.111.2) at the distress he finds in Harpagus' household, he makes a wrong assumption about the baby's identity in his ignorance (δοκέων τῶν τινος οἰκετέων εἶναι. οὐ γὰρ ἄν κοτε κατέδοξα ἔνθεν γε ἦν, 1.111.4), he is astonished (ἐθάμβεον, 1.111.4) at the gold and luxurious clothes and only finds out (πυνθάνομαι, 1.111.5) the truth when told by his escort. The characterisation is that of a slave, subject to orders, kept in ignorance, reliant on others for information and who accepts his powerlessness in the face of intimidation and threats, as his response to his wife's plea not to expose the baby shows (ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἔφη οἷός τε εἶναι ἄλλως αὐτὰ ποιέειν, 1.112.1).

Cyno, however, reacts in a different way. She notices the baby's size and handsome appearance (τὸ παιδίον μέγα τε καὶ εὐειδὲς ἐόν, 1.112.1), not his apparel and makes an effort to

---

<sup>95</sup> Pelling, 2000: 89.

dissuade her husband from exposing him, in contrast to Harpagus' wife. However, even when her rhetoric fails (οὐ δύναμαί σε πείθειν μὴ ἐκθεῖναι, 1.112.2) she has a plan which, she convinces Mitrdates, will avoid detection by Harpagus' men, will enable their still-born child to be buried and will enable her to rear a child. She sets the agenda,<sup>96</sup> and shows a decisiveness and independence of action that her husband lacks.

Van de Veen<sup>97</sup> cites this story in support of his hypothesis that during the course of Herodotus' *Histories* the insignificant is relevant, the magnificent irrelevant (τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε, τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρὰ, 1.5.4) showing that human prosperity never stays in the same place. Cyno saves Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire, though she has no social or political status and Astyages is ultimately defeated by the man he tries to have killed, despite his network of servants and informers.

Gray argues<sup>98</sup> that Cyno's otherness as subject is more significant than her otherness as woman and that she has a joint role with her husband in being the polar opposite of royal barbarian otherness in status, nature and behaviour.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Van de Veen, 1996: 45.

<sup>97</sup> Van de Veen: 1996: 42-52.

<sup>98</sup> Gray, 1995: 205.

<sup>99</sup> Gray, 1995: 204.

This type of dialectic, however, as with the Greek-barbarian or the male-female polarity, comes to grief when we analyse the ambiguities in each individual's speech, actions and emotions as portrayed by Herodotus. This is evident when we consider the ways in which Cyno and Mitrdates differ from, as well as complement, each other. Cyno becomes a significant actor in the story because, unlike her husband, she transcends her powerlessness as a slave. She becomes an agent of change, thereby challenging the stereotype of the passive woman and the powerless slave.

However, she is less successful as a speaker. We reflect that her prediction (οὔτε σὺ ἀλώσειαι ἀδικέων τοὺς δεσπότας, οὔτε ἡμῖν κακῶς βεβουλευμένα ἔσται, 1.112.3) proves inaccurate in that Mitrdates is found out because Cyrus' barbarian royal nature (violent, dictatorial 1.114 - 115), his regal appearance (ὁ τε χαρακτήρ τοῦ προσώπου προσφέρεσθαι ἐδόκεε ἐς ἑωυτὸν, 1.116.1), and his speech (ἡ ὑπόκρισις ἐλευθεριωτέρη, 1.116.1) prevail over his upbringing as the child of slaves and reveal him to Astyages as his grandson. It is not predictable that Mitrdates will survive and Harpagus be punished; indeed it flouts the conventions of despotic hierarchy.

There is some ambiguity, therefore, in Herodotus' portrayal of Cyno; she is better at decisive action than persuasive words or accurate predictions. In her emotional response (δακρύσασα καὶ λαβομένη τῶν γουνάτων τοῦ ἀνδρός, 1.112.1) to the

prospect of the killing of a baby, however, she reflects a commitment to family and children that contrasts with the priorities of Astyages and Harpagus. Here we disagree with Fisher who sees in Harpagus' reluctance to kill the baby himself a 'natural difficulty even though men find in killing smiling babies'.<sup>100</sup> Rather, he fears for the consequences for himself if Mandane succeeds her father. In fact it may be that Herodotus intends us to draw a contrast with the ten Corinthians who did find it impossible (οὐδενὸς βουλομένου διεργάσασθαι, 5.92.γ3) to kill Labda's smiling baby. The irony, of course, for Harpagus is that his failure to kill one child leads to the death of his own.

The portrayal of Cyrus is also ambivalent.<sup>101</sup> Though he 'plays the game of being king'<sup>102</sup> as a boy he is, of course, the product of a mixed marriage (ἐκ γὰρ δυῶν οὐκ ὁμοεθνέων ἐγεγόνεε, 1.91.5) and so his social position is ambivalent; he is both inside the existing power structure with a Median mother but outside it with a Persian father and a slave carer.

He does not disown Cyno but continues to praise her (τραφήναι δὲ ἔλεγε ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ βουκόλου γυναικός, ἥιέ τε ταύτην αἰνέων διὰ παντός, 1.122.3) as the person who brought him up, though his biological parents Mandane and Cambyses try to eliminate her role by spreading the rumour that he was

---

<sup>100</sup> Fisher, 2002: 208n39.

<sup>101</sup> Pelling, 1996: 16n39.

<sup>102</sup> Asheri, 2007: 160.

raised by a female dog (κατέβαλον φάτιν ὡς ἐκκείμενον Κῦρον κύων ἐξέθρεψε, 1.122.3) and Harpagus dishonestly claims credit, with the gods, for keeping him alive (κατὰ θεοῦς τε καὶ ἐμὲ περίεις, 1.124.2).

In terms of character Herodotus draws a contrast between Cyrus and Astyages, thus challenging the concept of the 'barbarian royal'. As a young man, Cyrus is described as the most manly and popular of his contemporaries (ἀνδρησιότατος καὶ προσφιλεστάτος, 1.123.1) whereas Astyages is responsible for losing his empire through his harsh, cruel behaviour (διὰ τὴν τούτου πικρότητα, 1.130.1). Cyrus also uses the rhetoric of freedom when he calls on the Persians to free themselves from slavery to the Medes (νῦν ὧν ἐμέο πειθόμενοι γίνεσθε ἐλεύθεροι, 1.126.6) perhaps leading at least some of Herodotus' audience to recall the call to Greeks to free themselves from Persian tyranny, in *The Persians* (ὦ παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ἴτε, ἐλευθεροῦτε πατρίδα, *A. Pers.* 402-3).

There is a parallel, too, between Astyages and Xerxes in the description of both as θεοβλαβῆς (Hdt.1 127.2; *A. Pers.*831), maddened by the gods and therefore liable to make irrational decisions; to make Harpagus his commander in the campaign against the Persians, in the case of Astyages, to fight the Greeks at Salamis, in the case of Xerxes.

We also reflect that, despite Astyages' omnipotence, ultimately he is not in control.<sup>103</sup> His orders are disobeyed, his advisors give the wrong advice (to return Cyrus to his parents, for example) and within his family his actions earn him the resentment of his daughter (θυγατρὶ τῆ ἐμῆ διαβεβλημένος, 1.118.2) and the desire for revenge from Harpagus (1.123.1). We note also the irony that, although both Astyages and Harpagus are motivated by power and safety,<sup>104</sup> the outcome of their actions is that Astyages becomes subject to Cyrus' power, and Harpagus loses his son through seeking to avoid the accusation of being Cyrus' murderer.

Apart from Cyno, the two women in the story, Mandale and Harpagus' wife, do and say very little but the outcome of their passivity is very different. When Mandale's son is returned to her and her husband, we note their joy at his unexpected arrival (μεγάλως ἀσπάζοντο, 1.122.1) and reflect on their happiness at a re-united *oikos*.

Harpagus' joy, however, is short-lived. We have already noted the ominous nature of περιχαρῆς (1.119.2). His wife will also be the victim of his failure to act when her only child is murdered by Astyages. Her feelings at the destruction of her *oikos* are not focalised but we have already noted that, in Herodotus, to be childless is a source of unhappiness.

---

<sup>103</sup> Munson, 2005: 62.

<sup>104</sup> Van de Veen, 2002: 29.



Dewald<sup>105</sup> makes a general observation that women in Herodotus have a more creative response to circumstances than men. This is certainly true of Cyno compared with Mitradates. In the case of Mandale and Harpagus' wife, however, they are passive in responding to circumstances that men create but with very different outcomes.

In the case of Candaules, his wife's actions led to a change in dynasty from the Heraclidae to the Mermnadae (1.7.1). In the case of Cyno, her actions contributed to the defeat of the Medes and the beginning of the Persian empire (Πέρσας δὲ δούλους ἐόντας τὸ πρὶν Μήδων νῦν γεγονέναι δεσπότας, 1.129.4). In both cases, though the two women are at opposite ends of a social spectrum, they exploit their invisibility, a mark of their gender, to achieve not only significant change for themselves but also for the wider historical narrative.

### **The gift of life: Intaphrenes' wife (3.119)**

We have considered Amestris, who chose a deadly gift from her husband. We now consider the story of Intaphrenes' wife who made a very different choice in relation to her marriage, in her response to her husband's imprisonment with all the male members of his household and in her dealings with Darius.

---

<sup>105</sup> Dewald, 1981: 108.

Herodotus uses ring composition to identify his theme in this narrative passage (3.118 -119) which is the death of Intaphrenes, one of the seven rebels against the Magus, for an assault (ὕβρισαντα τάδε, 3.118.1) on Darius' guards. His use of the Persian sword, the *akinakes*, and his means of assault, mutilation, both identify him as barbarian.

His wife's reaction might suggest she shares this 'otherness'. She frequents the palace gates, weeping and wailing (κλαίεισκε ἄν καὶ ὀδυρέσκετο, 3.119.3). This type of unrestrained emotional outburst characterises the Persian both male and female, in the *Persians* (A. *Per.* 113-9, 537-45, 909-30). It prompts a word of advice to Medea from the Chorus, before she comes out to speak to them (μὴ λίαν τάκου δυρομένα σὸν εὐνάταν, E. *Med.*158-8)

However, the words in Homer more often convey overwhelming grief at a death, for example, the Trojans lamenting their hero when his body is brought back by Priam from the Greek camp (Ἔκτορα δάκρυ χέοντες ὀδύροντο, Hom. *Il.* 24.714). The final scene of the *Iliad* also includes the laments of Andromache, Hecuba and Helen and reminds us of the important role of women in mourning the dead both in the Archaic period and later, despite legislation reportedly brought in by Solon to regulate public mourning by women (Plu, *Sol.* 21.4-5).

In Herodotus the actions of weeping and wailing are not necessarily associated with feelings of distress or grief. Harpagus, for example, carries the baby Cyrus home weeping (ἦιε κλαίων ἐς τὰ οἰκία, 1.109.1) but, as we have seen, he is motivated by self-interest rather than concern for the child. Idanthysus, king of the Scythians, uses it as a taunt to Darius who wants to be acknowledged as his master (κλαίειν λέγω, 4.127.4). Moreover the story of Psammenitus suggests that there are some sorrows that are too great to cry over (τὰ μὲν οἰκία ἦν μέζω κακὰ ἢ ὅστε ἀνακλαίειν, 3.14.10), when he is asked by Cambyses why he cried for an elderly friend who was reduced to penury but not for his own children, who faced humiliation and death.<sup>106</sup>

Intaphrenes' wife's actions, therefore, are appropriate but we cannot conclude that they reflect her emotions which are not explored by Herodotus, whereas those of Darius are. He fears (ἀρρωδήσας, 3.119.1) treachery, her actions persuade him to pity her (ποιεῦσα δὲ αἰεὶ τούτῳ τοῦτο...ἔπεισε οἰκτιραί μιν, 3.119.3), her speech surprises him (θωμάσας τὸν λόγον, 3.119.5), he takes pleasure in her (ἠσθεὶς αὐτῇ, 3.119.7) and approves her words (εὖ τε δὴ ἔδοξε...εἰπεῖν ἡ γυνή, 3.119.7). This gives us an interesting portrayal of a barbarian king's mind: fearful of rebellion, capable of pity but on his terms. We note that his offer to let her save one family member (δίδοι ἕνα

---

<sup>106</sup> Renehan, 2001: 184.

τῶν δεδεμένων οἰκηίων ῥύσασθαι τὸν βούλει ἐκ πάντων  
3.118.3) is his response to her actions not to her request.

Those who rely on his goodwill suffer the consequences. Oeobazus asked to leave one of his three sons behind when the Persians were about to invade Scythia and Darius appeared to be friendly (ὡς φίλῳ ἐόντι, 4.84.1) offering to leave all three behind. The focalisation of Oeobazus' feelings and expectations (περιχαρῆς ἦν, ἐλπίζων τοὺς υἱέας στρατηίης ἀπολελύσθαι, 4.84.2) warn us that he will be disappointed; all three are left behind, but dead. Pythios makes a similar request to Xerxes, hoping he will take pity on an old man (ἐμὲ ἐς τόδε ἡλικίης ἤκοντα οἰκτίρας, 7.38.3) but the king responds by saying his eldest son, the one he wants to save, will pay with his life (τῇ ψυχῇ ζημιώσεται, 7.39.2). He is cut in half and displayed for the whole army to see.

We observe, therefore, that Intaphrenes' wife does the right thing by waiting for Darius to speak to her. She also gives herself time to deliberate (βουλευσαμένη, 3.119.4) before she makes her choice (αἰρέομαι ἐκ πάντων τὸν ἀδελφεόν, 3.119.4). The woman who was weeping and wailing now considers her words carefully. We reflect on the contrast with her husband who was suspected of plotting a rebellion (ἐπιβουλεύειν οἱ ἐπανάστασιν, 3.119.2). Dewald suggests that the point of the story is 'Darius' recognition of the woman's cleverness in expressing her tacit loyalty, by choosing to save a member of

her natal family rather than her politically compromised husband.<sup>107</sup> However, that goes further than the text. The reason she gives, which may link Herodotus to Sophocles' *Antigone* (905-12),<sup>108</sup> is that she will never get another brother now that her parents are dead whereas, god willing (εἰ δαίμων ἐθέλοι, 3.119.6), she might get another husband and children.

However, Antigone honours a dead brother and has no children or husband. Intaphrenes' wife, however, is making a choice. Darius expresses his view, that she is leaving her husband and children in the lurch (ἐγκαταλιποῦσα, 3.119.5) in favour of a man who is not as close to her as her children (ἀλλοτριώτερός, 3.119.5) nor as dear to her as her husband (ἦσσον κεχαρισμένος, 3.119.5). This reflects what he regards as appropriate female priorities.

She replies that she could get another husband and children 'εἰ ταῦτα ἀποβάλουμι' (3.119.6). Powell<sup>109</sup> suggests that the verb ἀποβάλλω usually means 'lose through one's own fault' but gives this citation as an exception. We suggest that its meaning here is closer to 'reject' or 'turn against' as the verb is used in Euripides' *Trojan Women*,<sup>110</sup> by Andromache to describe the type of woman who rejects a former husband, by going to bed

---

<sup>107</sup> Dewald, 1998: 640.

<sup>108</sup> 445 - 441BCE.

<sup>109</sup> Powell, 1938: 38.

<sup>110</sup> Performed at the Great Dionysia in 415 BCE so this play postdates the *Histories*.

with another (ἄνδρα τὸν πάρος καινοῖσι λέκτροις ἀποβαλοῦσ' ἄλλον φιλεῖ, E. *Tr.*667-8).

Intaphrenes' wife remains an enigmatic character. She makes the right choice in that her son as well as her brother is saved. However, Herodotus leaves us to ponder what kind of woman chooses her brother before her children. That choice differs from the one made by Antigone, who challenges Creon by reference to the unwritten and secure commandments of the gods (ἄγραπτα κάσφαλῆ θεῶν νόμιμα, S. *Ant.*454-5) and where the irony is that Creon realises too late that his obstinacy has cost him his family.

However, the link with *Antigone* does highlight a preoccupation with the fractured *oikos* which we find particularly in the plays of Euripides, with Medea at one end of the spectrum, who kills her brother to help Jason and Electra at the other, who plots with her brother to kill their mother.

This story, therefore, is a counterpart to the story of Cyno in that Intaphrenes' wife achieves a positive outcome by deference to a tyrant rather than by opposition, and to the story of the mother of Cleobis and Biton whose happiness vested in her sons.

We turn now to consider two groups of women, Amazons and Athenians, where we know a lot about contemporary attitudes towards them, so can compare these with Herodotus' narrative.

### **Playing the Amazon (4.110-117)**

We consider firstly the extent to which Herodotus portrays the Amazons as ‘other’: warriors and ‘hostile to men and marriage’.<sup>111</sup> We know that the Amazons were already familiar to Greeks through literary sources. They appear in the *Iliad* as warriors, who fought both Greek (Bellerophon) and Trojan (Priam) heroes and earned the epithet of ‘a match for men’ (ἀντιανείραι, Hom. *Il.* 3.189; 6.186) and Aeschylus has Athena attribute the name of the Areopagus to the fortification made by the Amazons when they came to Athens to take revenge on Theseus (A. *Eum.* 685-90).<sup>112</sup>

They also feature in artistic form on black-figure vases from the late 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE.<sup>113</sup> One, c. 520-500BCE shows them fighting Heracles and Telamon, another, c. 510BCE shows Theseus abducting the Amazon Antiope. A mural at the *Theseum* in Athens showed their battle with Theseus for the Acropolis, whilst the Stoa Poikile included paintings of Amazons on horseback and with wicker shields.<sup>114</sup> By the time of the *Histories*, moreover, they are shown in Attic vase paintings in Persian clothing, and on the Parthenon frieze, fighting the Greeks, which suggests that they were, after 480BCE, identified with the empire defeated by the

---

<sup>111</sup> Fantham, 1994: 131.

<sup>112</sup> Tyrrell, 1984: 14.

<sup>113</sup> Fantham, 1994: 130.

<sup>114</sup> Tyrrell, 1984: 10-12.

Greeks.<sup>115</sup> A statue of an Amazon of c.430 BCE<sup>116</sup> shows her wounded and with one breast exposed; she is both defeated and eroticised.

When, therefore, Herodotus starts his story with a linguistic note that the word ‘Amazon’ means ‘killer of men’ (Οἰόρπατα; ἀνδροκτόνοι, 4.110.1) in both Scythian and Greek, confirms that the Greeks were victorious in battle (νικήσαντας τῆ ἐπὶ Θερμώδοντι μάχῃ, 4.110.1) but that the crew of the ships taking the Amazons away were slaughtered by them (ἐπιθεμένας ἐκκόψαι τοὺς ἄνδρας, 4.110.1), he presents his audience with a familiar picture. They are fully ‘other’ in being women who fight. However, Herodotus then introduces a detail which begins to subvert this picture; they know nothing about ships (πλοῖα δὲ οὐ γινώσκειν αὐτὰς, 4.110.2). This reminds us that, in this respect, they are like other women, who enter ships as passengers or captives, not as crew,<sup>117</sup> as well as like other landlocked barbarians. Once they land, however, they start plundering the Scythians’ land on horseback (ἵππαζόμεναι ἐληίζοντο τὰ τῶν Σκυθέων, 4.110.2), suggesting a way of life as nomadic hunters, an aspect of the Amazon that differs from either the epic warrior or the vengeful invader. Herodotus’ theme will be the meeting of two cultures, the Scythian and the Amazon, which produces the Sauromatae.

---

<sup>115</sup> Lefkowitz, 1986: 6; Fantham, 1994: 134n1.

<sup>116</sup> An Early Roman Imperial copy is in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin.

<sup>117</sup> Tyrrell, 1984: 139n2.



The story starts by focalising the Scythians' incomprehension (οὐκ εἶχον συμβαλέσθαι τὸ πρῆγμα, 4.111.1). The only other use of this verb in Herodotus with this meaning<sup>118</sup> is to express Xerxes' state of mind before the battle of Thermopylae. The king cannot grasp why the Spartans are preparing for almost certain death by combing their hair (7.209.1). Here, the Scythians wonder where the people plundering their land have come from (ἐν θώματι ἦσαν ὀκόθεν ἔλθοιεν, 4.111.1), since they cannot identify their nationality (οὔτε γὰρ φωνὴν οὔτε ἔσθητα οὔτε τὸ ἔθνος ἐγίνωσκον, 4.111.1).

Herodotus employs narrative delay to good effect because the Scythians are ignorant of the most remarkable fact, namely that they are women. Their reaction to that fact and their subsequent negotiations with the Amazons illustrate a degree of ambiguity in both the Scythian young men and the Amazons, we suggest, rather than a polarity in which the Scythians 'turn into quasi-Greeks'.<sup>119</sup> It also challenges the myths in which the Amazons are defeated over and over and which, according to Tyrrell, 'supported the sexual dichotomy institutionalised in Athenian marriage'.<sup>120</sup>

The first point is that, when confronted with a 'logical monster that is both man and woman at the same time',<sup>121</sup> the Scythians

---

<sup>118</sup> Powell, 1938: 342.

<sup>119</sup> Hartog, 1988: 367.

<sup>120</sup> Tyrrell, 184: 113.

<sup>121</sup> Hartog, 1988: 221.

do not withdraw in horror. The rapprochement between their young men and the Amazons shows the two groups as remarkably alike.<sup>122</sup>

The narrative emphasises, too, a nomadic existence that is the opposite of the settled life of the *polis* (ζόην ἔζωον τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκείνησι, θηρεύοντές τε καὶ ληιζόμενοι, 4.112). Moreover, these are young men; in Athens they would be ἐρώμενοι, being courted by older men. This makes their dealings with the Amazons more complex than ‘reversing the customs of patriarchal marriage’.<sup>123</sup>

On the one hand, the men are the instigators of their plan, to father children with the Amazons (ἐξ’ αὐτέων παῖδας ἐκγενήσεσθαι, 4.111.2), which accords with the Athenian view that the purpose of marriage was to produce an heir. It also shows that the young men are not interested in the Amazons as potential *hetairai*. On the other hand, the Athenian marriage custom whereby the woman goes to her husband’s house with a dowry is reversed but through negotiation not custom.

The two groups begin to communicate by sign language (τῇ δὲ χειρὶ ἔφραζε, 4.113.2) and pair off. Herodotus states the outcome (οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ νεηνίσκοι...ἐκτιλώσαντο τὰς λοιπὰς τῶν Ἀμαζόνων, 4.113.3). The meaning of the verb as cited in LSJ is ‘tame, make tractable’ and this is how it is translated by

---

<sup>122</sup> Munson, 2005: 72.

<sup>123</sup> Tyrrell, 1984: 41-2.

Waterfield.<sup>124</sup> Powell's gloss ('i.e.married')<sup>125</sup> may tell us more about his attitude to women than the Scythians'. However, there is nothing to suggest that the Amazons needed to be tamed or resisted the young men's advances (ἡ Ἀμαζῶν οὐκ ἀποθέετο ἀλλὰ περιεῖδε χρήσασθαι, 4.113.1).

We suggest the meaning may be derived from the noun κτύλος as used by Pindar in his Pythian Ode (2.17) to mean 'cherished'. Its meaning therefore in Herodotus would be that the young men cherished the Amazons, or gained their love, which fits the middle tense better.<sup>126</sup> The next step they take confirms this reciprocity and again illustrates the similarity of the Scythian men and the Amazons and their difference from the Greeks and the Greek *oikos* for the two join camp and make it home (συμμερίζαντες τὰ στρατόπεδα οἴκεον ὁμοῦ, 4.114.1).

We must now consider the point of difference which emerges when the Scythians propose that the Amazons return with them to their homeland. The issue for the Amazons is a clash of culture (τὰ νόμια, 4.114.3). Herodotus uses this word in relation to the Scythians to show their conservatism (4.80.5) but, as we see in the story of the Amazons, this is not reflected by the behaviour of the young men they encounter.

---

<sup>124</sup> Waterfield, 1998: 272.

<sup>125</sup> Powell, 1938: 201.

<sup>126</sup> Rawlinson's translation is 'gained the favour of'.

The Amazons say their way of life is different from that of Scythian women, who do women's work and stay in their wagons (ἔργα δὲ γυναικῆα ἐργάζονται μένουσαι ἐν τῆσι ἀμάξῃσι, 4.114.3). However, we cannot conclude from this that they are like Greek women in custom or practice. We have to consider this passage in the context of the other information Herodotus has given us about the Scythians.

He starts Book 4 with a story of a generation of children born to slaves and Scythian wives who had sex with them (ἐφοίτων παρὰ τοὺς δούλους, 4.1.3) in their husbands' long absence fighting the Medes. The Scythian practice does not reflect the anxiety about legitimacy in Athens, which led to Pericles' citizenship law of 451-450 BCE, an anxiety that may have been specifically Athenian. There might have been provision for marriage between slaves and free women in Crete, as evidenced by the Gortyn Law Code,<sup>127</sup>

Herodotus confirms that the Scythians are nomads who have no settlements but carry their homes with them (τοῖσι γὰρ μήτε ἄστεα μήτε τείχεα ἢ ἐκτισμένα, ἀλλὰ φερέοικοι ἐόντες, 4.46.3). This is a land without agriculture or cities, as Darius is told before he attempts an invasion (οὔτε ἀρηρομένον φανήσεται οὔδεν οὔτε πόλις οἰκεομένη, 4.97.3). The contrast with life in a *polis* unites Scythians and Amazons.

---

<sup>127</sup> Pembroke, 1967: 19.

We cannot be sure which of the sacrificial practices described by Herodotus (4.60-63) involved women but we can assume that they were involved in the procedure whereby a corpse was placed on a wagon, taken round to friends and entertained for 40 days before burial (4.73). This contrasts with the role of Athenian women in lamenting the dead and visiting family tombs.<sup>128</sup>

We also learn that women cleansed themselves (γίνονται καθαραὶ καὶ λαμπραί, 4.75.3) with a paste of cypress, cedar, and frankincense wood as an alternative to taking a bath (ἀντὶ λουτροῦ, 4.75.2), a practice which would seem strange to an Athenian woman.

The Scythians, moreover, resist importing foreign customs especially Greek ones (Ξεινικοῖσι δὲ νομαίοισι αἰνῶς χρᾶσθαι φεύγουσι...Ἑλληνικοῖσι δὲ καὶ ἥκιστα, 4.76.1) and Herodotus tells the cautionary tale of Scyles, another person destined for a bad end (ἔδεέ οἱ κακῶς γενέσθαι, 4.79.1) for celebrating Bacchic rites, which were an aspect of Greek culture of which the Scythians disapproved (τοῦ βακχεύειν πέρι Ἑλλησι ὀνειδίζουσι, 4.79.3). We recall that Athenian women were involved in the three day festival of Dionysus, the *Anthesteria*, as dramatised by Euripides (ἔνθα μένει, θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος ἀφ' ἰστῶν παρὰ κερκίδων τ' οἰστρηθεὶς Διονύσῳ, E. *Ba.* 116-7)

---

<sup>128</sup> Fantham, 1994: 76, 96-7; Pomeroy, 1975: 80.

in a play which shows the very madness which the Scythians considered it unreasonable to court.

Pelling <sup>129</sup> suggests that the Scythians, including their women, seemed normal compared with the Amazons who personified otherness. However we argue that the cultural differences between Scythian and Greek women, between the nomadic existence and the life of the *polis*, outweigh a similarity which is based solely on division of labour.

The Amazons prove themselves better linguists than the Scythians (τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τὴν μὲν τῶν γυναικῶν οἱ ἄνδρες οὐκ ἔδυνάτο μαθεῖν, τὴν δὲ τῶν ἀνδρῶν αἱ γυναῖκες συνέλαβον, 4.114.1) and they are able to persuade the men to adopt their proposals as Herodotus emphasises by repetition (ἐπέιθοντο οἱ νεηίσκοι, 4.115.1; 4.115.3). They do this by responding effectively to the men with a wide variety of rhetorical techniques. In their first speech (4.114.3-4) they employ ring composition to emphasise their inability (οὐκ ἂν δυναίμεθα, 4.114.3; 4.114.4) to live with (οἰκέειν, 4.114.3) Scythian women or get along with (συμφέρεσθαι, 4.114.4) them. They show a familiarity with anaphora (ἡμεῖς is repeated three times in this first speech) and the use of *men* and *de* to mark the antithesis between them and the Scythian women. They also know the persuasive power of the superlative (δικαιότατοι, 4.114.4) and that a triad of verbs gives a sense of rhythm

---

<sup>129</sup> Pelling, 1997: 52.

(τοξεύομέν τε καὶ ἀκοντίζομεν καὶ ἱπαζόμεθα, 4.114.3). They conclude with an order and a request (ἀπολάχετε τῶν κτημάτων τὸ μέρος, καὶ οἰκέωμεν ἐπ' ἡμέων αὐτῶν, 4.114.4), they speak with authority and are clear about what they want, all marks of a good advocate.

In their second speech (4.115.1-3) they start with a synonym (φόβος τε καὶ δέος, 4.115.1) and answer the men who had given family and property as reasons for the Amazons to go to live with them and the other Scythians (εἰσὶ μὲν τοκέες, εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ κτήσιες, 4.114.2). The women use *men* and *de* in the same connective sense to explain why this would not be possible; they have taken the men from their parents (τοῦτο μὲν ὑμέας ἀποστερησάσας πατέρων, 4.115.2) and caused great damage to their land (τοῦτο δὲ...δηλησαμένας πολλά, 4.115.2). Once again they use the imperative to give orders (τάδε ποιέετε ἅμα ἡμῖν, 4.115.3) and as a rallying cry, Come! (Φέρετε, 4.115.3) and combine it with their own request.

Hartog <sup>130</sup> sees this as an example of role reversal in that men are persuaded by women but it could equally illustrate that the Amazons are more 'Greek' than the Scythians in that they have mastered the art of rhetoric. In constructing his Amazons, Herodotus makes them better at Greek than Scythian (οὐ χρηστῶς ἐξέμαθον, 4.117).

---

<sup>130</sup> Hartog, 1988: 221.

He concludes his story of the Amazons with an account of their female descendents who hunt, ride horses, wear the same clothes as men and go to war (ἐς πόλεμον φοιτῶσαι, 4.116.2). The verb means ‘go regularly, frequently’<sup>131</sup> in this context. The Sauromatae have a custom, he says, which requires a woman to kill a man in war before she can marry (οὐ γαμέεται παρθένος οὐδεμία πρὶν [ἄν] τῶν πολεμίων ἄνδρα ἀποκτείνει, 4.117). This makes them heirs to the Amazons of myth. However, Herodotus does not generalise. In his final ethnographical observation he notes that some women die unmarried because they cannot satisfy this stipulation (οὐ δυνάμεναι τὸν νόμον ἐκπλήσαι, 4.117). This suggests that either they did not go to war that frequently, making Herodotus’ use of φοιτῶ ironic, or some women in the community were too weak to fight.

Herodotus’ picture of the Amazons, therefore, is an ambiguous one. It is too simplistic to say that ‘every feature of Amazonian society has a direct antithesis in ordinary Greek practice’.<sup>132</sup> Of course, Greek women did not go to war except in exceptional circumstances<sup>133</sup> but the above story suggests that this was not a regular practice of all the Amazons’ descendents either. Neither did Greek women go hunting and plundering, but this is an aspect of a nomadic lifestyle that most Greeks, male and

---

<sup>131</sup> LSJ III; Powell, 1938: 375

<sup>132</sup> Lefkowitz, 1986: 4.

<sup>133</sup> For example, during the revolution in Corcyra (Th.3.74.2).



female, had abandoned for the settled life of the *polis*. The marriage custom whereby the Scythian men moved to live with the Amazons and brought a dowry is an inversion of the patrilinear Greek custom but also challenges the myth of the Amazon invader. The relationship between the two groups is characterised by reciprocity rather than hostility which makes it more difficult to see the Amazon as the embodiment of defeat, either as a woman or as a quasi –Persian.

### **Bacchic Reality: Athenian women (5.87; 9.5)**

Just as Herodotus resists typecasting the Amazons as warriors and aggressors, he leads us to question the model of the Athenian wife whose life is within the *oikos* and whose link to aggression is solely as enacted in religious practices, as noted above at the festival of Dionysus. Herodotus gives us two instances where Athenian women become *Bacchae* incarnate, acting in concert in a killing. They are described killing the sole Athenian survivor of the battle on Aegina (5.87) and Lycides' wife and children (9.5).

In the first story, the women's feelings are focalised first (δεινόν τι ποιησαμένας κείνον μόνον ἐξ' πάντων σωθῆναι (5.87.2). Powell cites <sup>134</sup> thirteen examples of the construction δεινὸν ποιέεσθαι with an object in the accusative meaning 'to

---

<sup>134</sup> Powell, 1938: 80.

be indignant at'. In some cases, the phrase expresses feelings of resentment or anger at rule by another: the Persians at rule by the Medes (1.127.1), Theras at rule by his nephews (4.147.3), the Lydians at Gyges' succession to the throne (1.13.1), Dorieus at Cleomenes being king (5.42.2). In others, it expresses humiliation: Zopyrus at the Assyrians laughing (*καταγελάων*, 3.155.2) at the Persians, the Persians at the small number of ships which had destroyed them at Artemisium, (8.15.1), and the Athenians at being attacked by Artemisia at Salamis (8.93.2). It can also express a response to failure, as in the rebellion by the survivors of Apries' campaign against Cyrene (2.161.4) or to insubordination, as with Pausanias and Euryanax in relation to Amonpharetus, the Spartan who refused a tactical order to retreat (9.53.3).

As these examples show, this strong emotion often leads to dramatic consequences. In the case of the Athenian women their anger is directed at a man because he has survived and their husbands have not; their assault on him is accompanied by an interrogation (*ὄκου εἶη ὁ ἐωυτῆς ἀνὴρ*, 5.87.2).

To the Athenian men their actions are more terrible than the disaster on Aegina (*ἔτι τοῦ πάθεος δεινότερόν τι δόξαι εἶναι τῶν γυναικῶν ἔργον* 5.87.3). Their response to grief – the killing of an Athenian man – is regarded as worse than defeat in battle. Perhaps it was this very capacity for aggression that makes Pericles' advice to the war widows of the Peloponnesian

war as reported by Thucydides (τῆς τε γὰρ ὑπαρχούσης φύσεως μὴ χείροσι γενέσθαι, Th. 2.45.2) a piece of rhetoric not a reflection of difference. They have to be reminded that female excellence lies in being true to one's underlying nature and least talked about whether in praise or blame.

It is interesting, too, that the only sanction the men can come up with (ἄλλω μὲν δὴ οὐκ ἔχειν ὅτεω ζημιώσασι τὰς γυναῖκας, 5.87.3) is a change of dress. The verb is linked to the word for a fine or penalty (τό ζημιωμα) and Herodotus uses it in this literal sense on two occasions (6.21.2; 6.136.3). The penalty can be death, as for the governors of Memphis (3.27.3) or the eldest son of Pythius (7.39.2) or a lashing, as Xerxes ordered for the Hellespont (7.35.3).

These examples, we suggest, illustrate by contrast the impotence of the Athenian men and the Athenian legal system in dealing with female violence. However, Haubold<sup>135</sup> goes too far in interpreting this event as a shift of historical agency from gods/men to women; he argues that women here are the driving force behind cultural change, saying that δεινότερον can mean 'more powerful/important' as well as 'more terrible'. That may be true in a general sense but we can find no example in Herodotus where it is used in that way.

---

<sup>135</sup> Haubold, 2007: 242.

In the second story, it is the men who respond with outrage (Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ αὐτίκα δεινὸν ποιησάμενοι, 9.5.2) to the suggestion by Lycides that they debate Mardonius' offer of terms, deciding instead to stone him to death (κατέλευσαν, 9.5.2). On this occasion, the Athenian women follow suit, going to Lycides' *oikos* and doing the same to his wife and children (κατὰ μὲν ἔλευσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα, κατὰ δὲ τὰ τέκνα, 9.5.3). Dewald <sup>136</sup> comments on the 'lynch – mob mentality' shown by the Athenians in this episode, and suggests that it shows Herodotus as a less than uncritical supporter of Athenian democracy, though Baragwanath points out <sup>137</sup> that the execution of Lycides is an exception to the general rule of debate.

It also raises some questions about the role of women within that democracy. How did they find out (πυνθάνονται, 9.5.3) what was happening? How did they communicate with each other, or, as Herodotus puts it, give one another a signal (διακελευσαμένη δὲ γυνὴ γυναικί, 9.5.3)? The word is used elsewhere as a call to action, for example, by the Phoenicians to capture the women at Argos (1.1.4) and by the Persians to launch a cavalry charge to rescue the body of Masistius (9.22.3). It suggests a military chain of command rather than a chat at the well. The women also acted of their own accord (αὐτοκελέες, 9.5.3); this reminds us that the legal position of

---

<sup>136</sup> Dewald, 1998: 723.

<sup>137</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 312n51.

Athenian women as permanently under a disability does not necessarily reflect reality.

What is also significant about this episode is what Herodotus does not say or relate. In the first of the two stories about Athenian women, the men are appalled at their actions. In the second, no comment is made, yet women are responsible for killing another woman and her children. We have already noted that killing children can be the mark of a despot (Astyages, Xerxes) and, whilst failure to kill a child may be made out of expediency (Harpagus) or desire for a live child (Cyno) not necessarily out of a reluctance to commit the act, it is difficult to see the actions of the Athenian women as anything but transgressive in their killing of the survivor of Aegina and of Lycides' family. On these occasions at least they are not 'essential indicators of normality'.<sup>138</sup>

These two stories, therefore, challenge both sides of a gender polarity which sees the Amazons as the polar opposite of female Athenians, and suggests a more nuanced and ambiguous picture of both groups.

### **Artemisia, leader of men (7.99; 8.68-9; 8.87-9; 8.101-103)**

The Amazons appear in the same chorus as Artemisia, the final woman we consider, in Aristophanes' play *Lysistrata*; the Amazons as mounted warriors (ἐφ' ἵππων μαχομένας τοῖς

---

<sup>138</sup> Blok, 2002: 227.

ἀνδράσιν, Ar. *Lys.* 679) and Artemisia as an opponent at sea (ναυμαχεῖν καὶ πλεῖν ἐφ' ἡμάς, ὥσπερ Ἀρτεμισία, Ar. *Lys.* 675).

Herodotus starts with a pen portrait of Artemisia (7.99) and his first observation takes us back to the beginning of the *Histories* where one of his stated purposes is to ensure that great and remarkable deeds do not become uncelebrated (μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά...ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, Proem). He says it is remarkable that a woman should wage war on the Greeks (τῆς μάλιστα θῶμα ποιεῖται ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα στρατευσαμένης γυναικός, 7.99.1). We note the contrast with the Athenians' indignation at a woman attacking their city (δεινὸν γὰρ τι ἐποιεῦντο γυναῖκα ἐπὶ τὰς Ἀθήνας στρατεύεσθαι, 8.93.2).

We need to consider in more detail what Herodotus, as narrator, considered remarkable or surprising so that we can evaluate its meaning in connection with Artemisia. We have already identified situations where he uses the word to focalise an individual's thoughts or feelings. For example, Darius found Intaphrenes' wife's choice surprising (θωμάσας, 3.119.5) and the Scythian young men could not understand (ἐν θώματι ἦσαν ὀκόθεν ἔλθοιεν, 4.111.1) where their unknown assailants had come from.

He himself, however, found a range of scenarios remarkable. Sometimes it is an accomplishment, for example, the diversion of the river Euphrates by Nitocris of Babylon (ἄξιον θώματος,

1.185.3). Sometimes the word signifies an extraordinary quality, for example the bravery of the two Spartiates who volunteered to be executed by Xerxes in retaliation for the deaths of Darius' heralds in Sparta (αὕτη τε ἡ τόλμα τούτων τῶν ἀνδρῶν θώματος ἀξίη, 7.135.1). On other occasions, the word signifies a local custom or a natural phenomenon that strikes Herodotus as amazing; for example the round leather boats in Assyria (τὸ δὲ ἀπάντων θῶμα μέγιστόν μοι ἔστι, 1.194.1), the three annual harvests in Libya (τρεῖς ὥρας ἐν ἔωυτῇ ἀξίας θώματος, 4.199.1), and the unique varieties of sheep in Arabia (δύο δὲ γένεα οἴων σφι ἔστι θώματος ἄξια, 3.113.1).

We cannot assume, therefore, that Herodotus is attributing either praise or blame to Artemisia in finding her remarkable as a woman who goes to war. He makes a similarly observation (θῶμά μοι ὤν, 7.153.4) about Telinus of Sicily. He was described by his contemporaries as a rather effeminate and soft man (θηλυδρῆς τε καὶ μαλακώτερος ἀνὴρ, 7.153.4) but nevertheless achieved a task requiring courage and manly strength (πρὸς ψυχῆς τε ἀγαθῆς καὶ ῥώμης ἀνδρηίης, 7.153.4).

This brings us to a characteristic which Herodotus does attribute to Artemisia namely *andreia*, citing it as her motivation for going to war (ὑπὸ λήματός τε καὶ ἀνδρηίης ἐστρατεύετο, 7.99.1). The case of Telinus suggests it can be

possessed by a man who is judged to be like a woman. However, it is taking it a step further to attribute it to a woman.

Aristotle, in writing about characterisation in tragedy, drew a distinction between what was possible and what was appropriate in a female character (ἔστιν γὰρ ἀνδρεῖον μὲν [εἶναι]<sup>139</sup> ἥθος, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἀρμόττον γυναικί οὕτως ἀνδρείαν ἢ δεινήν *Poetics*, 1454a22-3). As Else comments, what is appropriate is not to overstep one's class (γένος) and the Greek word *andreion* when used of a woman 'carries its incongruity on its face.'<sup>140</sup> This follows the dual definition in LSJ of *andreion* as meaning both 'of a man' and 'manly, masculine, courageous', neither of which allows for it to be a quality possessed by a woman. We need to examine how the word is used by Herodotus both generally and in relation to Artemisia.

Apart from Telinus, there are five instances in the *Histories* where the word is used: twice, of individuals (Cyrus and Hegesistratos), three times, of groups (the Lydians, the unknown tribesmen fought by Sesostris, and the Getae).

The adolescent (ἀνδρευμένος)<sup>141</sup> Cyrus is described as the most manly and well-liked of his contemporaries (τῶν ἡλικῶν ἀνδρησιότατος καὶ προσφιλεστάτος, 1.123.1).

---

<sup>139</sup> Inserted by Else and adopted by Halliwell in his translation.

<sup>140</sup> Else, 1963: 458n12.

<sup>141</sup> The present participle suggests 'growing up' not 'grown up'.



It is because he possesses these qualities that Harpagus approaches him with proposals to overthrow Astyages. However, it is clear that his *andreia* is based on his potential, as evidenced by his behaviour in 'ruling' his play-mates, by designating roles and establishing a hierarchy (1.114), not on his achievements once he became king. *Andreia* means, in this context, adopting a leadership role with his childhood friends.

Hegesistratos' deed by contrast, is one of extreme physical courage (ἀνδρηιότατον ἔργον, 9.37.2) because he cuts off his own foot to escape from the Spartans! However, the extreme nature of this action makes it an extreme form of *andreia* and not a quality that would commend it to most men, let alone women.

This is true also of the *andreia* of the Getae, a Thracian tribe enslaved by Darius. They are described as ἀνδρηιότατοι καὶ δικαιοτάτοι (4.93) but Herodotus follows this with a gruesome description of human impalement based on their belief in their own immortality (ἀθανατίζουσι, 4.94.1).

However, the Getae showed a determination to resist invasion, as did the Lydians when they were facing a battle with Cyrus (ἤν...ἔθνος οὐδὲν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίῃ οὔτε ἀνδρηιότερον οὔτε ἀλκιμώτερον τοῦ Λυδίου, 1.79.3). Here, the second comparative adjective helps to define the first; being masculine or courageous means being warlike or showing resistance.

The tribes who resisted Sesostris are also described as ἀλκίμοι (2.102.4) and ἀνδρηῖοι (2.102.5) and are commemorated on pillars. Those who failed to resist (ἀνάλκιδες, 2.105.5) had their names marked with a picture of a woman's genitals (αἰδοῖα γυναικὸς, 2.105.5). Sesostris wanted to make it clear that men who do not fight are like women.

Artemisia is the only woman in the *Histories* to whom *andreia* is attributed. It does not signify resistance; Herodotus makes it clear that she joined Xerxes' forces as a volunteer (οὐδεμιῆς οἱ ἐούσης ἀναγκαίης, 7.99.1). Neither does it signify courage as we will see when we analyse her actions at Salamis.<sup>142</sup> The answer lies in the phrase as a whole; Artemisia went to war because of *andreia* and another quality (ὑπο λήματος τε καὶ ἀνδρηίης, 7.99.1) which can be translated as 'resolution' or 'purpose' as well as 'courage'.<sup>143</sup> Artemisia proves herself to be an excellent strategist in her role as naval commander (ἡγεμόνευε, 7.99.2); like Cyrus, she is a leader. She also becomes the ruler of her country on the death of her husband, with a young son (αὐτὴ τε ἔχουσα τὴν τυραννίδα καὶ παιδὸς ὑπάρχοντος νεηνίω, 7.99.1).

This leadership role is emphasised by the text. Herodotus uses the imperfect (ἔστρατεύετο, ἡγεμόνευε, 7.99.1; 7.99.2) to make it clear that Artemisia was accustomed to adopt the position of

---

<sup>142</sup> See below, p.80-1.

<sup>143</sup> See also 5.72.4; 5.111.1; 9.62.3.

military commander and to supply ships (παρείχεται, 7.99.3)

We can contrast this with the case of Tomyris who engaged in battle with Cyrus (συνέβαλε Κύρω, 1.214.1), where the aorist is used to signify an action taken by the queen when negotiations had failed.

Artemisia possesses *andreia*, not because of her actions in battle, but because that is part of her role, as leader of her country, as it is of male leaders. That is what makes her remarkable to Herodotus, it is argued, as it would be to most of his audience. We also recall that it was lack of this quality (*anandreia*) that Atossa held against Xerxes (A. Pers. 755-6).

Herodotus also notes that Artemisia gives the king the best advice ( γνώμας ἀρίστας βασιλεῖ ἀπεδέξατο, 7.99.3), but this, we argue, is far from unambiguous, begging the question, best in what sense.

Her first speech (8.68) shows her rhetorical skill. She opens by using litotes to emphasise her own contribution at Euboea (οὔτε κακίστη γενομένη ἐν τῆσι ναυμαχίησι τῆσι πρὸς Εὐβοίῃ, οὔτε ἐλαχιστα ἀποδεξαμένη, 8.68.α1) and uses the technique later to point out that the Greeks would not be able to hold out against Xerxes for long (οὐ γὰρ...πολλὸν χρόνον, 8.68.β2). She uses anaphora and *men* and *de* in the connective sense, in a rhetorical question to remind the king what he already controls (οὐκ ἔχεις μὲν τὰς Ἀθήνας...ἔχεις δὲ τὴν ἄλλην Ἑλλάδα;

8.68.α2). She places the pronoun at the end of a sentence for emphasis, pointing out that there was no-one to stand against him on land (ἐμποδῶν δέ τοι ἴσταται οὐδεὶς, 8.68.α2), in support of her argument that Xerxes should avoid a sea battle,

She uses *men* and *de* in the antithetical sense to draw a contrast between what she predicts will happen if Xerxes avoids a sea battle (ἦν μὲν μὴ ἐπειχθῆς ναυμαχίαν ποιούμενος, 8.68.β1) and the likely consequences if he does (ἦν δὲ αὐτίκα ἐπειχθῆς ναυμαχῆσαι, 8.68.γ). She understands that the battles of Thermopylae (7.175.2) and Artemisium (8.21) were part of an overall strategy and so to risk the fleet was also to risk the land forces.

She uses flattery by peppering her speech with marks of Xerxes' status; twice she addresses him as master (δέσποτα, 8.68.α1; 8.68.β1) and once as king (ὦ βασιλεῦ, 8.68.γ), and by calling him the bravest of men (ἀρίστος ἀνδρῶν, 8.68.γ). This translation has been adopted in preference to 'best of men' (Rawlinson) or 'no-one better than you' (Waterfield) because it fits the context better. Artemisia is contrasting Xerxes with his enslaved allies, who are cowards (τοῖσι μὲν χρηστοῖσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων κακοὶ δοῦλοι φιλέουσι γίνεσθαι, τοῖσι δὲ κακοῖσι χρηστοί, 8.68.γ). However, we also reflect that, in calling Xerxes the bravest of men, she invites comparison with Leonidas (7.224.1), and Dianeces (7.226.1), both heroes at Thermopylae, and Aristides, the Athenian, at Salamis (8.95)

who were described in the same terms. For Herodotus' Greek audience, the comparison would be invidious.

She concludes her speech by disparaging some of those allies who also fought at Euboea (τῶν ὄφελός ἐστι οὐδέν, 8.68.γ) emphasising their uselessness by placing the pronoun at the end. This makes a form of ring composition; she starts her speech with self praise, to make Xerxes favourably inclined towards her and concludes by reminding him of the shortcomings of others.

Herodotus' Artemisia, therefore, delivers a carefully constructed piece of rhetoric. We need now to consider its purpose and content. Baragwanath suggests that, in using the term *anakrisis* (8.69.1) to describe her speech, Herodotus 'underlines the necessarily defensive quality of her reply'.<sup>144</sup> However, this parallel with legal terminology ignores the ambiguities and ironies in Artemisia's speech, which we now consider.

Her injunction to avoid a sea battle is followed by a generalisation on the superiority of Greeks over Persians at sea being akin to that of men over women (οἱ γὰρ ἄνδρες τῶν σῶν ἀνδρῶν κρέσσονες τοσοῦτόν εἰσι κατὰ θάλασσαν ὅσον ἄνδρες γυναικῶν, 8.68.α1). We started this study by noting the irony in Artemisia voicing this opinion.

---

<sup>144</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 313.

However, there is ambiguity in this parallel between racial 'otherness' and gender 'otherness,' both for Artemisia's immediate audience and for Herodotus' Greek audience.

Herodotus says elsewhere that, for Persians, the greatest form of abuse is to be called more cowardly than a woman (γυναικὸς κακίω ἀκοῦσαι δέννος μέγιστός ἐστι, 9.107.1) and, before the battle of Plataea, the Persian horsemen taunted the Greeks by calling them women (γυναϊκᾶς σφεας ἀπεκάλειον, 9.20). Even if Xerxes missed the irony in a woman comparing his forces to women, he could not fail to recognise the explicit criticism of his navy.

We should reflect on whether Herodotus more generally equates women with cowardice. There are certainly plenty of references to 'woman' (γυνή) <sup>145</sup> in Herodotus but rarely is it used in a pejorative sense. On four occasions (1.155.4, 8.88.3, 9.20, 9.107.1) the word is synonymous with cowardice, but only by non-Greeks, and the only person in the *Histories* to voice a view as to women's inferiority as a sex is Artemisia, as noted above.

As for a Greek audience, we have already noted the Athenians' indignation at being attacked by a woman at Salamis (8.93.2) so the link Artemisia makes between the Persian forces and women would be met with approval. However, it is worth

---

<sup>145</sup> 373 (Powell, 1938); 375 (Dewald, 1980; Cartledge, 1993)

noting that Artemisia says the Persian inferiority is at sea. On land she identifies the same likelihood of a Greek dispersal and flight (σφραγ διασκεδᾶς, κατὰ πόλις δὲ ἕκαστοι φεύζονται, 8.68.β2) as Mnesiphilus had identified as a risk, in persuading Themistocles (8.57.2) and, through him, Eurybiades, to stay put and prepare for a sea battle.

We should also consider whether her claims for her own contribution and her criticism of others as expressed in her two aphorisms (8.68.α1; 8.68.γ) have any validity. At the battle of Artemisium, off the coast of Euboea, Herodotus has nothing to say about her role, whereas he marks out the Egyptians for their outstanding bravery (ἠρίστευσαν, 8.17). More generally, he also mentions Syennesis of Cilicia and Gorgus and Timonax, both of Cyprus as amongst the most notable (ὀνομαστότατοι, 7.98) of Xerxes' naval commanders.

Moreover, the joint contribution of the Egyptians, Cilicians, Cyprians and Pamphylians to the Persian fleet was four hundred and eighty ships (7.89.2 - 7.91) as against Artemisia's five, though these are described as most famous (νέας εὐδοξοτάτας, 7.99.2), after the squadron from Sidon. As Macan points out, her exploits were 'hardly sufficient to justify this extravagant praise.'<sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup> Macan, 1908: 126.

Moreover, Herodotus does not attribute the losses off the coast of Euboea to Persian inferiority but to shipwreck, caused by a storm which happened by divine will (ἐποιέετο τε πᾶν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, 8.13) to reduce the disparity between the size of the Persian and the Greek navies. It is rare for him to refer to divine intervention in human affairs.<sup>147</sup> Here, it highlights the distance between his version of events and that given to Artemisia.

Finally, her aphorism that good slaves have bad masters and vice versa (8.68.γ) is an ambiguous compliment to Xerxes and carries no helpful message, in contrast with Artabanus' warning to Xerxes, introduced with the same injunction to take heed as Artemisia uses, that the end is not always clear at the beginning (ἐς θυμὸν ὧν βαλεῦ...τὸ μὴ ἅμα ἀρχῆ πᾶν τέλος καταφαίνεσθαι, 7.51.3).

Artemisia is portrayed, therefore, as self-serving and unjustifiably critical of others. However, her strategy of avoiding a sea battle but pushing on by land is proved to be correct at Salamis. We need now to consider why that strategy was rejected.

The response of both her friends (εὐνοοί, 8.69.1) and her enemies (ἀγεόμενοι τε καὶ φθονέοντες, 8.69.1) makes it clear that everyone on the Persian side thinks Xerxes is committed to

---

<sup>147</sup> Dewald, 1998: 712. Another example is the warning to the Chians (6.27).



a sea battle and anticipate, therefore, that he will punish Artemisia (κακόν τι πεισομένης πρὸς βασιλέος, 8.69.1) or kill her (ἀπολεομένης αὐτῆς, 8.69.2), for voicing a different opinion. This focalisation reveals that their primary concern is how Xerxes will react, not whether her strategic view is correct. Perhaps they recalled his fury (θυμῶθεις, 7.11.1) when Artabanus urged caution before Xerxes launched his expedition against the Greeks and crossed the Hellespont. Her enemies are also motivated by envy and resentment of her political influence (ἄτε ἐν πρώτοισι τετιμημένης διὰ πάντων τῶν συμμάχων, 8.69.1).

However, Xerxes was pleased with Artemisia's advice (κάρτα τε ἦσθη τῆ γνώμη, 8.69.2). Exactly the same phrase is used to describe Darius' reaction (4.97.6) to Coës' advice, before the king invaded Scythia, not to dismantle the bridge over the Ister river but to keep it guarded as an escape route. Darius, however, is not only pleased with this advice, but follows it. Xerxes, by contrast, does not act on Artemisia's advice but gives orders that the advice of those in favour of a sea battle be followed (τοῖσι πλέοσι πείθεσθαι ἐκέλευε, 8.69.2).

At first, this appears to be a rare case of majority voting at the Persian court. However, we soon note an 'ironic syntactical movement from a democratic-seeming outcome, to the king's

real motivation.’<sup>148</sup> This is his firm belief that his men fought badly on purpose<sup>149</sup> at Euboea because he was not there (τάδε καταδόξας, πρὸς μὲν Εὐβοίῃ σφέας ἐθελοκακέειν ὡς οὐ παρεόντος αὐτοῦ, 8.69.2).

He listens, therefore, to Artemisia’s criticism of other allies, which we have seen is self-interest on her part, but he ignores her accurate analysis of the Greek position and her subsequent advice, to avoid a sea battle and take advantage of Greek disunity. This is because he gives too much significance to his own contribution as king. His final action, before he gives the order to set sail, is to prepare himself to watch the battle (αὐτὸς παρεσκεύαστο θεήσασθαι ναυμαχέοντας, 8.69.2). Herodotus’ audience could not fail to note the dramatic irony in this; Xerxes is preparing to watch a Persian defeat and many men die precisely because they want to be seen by him (8.86; 8.89.2).

We turn now to the battle of Salamis, to Herodotus’ verdict on the Persian forces and Artemisia’s contribution.

Herodotus himself saw it as one of the advantages of democracy (ἡ ἰσηγορίη, 5.78) over tyranny that a free man would be keen to fight for himself, whereas those who were repressed by a tyrant would fight badly (κατεχόμενοι μὲν ἐθελοκάκεον ὡς δεσπότη ἐργαζόμενοι, ἐλευθερωθέντων δὲ

---

<sup>148</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 313.

<sup>149</sup> Powell’s translation.

αὐτὸς ἕκαστος ἐωυτῷ προεθυμέετο κατεργάζεσθαι, 5.78), and he records Themistocles advising the Ionians on the Persian side to do so, before the battle at Euboea (8.22.2). However, at the battle of Salamis, Herodotus notes that, though Themistocles advised the same group once again to fight badly, in practice few did (ἐθελοκάκεον μέντοι αὐτῶν κατὰ τὰς Θεμιστοκλέος ἐντολὰς ὀλίγοι, οἱ δὲ πλεῦνες οὐ, 8.85.1).

In fact, suggests Herodotus, the Greeks won the battle because of orderly tactics (σὺν κόσμῳ...κατὰ τάξιν, 8.86) whereas the Persian forces became disorganised, doing nothing to plan (οὔτε τεταγμένων ἔτι οὔτε σὺν νόῳ ποιούντων οὐδέν, 8.86). The larger Persian fleet also proved a disadvantage in the narrow straits of Salamis.

Moreover, it was precisely because crews were trying to impress Xerxes that many perished, because they fell into the path of retreating Persian ships (πειρώμενοι ὡς ἀποδεξόμενοι τι καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔργον βασιλείῃ, τῆσι σφετέρησι νηυσὶ φευγούσησι περιέπιπτον, 8.89.2).

Artemisia however, responded differently. She was being pursued by an Athenian ship, whose captain, Ameinias of Pallene had orders to capture her or be captured himself, with a large reward if he succeeded (8.93.1). As she had no means of escape she rammed and sank (ἐνέβαλέ τε καὶ κατέδυσε, 8.87.4) one of her own ships, crewed by men from Calynda, with their

king on board (8.87.2). Herodotus offers three possible explanations for this action: she had quarrelled (τι νεῖκος, 8.87.3) with Damasithymus, she did it on purpose (ἐκ προνοίης, 8.87.3), or the ship happened (κατὰ τύχην, 8.87.3) to be in her way. Macan suggests <sup>150</sup> that, in saying this might have happened by chance, Herodotus forgot that the ship belonged to Artemisia's fleet. We suggest it is more likely that he was being ironic.

He emphasises her good fortune (εὐτυχίη, 8.87.4; 8.88.3) in deceiving the captain of the Greek ship pursuing her into thinking she was either on the Greeks' side or was a defector (8.87.4) and in the fact that there were no survivors of the Calyndian ship to testify against her (κατήγορον γενέσθαι, 8.88.3).

He also makes it clear that the action was to her advantage. He uses συνήκειε three times (8.87.2; 8.88.1; 8.88.3) in this sense, noting that she gains in favour with Xerxes, because he, like the Greek captain, is deceived by what he has seen. Herodotus makes his own judgment on Artemisia and the king with a note of 'malicious humour'<sup>151</sup> (κακὸν ἐργασαμένην ἀπὸ τούτων αὐτήν μάλιστα εὐδοκιμῆσαι παρὰ Ξέρξῃ, 8.88.1). Whether we translate *kakos* as bad or cowardly, Herodotus

---

<sup>150</sup> Macan, 1908: 496.

<sup>151</sup> Macan, 1908: 496.

clearly does not share Xerxes' good opinion of Artemisia's exploit.

Xerxes has another explanation for the defeat at Salamis, echoing Artemisia's prediction; his men have become women, his women men (Οἱ μὲν ἄνδρες γεγόνασί μοι γυναῖκες, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες ἄνδρες, 8.88.3). He equates defeat with cowardice whereas Herodotus excludes this as an explanation, saying the Persians were braver (ἀμείνονες, 8.86) at Salamis than at Euboea.

We reflect that Xerxes, like Candaules, is blinded by events. He does not recognise that, at Salamis, cowardice is shown by a woman rather than his men.

We need now to consider the second occasion when Artemisia gave advice to Xerxes, which was after the defeat at Salamis. On this occasion he recognises that she had been the only person with a strategy (ἐφαίνετο μούνη νοέουσα τὰ ποιητέα ἦν, 8.101.1) and had given good advice (εὔ συνεβούλευσας, 8.101.4). He also gives her the honour of asking her advice on her own, dismissing (μεταστησάμενος, 8.101.2) his councillors and guards.

He puts to her the two options proposed by Mardonius, that is either for him to launch an immediate attack on the Peloponnese (8.100.3) or to allow Mardonius to wage war on his behalf.

Artemisia's initial response, therefore, strikes us as odd. She says it is difficult to know what best to say (*χαλεπὸν μὲν ἐστὶ συμβουλευομένῳ τυχεῖν τὰ ἄριστα εἶπασαν*, 8.102.1) but devotes no time at all to Mardonius' first proposal. She commends the second as being advantageous to Xerxes whether Mardonius succeeds or not.

The reason for her difficulty lies, we suggest, in her knowledge that giving good advice to the king can be a risky business, as Artabanus found out, when he argued against Mardonius' proposals for invasion of Greece. He drew a distinction between good and bad planning (*τὸ εὖ βουλευέσθαι...ὁ βουλευσάμενος αἰσχροῶς*, 7.10.δ2) planning and urges exactly what Mardonius himself proposes after Salamis, namely that he fight on behalf of Xerxes, leaving the king in Persia. Artabanus is punished by being told to stay with the women (*μένειν ἅμα τῆσι γυναίξί*, 7.11.1), another example of cowardice being associated with women, in Xerxes' eyes.<sup>152</sup>

By this stage in the narrative we know that Xerxes is already planning his escape (*δρησμὸν ἐβούλευε*, 8.97.1) and Herodotus himself thinks Xerxes was in such a state of dread that no-one could have persuaded him to stay (*οὐδε...ἔμενε ἂν δοκέειν ἐμοι*;

---

<sup>152</sup> Dewald, 1998: 697.

οὕτω καταρρωδήκεε, 8.103).<sup>153</sup> Artemisia's difficulty suggests she did not know how her advice would be received.

She finds a way of recommending Mardonius' second option, however things turn out. If Mardonius succeeds, the achievement will belong to Xerxes, because his slaves were victorious (σὸν τὸ ἔργον γίνεται; οἱ γὰρ σοὶ δοῦλοι κατεργάσαντο, 8.102.2). If he fails, Xerxes and his family will still survive to cause problems for the Greeks in the future (ἦν γὰρ σύ τε περιῆς καὶ οἶκος ὁ σός, πολλοὺς πολλάκις ἀγῶνας δραμέονται περὶ σφέων αὐτῶν οἱ Ἕλληνες, 8.102.3). This is clever oratory on Artemisia's part; she gives Xerxes a way to save face. Though he is the one about to flee, she suggests it will be the Greeks who will be running away if Xerxes live to fight another day.

It is a significant prediction, as well, in the narrative. Perhaps it was a 'vast mistake'<sup>154</sup> to let the king escape. Certainly the Athenians were incensed when they found out (μάλιστα ἐκπεφυγόντων περιημέκτεον, 8.109.1) and it took a 'disingenuous speech'<sup>155</sup> by Themistocles (ταῦτα λέγων διέβαλλε, 8.110.1) to convince them not to pursue the king.

---

<sup>153</sup> Macan, 1908: 519 suggests Herodotus uses the pluperfect to intensify Xerxes' emotion.

<sup>154</sup> Macan, 1908: 518.

<sup>155</sup> Waterfield, 1998 : 525.

Baragwanath <sup>156</sup> points out that διαβάλλειν means both ‘to deceive’ and ‘to hide one’s intentions’ but suggests that the Athenians were ready to be persuaded (πάντως ἔτοιμοι ἦσαν λέγοντι πείθεσθαι, 8.110.1). This suggests a parallel with Artemisia and Xerxes. Her advice pleases the king because it confirmed his own intentions (λέγουσα γὰρ ἐπετύγχανε τὰ περ αὐτὸς ἐνόεε, 8.103). Moreover, just as we have noted Artemisia being commended for her good advice, Themistocles has earned the epithet of ‘wise in counsel’ (σοφός τε καὶ εὐβουλος, 8.110.1). However, his true motivation in urging the Greeks to stay in Greece, according to Herodotus, was to curry favour (ἀποθήκην μέλλων ποιήσεσθαι, 8.109.5) with Xerxes. Like Artemisia, he is skilled at strategy but capable of treachery and betrayal. Baragwanath calls Themistocles a ‘man of *metis*’<sup>157</sup> for whom self interest is paramount. The same could be said of Artemisia.

Her observation, however, that any Greek victory would be insignificant because it was against Mardonius rather than Xerxes (οὐδέ τι νικῶντες οἱ Ἕλληνες νικῶσι, 8.102.3) reflects a Persian not a Greek viewpoint and was not the verdict of Herodotus.<sup>158</sup> He called the victory of Pausanias at Plataea the most glorious in living memory (νίκην καλλίστην ἀπασέων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, 9.64.1).

---

<sup>156</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 310.

<sup>157</sup> Baragwanath, 2008: 317.

<sup>158</sup> Macan, 1908: 518.



We should reflect, therefore, on how this fits with Herodotus' judgment that, of all the allies, Artemisia gave Xerxes the best advice (7.99.3) and what the king's response tells us about the two individuals.

History proved Artemisia right in her advice to Xerxes to avoid a sea battle at Salamis. Had he taken it, the consequences would have been worse for the Greeks.

Her second piece of advice, namely to go back to Persia, and allow Mardonius to fight the Greeks in Europe, coincided with Xerxes' own intentions.

It is difficult, therefore, to see her advice as 'best' in terms of outcome either for the Greeks or for the Persian forces.

However, if we translate γνώμαι ἀρίσται (7.99.3) as bravest decisions, we acknowledge that, whilst Artemisia did not show courage in battle, she was courageous on both the occasions that she advised Xerxes. On the first occasion she was the only person to argue against a sea battle when all present thought she would be punished for expressing that view. On the second occasion, it has been suggested above that she was in difficulty because she did not know of Xerxes' intention to flee.

This proposed translation accords with another occasion in the *Histories* when Herodotus himself expresses a view. When the Carians are preparing to fight the Persians, one of them,

Pixodarus, argues (unsuccessfully) that they should keep the river behind them to prevent any retreat. This is clearly a brave rather than a strategically sensible proposal but Herodotus approves it (ἐγίνοντο βουλαὶ ἄλλαι τε πολλαὶ καὶ ἀρίστη γε δοκέουσα εἶναι ἔμοι Πιξωδάρου, 5.118.2).

Her relation to Xerxes as his advisor suggests that, in terms of the narrative, she acts as a foil to him. Her skill with strategy, her courage in giving advice and her ability to manipulate circumstances to her advantage are part of her *andreia* as is her political acumen, in confounding her enemies.

Xerxes, by contrast, lacks *andreia*. He makes the wrong decisions, he is either absent from battle as at Euboea, or aggravates the difficulties of his men as at Salamis, he runs away rather than face the enemy and he is outwitted by women when he gets back to Persia.

Munson argues that the Hellenic, ‘male’ side of Artemisia prevails in Herodotus’ narrative and that ‘foreign to bedroom politics and to feminine issues [she is] the representative of a straight male world, like a cultured Athena’.<sup>159</sup> This study has argued that *andreia* (masculinity in a ‘straight male world’) is not always synonymous with courage, that, indeed, skill in strategy and politics can go hand in hand with treachery and

---

<sup>159</sup> Munson, 1988: 94.

deception, and the quality it best encapsulates in Herodotus is effective leadership.

### **Conclusion**

Three main themes have emerged from this study. The first is that outward appearance is not a reliable guide to underlying reality, and often leads to a dissonance between expectation and outcome. The second is Herodotus' use of verbal irony. The third is the interplay between public and private spheres of influence, in which women as well as men have a role to play.

### **Appearance and Reality**

One of the ironies we have identified in Herodotus is that things are often not what they seem. Candaules is motivated by an irrational passion, based on his perception of his wife's beauty. Gyges is motivated by fear of the consequences of disobeying his master. The reality, however, which neither man expects, is that Candaules' wife responds to this act of objectification with an act of violence of her own, asserting her right not to be seen. This study has argued that her response to her exposure is what would be expected of an Athenian woman. What marks her as different is her agency in planning revenge and arranging for a man to be killed.

However, the two studies of Athenian women we have considered call even this difference into question. In the case of

the attack on the sole Athenian survivor of the war between Athens and Aegina, men could change the outward appearance of their women, by a change of dress, but not the underlying reality, a capacity for female aggression for which they, and the legal system, had no effective remedy. In the case of the murder of Lycides and his family, women as well as men show no regard for due process and the rule of law, but act with mob violence, on a joint enterprise, and away from their own *oikoi*.

These two stories have received little attention from scholars, in contrast with the mythological stories of powerful, aggressive women in tragedy. Yet they raise even more uncomfortable questions for Athenian men than the stories of women such as Medea or Clytemnestra, set as they were in the distant mythical past. The first story (5.87) has the added irony that the women commit the assault on the male survivor with the words ‘Where is my husband?’ thus asserting the importance of the marital bond whilst committing an act that those men’s contemporaries found shocking.

In the story of Amestris, we meet Artaynte, a woman who courts disaster through her wish to be seen and contrast her with her mother, who avoids the male gaze of Xerxes only to suffer disfiguration on the order of his wife, who wrongly interprets what she has seen, and ignores the reality that Masistes’ wife had repulsed her husband. Xerxes, however,

knows and fears what his wife is capable of, in contrast with Candaules.

Cyno relies on her invisibility as a slave woman. She also differs from her husband in seeing that she can exploit her own still-birth and acquire a healthy baby, whereas her husband does not see beyond the trappings of wealth and his own powerlessness as a slave. In seeking to have Cyrus killed, Astyages acts on the image of his daughter in dreams, which leads him to the political miscalculation of a marriage between Mandane and Cambyses, whereas, for Harpagus, the sight of his son's remains is a reality which leads him to join forces with Cyrus in overthrowing Astyages. For both men, however, the very action they take to avoid one feared outcome leads to another which is worse.

We have noted how Herodotus subverts the sexualised imagery, as well as the oral tradition, of the Amazons as conquered warriors, hostile to men, by presenting their descendants as part of a nomadic tradition which they share with the Scythians. Their appearance (they wear the same clothes as men) matches the reality of a shared way of life.

Artemisia avoids being identified by both Greeks and Persians at Salamis and thereby succeeds in escaping blame and capture. Xerxes, by contrast, identifies defeat at Euboea with his own absence; he needs to see and be seen, with the consequence that

many die at Salamis, in their eagerness to perform well before him.

Herodotus' stories are very seductive. They create strong images and sometimes produce extravagant prose. Flory, for example, accuses Candaules' wife of 'bullying Gyges into killing his master to satisfy her private lust for revenge'.<sup>160</sup> Romm sees Herodotus' Amazons as 'high-minded feminists not fearsome warriors'.<sup>161</sup> This study has argued, however, that Herodotus subverts such images through his use of irony and requires his audience, ancient and modern, to remember that things are not always what they seem.

### **What do you mean?**

There are a number of means whereby Herodotus creates a distance between his audience and the narrative. Sometimes this is by an explicit prediction that 'things were bound to turn out badly' as for Candaules, Scyles and Artaynte. This creates the same expectation as for an audience at a tragedy; we are prepared for reversal and dramatic irony.

We have noted as well that, in Herodotus, words can convey a meaning that is the opposite of that expressed by the word. The mother of Cleobis and Biton, Harpagus, Oeobazus and Artaynte

---

<sup>160</sup> Flory, 1987: 32.

<sup>161</sup> Romm, 1998: 171.

were all overjoyed at a turn of events but this joy is a signal of impending disaster; as these examples show, there is no gender bias to this.

By contrast, *eros* is associated with male and barbarian excess and a sense of shame (*aidos*) has a different meaning for men and for women. However, we have suggested that the sense of shame felt by Candaules' wife marks her as similar to, rather than different from, an Athenian citizen wife.

We have argued that *andreia*, a quality possessed by Cyrus and Artemisia, marks them as effective leaders, and contrasts them with Astyages and Xerxes who lack this quality, both at court and in war.

Some women in the *Histories*, like Candaules' wife and Amestris do not need to persuade; they can command and this marks them as 'other,' like Astyages and Xerxes. However, the second story of Athenian women is also an example of a case where action takes the place of debate whereas the Amazons prove adept at the art of persuasion.

We have noted that Themistocles manipulates the debate in Athens to achieve his desired outcome. Artemisia, however fails to persuade Xerxes to avoid a sea battle but proves right in her prediction of a Persian defeat. Cyno manages to persuade her husband not to kill the baby Cyrus but fail to predict that his size and good looks will eventually betray his origins. The

mother of Cleobis and Biton also makes a request with an outcome she fails to predict.

This study has explored the limitations of ‘otherness’ as a way of analysing these eight stories in which women play a key role. Herodotus gives us Persians and Athenians who share an ideology that women should not fight and that equates femaleness with cowardice, but, through his depiction of Artemisia, he distances himself from that ideology whilst also condemning her actions for being cowardly. His Amazons, as well, are not the personification of female ‘otherness’ that was reflected in the Athenian culture of his day.

### **Family matters**

We consider now the impact of these ironies on the arguments identified in the introduction, that women are defenders of societal values and function to define the male role by opposition.

We observe that the roles of men as husbands, fathers and sons are as significant in the stories we have considered as the roles of women as wives, mothers and daughters.

Candaules offends as husband as well as king. In exposing his wife to Gyges, he breaks a marital convention as well as demeaning his wife’s status as queen. Her response asserts her



rights in both roles to her private space, which has been violated. To that extent her function is normative. However, her actions are the opposite of what either Candaules or Gyges expect.

Xerxes offends not only his wife but also his sister-in-law. However Amestris' response, in relying on the *nomos* of the feast, achieves a deadly outcome. She is Xerxes' equal in cruelty and arbitrary action; her 'otherness' is as a barbarian not as a woman.

However, there is a contrast between the marriages of Candaules and his wife and Xerxes and Amestris and other married couples such as Cyno and Mitradates, Masistes and his wife, and within the Sauromatae, which are characterised by reciprocity.

Athenian women take public action as widows but, at the same time, assert the primacy of their husbands. They also show themselves the equals of men in destroying Lycidas' *oikos* thus challenging the 'otherness' of woman as nurturer.

By contrast, Intaphrenes' wife acts appropriately, in causing Darius to take pity on her, but chooses to prioritise her natal *oikos*, in the face of his assumption that husband and children would come first.

The mother of Cleobis and Biton has a public role as a priestess of Hera and a private one as mother of her two boys, but in praying to Hera she achieves the worst possible outcome for herself as a mother.

Cyno breaks all convention by preserving Cyrus' life and thus achieves for herself a role as mother but at the expense of Harpagus' son, who is killed despite his father's calculated action. We contrast this with Mandale who is entirely passive, but whose son returns home.

Although Herodotus tells us that Artemisia is a widow with a young son, these facts do not define her role. Rather, this study has argued that she is remarkable, indeed 'other', because her primary role is military leader. Munson argues convincingly that there are many similarities between her and Themistocles. We have argued that she also operates as a foil to Xerxes, illustrating by comparison his lack of masculine qualities, his *anandria*. We learn nothing of any domestic issues for Artemisia whereas Xerxes is powerless at home as well as in the public sphere.

However, her case study challenges the very notion of masculinity, suggesting that success is not always achieved by force of arms (the traditional Homeric virtue of *arête*) but sometimes through deception and the ability to think strategically.

Herodotus invites us to consider men as well as women in familial roles, and women as well as men acting outside the *oikos*. This undermines the generalisation that sees women as the observers, defenders of societal values and symbols of the constraints of human existence. By extension, and applying the template of ‘otherness’ this makes men the actors, the violators of societal values and symbols of ambition and boundary crossing. However, in Candaules’ wife, we meet a woman who observes and acts, in the story of the Amazons, we encounter a negotiation between men and women on societal values, and it is Mitradates, not Cyno who symbolises the constraints of slavery. Generalisations describing Candaules’ wife, Artemisia and Amestris as ‘passionate, aggressive women’<sup>162</sup> do not survive scrutiny. These three women are significantly different from each other.

### **Epilogue**

This study was born out of frustration. *The Histories* tell of a female baker (1.51), a bloodthirsty queen (1.214), and a paternity dispute (6.52) amongst many other stories of women yet books on women in the classical world<sup>163</sup> focus on Athenian women and Amazons, with a short excursus on Spartan women. As a result, Herodotus hardly merits a reference.

---

<sup>162</sup> Pomeroy, 1975: 95.

<sup>163</sup> Pomeroy, 1975; Fantham, 1994.

However, we conclude by returning to Athens and what Herodotus tells us about Athenian attitudes to women. We have noted that the response of Candaules' wife to her objectification is what would be expected of an Athenian wife and her actions beg the question of what a woman is supposed to do when her *kurios* is her abuser.

The mother of Cleobis and Biton is engaged as priestess of Hera in an activity that was an area of public life where Athenian women participated,<sup>164</sup> but with the ironic outcome that her very access to the god led to her sons' death.

The story of Cyno raises questions about the status and role of a slave woman that was as relevant to the Athenians as it was to the Medes and Persians.

In the story of Intaphrenes' wife it is a barbarian king who voices the orthodoxy that a woman would put husband and children first, which fits Athenian practice whereby a woman moves to her husband's *oikos* on marriage.<sup>165</sup>

Athenian women, in contrast with Intaphrenes' wife, do prioritise their husbands but act out that loyalty in a barbaric way, whereas Herodotus' Amazons are very different from the warriors of Athenian myth and do not function to define Athenian women by opposition. Herodotus, rather, notes their

---

<sup>164</sup> Pomeroy, 1975: 75; Fantham, 1994: 95.

<sup>165</sup> Gould, 1980, 44-45.

difference just as he observes that Artemisia is a 'wonder' as a woman who possesses *andreia*. Her story reveals that Persians and Athenians share an ideology that sees women as inferior but from which Herodotus distances himself with his authorial comments.

Finally, Amestris is Xerxes' equal in cruelty and arbitrariness but we have the foil of Masistes and his wife. This story, with that of Candaules, also gives us another perspective on *eros* from the debate between Socrates and his friends in Plato's *Symposium*.

We conclude, therefore, by observing that, despite Herodotus' wide-ranging ethnographical enquiries, it is Athenian attitudes to women that he illuminates in the eight stories we have considered, from the distance of an ironic onlooker.

WORD COUNT 20278

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES**

Asheri, D., Lloyd, A.B. and Corcella, A., *Herodotus, Histories*, Book 1 - 1V, London, 2007.

Bowen, A. J., *Plutarch: The Malice of Herodotus*, Warminster, 1992.

Else, G.F., *Aristotle's Poetics*, Harvard, 1963.

Flower, M.A. and Marincola, J. *Herodotus, Histories, Book IX*, Cambridge, 2002.

Halliwell, S., *The Poetics of Aristotle*, translation and commentary, Chapel Hill, 1987.

How, W.W., and Wells, J., *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 2 vols. Oxford, 1913; repr. with corrections, 1928.

Hude, C., *Herodoti Historiae*, 2 vols. Oxford, 1927.

Lloyd, A.B., *Herodotus: Book II*, 3 vols. Leiden, 1975-88.

Macan, R., *Herodotus: The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Books*, 2 vols. London, 1895; repr. New York, 1973.

----- *Herodotus: The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Books*, 2 vols, London, 1908; repr. New York, 1973.

Rawlinson, G., *Herodotus, The Histories*, translation, London, 1910.

Rusten, J.S., *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book 2*, Cambridge, 1989.

Scott, L., *Historical Commentary on Herodotus, Book 6*, Brill, 2005.

Waterfield, R., *Herodotus, The Histories*, translation, Oxford, 1998.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Baragwanath, E., *Motivation and Narrative in Herodotus*, Oxford, 2008.

Blok, J., 'Women in Herodotus' in Bakker, E.J., De Jong, I.J.F., Wees, H.van (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, Leiden, 2002.

Cairns, D.L., 'Off with her ΑΙΔΩΣ': Herodotus 1.8.3-4', *CQ*, Vol.46, No.1 (1996), pp.78-83.

Carey, C., 'Rape and Adultery in Athenian Law', *CQ*, Vol.45, No.2 (1995), pp.407-17.

Cartledge, P., 'Spartan Wives: Liberation or Licence?' *CQ*, Vol.31, No.1 (1981), pp.84-105.

Cartledge, P., *The Greeks: A portrait of self and others*, Oxford, 1993.

Chiasson, C.C., 'An Ominous word in Herodotus', *Hermes*, vol.111, No.1 (1983), pp.115-118.

Davidson, J., *Courtesans and Fishcakes*, London, 1997.

Dewald, C., 'Biology and Politics: Women in Herodotus' "Histories" ', *Pacific Coast Philology*, Vol.15 (Oct.1980), pp.11-18.

Dewald, C., 'Women and Culture in Herodotus' *Histories*', in H. Foley (ed.) *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, pp. 91-125, Philadelphia, 1981.

Dewald, C., Review of F. Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* (Berkeley and London, 1988), in *CPh*, Vol.85, No.3 (July.1990), pp.217-224.

Dewald, C., Introduction and Notes to *Herodotus, The Histories*, tr. R. Waterfield, Oxford, 1998.

Dewald, C., 'The Figured Stage: Focalizing the Initial Narratives of Herodotus and Thucydides' in T.M.Falkner, N. Felson & D. Konstan (eds.), *Contextualizing Classics: Ideology, Performance, Dialogue* , Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford, 1999.

Dewald, C. & Kitzinger, R., 'Herodotus, Sophocles, and the woman who wanted her brother to be saved' in C.Dewald & J. Marincola (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, Cambridge, 2006.

Evans, J.A.S., 'Father of History or Father of Lies: The Reputation of Herodotus', *CJ*, Vol.64, No.1 (Oct.1968), pp.11-17.

Evans, J.A.S., *Herodotus, Explorer of the Past: Three Essays*, Princeton, 1991.

Fantham, E., H. Foley, N.B. Kampen, S.B. Pomeroy, H.A. Shapiro, *Women in the Classical World*, New York and Oxford, 1994.

Fehling, D., *Herodotus and his 'Sources': Citation, Invention and Narrative Art*, tr. J.G. Howie, Leeds, 1989 (German orig.1971).

Fisher, N.R.E., 'Popular Morality in Herodotus', in Bakker, E.J., De Jong, I.J.F., Wees, H. van (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, Brill, 2002.

Flory, S., *The Archaic Smile of Herodotus*, Detroit, 1987.

Flory, S., 'Who Read Herodotus' Histories?', *AJPh*, Vol.101, No.1 (Spring 1980), pp.12-28.

Forsdyke, S., 'Athenian Democratic Ideology and Herodotus' Histories', *AJPh*, Vol.122, No.3 (Autumn 2001), pp.329-358.

Fowler, R.L., 'Herodotus and his contemporaries', *JHS*, vol.116 (1996), pp.62-87.

Gould, J. *Herodotus*, Bristol, 1989.

Gould, J. 'Law, Custom and Myth: Aspects of the social position of women in Classical Athens', *JHS*, Vol.100 (1980), pp.38-59.

Gray, V., 'Herodotus and the Rhetoric of Otherness', *AJPh*, Vol.116, No.2 (Summer, 1995), pp.185-211.

Griffiths, A., 'Was Kleomenes Mad?', in Powell, A. (ed.) *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her success*, Routledge, 1989.

Hall, E., *Inventing the Barbarian. Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford, 1989.

Harris, E.M., 'Did the Athenians regard Seduction as a worse crime than Rape?', *CQ*, vol.40., No.2 (1990), pp.370-77.

Harrison, T., *Divinity and History: the Religion of Herodotus*, Oxford, 2000.

Hartog, F., *The Mirror of Herodotus*, tr. J Lloyd, Berkeley and London, 1988 (French orig.1980).



Hartog, F. & Hayes, W.R., 'Herodotus and the Historiographical Operation', *Diacritics*, Vol.22, No.2 (Summer 1992), pp.83-93.

Haubold, J. 'Athens and Aegina (5.82-9)', in Irwin, E. & Greenwood, E. (eds.), *Reading Herodotus: A Study of the Logoi in Book 5 of Herodotus' Histories*, Cambridge, 2007.

Hazewindus, M., *When Women Interfere: Studies in the Role of Women in Herodotus' Histories*, Amsterdam, 2004.

Hodkinson, S., 'Inheritance, Marriage and Demography: Perspectives on the Success and Decline of Classical Sparta', in Powell, A. (ed.) *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her success*, Routledge, 1989.

Jong, I.J.F., De, *Narrators and Focalizers: the Presentation of the Story in the Iliad*, Amsterdam, 1987.

Lang, M.L., *Herodotean Narrative and Discourse*, Cambridge, Mass. & London, 1984.

Larsen, S., 'Kandaules' Wife, Masistes' Wife: Herodotus' Narrative Strategy in Suppressing Names of Women: (Hdt.1.8-12 and 9.108-13)', *CJ*, Vol.101, No.3 (Feb-Mar. 2006), pp.225-244.

Lateiner, D., *The Historical Method of Herodotus*, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 198

Lefkowitz, M., *Women in Greek Myth*, Bristol, 1998.

Lidov, J.B., 'Sappho, Herodotus, and the "Hetaira"', *CPh*, Vol.97, No.3 (Jul.2002), pp.203-237.

Lloyd, M. 'Cleobis and Biton (Herodotus 1-31)', *Hermes*, Vol. 115, No.1 (1987), pp.22-8.

Luraghi, N., *The Historian's Craft in the Age of Herodotus*, Oxford, 2001.

MacDowell, D.M., *Spartan Law*, Edinburgh, 1986.

Munson, R.V., 'Artemisia in Herodotus', *ClAnt*, Vol.7, No.1 (Apr., 1988), pp.91-106.

Munson, R.V., 'Ananke in Herodotus', *JHS*, Vol.121 (2001a), pp.30-50.

Munson, R.V. *Telling Wonders: Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work of Herodotus*, Michigan, 2001b.

Munson, R.V., *Black Doves Speak: Herodotus and the Languages of Barbarians*, Harvard University Press, 2005.

Parker, R., 'Spartan Religion' in Powell, A. (ed.) *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her success*, Routledge, 1989.

Pelling, C., 'The Urine and the Vine: Astyages' Dreams at Herodotus 1.107-8', *CQ*, vol.46 (1996), pp.68-77.

Pelling, C., 'East is East and West is West – or are they? National Stereotypes in Herodotus', *Histos* 1, electronic publication, <http://www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos>, 1997.

Pelling, C., *Literary Texts and the Greek Historian*, London, 2000.

Pelling, C., 'Speech and Narrative' in C.Dewald & J.Marincola (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, 2006.

Pembroke, S., 'Women in Charge: the Function of Alternatives in Early Greek Tradition and the Ancient Idea of Matriarchy', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol.30 (1967), pp.1-35.

Pomeroy, S.B., *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, Pimlico, 1975.

Powell, J.E., *A Lexicon to Herodotus*, Cambridge, 1938.

Pritchett, W.K., *The Liar School of Herodotus*, Amsterdam, 1993.

Redfield, J., 'Herodotus the Tourist', *CPh*, vol.80 (1985), pp.97-118.

Redfield, J., 'The Women of Sparta', *CQ*, vol.73 (1977), pp.146-161.

Renehan, R. 'Herodotus Philanthropos', *Hermes*, Vol.129, No.2 (2001), pp. 173-187.

Romm, J. *Herodotus*, New Haven & London, 1998.

Sainte Croix, G.E.M., 'Herodotus', *G & R*, Vol.24 (Oct.1977), pp.130-148.

Shapiro, S.O., 'Proverbial Wisdom in Herodotus' *TAPA*, Vol.130 (2000), pp.89-118.

Thomas, R. *Herodotus in Context*, Cambridge, 2000.

Tyrrell, W.B., *Amazons: A Study in Athenian Mythmaking*, Baltimore, 1984.

Van de Veen, J.E. *The Significant and the Insignificant: Five Studies in Herodotus' View of History*, Amsterdam, 1996.

Walcot, P., 'The Funeral Speech, a study of values', *G & R*, Vol.20 (1973), pp.111-119.

Helen Tank 29001063