

The Figured Stage: Focalizing the Initial Narratives of Herodotus and Thucydides

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Narrative becomes a problem only when we wish to give to real events the form of story. It is because real events do not offer themselves as stories that their narrativization is so difficult.

—Hayden White

Narrative is not innocent, and the more it pretends to innocence, to represent "the way things are," the less innocent it is; encoded in the apparent naturalness of narrative is a set of assumptions that are authoritative because they largely remain hidden from the reader. In the first chapter of *Man in the Middle Voice*, John Peradotto singles out from among these assumptions the seduction of the visual, since the immediacy of narrative appears to transport us directly to the scene being described, and "seeing is believing." As Peradotto observes, in Standard Average European thought, you believe you *can* step in the same river twice, because that's what it looks like you are doing; the power of ideology lies in the seduction exerted by the obvious, the natural.¹ This observation is germane to all narrative genres—the epic poem, the novel,

1. Peradotto 1990: 15-17 cites Whorf, in Tyler 1987: 149-50, for an account of SAE (=Standard Average European) thoughts and beliefs: "'reality,' the 'world,' is composed of more or less stable substances. . . . Language, when it is 'true to' this direct perception, represents, literally re-presents things pretty much as they are in themselves;" cf. Lucian, *Hist. conscr.* 51, cited by Moles 1993: 89a. On pp. 29-30, Peradotto cites Barthes 1983: 285 and Eco 1976: 79 for the function of the semiotic analysis of narrative, i.e., to make ideology explicit. See also White 1987: 86-87, 150-68, 185-213. For assessments by working historians of these issues, see Momigliano 1981 and Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob 1994: 223-37. I would like to thank Nancy Felson for invaluable editorial help on this article.

the romance, and so forth. It holds a particular kind of force in the case of narrative history, since narrative history (ostensibly at least) claims to convey to the reader the reality of the past, and its visual power and immediacy are thought to make it look like a transcription of reality, of what really happened.

Every reflective reader, however, knows that the connection between narrative history and reality is not a simple one. Marilyn Katz has reminded us of Voltaire's wonderful *mot*, that history is the trick the present plays on the past.² D. Lowenthal has recently explored a number of ways in which "the past is a foreign country" (Lowenthal 1990). For Hayden White, quoted above, ". . . real events do not offer themselves as stories" (White 1987: 4). But perhaps they do; in retrospect (which is when they become events), they offer themselves as too many stories. If each person involved in some great event were asked even immediately thereafter to deliver a narrative that showed things *wie sie eigentlich gewesen sind*, the same scene would appear very differently, linked up with other different events and narrated from many different vantage points, with many different emphases and narrative colorations. Who the heroes and villains are would change. Any historical narrative is faced with the problem of how to make a single story out of many stories.³

I want to concentrate here on one particular aspect of this problem: the way the two early Greek historians Herodotus and Thucydides introduce into their texts what narratologists call focalization.⁴ We cannot

2. In the orally delivered version of the paper included in this volume. The paraphrase of Voltaire appears in Bowles and Gintess 1986: 40.

3. Herodotus is called the first historian; Meier 1987: 44-47 identifies his achievement as the invention of a "multi-subjective, contingency-oriented account . . . using empirical data and writing in as comprehensive a form as possible." See Mink 1987: 192-95, for how nineteenth-century Romanticism and the demise of the idea of Universal History led to our current perception that history is not one story. "A fortiori, we believe that there are many central subjects or themes for the many stories, and that the differences among them are inadjudicable. Moreover, the many stories have their own beginnings, middles, and ends, and are at least in principle fully intelligible without ensconcing them within a more comprehensive narrative whose form is not fully visible in the segment that they represent," pp. 193-94. For the related problem of 'linearization,' or the need to organize into a narrative sequence events that originally transpired simultaneously, see Hornblower 1994: 142 f. (on Thucydides).

4. Hornblower's 1994 article on Thucydides remains the most extended attempt to consider the two earliest Greek historians in narratological terms; Connor 1984 and 1985 anticipates many features of a narratological analysis without use of a specifically narratological terminology. For focalization see Hornblower 1994: 134, who cites M. Bal 1985: 100-14. See also Rimmon-Kenan

look at the whole of this large and interesting issue here, but I propose to take a provisional sounding, by examining how each of these early Greek historians first establishes his own narrator's voice in the text, and asking what the qualities of each voice are. Then we will look at where and how the narrator's voice first concedes power to other voices, other narrative points of view. This will suggest some interesting things about narrative history's ideological power, its capacity in general to convince us that things were as it says they were, and thus that a real past is being conveyed through narrative. For both Herodotus and Thucydides incorporate voices other than their own into their narratives. This is one of the important ways in which they convince us that their texts continue to contain the many stories out of which they originated. Yet they use their various narrative voices very differently. And the differences between them in this area point to the different ways in which each historian asks us to understand his own relations as narrator with the other voices he incorporates. Each historian presents his text, and its way of using other voices than his own, as "natural"; the relation among narrative voices is part of a text's ideology, since it is presented as part of how "things really are." Both similarities and differences in Herodotus' and Thucydides' basic attitudes toward discourse are implied, a topic to which I will briefly return at the end of the paper.

The proem of an ancient historical narrative begins to put in place the narrative rules which will represent the voice of authority for the rest of the work.⁵ The narrative moves are established that will seem natural; narrative possibilities are put in place that will allow us as readers to sit back and begin to let the narrative work its way with us. Both Herodotus and Thucydides use their proems to convey important information at the outset about who is allowed a voice in their texts and what rules control the shift from their own voices as narrators to the voices of others.

1983: 71-85. Genette (1980: 186) came up with the term "focalization" because "narrative point of view" fails to distinguish between the questions "who speaks?" and "who sees?" That is, a narrator can tacitly convey the thoughts or sensations of others, so that they focalize the account, while he or she continues to narrate it. T. Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford 1998) appeared after this piece was in press.

5. See Moles 1993: 91-114 for the truth claims made in the first pages of Herodotus and Thucydides. See now also Marincola 1997 for the more general ways in which the ancient Greek and Roman historians established their narrative authority and pp. 271-75 for how they established their own narrative personae in their texts. (For a post-modern deconstruction of the ideology implicit in a proem—or the first few pages of an article like this one—see Derrida 1981: 1-59; cf. n. 1.)

The text we call the *Histories* begins as a bald declaration: "This is the *apodexis* of the *historiê* of Herodotus."⁶ Already in this short clause two tacit fissures appear in the narrative surface. The first occurs in any narrative text, and separates the voice that first spoke these words (what we may call the real-time author) from the voice that enunciates them in the text, the narrator.⁷ This narrator uses a deictic to separate himself out from what is to follow (*hêde*), naming the narration as an object and pointing at it: *this* is the *y* of *x*, the display/publication of Herodotus' investigation/research. He does not linger on precisely how the named Herodotus possesses or claims or even understands the whole narrative to come, nor does he make explicit his own relation to the named Herodotus. Rather, two purpose clauses follow: "so that the happenings of the past will not be worn away," and "so that great and wonderful deeds of both Greeks and barbarians will not become *aklea*," and then the sentence ends in a loosely attached accusative construction, "both in other respects and with respect to the *aitiê* (cause/reason/responsibility, even fault) through which they went to war with each other." Whose purposes are expressed in the "so that" clauses? Presumably still those of the narrator who has emerged in the first sentence, naming the text as the *apodexis historiês* of Herodotus.

The narrator does not come forward at this point to clarify the issue in his own voice. Instead, he abruptly introduces two additional figures on the narrative stage, Persian *logioi*, or learned men, and then, a little further down, Phoenicians.⁸ He uses indirect discourse to report a very

6. "Of Halicarnassus" or "of Thurii," depending on which manuscript tradition is followed. Jacoby 1956: 225 argues that Herodotus' own wording must have been "of Thurii."

7. I am using the terminology of Rimmon-Kenan 1983: 86-89 and Bal 1985: 119-26. According to both of them, every text has a narrator, whether or not the narrator announces him/herself as a personality, an "I" with a role to play in the text. Both the Herodotean and the Thucydidean narrator do reveal themselves almost immediately as an "I" in their texts; however, while the Thucydides narrator remains "extradiegetic" for the most part (not intruding himself overtly into his narrated account), the Herodotus narrator is "intradiegetic," taking an active part qua narrator throughout the narrative (he is, however, extradiegetic to the *logoi* his text includes). Both Rimmon-Kenan and Bal reserve Chatman's 1978: 151 "implied author" for something more global than the narrator, that is, the total effect of the entire text on the reader.

8. Nagy 1987: 175-84 argues that Herodotus sees himself also as a *logios* and connects this with the idea of *apodeixis* and with oral performance. Evans 1991: 95-99 sharply distinguishes the performances of *logioi*, "oral memorialists" from the much larger and more complex set of functions performed by Herodotus himself. For the larger issues connected with Herodotean orality, see also Thomas 1993 and Darbo-Peschanski 1995.

peculiar story or rather series of stories from these Persian *logioi* and Phoenicians, one that purports to expatiate on the issue raised at the end of the first sentence by the narrator: the *aitiê* behind the enmity between Greeks and barbarians.

The account of the Persian *logioi* concerns a series of violent reciprocal abductions of women: first a vivid vignette about Io, abducted from Argos by Phoenicians; then more briefly Europa's abduction from Tyre by Cretans, Medea's from Colchis by Greeks, and finally Helen's, from Sparta, by a Trojan. The Persian account unabashedly concludes by pointing a finger: Greeks, the Persians say, are really responsible for the enmity between Greeks and barbarians, because they allowed this series of exchanges to escalate into war. And just in case we miss the point of the narrator's decision to efface himself and begin by retelling the account of the Persian *logioi*, he now adds an alternative Phoenician version too: Phoenicians agree on the whole with the Persians, they say, but they want to correct one detail in the Persian account. Phoenicians did not abduct Io, they merely helped her escape from a very embarrassing situation, since she had slept with the ship's captain, got pregnant, and did not want her parents to find out, so the Phoenician captain helpfully took her off to Egypt. Thus this first set of shifting focalizations forces us as an audience to play with the notion of what a *logos* is, and what its relations to its speakers and to the real past are likely to be. It becomes clear to the alert reader of Herodotus that a warning is being delivered: narrative is likely to be self-interested. For these are not just stories that happen to be told by Persians and Phoenicians—what is significant about the change of narrator's voice is that Persians deliver a justification of Persian actions (the enmity was begun a long time in the past, by Greeks), and Phoenicians add as a rider a justification of Phoenician actions.⁹

I have written elsewhere about the powerful rhetorical effect of this first set of variant voices in the *Histories*, in making us as readers aware of Herodotus' refusal of an authoritative, monologic discourse.¹⁰ Every

9. Whether Herodotus is genuinely claiming Persian and Phoenician authority for these thinly rationalized stories from Greek myth is a matter of considerable debate: Flory 1987: 24-29 and 166-67 nn. 5-6. Fehling 1989: 57 believes that he does, and that the "principle of regard for party bias" is a prominent marker of Herodotus' general untrustworthiness (105-8). Arieti 1995: 8-11 believes that the whole passage is implicitly designed as an unfavorable characterization specifically of Persians and Phoenicians.

10. Dewald 1987: 149-50, 168. See also Lateiner 1989: 76-90 for Herodotus' explicit use of alternative narratives, among which the reader must choose; see

account that follows in the *Histories* will have to be viewed through the critical lens that the proem has created; even foreign *logioi* of long-ago events are not neutral narrators. But here, as we investigate the focalizing of Herodotus' proem, let us look instead at who and what have been called onto the narrative stage by this point in the text:

1. the (presumed) real author Herodotus, named in the first line as owner in some unspecified way of the text being identified;
2. the narrator, who points first to the narrative of Herodotus, and then moves on to discuss Persians and Phoenicians;
3. the narrative as an object (*hêde*) that the narrator points to as the *apodexis historiês*, or the demonstration/publication of research/investigation;
4. the Persian *logioi* (focalizing their story);
5. the Phoenicians (focalizing their supplement); and
6. the Greeks, who are only mentioned parenthetically and who elsewhere narrate their own Hellenocentric and mythic versions of the events narrated by foreigners here.

In the account of Io told by the Persians, the narrator adds only that "the Greeks" agree that her name was Io but disagree with the Persian story of her abduction. The unspoken Greek version, we may note, is every bit as self-justifying as the two Persian and Phoenician stories that precede it. What the Greek version would add to the abduction stories that are recounted here by foreigners is myth and a number of gods, all of them unmentioned in Herodotus' proem. Their inclusion would serve to justify the odd or reprehensible behavior exhibited by the Greek characters in the demythologized versions delivered by the text's Persian *logioi* and Phoenicians. It was a god, after all, in the Greek account who drove Io to Egypt and took Europa to Crete, and a variety of other gods and goddesses who helped Jason abduct Medea, gave Helen to Paris, and even supervised the war on Troy. For Herodotus' Greek audiences, their legends and myths hover as an unspoken ghostly presence on the narrative stage. Their presence through absence (in a very Derridian fashion) is not accidental. Part, although never explicitly remarked upon, of how *logoi* from the distant past become "worn away by time" has to do with the tendency of their speakers to dress up the events they are recounting. Gods, as well as virtuous motives or exonerating circum-

Darbo-Peschanski 1987a: 117 for the status of *logoi* throughout Herodotus' narrative: "ce qui compte, c'est qu'ils apparaissent comme les récits d'autrui, différents l'un de l'autre, comme du discours de l'inquêteur."

stances, can be added to a narrative to modify or explain away a narrator's own sense of potential culpability for those events.¹¹

A seventh presence, the audience, is brought in at the end of the proem, where the narrator adds an explanation in the first person for what he intends to do next (1.5): "and I will not say about these matters that it happened one way or the other, but the man I know first began unjust deeds against the Greeks, beginning with him I will proceed to the rest of the *logos*, going alike through small and big communities of humankind." Here the narrator finally unequivocally adopts the first person voice, using it to indicate control, that *he* intends to be in charge of all of the voices who will come on-stage and narrate accounts that will contribute to the *logos* as a whole. As importantly, he tells us so by looking at us, the unvoiced audience at whom this whole interlocking exchange is directed, as he informs us of what he is not going to do. The argumentative tone of his comment reveals that we, his audience, are to be the involved spectators of his decision here to back off from the stories of others just recounted; our judgment will matter as well as his own.¹²

Thus right at the outset of the *Histories* we have a very full stage: Herodotus the named author; the narrator; the narrative as object; Persian and Phoenician experts; missing Greek mythographers and poets; and finally, ourselves, the implicit audience as recipient of all this. The whole scene represented here becomes the *apodexis historiês* named deictically in the first line of the text. We understand as we proceed that the *hêde* with which the text starts constructs itself out of the script or conversation that will unroll as the text continues, between the narrator and witnesses like the Persians and Phoenicians who have produced the *logoi* he narrates. We, the readers, are both audience for and participants in this performance.

All seven of the narrative "characters" presented in Herodotus' proem will reappear many times. The historical Herodotus appears least frequently; although we are told that he went a number of places and

11. Here Herodotus is perhaps (not entirely seriously) making a gesture toward the concerns of his great predecessor Hecataeus (Lateiner 1989: 123, nn. 47, 49; Flory 1987: 28; Derow 1994: 74). For his interest in distinguishing the human sphere he wants to investigate from stories of the gods, see Lateiner 1989: 64-67. For his larger interests, however, in divine justice see Immerwahr 1966: 311-26, Gould 1994, Darbo-Peschanski 1987b: 111-15.

12. For Herodotus' implicit engagement with his audience, see Lateiner 1989: 30-33, Hartog 1988: 289-94. Pohlenz 1937: 208-11 (cited by Lateiner) connects this feature to an original oral delivery of the *Histories*.

saw a number of things, we are told nothing about his life per se.¹³ The narrator is far more frequent and vigorous a presence; he intervenes throughout the text to interrupt, and on numerous occasions he comments on the *logos* or *logoi* (both are used) that comprise its narrative backbone.¹⁴ Not just Persians and Phoenicians but a long list of other informants as well appear in the *Histories*, either tacitly or explicitly mentioned as the sources for *logoi* recounted in the text (Jacoby 1956: 398-99). Even the almost-missing Greek poets and mythographers will reappear, and their voices' potential contribution will also sporadically be suggested.¹⁵ One of the most basic ways in which the proem acts as an overture lies in this process we have just examined. It introduces a number of narrative voices and establishes a pattern for their relationships with the narrator out of which the ongoing narrative as a whole will take shape.

As importantly, the way the initial narrative stage is constructed suggests to us as readers how to understand the relations that will exist among these voices. The second half of 1.5 indicates that the controlling voice will be that of the narrator; he calls the shots. This first exchange leaves some considerable doubt, however, about the status of what witnesses like Persians and Phoenicians, and their *logoi*, will bring to the narrative. For although the narrator first communicates their narratives (in particular, the vivid little vignette of Io's abduction from Argos) he does not analyze them, but moves on dismissively by means of simple praeterition: "and I will not say about these matters that it happened one way or the other, but the man I know first began unjust deeds against the Greeks, beginning with him I will proceed to the rest of the *logos*. . . ." Modern scholarly readers have most commonly interpreted this strategy on the part of the narrator as a formal declaration of renunciation of narratives like those told by the Persians and Phoenicians. According to this reading, the narrator uses the end of his proem to announce that we have

13. Even the citizenship he claimed in the first line of the *Histories* remains in doubt (n. 8). For Herodotus' statements about his travels and his informants, see Jacoby 1956: 247-80, 395-400, Myres 1953: 4-16, Podlecki 1977: 252-63 (who doubts Herodotus' familiarity with Athens), Hornblower 1987: 1-4, Brown 1988: 3-15, 67-75. Herodotus is much less forthcoming than the Thucydides-narrator is about Thucydides' life: Hornblower 1987: 1-4.

14. See for instance, Hartog 1988: 260-309, Marincola 1987: 121-37, Dewald 1987: 150-67, Darbo-Peschanski 1987a: 107-89, Lateiner 1989, esp. 55-108.

15. Lasserre 1976 argues that much of the information from earlier times in the *Histories* comes from archaic poetic sources. For poets cited by Herodotus, see Lateiner 1989: 99-100. See Boedeker and Sider 1996 for allusions to Simonides' poetry in the narrative of the Persian wars.

now left the world of myth, of even rationalized stories about Io or Helen, and are entering the world of *logos*, solid statements of ascertainable fact about real-time historical actors.¹⁶

Much in the narrative of 1.6 through 1.25, recounting the history of the Mermnadae from Gyges, the founder of the dynasty, through Croesus, his fifth-generation heir, seems to follow this implicit program. The narrator focalizes the account by acting like a neutral and helpful reporter, straightforwardly listing the ancestors of Croesus the Lydian and supplying important facts about their reigns and motives for their actions that seem reasonable and that we as readers are given little reason to question. He does add some judgments of his own, but these too testify to the fairly judicious authority of his own persona, as he guides us along the path of whatever accounts have not been worn away by time.¹⁷ We are clearly meant to trust his judgments and the data he focalizes through his own authoritative voice in chapters 6 through 25.

But such a reading evades the larger issue of the proem, the fact that it has tacitly problematized the narration of even ostensibly authoritative *logoi* reported from the distant past, by showing that they can be self-serving; it omits, or evades looking closely at, two passages within the narrative of 1.6-25 that in certain disconcerting ways resemble the *logoi* of the Persians and Phoenicians. They are the longest (together they take up more than four of the nine pages involved of the Oxford text) and most vivid in this stretch of narrative: the account of how Croesus' great-great grandfather, Gyges, first got the throne of Lydia (1.8-13), and the story of how Arion of Lesbos escaped a watery grave thanks to a friendly dolphin (1.24). The first of these, that of Croesus' great-great grandfather Gyges, begins as though the narrator is still firmly in charge. As the long-ago story continues, however, in a number of respects it begins to resemble the tale of Io told by the Persian *logioi* in the proem. It is told

16. Jacoby 1956: 335. See also Momigliano 1966: 114, Drews 1973: 88-90 and n. 172, Lateiner 1989: 41-42.

17. In 1.12, he adduces the testimony of Archilochus of Paros that both helps date Gyges and vouches for his historicity; in 1.14 he mentions how remarkable certain dedications in Delphi are and where they are to be found; in 1.15 he comments that he will pass over most of the reign of Gyges, since nothing particularly noteworthy happened during it; in 1.16 he mentions the deeds of Sadyattes that were most *axiapêgêtotata*; in 1.20 he says he knows the details of Sadyattes' and Alyattes' war against Miletus because he has heard it from the Delphians, and adds (20-22) what the Milesians say, a story celebrating the cleverness of Thrasybulus, the tyrant of Miletus at the time; in 1.25 he judges that Alyattes' dedication of a silver bowl on an iron stand is remarkable and the work of a particular Glaukos of Chios.

because it purportedly gives the causal background underlying later events; the pace slows; the tale again includes a beautiful woman, sex and violence, and, most importantly, large-scale political changes taking place for quite private and idiosyncratic motives. As in the Io story of the proem, there is an odd incommensurability between the quasi-humorous narrative and its outcome. The abduction of the Argive princess in the proem leads ultimately to the enmity between Greeks and barbarians; the vicarious voyeurism of the besotted monarch Candaules leads to the end of a 505-year royal dynasty in Lydia. Both stories are self-contained and move briskly along; the characters internal to them are not given extensive secondary focalizations of their own, but remain characters largely delineated by the needs of the tale.¹⁸

As the narrator makes very clear, however, the resemblances between the Gyges story and the earlier account of Io are not there in order to make the reader dismiss the Gyges story as a necessarily untrustworthy record of past events. To the contrary, when the more baldly informative and/or analytical focalization of the narrator resumes with an account of the political implications of Gyges' takeover (1.13), the narrator takes care to emphasize how important the just-completed Gyges story is, if we are fully to understand something that will not happen in the narrative for another forty-odd pages of Oxford text (1.85-91). "This much the Pythian priestess said, that vengeance (*tisis*) would come for the Heraclids in the fifth generation of Gyges' descent. The Lydians and their kings took no account of this pronouncement, until it was achieved." What the narrator says here is, in effect (presumably following the version of his original informants in Delphi), "Look! Pay attention! this märchen-like story will help you understand what happens later to Croesus." And yet the tone, the thematic elements, the light-hearted vividness of its details, and its implicit status as a long-ago story narrated by Delphi—in short, almost everything about its focalization—reminds us of the prior episode of Io and her Phoenician friends narrated by the Persian *logioi*, which the narrator has implied we should read skeptically. Left uncertain is precisely the relation that the narrator

18. These similarities on the level of narrative function do not make the two accounts identical. The Gyges story is not told in indirect discourse; as Flory 1987: 30 points out, its much greater vividness and length indicate that the narrator's relative interest in it as a serious story is commensurately greater. Lateiner 1989: 123, n. 49 comments that Herodotus establishes three periods of history. Those that are, like the story of Gyges, from the middle period are generally accepted, with provisos.

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wishes to establish between his own voice and that of the vivid and important *logos* from the distant past that he has just narrated. Why is the story of Io told by the Persian *logioi* dismissed with a shrug, while the Gyges story seems to become an important key for understanding what happens to Gyges' fifth-generation offspring, Croesus? The narrator does not tell us.¹⁹

This problem, the unresolved relation between the economical focalizing explicitly done by the narrator and the lively and detail-filled focalizing found in the longer *logoi* that he includes in the narrative, occurs, once more, in an even starker form, before the story of Croesus' antecedents is finished. After briefly narrating the reigns of Ardys and Sadyattes, and a longer but still reasonably historical account of Alyattes' war on Miletus,²⁰ the narrator uses the connection between Thrasybulus of Miletus and another tyrant, Periander of Corinth, as an excuse for adding in indirect discourse a really improbable story, completely extraneous to the story of Croesus and his antecedents, of something that happened in Corinth during Periander's reign. It is added precisely because it is improbable: "To Periander, the Corinthians say (and the Lesbians agree with them), a very remarkable thing occurred in his life, that Arion of Methymna was brought to Taenarum by a dolphin. . . ."²¹ Narratologically, what is important is that here the narrator seems again to go out of his way to emphasize that this vivid and märchen-like account has been told to him by others. While we only infer that Delphians have told the Gyges story (as part of their larger story about Croesus),²² Corinthians and Lesbians are expressly identified as the

19. It may implicitly be a matter of source criticism: Delphi's role in the Croesus story presumably gives the story greater credibility. The Croesus story is certainly richer in that it contains the themes of justice, knowledge, and responsibility that programmatically set the tone for the rest of the *Histories*. The Io story and the larger abduction sequence of which it is a part omits these, remaining focused only on the juridical portrayal of tit-for-tat. See also nn. 22 and 51 below.

20. It is explicitly an account told to the narrator by others. The narrator vouches for (*oída*) the burning of the temple of Athene at Assesos, because he heard it from the Delphians (1.20). He comments that the Milesians add supporting details.

21. 1.24. There are thematic connections to the larger narrative: Cobet 1971: 145-51, Flory 1978: 411-21.

22. For the connections of the whole Croesus *logos* to Delphi see Wardman 1961: 146-47. The Delphic narration of the Gyges story is ultimately as self-serving as the Persians' account of Io, since the priestess uses the long-ago story of Gyges to justify the behavior of Apollo and his oracle, when Croesus complains (1.91). Herodotus does not make this point explicitly, however.

source of the story about Arion. As in the Gyges story, indication that the Arion story has been gleaned from others does not automatically make it untrustworthy, since the narrator adduces evidence from *opsis* that supports it (the narrator states that a bronze *anathêma* of Arion riding a dolphin may be seen at Taenarum). It does again remind us that the focalization does not remain his own when he moves to the narration of his longest and most vivid accounts.

Herodotus' great predecessor Hecataeus stated in the first sentence of his history, ". . . I write what seems to me to be true, for many and laughable, as they appear to me, are the stories of the Greeks" (FGrHist I F 1). We have seen that both the way the proem's stage has been configured in Herodotus' *Histories* and the way the proem intersects with the first substantial piece of narrative about Croesus' antecedents serve notice that in Herodotus things will not be this simple.²³ The proem has framed our readerly expectations of what focalization might mean in this text, since it sets the stage that allows the narrator in the first two longish narratives about Gyges and Arion to leave issues about authority and factuality ambiguous—in effect, to have it both ways. The focalization shifts from the informative factuality of the narrator into that of a vivid *logos*, often without clear notification that it has changed, until before we know it we are again reading something that in tone resembles the story of Io. The reader has been led to approach such stories as the accounts of people other than the narrator himself. The change of pace, the vivid touches of verisimilitude, and the occasional markers of reported discourse are all indications that this is so.²⁴ The level at which such stories should be trusted is left up to us as readers to decide. The changing focalization makes it clear that someone else is originally responsible for what the narrator is telling us; his job has been to transmit it.²⁵

23. For our necessarily sketchy understanding of Herodotus' connections with Hecataeus, see Drews 1973: 11-19 and 48-49, Fornara 1971: 13-17 and 1983: 29-32 (including his discussion of Jacoby 1909: 40), West 1991, Drerow 1994: 73-78, Marincola 1997: 225.

24. See Darbo-Peschanski 1987a: 113 ff., and in particular the discussion of "la 'voix off,'" for the reader's difficulties in seeing clearly when the embedded narrator is in charge, and when a different focalization has begun.

25. It is at the conclusion of the whole Croesus-episode (1.91) that the embedded narrator implies that Delphi has been the source of the Gyges *logos*. There the embedded narrator reports (*legetai*) that when Croesus charged Delphi with ingratitude, the Pythia dryly and rather legalistically summarized the story of Gyges and Candaules as the initial *aitia* of Croesus' downfall in 546 at the hands of Cyrus.

What results is a remarkably catholic and flexible narrative structure. The narrator has used his initial sequence of narratives to indicate that we, the readers, will encounter a number of different, more or less tacitly embedded, focalizations as we read sequentially through the *logoi* that comprise the *Histories*. Within the resulting *logoi*, such features as the inclusion of vivid details, plausible constructions of motive, even reported dialogue of the actors in the account, will make stories more lifelike. Yet, given the rules the proem has established, they will not necessarily be more trustworthy as accounts of a real past or accounts endorsed by the narrator: the proem has already problematized both the motives of speakers of vivid *logoi* from the past and their meanings. These stories are not necessarily less trustworthy; the issue in most instances is left to the reader to decide. The narrator himself has definitely undertaken to guide his readers through the sequence of different voices, transmitting *logoi* and filling in their interstices with useful and informative material he focalizes himself.

We do not know whether this sense of narratologically having it both ways is part of what irritated Thucydides enough to criticize "somebody" for turning not to the search for the truth but *epi ta hetoima*, to the things at hand, and writing *epi to prosagôgoteron têi akroasei ê alêthes-teron*, for making it more attractive to hear rather than more accurate.²⁶ But if we turn now to the proem of Thucydides, we are struck by the fact that, although some of the elements of the initial narrative stage are similar, a quite different implicit relation prevails among the real-time author, the narrator, his various informants, his audience, and the *logos*.

There is no deictic, no artifact at the beginning of Thucydides' text for a narrator to point at and discuss. The text instead begins as a past-tense, severely impersonal third-person narrative. As in the text of Herodotus, the real-time author is named in the first line. Here, however, he is not merely named as the possessor (in the genitive case) of an *apodexis historiês*. He is rather the subject of the first sentence, described as an actor performing the action of recording a war: *Thoukudides Athênaios xunegrapse tôn polemon ton Peloponnêsiôn kai Athênaiôn, hês epolemêsan pros allêlous*, "Thucydides the Athenian wrote up the war of the Peloponnesians and Athenians, how they went to war with each other." In other words, where the Herodotus narrator begins by pointing at the *Histories*,

26. Thucydides 1.20.3, 21.1. For Thucydides' separation of himself from previous writers and poets, see Flory 1990 and Hornblower 1997: 58-61. For Herodotus' influence on Thucydides, see Scanlon 1994 and Hornblower 1987: 17-33 and 1996: 19-38, 122-45.

the Thucydides text begins with a (small) narrative about Thucydides himself. We have gone from a Herodotean noun for the text (*hêde hê apodexis*) to a Thucydidean verb relating the author's activity (*xunegrapse*), and this is not a trivial difference. It means that Thucydides the author described in the text is not initially identified with the issue of Herodotean *historiê*, discrimination among competing versions of events proffered by other *logioi*. Instead, he himself is stated to have done something; *he* has written up the recent war fought between Peloponnesians and Athenians. As the text begins, the actor Thucydides and his activity, writing, are planted firmly center stage for us by an anonymous narrator. Thucydides is presented as himself a player, a significant actor connected to a named event, a particular war; he is the one who composed it. There are no additional *logoi* or *logioi* in sight.²⁷

One is tempted to start (indeed, in the past I have started) by saying that this structure looks like a refusal of Herodotus' sophisticated use of shifting focalizers to mark the issue of the agendas implicit in vivid *logoi* from the past.²⁸ Thucydides' initial narrative move even appears suspiciously like the construction of an authoritative, because monologic, discourse that we soon learn is narrated by the named individual with whom the text begins. But as the narrative continues, it becomes clear that this text too will introduce a multiplicity of voices who speak on their own terms, from their own more or less well-identified concerns. They are found, however, in a quite different configuration from those found in the text of Herodotus. We will have a considerable wait—fourteen pages of Oxford text—before this configuration begins to reveal itself to our readerly scrutiny.

While the narrator in Herodotus' *Histories* promptly begins to move in and out of a set of different focalizations, in the Thucydides text an anonymous narrator describes the named character, Thucydides, right from the beginning of the war (and the text) as writing it up because of a judgment he has come to. The judgment itself—both the fact of it and the

27. The Thucydides narrator remains entirely heterodiegetic and extradiegetic until the third sentence. (For a lucid presentation of these terms, which originate with Genette, see Rimmon-Kenan 1983: 95.) For the prosaic, unpretentious and even technical resonances of the verb *xunegrapse*, see Loraux 1986: 150-51, Connor 1984: 28, n. 25, Hornblower 1997: 5, Crane 1996: 28-29. Loraux 1986 remains the fullest exploration of the rhetorical stance implied in Thucydides' first sentence, in particular the tension between its extreme impersonality and its intensely personal claim: "Thucydide a fait de la guerre un écrit, mais l'écrit est la guerre" (161).

28. Dewald 1987: 148.

reasons behind it—will control the next substantial stretch of narrative, one about half again as long as the account of Croesus' ancestors in the Herodotus text. The end of the first sentence introduces the fact of Thucydides' judgment, since the subject of the sentence, Thucydides (who wrote up the war), is immediately modified with a series of four nominative participles: *arxamenos* . . . (beginning straight away from the war's inception); *elpisas* . . . (expecting it would be great and more noteworthy than any that had happened in the past, *axiologôtaton tôn progegenêmenôn*); *tekmairomenos* . . . (using as evidence that both sides were at the height of their preparation); and *horôn* . . . (seeing the rest of the Greeks taking sides). The actor, Thucydides, does not quite engage with us, the audience, as Herodotus' narrator does. He is rather initially depicted by a still anonymous narrator as up on stage, by himself, writing, and as having occupied himself with previous ratiocination and investigation. Thus the text initially focalizes him as someone occupied for a long period of time in the intense scrutiny of events and exercise of judgment about them.

The second sentence begins as a declarative statement causally linked to the first: "For this was the greatest upheaval for the Greeks and a portion of the barbarians, and so to speak for the majority of mankind." It is not clear initially which aspect of the first sentence the second sentence's *gar* explains: why the named Thucydides wrote up the war, why he began when it first started, why he thought it would be great, or why other Greeks began quite early to take sides in it. But it becomes clear in the third sentence, also introduced by a causal *gar*: "For times before this and those still further back were impossible to get at (*heurein*) through the lapse of time, but from the evidence that I in my investigation have been able to trust I do not think they were great either as regards their wars or in anything else." This shows that the intellectual focus is to remain on the first sentence's second participial phrase, "expecting that this war would be great and more noteworthy than any that had happened in the past." The causal link that is important here does not concern the war or even Thucydides' own character or actions, but again his judgment. Because of the appearance of the first-person pronoun with its participle (*skopounti moi*) and then the first-person verb (*nomizô*), we also know before the third sentence has ended that the aforementioned named actor, Thucydides, is unequivocally establishing himself as the narrator of what will follow. He thus strikes an initial position quite different from the ironic detachment established by Herodotus' narrator: his war, his expectations, his investigations, and his conclusions will

occupy center stage. The elements on the stage have shrunk from seven to three; the named actor Thucydides definitively conflates with the narrator and exercises narrative authority, and his war and his audience have become the only items of relevance. His authority is not the adjudicating and inclusive one of a Herodotus listening to *logoi* but comes from his own demonstrated willingness to think, to argue with himself, to draw reasonable conclusions, and to deliver to us the result of his internal cogitations. Because of the individuality and specificity of this authorial focalization, I shall call him the Thucydides-narrator here.

While the Herodotus text includes about a page of reported stories from the distant past and then launches directly into a chronologically organized account of Croesus' ancestors, the fourteen pages of the Thucydides text immediately following the introductory paragraph continue to focalize the Thucydides-narrator's mental intensity. What is narrated is a small and self-contained treatise commonly called the Archaeology (1.2-23) that elaborates on the reasons why the Thucydides-narrator thinks early times were inferior to the present, and hence that all the wars of the past were inferior to the Peloponnesian War.²⁹ He returns to the beginning of Greek history to develop this point through the discussion of a series of highly abstract historical observations: "self-interest, the desire for profit, and even fear led to the growth of power and security in Greece and to an escape from the squalor and danger of early times."³⁰

Thus like the Herodotus narrative, but much more extensively, the Thucydides narrative begins in effect with a false move, a move apparently away from the announced topic at hand, the war. But where the brief and humorous excursus of the Herodotus proem (1.1-5) uses stories from the distant past to suggest the general possibility of partisan distortion on the part of *logioi* retelling their *logoi*, the Archaeology in the Thucydides text avoids narration of specific stories. Instead the Thucydides-narrator moves rapidly through events, defined as the material and military developments of hundreds of years of Greek history. He reduces them to a rather abstract set of prior conditions, showing us in the process that he is not himself just a neutral narrator, but someone

29. Thucydides' arguments (1.11, 23) are not compelling: Connor 1984: 21 n. 6, Hornblower 1987: 108.

30. Connor 1984: 25-26. In the Archaeology the Thucydides-narrator omits the element of honor that the Athenians include as a motive for human action along with fear and self-interest in their speech at the Spartan assembly (1.76.1-2).

endowed with a particularly exacting standard of judgment and intensity of focus of his own. In the way it is narrated, the Archaeology as a whole reveals the Thucydides-narrator's ability to analyze the *sêmeia* and *tekmêria* of material culture and to mine the stories of epic for his own purposes.³¹ Several of its themes will resonate through the rest of the account to come: the significance of self-interest, the profit motive, and fear in determining individual and communal human action; and the importance of naval might, financial reserves, and imperialism as crucial factors in the growth of power and security in human communities over time. W. R. Connor comments that the Archaeology is a digression that "demands a reader of exceptional patience and determination" (Connor 1984: 20), both because it is so severely analytic, full of abstract nouns and social and economic forces, and because it gives so unheroic a view of the past. Although a few named individuals are allowed a role in the narrative of the growth of power from early times to the present (e.g., Minos, Ameinocles, Themistocles), the narrative does not look at them as characters (let alone as potential focalizers), but only as stepping stones in the inexorable march of political and social change (see Connor 1984: 24, n. 16). The reader is not even told who won the Peloponnesian War—and, indeed, faced with this magisterial survey on the value of sea-power, it is a little surprising to remember at its conclusion that the stodgy, land-based Spartans actually won the war that is to be the announced focus of the text as a whole.³²

The austerity of this opening excursus should not be mistaken for Thucydidean modesty. In the process of the careful study of details (that he has "gone after"),³³ the Thucydides-narrator has also produced an *epideixis*, conventionally showing, though not in a conventional manner, the greatness of his subject matter, and dismissing as inadequately grounded in critical investigation the judgments of the poets and

31. See Hornblower 1987: 100-7 for the Thucydidean vocabulary of evidence. Hornblower's commentary (1991) can profitably be consulted throughout the following discussion.

32. de Romilly 1967: 285 comments on the Archaeology: "Une seule histoire l'intéresse: celle qui mène de la barbarie à l'empire athénien." See also Connor 1984: 34; Thucydides does not raise the subject of Athens' eventual defeat until 2.65. Crane 1992: 241-42 suggests that the Thucydides-narrator is using a prescientific form of economic analysis in the Archaeology, in which surplus wealth leads to the growth of imperial power; from this angle the later hostility between Athens and Sparta can be seen as an outgrowth of a tension between "capitalist" and "subsistence" perspectives. See also Crane 1992a: 24-25.

33. Connor 1984: 27-28 mentions the military overtones of *epexelthon*; see also Crane 1996: 36-37.

logographers before him. And in the last four chapters of the *Archaeology* the Thucydides-narrator explicitly returns, ring-composition style, to the focus with which it began: his own judgment.³⁴ Chapter 20 begins by acknowledging that others besides Thucydides, both Athenians and non-Athenians, have also been interested in the past. However, like the narrator of Herodotus but much more directly and critically, the Thucydides narrator points to these anonymous competitors only to dismiss them for their carelessness in ascertaining what really happened; he tells the correct version of the killing of the Athenian tyrants, dismissing the customary Athenian version, and then moves on to itemize two other facts from the past that he thinks Herodotus got wrong, without naming him.³⁵ He then turns to his own practices as an investigator, speaking of his efforts to find out both what was said and what was done in the Peloponnesian War. He will be satisfied, he tells us, if others find his work useful, given the fact that human nature behaves fairly predictably when circumstances are similar.³⁶ Finally, he reverts to the issue on which his long excursus has been hung, the judgment he made at the war's outset, that this would be the greatest of all wars to the present. Here however, at the formal conclusion of the *Archaeology*, he no longer speaks in terms of material resources but of more emotional and impressionistic issues: cities destroyed, exiles, loss of life, prodigies—earthquakes, eclipses, droughts, famine, the plague—in short, the magnitude of the human suffering involved in the twenty-seven year war he intends to recount. He has stated his intent to get it right, in order to help later

34. See Connor 1984: 30, n. 29 and Ellis 1991: 345, n. 6 for bibliography on ring-composition as a defining feature of the structure of the *Archaeology*. See Connor 1985: 6-7 for the *Archaeology* as a "demonstration piece, showing what Thucydides' method can do," even in examining the distant past.

35. See above n. 26 and Gomme 1956: 136-39, Hornblower 1997: 57 on 1.20.2. Of his competitors and predecessors Thucydides names only Hellanicus (1.97); see Finley 1967: 1-54, 55-117 and Hornblower 1987: 110-35 for Thucydides' broader intellectual affinities.

36. For the relationship between *logos* and *ergon* in Thucydides, see Parry 1981, Hornblower 1987: 45-72 and Crane 1996: 27-74; Macleod 1983: 52-53 succinctly summarizes the functions of the speeches in the *History*. For the extent to which the Thucydides-narrator is claiming that his work will be useful in predicting the course of future political events, see Hornblower 1987: 133-34. See Edmunds 1993: 837, cited by Crane 1996: 49-50, for the *History* as a "possession for all time," and the way this claim pulls the reader into the performative now of the text. It will be useful for each subsequent reader in successive and discrete contexts because each reader in his own time, as a reader, enters into and corroborates/reproduces the Thucydides-narrator's own judgment. (For a similar argument see Connor 1984: 16.)

readers understand some of the more predictable features inherent in political movements of the same sort, but he will also not ignore the terror and pathos of what he is recounting.³⁷

We have strayed somewhat from a strictly narratological analysis here because, particularly in reading the chapters on method, it is difficult not to get swept up in the issues the Thucydides-narrator defines as important. But these are in fact our best guide to understanding his role as a focalizer for the narrative to come as well. For the fourteen pages of the Archaeology are narratologically as significant for the Thucydides text as the proem about the abductions of women told by Persian *logioi* and Phoenicians is for the Herodotus text. By the end of the Archaeology we have been introduced not, as in the Herodotus text, to a full stage with a number of speakers or potential speakers on it, but to the Thucydides-narrator alone, who will continue intellectually to dominate the whole and who enunciates certain narrative rules about what is to be important in our reading. Let me itemize some of them here. We know that 1) he intends largely to downplay ephemera like the particular desires or decisions of individuals as historical causes, and to look instead for long-term social and political trends underlying the actions of named collectivities; 2) he regards fear, the profit motive, and self-interest as basic human motivations; 3) he intends to provide a high degree of accuracy in recounting details, but also 4) as he tells us in discussing his procedures for including speeches (1.22), he intends to exercise a selectivity about what detail is to be recounted. Above all, 5) he intends to provide a treatise that is useful because of the strenuousness, the single-minded focus, and the depth of his own authorial probings: really valuable results come by looking beneath the stories from the past and abstracting from them the forces that underlie their idiosyncratic details. By the end of the Archaeology, as readers we have been told that this is a work into which authorial effort has been put, and that 6) Thucydides as narrator expects a similar effort from those readers who are interested in the usefulness of this *ktêma es aiei*, possession for all time.

37. Connor 1984: 31-34 emphasizes the tension between the confident, progress-oriented Archaeology as a whole and the pathos of its ending. He connects this tension with the implicit dissonance between the Archaeology's treatment of power and the known outcome of the war. The reader asks at its conclusion: "What went wrong? Where did Athens fail?"—a question to which the rest of the *History* supplies an answer. See also Connor 1977. Crane 1996: 222-47 argues that in general the highly emotive aspects of the *History* are nonetheless integrated into a "rhetoric of austerity," in which the reader's general emotions and pleasure therefrom are ruthlessly sacrificed in favor of clarity of vision.

In fact, the Thucydides-narrator has not just accepted the first story told by anybody; indeed, he has accepted no stories at all but has subjected both *logoi* and *erga* to the most rigorous scrutiny. At the end of chapter 23 the stage is almost as bare of human beings and their voices as it was at the outset. Herodotus and some shadowy Athenians have been briefly conjured up as potential additional and alternative narrators but have then been allowed to vanish; the only voice remaining is Thucydides' own.

The Archaeology ends with the statement of what the Thucydides-narrator considers the truest cause of the war (although the one least talked about) to be: the growing power of the Athenians, which forced the Spartans into war, by making them afraid. As Connor notes, one would expect this statement to be followed immediately by something like the Pentekontaetia (1.89-117), a highly condensed account of the growth of Athens' power during the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, 478-432 BCE (Connor 1984: 42). But the Thucydides-narrator starts his narrative of events instead by recounting a complicated and somewhat marginal affair that took place in northwest Greece, initially involving Epidamnus, Corcyra, and Corinth (1.24-55), several years before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War proper. We read in some detail how the Epidamnian democrats drive out their own aristocrats, who make common cause with the non-Greeks of the area around Epidamnus, and how the mother-city of Epidamnus, Corcyra, then supports the aristocrats rather than the democrats (24). Encouraged by Delphi, the democrats of Epidamnus go to Corinth, the mother-city of Corcyra, to ask for help, and they receive it in full measure because Corinth has for many years been slighted by Corcyra (25). War between Corcyra and Corinth over Epidamnus grows more certain, each side proves intransigent, and a naval war begins; at this point the Corcyraeans make good on their threat to turn to the most powerful navy in Greece, that of Athens (28-36). The account as a whole ends with the speech of the Corcyraeans at Athens (32-36), the speech of the Corinthians in reply (37-43), the Athenian decision (taken in two assemblies) to accept a defensive alliance with Corcyra (44), and subsequent naval encounters off Corcyra in which Athens sends a significant number of ships to aid Corcyra against Corinth (45-55). Why begin with this story, narrated in such detail? And how has the focalizing of the Archaeology through the strong persona of the Thucydides-narrator helped us read it?

On the level of narrative, the Epidamnus-Corcyra-Corinth episode translates the narratological lessons we have learned from the Archaeol-

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ogy into a reading of contemporary events. The account of the tensions among the various parties of Epidamnus, Corcyra, and Corinth are rendered extremely schematically, with no attempt initially made by the Thucydides-narrator to justify or even depict in detail any of their individual political positions. Despite the conviction of many readers that either Corcyra or Corinth is depicted as behaving particularly badly (Connor 1984: 34, Crane 1992: 2-3), the tone established in the *Archaeology*—above all, the decision to focalize only through the Thucydides-narrator's own dispassionate interest in abstract forces and trends—is conspicuously maintained here, even at the now slower and more detailed narrative pace. Naval power counts; fear, desire for profit, and self-interest evidently lie at the heart of both the initial Epidamnian *stasis* and Corinth's subsequent outrage at Corcyra, as they also form the basis of Corcyra's decision to call upon Athens, and Athens' ultimate decision to accept a defensive alliance with Corcyra. In order to maintain the focus on trends and impersonal factors (notably material benefit and fear) and on how these explain the causal connections that link events, the account as a whole is highly selective in its details. The only named individuals in it are some Corinthian commanders in the initial sea battle between Corcyra and Corinth (29), and Athenian, Corinthian, Corcyraean, and more Athenian commanders in subsequent naval encounters (45-47, 51). None of these or even the cities as collectivities—Epidamnians, Corcyraeans, Corinthians, Athenians—is allowed to focalize the account, which moves briskly along reporting everyone's motives, decisions, and actions impersonally.

The Thucydides-narrator does not concentrate on the various justifications or rights and wrongs of the parties involved (although all of the participants are clearly wrought up over such issues), but instead on how fear, material benefit, and general self-interest are impersonally at work within all of the states whose complicated interconnections are described.³⁸ Thus the narrative of this passage as a whole maintains the austere and highly intellectual focalization established in the *Archaeol-*

38. See n. 30 above. One might sum up the Athenian decision to form a defensive alliance with Corcyra as an attempt to negotiate the conflicting claims of fear and material benefit as elements of a larger self-interest. The Athenians decide that material benefit (the ships of the Corcyraeans) is more important to their civic self-interest than is the fear of Corinth. See Crane 1992: 7, 24-27 for the extent to which both Thucydides' emphasis on impersonal forces and Athens' "coldness and emotional detachment" in making the decision to give Corcyra limited support would have distressed and shocked a contemporary Greek audience. See also Stadter 1983.

ogy, even though what we are now reading is a detailed narrative of strongly felt contemporary politics. It is no small achievement that the Thucydides-narrator has maintained a focalization that reflects his own interest in abstract forces and long-term trends, when narrating something as highly charged and complex as the complicated affair of Epidamnus, Corinth, and Corcyra.

Focalization of other voices comes into the picture when we finally encounter direct speeches delivered by the participants themselves.³⁹ Within the Epidamnus-Corcyra-Corinth episode occurs the first speech in the *History*, of the sort promised by the Thucydides-narrator in 1.22. It is a persuasive, opportunistic speech delivered by anonymous Corcyraean representatives in Athens (32-36), pleading for an alliance to protect Corcyra from Corinth. Here, although the speakers remain unnamed, we finally have secondary focalization with a vengeance—all of the issues of strong emotion, self-justification, special pleading, flattery, subtle threat, the elements of the situation that have not formed a part of the Thucydides-narrator's prior narrative, come pouring out. We hear, in effect, a fair amount of the same narrative that the Thucydides-narrator has just schematically given us, now however focalized through the desires and anxious anticipations of one of the participant cities. The speech of the Corcyraeans is followed immediately by another equally partisan and charged speech from the Corinthians, in reply (37-43), mostly maligning the Corcyraeans. These two speeches do not superficially resemble each other as speeches; indeed, they have been seen to contain contrasting types of argument about "the advantageous" (*to sumpheron*) and "the just" (*to dikaion*) respectively.⁴⁰ To the unwary reader, however, much more striking than their real differences are some

39. Hornblower 1994: 134 ff. and 1996: 507 (under the entry for "focalization, focalizers") makes clear that as the Thucydides narrative continues, focalization of individual characters does not take place only through the use of speeches. Much more than in Herodotus, the Thucydidean narrative tends tacitly to focalize the thought and concerns of the more important actors, especially in the later narrative. See, e.g., Hornblower 1996: 152-54 and more broadly Crane 1996: 47-48: "The commonplace terms for thought, unobtrusively scattered throughout the narrative, combine to present the reader with a detailed model of actors observing, reacting, and planning." Hornblower 1987: 61 and 146 cites Westlake's 1968 argument that Alcibiades' character changed Thucydides' understanding of the role that individuals play in the shaping of historical events.

40. Crane 1992: 12; see also Hornblower 1997: 75. The individual speakers are not identified; see Morrison 1994 for Thucydides' tendency to treat cities collectively as analogous to individuals.

similarities, in particular the way that both speeches passionately and articulately justify their different presentations of current events. The Corcyraeans connect events mostly to the future, the Corinthians to the past, but both speeches differ strikingly in tone from the previous nineteen pages of narrative delivered by the Thucydides-narrator himself. For both speeches are clearly designed by their speakers to force a decision on Athens. Amazingly enough, the climax of the episode, Athens' decision to enter a defensive alliance with Corcyra, is narrated only in what looks like an anticlimactic afterthought, in twenty lines of the Thucydides-narrator's spare prose at the end of the episode.⁴¹

Thus the way that the initial narratives are constructed in Thucydides sets up a fissured consciousness, split absolutely between the viewpoint of the analytical Thucydides-narrator, who understands the full range of the factors involved in events, and those of the various speakers whose partial and highly engaged albeit intelligent arguments he allows the speeches to focalize.⁴² This gap remains complete until almost the end of book one, where Pericles comes before the Athenian assembly to argue that war is inevitable and that the Athenians should resist various Peloponnesian ultimata. Pericles is assigned the only focalized voice within the narrative that in force and scope resembles that of the Thucydides-narrator himself. It is the tragedy of the narrative as well as of the city of Athens that this voice will disappear (2.64), as Pericles himself is felled by the plague early in the war.⁴³ But, excepting

41. 1.44. There are no reported speeches or references to Pericles' part in the discussion. Connor 1984: 35-36 notes the irony of the glancing reference in 1.44.3 to Athens' interest in Corcyra as situated on the sailing route to Italy and Sicily.

42. Hammond 1973: 52-53 thinks the speeches of the Corcyraeans and Corinthians at Athens (1.32-43) more likely than many in the *History* to have been real speeches whose actual arguments are summarized by Thucydides. Looking closely at them in their narrative context, however, we see why the exact meaning of *ta deonta* (1.22) has attracted so much scholarly controversy. Thucydides makes it clear that he is articulating his own principle of selectivity. But does *ta deonta* in this particular setting mean that Thucydides culled from the actual speeches of the Corcyraeans and the Corinthians what was typically said by this speaker or sort of speaker? Or the best, most sensible arguments to be made for this point of view? Or even the arguments that had the most impact on the thinking of the Athenian audience, the ones that were in practice found to be the most effective? See Macleod 1983: 52-53 and more broadly Hornblower 1987: 71-72. It is quite possible that in practice *ta deonta* means different things for different speeches in the *History*.

43. Parry 1972: 60: "Pericles is the essence of Athenian intelligence;" see also Edmunds 1975: 7-88, 209-12. Connor 1984: 77 comments: "After chapter 65 [of book two] the narrative reports the major decisions [of Athens] but has little to say about the processes by which they were reached."

always the figure of Pericles, the narrative's construction, both in its dominant focalization by the Thucydides-narrator and in the detailed particulars of its initial episodes, conveys a specific narrative strategy in the early parts of book one: all the initial participants in events, at least as the war begins, are presented as subject to the interplay of complex impersonal forces that no one speaker or actor within the narrative completely controls or even understands. Certainly the reader, who might reasonably have gone into the narrative of the buildup toward war expecting to focus on Athens and Sparta, has been made to feel surprise. Sparta is off the stage altogether through 1.55, and Athens is introduced into the narrative as the reluctant recipient of Corcyraean and Corinthian initiatives. As book one continues, Athens and Sparta too, like the Epidamnians, Corcyraeans, and Corinthians who begin this narrative, are depicted as overtaken by events that have started in the far northwest. Because of the way that the Thucydides-narrator has narrated book one, by the time we have gotten to the beginning of the war proper in book two we understand that the complexities of the coming war lie outside the control or the comprehension of any individual or even state—unless that state is guided by Pericles, or the account of that war is narrated by Thucydides.

We have seen how differently the initial narratives of Herodotus and Thucydides are focalized, and in particular how differently Herodotus and Thucydides manage the first shift from the focalization of the narrator to that of others who speak in the text. Both writers allow their writerly personae to emerge early in their proems and first narratives, and both use the focalization of their own narrators' voices carefully to leave a space for the first emergence of other independent voices—in Herodotus, the voices of various *logoi*, focalized as independent stories; in Thucydides, the voices of various speakers in the narrative. The two authors, however, use very different means to distribute authority to the different voices in their texts.⁴⁴

The Herodotean narrator sets up a shifting focalization that alternates between his own neutral and sensible narrator's voice and those of

44. In both texts, the way focalization is handled throughout the narrative remains to be studied. See nn. 4 and 39 above, especially for Hornblower's consideration of focalization in Thucydides. Impressionistically, it appears that in the later books of Herodotus, as the material increasingly concerns events that Herodotus' informants might have participated in, more focalization of actors in the narrative of events occurs, bringing Herodotus' narrative behavior closer in this respect to that of Thucydides. It continues to be the case, however, that the narrative is constructed of *logoi* reported to Herodotus by others.

other more or less explicitly identified narrators whose *logoi* he relates. Many times in the *Histories* it is unclear precisely who is narrating a lengthy or vivid *logos*, but on the whole the pattern established in the proem persists. The narrator's own voice is responsible for introducing and bridging the gap for us as readers between the sequentially organized *logoi*, but he has also put us on generalized guard that it is our duty to evaluate the *logoi* as they appear, since *logoi* can be spoken from partisan positions. Within a particular *logos*, the actors in events do not themselves often or strongly focalize the account. Rather, they remain aspects of the plot, part of the larger focalization of the story qua story, and only as much of their personalities and thoughts are given as are useful for the completion of the story. What is focalized in the *Histories*, principally, is stories originally told to the narrator by others. It is the bridging narrative of the narrator that permits us to read the stories in a context that gives them a historical meaning.

The Thucydides-narrator's focalization distributes more or less the same elements of the narrative very differently. He is not one speaker among many on stage; his own voice rather dominates and defines the terms through which we will measure all the others who figure as actors within his account. Thus where Herodotus focalizes *logoi* or stories spoken by unidentified or very generally identified informants, Thucydides focalizes the words and then later the tacitly reported thoughts of actors in events. This fact affects our reading of the potential capacities of an actor inside a Herodotean or Thucydidean narrative. A character (what narratologists call an actant) in Herodotus occurs within and only as a functional part of a small, human-sized *logos*, and only as much of his or her thoughts, words, and deeds are reported as are relevant for the *logos* in which he or she appears. On the other hand, the first characters to emerge in Thucydides' narrative are largely anonymous. Although they are given vivid focalizations of their own in their speeches, the parts they play as actors in the large, complicated scenario of the Peloponnesian War are almost invisible. Because of the vast canvas of abstract forces and complex causal connections that have framed their individual observations and even actions, they often appear smaller and less sharply defined as individuals than do actors within a Herodotean *logos* (Pericles, as always, remains an exception). But in another sense Thucydidean actors also appear to be larger. For the narrative is structured so that each of Thucydides' speakers in a peculiarly democratic way makes his own most serious political thoughts heard, or at least those aspects of them that the Thucydides-narrator has judged relevant to tell us. Each of

Thucydides' speakers has a mind that in its capacity to argue and generate abstractions works like Thucydides' own, and like ours as readers who have been educated by the ongoing narrative how to evaluate events in a Thucydidean way.⁴⁵

This essay began with the observation that ideology is what is invisible because it looks natural. Both Herodotus and Thucydides have made look natural the way that they first allow the focalization of their own voices and those of others to emerge. As a basic aspect of their narrative ideologies, it is worth noticing that both of the focalizing strategies assume a *resistance* to the vividness of story as a guarantee of its truth-telling. That is, both Herodotus and Thucydides build into their own initial narrator's voice a way to problematize and make the reader aware of the distance between simple vividness on the level of narrative and the idea that what is being conveyed is an accurate account. Herodotus does so by emphasizing that it is only on the level of the *logos* itself that he vouches for the reality of what he conveys—these are, he says, real stories, really told him by others. Inside the individual account, however, many of Homer's rules for creating narrative seem to continue, at least in the early books of the *Histories*. The individual longer *logoi* are lively, full of details that enhance their vividness rather than their credibility as detailed accounts of what really happened in the past. Thucydides, on the other hand, does not point at *logoi* from the past and talk about them—instead, he has banished *logoi* and their narrators altogether.⁴⁶ Where narrative vividness in Herodotus is a marker of *logoi* originally told by others, in Thucydides it becomes implicitly a guarantee of detailed inside knowledge on the Thucydides-narrator's own part. His most important guarantee, however, that reality is being honored has to do with the strenuousness of his own authorial voice. The only narrative (as opposed to the speeches of individual actors in the account, that he does call *logoi*) is his and, because it is his, we are expected to take seri-

45. See Connor 1984: 16-19 for the way that Thucydides' narrative recreates for the reader the uncertainties and tensions dogging the actors caught in the immediacy of events. For the problems of the characterization of Thucydidean speakers and the authenticity of the Thucydidean speeches, see Hornblower 1987: 55-63. Pelling 1991: 141 cites K. Reinhardt 1965: 368-69 for "the greater degree to which Herodotus' speeches are anchored to the character of their speakers; Thucydides is much more concerned to stimulate trains of thought for their own sake, further removed from the speaker and context."

46. Hornblower 1994: 151 discusses Thucydides' (rare) use of Herodotean expressions of authorial doubt, conjecture, or alternative versions.

ously his claims for the accuracy of factual details, dialogues, and even speeches, in a way that Herodotus rarely allows us to do.⁴⁷

As we saw earlier, another problem with narrative history, apart from the seductive power of its vividness, is the fact that it must create one narrative out of what was initially the experience of many different people, with many different narrative points of view.⁴⁸ It is worth noting that both Herodotus and Thucydides have used focalization in their texts to suggest traces of this initial polyvocalism. Herodotus does so by emphasizing the number of different sources for his *logoi*, and by his own critical comments as a narrator as the narrative proceeds, adding variant versions from other sources, or otherwise critiquing the individual account. Thucydides, on the other hand, emphasizes the specific voices of key actors, and makes a generalized claim in the *Methodenkapitel* that he has taken pains to talk to eyewitnesses drawn from all sides of the conflict. Dialogism is the term M. Bakhtin has used for texts that escape the limiting structures of a controlling authorial ideology by incorporating the voices of other competing or even subversive ideologies in the text.⁴⁹ Perhaps one can say as a sort of paradox that part of the ideology, the natural and taken-for-granted world of historical narrative, at least as Herodotus and Thucydides practice it, is a specific and idiosyncratic use of focalization by each author that makes the text dialogic, that encodes within it, as one of its essential components, the real and living voice of others—either (like Herodotus) those who initially have told the *logoi* or (like Thucydides) those who initially spoke and acted in the events narrated. In their quite distinctive ways, both Herodotus and Thucydides struggle with the otherness, the intractability, of the other voices in their texts. The traces of this struggle provide one of our biggest assurances as readers that we can trust their expressed desire to write history, and not what we would call historical novels.

There are also, however, ways in which each author manages focalization within his narrative that point to distinctive aspects of his

47. See Lateiner 1989: 61-75 and 92 for Herodotus' preference for various kinds of expressions of doubt rather than expressions of authorial certainty; cf. Darbo-Peschanski 1987a: 88-97.

48. See n. 3 above.

49. Bakhtin's dialogism is difficult to characterize more precisely because his definition of it (and which authors' texts embodied it) changed over time. Todorov 1984: 104 cites Bakhtin's Dostoevsky essay of 1929 for one of the central ideas of dialogism: "The character's consciousness is given as another consciousness, as belonging to someone else, without being reified in the least, or closed in, without having become the object of authorial consciousness. . . ."

own habitual assumptions about reality, so that the text becomes in its narrative rules also a kind of *mise en abyme*, retracing in the way the narrative works the rules that also operate in the larger outside world that each author is trying realistically to convey in his text.⁵⁰ As we have seen in looking at focalization, the world established by Herodotus at the outset is composed of *logoi*, stories, and the chief emphasis for much of the *Histories* remains on whether a particular *logos* is authoritative or not, with a warning served up at the very beginning that *logoi* tend to be self-interested. Herodotus' world as a whole is one observed by a talented, ironic onlooker, in which one gets told things and evaluates them from a distance. What counts at the end is how the events narrated in the *logoi* form patterns whose regularity and adherence to a larger template of values connects them to reality.⁵¹

Where Herodotus' world as a narrator is relatively removed from the immediate ins and outs of Greek civic power relationships (while Herodotus maintains an ironized relation to all the narratives of the Greek cities whose activities he describes), Thucydides' world is the smaller but politically more empowering one of the Athenian citizen. Thucydides denies a role to *logoi* narrated to or by an uninvolved onlooker. Each focalized speaker instead makes argumentative points that matter to himself, and is himself embedded in a political world he is trying to shape with his own intelligent arguments.

Viewed in this way, the individual focalized speaker in Thucydides looks more substantial than most individuals inside a Herodotean *logos* of events; in any case his relation to power is quite different. For the Thucydidean focalized individual acts as a member of a political community that shares certain common assumptions about the possibility of political discourse and its connection to action. As we have seen, Thucydides first allows individuals focalization in the context of a highly charged three-cornered political debate among Corinthians, Corcyraeans, and Athenians, in which all the actors are aware of the political stakes involved and of the kinds of thinking and arguing that must be done to effect a satisfactory outcome for their own cities. Contrast this to

50. White 1973: 7-11 proposes a form of this idea in what he calls "explanation by emplotment"; he, however, takes Northrop Frye's four categories of romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire as the basic and distinctive plots that "provide the 'meaning' of a story by identifying the kind of story that has been told." For a more extended survey of the literary device of the *mise en abyme*, see Dällenbach 1989.

51. For large-scale interpretive patterns in Herodotus, see Immerwahr 1966: 306-26 and Gould 63-85.

the first speakers in events in Herodotus: the abducted women and their captors do not speak at all, and when the king of Colchis tries to communicate with the Greeks who have abducted his daughter, he receives back from the Greeks only a refusal to engage (1.2.3); the Greeks are similarly dismissed when they ask the Trojans for the return of Helen and compensatory damages (1.3.2). In Herodotus' initial narratives the individual actor in events is not embedded in a political discourse, a political community. Even if we leave the hapless Greek and barbarian women of the proem aside, Gyges can't get either Candaules or the queen to listen to him; Arion is helpless to persuade the villains who want to drown him (1.8.3, 1.11.3, 1.24.2). Even if the Herodotean actor plays a larger role in the *logos* than his or her Thucydidean counterpart, the world defined by Herodotus' initial narrative is a much larger and more randomly dangerous place, where people speak paradoxically, coercively, or manipulatively rather than in the politically invested and relatively grounded and responsible language of Thucydidean civic politics.⁵²

Herodotus was a well-traveled man piecing together *logoi* culled from his father's generation or further back still; in fact, his primary stated goal is to save accounts of the great events of the past from becoming unknown and he undertakes to do so by recording the *logoi* of them in his text. Thucydides on the other hand was a democratic citizen and general caught up in the midst of complex contemporary events. His drive to understand the meaning of what has engulfed his contemporary Greek world, and to clarify it by analyzing it, is palpable. Thus where Herodotus' emphasis is on stories, each focalized independently and more or less on its own terms, Thucydides starts with an individual political and highly analytic consciousness, his own, and then within its terms depicts others struggling, like himself, to understand and also manipulate events. Authorial integrity in consequence means something quite different in these two texts. Herodotus' is the integrity of generosity, collecting as many stories as possible and framing them, but with a generalized authorial irony, for our contemplation; Thucydides' is the integrity of rigorous analysis, relentlessly dismembering stories, abstracting from them basic factors that shape events, and investing with

52. See Darbo-Peschanski 1987b: 116-17, who observes that Herodotus' idea of justice remains outside the discourse of the text and of the actors within the text but inscrutably governs the workings of the whole, while the Thucydidean judgment of what is just, *to dikaion*, is very much the object of consideration, even dispute, both by the historian and by the various actors/cities in the text.

a high degree of analytic judgment and political understanding both his own voice and the voices of others focalized in his text.

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Platonic Mimesis

Mitchell Miller

I read Plato's dialogues as a philosopher, with primarily philosophical interests orienting my interpretive work. But I have found from the beginning that the dialogues open up, disclosing otherwise concealed depths, if I read them as a distinctive kind of Greek drama.¹ The key

1. In recent years there has been a welcome surge of interest among Plato scholars in the literary dimension of the dialogues, with increasing recognition of its essential relation to their philosophical content. See, for example, Howland 1998; Nehamas 1998; Kahn 1996; Hyland 1995; Nightingale 1995; Rutherford 1995; Sayre 1995. Four recent anthologies are in varying degrees motivated by this interest: Gill and McCabe, eds., 1996; Gonzalez, ed., 1995; Press, ed., 1993; Griswold, ed., 1988. With this fresh attention to the dialogues as literature (in a sense, however, that is rightly tempered by our growing appreciation of the orality that is still crucial to the status of fourth century texts—see Robb 1994), the topic of Platonic and Socratic irony has also gained increased attention. For earlier exegeses exemplary for their appreciation of the importance of irony, see, for example, Rosen 1987 [1968] and 1983; Griswold 1986; Gadamer 1980; Klein 1965. Nonetheless, specifically mimetic irony and Plato's use of it to mediate his "reader's" self-knowledge—the type of irony that I will discuss in the next section—has received little analytic treatment; the single best discussion I know is still the seminal 1941 essay by Schaerer. Dialogue structure, in turn, has gone largely undiscussed—and so, necessarily, has the interplay of mimetic irony with what I shall call the Parmenidean structure or trajectory of the dialogues. The exception that proves the rule in English-language scholarship is Ketchum 1980, but this, unfortunately, is unpublished. The most stimulating published analyses of dialogue structure that I know are the now nearly forgotten Schaerer 1969 [1938] and 1955; see also Gundert 1971; Goldschmidt 1947; Festugière 1936. All of this work has its roots in the seminal insistence on the unity of the form and content of the dialogues by Schleiermacher 1973 [1836]. (For an interpretation of the history of Plato interpretation that is particularly interesting on its ancient past, see Tigerstedt 1977.) A recent addition to the literature, received too late for me