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SUPPLEMENTARY PAPER

Aspects of Historical Causation in Herodotus*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Thucydides is, for modern scholars, the originator of a strict pattern of causation, and his statements about causes in the famous chapters of the first book are one of the main reasons for his popularity with historians of the nineteenth and the present centuries. By contrast, Herodotus has long had a reputation as a mere story teller. We have learned, however, in recent years to observe how much Thucydides owes to Herodotus, and the question has arisen quite naturally whether this is true also of patterns of causation. At the present time Herodotus is a controversial author. There exist two main trends of thought, the one seeing in him a mere reporter of traditions, the other interpreting him as a philosopher of history. The question of causation cannot be considered without taking sides in this controversy, and the discovery of patterns of causation in Herodotus has naturally strengthened the argument of those who attribute historical thought to him. The truth is that the reporting of traditions (admittedly the historical method of Herodotus) leaves a great deal of leeway to the historian to express his vision of history and his rational concepts as well. Tradition itself incorporates some of these, and in claiming historical principles for Herodotus, we do not prejudice at all the question of his originality — how much he owes to tradition and how much he has added to it. This question is irrelevant if we consider merely the work in its present form.

* This paper is a much expanded version of a paper read at the annual meeting in 1951 under the title: "Herodotus on the Causes of the Persian Wars." Much of the revision was done in 1955–56 during the tenure of a Morse Fellowship from Yale University. I want to thank Professor Francis R. Walton for suggestions regarding the style of the present paper; a referee of the Association for several detailed criticisms; and Miss Katherine Lever for some general observations.

The notion of causality in history, which has exercised historians particularly since the last century, is really a metaphorical notion taken from natural science. Herodotus, although he is an empiricist, is certainly not a scientist in the modern sense, and it is dangerous to apply to him scientific notions developed only in our own time. The observations Herodotus made in ethnology, geography, and history were not simply factual, but they included a great deal of what we today would call speculation: the workings of the divine, of abstract forces like custom, virtue, presumption, and others, as well as the observation of general laws, or rules, like the idea of balance, or the mutability of fortune. Herodotus' Histories are not merely a scientific work; they contain also elements of myth in which events are important not only because they have had certain effects on other events, but also as symbols expressing certain truths. We have nevertheless the right to ask of Herodotus what his thought of causation was, but we must be prepared to use this term only as a general guide and not too precisely. By elements of causation, we shall therefore mean those elements in historical situations and events that serve to tie them together and thus to account for at least a part of a later complex of events in terms of at least a part of an earlier complex.

Causation, then, becomes a word expressing the historian's methods of tying events together, and this is the primary task which forced Herodotus, in order to be a historian and not a mere teller of tales, to develop some kind of a rational system for the connection of events. In studying causality in Herodotus we must therefore consider it from two points of view: (a) what did it contribute to his own understanding of history? and (b) what has it contributed to the structure of the work? I shall consider causation equally under both aspects.

The difficulty of the subject has necessitated a kind of disjointed approach, for we are asking a question that has its origin in modern terminology. Beginning with a word study of *aitiê*, we find that it is not, as has been thought, the equivalent of the modern word "cause" and that Herodotus in fact has no single word for causation. It is the modern reader who, in trying to understand Herodotus within his own frame of reference, puts together a number of traits of the work which to Herodotus were known only intuitively. The interpretation of the proem will give the outline of the complex character of causation in Herodotus. A survey of minor causes

will show the relative unimportance of those causes that play an overwhelming part in modern historical writing. The main part of the paper consists of a survey of the major units of the work and of the part causation plays in each one of them, showing the close connection that exists between events and their causes. Finally, the unity of the conception of causation inherent in the whole work becomes apparent in the interpretation of the Persian council scene at the beginning of the Seventh Book. It is in fact in the great scenes of that book that a unified interpretation of Herodotus can be found, and the present paper is thus complementary to another, on "Historical Action in Herodotus" (*TAPA* 85 [1954] 16-45), in which I have tried to show the unity of the metaphysical conception in Herodotus by an interpretation of the three scenes in which Artabanus plays a part: the Council, the dream scene, and the conversation at the Hellespont.

2. AITIÊ AND CAUSATION

In the Preface to his Histories Herodotus uses the famous phrase that his inquiry will show, among other things, "for what reason" Greeks and Barbarians fought with one another. The Greek phrase $\delta\iota' \eta\nu \alpha\iota\tau\eta\nu$ is controversial both in meaning and significance. Some scholars have thought it merely a connective phrase,¹ to start the story "somewhere" as in the proem of the *Odyssey*. K.-A. Pagel,² in a brilliant dissertation, firmly established that causation is indeed a key idea with Herodotus, but he restricted its meaning to the revenge motif as a basic factor in human action in war. This restriction is surprising in view of Pagel's other discovery, the idea of balance in history, by which the ups and downs caused by vengeance

¹ F. Jacoby, *RE Suppl.* 2, s.v. "Herodotus," cols 334 f., who however goes on to emphasize the relative importance of that phrase. Others deny this altogether: see W. Schmid, *PhW* 52 (1932) 1001-1006, and Schmid-Stählin, *Gesch. d. griech. Lit.* 1.2 (Munich 1934) 586, note 1 (but cf. 593 f.). Similarly, F. Focke, *Herodot als Historiker* (Stuttgart 1927) 5-6 and 48-9. E. Howald in *Hermes* 58 (1923) 131. See *Odyssey* 1.10.

² K.-A. Pagel, *Die Bedeutung des aitiologischen Momentes für Herodots Geschichtsschreibung*, Diss. Berlin 1927. Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 571, and notes 3 and 5, follow Pagel closely, as does M. Pohlenz, *Herodot der erste Geschichtsschreiber des Abendlandes* (Leipzig 1937) 94-96. However, numerous criticisms were expressed shortly after the dissertation appeared; see W. Aly in *PhW* 49 (1929) 1169-72; F. Focke in *Gnomon* 8 (1932) 181-83; B. Snell in *Jahresberichte für die klassische Altertumswissenschaft* 220 (Leipzig 1929) 14 and 18; F. Hellmann, *Herodots Kroisos-logos* (Berlin 1934) 7-8. More recently, A. Maddalena, *Interpretazioni Erodotee* (Padua 1942) 59-63; cf. 33 and 39 f.

are equalized. Balance, however, may be operative also where vengeance is not involved,³ and thus it demands a conception of causation more comprehensive than the mere *aitiê* concept can furnish. Pagel had here the means of constructing a comprehensive interpretation of Herodotus' philosophy of causation, and the reason he failed in this was simply his dependence on Jacoby's view of the composite character of the work, a view which made a unified interpretation of the Histories impossible. Since then, there have been attempts by others to explain the work of Herodotus in its present form, irrespective of its origins, for it is felt today that the genetic problem of the Histories in itself does not hold the key to the understanding of the work as we now have it.⁴ A reinterpretation of Pagel's findings is therefore in order.

Pagel's survey is restricted entirely to the Greek word *aitiê*, which according to Powell's *Lexicon*⁵ occurs 51 times in the Histories. In Powell's listing, it means "reason why" 22 times, "charge, fault, blame" 22 times, and "alleged reason" once.⁶ But an analysis of the passages shows that this classification obscures the real issues. *Aitiê* is used only in a human (ethical) context, and nearly always in cases where blame is attached to an action.⁷ Even in the meaning

³ This is denied, e.g., by Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 571, note 5, for whom *isis* is the only instrument of balance (cf. also 555, note 5; 571, note 7; 579-80). However, in Pagel's prime example, the famous passage in which Herodotus speaks of the balance established by the divine in the animal kingdom (3.107-9), only the vipers and winged snakes are held in check by a process involving vengeance, but the hares and lions are not; therefore, vengeance is only one of the factors operative in achieving balance. In the same way, there are historical processes that achieve balance without the use of vengeance; e.g., the equalization of the Persian and Greek fleets at Artemisium (8.13) is of this nature. See also Maddalena (above, note 2) 10.

⁴ The main exponent of this view is Pohlenz (above, note 2); I owe much to this work even where I do not quote it specifically.

⁵ J. E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Cambridge 1938).

⁶ To the meaning "blame" add six instances of *aitiê* used with *ἐχειν* to make a total of 51.

⁷ A single exception appears in 2.91, 6: Perseus passes through Egypt for the purpose of bringing the Gorgon's head from Libya: *κατ' αἰτίην τήν καί Ἕλληνας λέγουσι, οἴσοντα ἐκ Λιβύης τήν Γοργούς κεφάλην*; here no blame is attached to the action. This passage is cited by Aly (above, note 2) who also adduces 3.139 and 7.213 f. for the meaning of "reason why," but the latter two cases seem to me to involve responsibility. Aly is misled by these and by some other passages (which he does not cite) to conclude also for the proem that there *aitiê* means simply "reason why" without the assumption of responsibility; he adds that it cannot there mean guilt, because *ἀλλήλοισι* would then imply that the Greeks were also guilty despite their victory over the Persians. In this paper, I shall try to show that this is exactly what we do find. Herodotus closely follows general Greek usage in his use of *aitiê* (see *LSJ*, s.v. *αἰτία*). The meanings

“reason why” the cause is always based on human motives, and (with one exception) unfavorable motives: hence its close connection with the idea of vengeance. There is a close correspondence between the meanings “motive” and “charge or blame,” and the force of the verb *αἰτιάσθαι* is strongly felt in the noun. Whether the charge, or the motive, is a true one, or merely pretended, is not indicated by the word *αἰτιῆ* alone, and Powell’s single instance of *αἰτιῆ* = “alleged reason” is wrongly classified. Of the Persian campaign into Libya Herodotus says, referring to the murder of Arcesilaus by the Barcaeans, *αὐτῆ μὲν νῦν αἰτίη πρόσχημα τοῦ λόγου ἐγένετο* (4.167, 3); clearly *αἰτιῆ* here means, not “cause,” but “accusation.” Further, *αἰτιῆ* is never used in aetiological contexts, although these are numerous in Herodotus, and although *αἰτιος* “responsible” occurs a few times in this sense.⁸ *Αἰτιῆ*, then, has a very special meaning in Herodotus: it indicates the fact that a historical event is due to human action, or has a human purpose or motive. Hence in the famous opening phrase *δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι*, Herodotus does not put the problem of general historical causation in the modern sense, but asks simply: “whose responsibility was the war?” or “who is to blame?”⁹ This is borne out by the next sentence: *Περσέων μὲν νῦν οἱ λόγοι Φοίνικας αἰτίους φασὶ γενέσθαι τῆς διαφορῆς*, i.e. the Phoenicians were to blame, and by Herodotus’ own statement in 1.5, 3: (I shall name the man) “whom I know to have started with *unjust deeds*,” i.e. Croesus is named as the first aggressor against the Greeks.

Αἰτιῆ, then, implies guilt. Where no guilt is present, Herodotus has available the term *προφασίς*, a word of uncertain etymology,

“blame” and “responsible action” are apparently earlier than the meaning “cause,” which in philosophy does not seem to appear before Democritus (Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*,⁷ B 11b-k, 83 and 118). See P. H. De Lacy, “The Problem of Causation in Plato’s Philosophy,” *CP* 34 (1939) 97–98. Differently, J. L. Myres, *Herodotus Father of History* (Oxford 1953) 54–55. See also K. Deichgräber, *Der listen-sinnende Trug des Gottes* (Göttingen 1952) 27; Ph.-E. Legrand, *Hérodote, Introduction* (Paris 1932) 54.

⁸ Lists of aetiological passages in Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 604, note 8 and 606, note 3. However, in 2.20 ff. the sun as the cause of the Nile floods, and the Nile itself, are personified; the same is true of the lion cub in 3.108, 4. That leaves only four passages for the use of *αἰτιος* for really abstract causes: 2.108, 3 (where the gender is feminine) and 7.125; 4.30, 1; 4.43, 6 (where the gender is neuter). Myres, (above, note 7) 57, comes to much the same conclusion concerning the use of *αἰτιῆ* and *αἰτιος*, although he does not present the evidence.

⁹ *Δι’ αἰτίην* occurs sixteen times in Herodotus, and in each case the action is retaliatory or blameworthy; see Powell’s *Lexicon* (above, note 5) s.v. *αἰτίην*.

but which means basically an act of setting forth, a professed motive. A motive thus announced may be a false one (a pretext) or it may be a true one brought forward in explanation of an action for which there is also another, ulterior, motive (an excuse), and this action may be either shameful or merely prudent; hence *prophasis* in Herodotus need not carry with it the assumption of guilt. When the professed motive is a lie, Herodotus indicates this by calling the *prophasis* a fabrication, *πρόσχημα τοῦ λόγου* (6.133, 1, cf. 4.167, 3), as he does also in the case of *aitiê*. In these instances there is of course an ulterior motive as well, and *prophasis* is the *immediate* excuse. *Aitiê* and *prophasis* coincide in the *immediacy* of the assumed or professed motivation as compared to other, more remote, causes and are therefore sometimes, though not often, used nearly synonymously. In 2.139, for instance, the Ethiopian ruler of Egypt sees a dream figure advising him to murder the priests of Egypt; this he considers a ruse by the gods so that they may have a *prophasis* for his destruction, but he knows that the end of his fated rule of 50 years has come, and leaves peacefully and unharmed.^{9a} Similarly in 9.42, Mardonius knows of a prophecy that the Persians will perish if they destroy the Delphic sanctuary; but he will not destroy it, and will not perish, at least not on account of this *aitiê*. Yet his defeat is nevertheless fated, and a contrast is implied, both for the Ethiopian and for Mardonius, between the immediate occasion and the necessity of the end of rule. In the story of Scyles, who is punished by the Scythians for his worship of the Greek god Dionysus, his death is called a necessity, and the immediate occasion is called a *prophasis* at the beginning of the story of the discovery by the Scythians of his worship *more Graeco* (4.79, 1), but an *aitiê* after that story has been told (4.80, 2). In the same way, the Libyan campaign is introduced by the promise of telling its *prophasis* (4.145, 1), but after the story of Pheretime and Arcesilaus has been told, it is called (in the passage cited above) the *aitiê* of the Persian campaign (4.167, 3), and is characterized as a pretext (*πρόσχημα τοῦ λόγου*) and contrasted with the real reason, *Λιβύων καταστροφή*.¹⁰ Furthermore, both for

^{9a} I translate 2.139, 2: "When he had seen this vision he said that the gods seemed to him to be showing it to him as a pretext. . . ." Differently Stein *ad loc.*, and J. Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen über Syntax 2* (Basel 1924) 240.

¹⁰ Other stories show the same contrast between fate and either *prophasis* or *aitiê* (*aitios*), especially the accounts of the overthrow of Apries (2.161, 3) and of Miltiades' ill fortune at Paros (6.135, 3). Recently, a number of word studies have been made on the use of *aitia* and *prophasis* in Thucydides: see especially, G. M. Kirkwood in *AJP* 73

Scyles and for Pheretime, one may say that the element of guilt is introduced in the course of the story, whence *prophasis* is changed to *aitiê* after the story has been told. This is true especially in 4.167, 3, for there we had previously learned that the Barcaeans had accepted the collective guilt for the murder of Arcesilaus. Both *prophasis* and *aitiê*, although differentiated in meaning under the aspect of guilt, are identical in their contrast with other, more substantial motivations, among which a basic hostility (*ἔγκοτος* or the like), the desire for conquest (*ἔμπερος γῆς*), and fate are conspicuous. It is important to realize that Herodotus never uses *aitiê* or *prophasis* for these more important causes, and that the two terms therefore form only a limited guide to his conception of causation. This is especially true of Oriental designs of conquest, which make use of *aitiai*, but many of which are not basically motivated by them as are many wars among Greeks.

Yet the determination of immediate motivation, including blame, clearly has at least two important functions in Herodotus' work: it explains individual action, and it contributes greatly to the understanding of history in general by enabling the historian to set off individual events from each other and thus to achieve an intelligible structure in the presentation of his material. These are two functions causation has in modern historical writing as well. Pagel erred in confining Herodotean causality to the revenge motif merely because Herodotus has no single word covering the whole range of causation. It is necessary to go beyond the author's vocabulary and ask what Herodotus means by causation in terms that are intelligible to us. In this way, we may justify Cicero's dictum that Herodotus is the "Father of History."

3. THE PROEM: 1.1-5¹¹

Herodotus' proem is easily identified as a unit by the asyndeton of Ch. 6 (which begins the historical narrative with Croesus), and

(1952) 37-61 and L. Pearson in *TAPA* 83 (1952) 205-223; I largely agree with Pearson's conclusions, but I think that in Thuc. 1.23, 6 *prophasis* in the meaning of "psychological motive" nevertheless indicates the true cause of the Peloponnesian War. For Thucydides, psychological motives are in fact the true causes of human events and he conceives of some of them as permanent. Pearson gives the pertinent bibliography, among it J. Lohmann in *Lexis* 3 (1953) 20-29, who defines *prophasis* as antecedent (*prophainomenon*); Herodotus gives no support whatever to this interpretation which has found favor with H. Diller in *Gnomon* 27 (1955) 10. Cf. also H. Bischoff, *Der Warner bei Herodot* (Diss. Marburg 1932) 25, note 1.

¹¹ The following bibliography on the proem is selective: Jacoby in *RE* (above, note 1) cols. 333 ff. and in *RE*, s.v. "Hekataios," cols. 2737-41, *passim*; Pagel (above,

by its own internal structure: after a heading ("This is the result of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus," etc.), the discussion turns on *aitiê*. First comes a Persian account: Περσέων μὲν νῦν οἱ λόγιοι . . . φασὶ . . . (1.1, 1) = οὕτω μὲν Πέρσαι λέγουσι γενέσθαι (1.5, 1), which is contrasted with δὲ in 1.5, 2 of the Phoenician version; then the two are lumped together (1.5, 3): τὰτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι, and are contrasted with δὲ of the author's own opinion: ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων, etc., which is further elaborated by γὰρ and ὦν in 1.5, 4. Thus the formal structure of 1.1–5 is as follows:

(1a) Heading: . . . ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις . . . δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.

(2) Persian account of αἴτιοι.

Phoenician variant.

(1b) Herodotus' own opinion of the αἴτιος and on the cycle of fortune.

To this formal scheme corresponds a unified train of thought: first the views of the author, then those of Persians and Phoenicians, then the author again. In sections 1a and 1b, Herodotus' method is shown to include two principles: (a) to fix the responsibility for the war (and, we might add, for events in general), and (b) to be objective or, as he puts it, to "go through small and large cities alike," since prosperity is liable to the cycle of fortune. These two statements are directly connected by the use of participles (*σημήνας* ---, *ἐπεξιών* ---, in 1.5, 3) and between them they should give a comprehensive view of Herodotus' manner of presenting history.

In the Persian account (1.1–4), the blame for the Persian War is placed by Herodotus' informants first with the Phoenicians who

note 2), ch. 1; G. De Sanctis in *RFIC* n.s. 14 (1936) 1–14; E. Howald, *Vom Geist antiker Geschichtsschreibung* (Munich 1944) 35–37; W. Aly, *Volksmärchen, Sage und Novelle bei Herodot und seinen Zeitgenossen* (Göttingen 1921) 59–60; Focke (above, note 1) 1–14 and 55, note 75; Hellmann (above, note 2) 15–23 and 23–29; O. Regenbogen, "Herodot und sein Werk," *Antike* 6 (1930) 246 f.; Schmid (above, note 1); Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 586, note 1 and 602, note 3; M. Pohlenz in *NGG, Philol.-Histor. Klasse*, 1920 (Berlin 1920) 56–67 and 68–69; Pohlenz (above, note 2) 1–9; E. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* (Bonn 1919) 20, note 1 and *Antike* 4 (1928) 19; W. Schadewaldt in *Antike* 10 (1934) 160–61 and 163–65; J. E. Powell, *The History of Herodotus* (Cambridge 1939) 54; F. Pfister in *PhW* 52 (1932) 1112–13; R. Walzer in *Gnomon* 6 (1930) 585–87; Focke in *Gnomon* (above, note 2) 178–181; Maddalena (above, note 2) 32, note 1; Myres (above, note 7) 30 and 66 ff.; Legrand (above, note 7) 227–35; W. A. A. van Otterlo, "Untersuchungen über Begriff, Anwendung und Entstehung der Griechischen Ringkomposition," *Mededeelingen d. Nederl. Ak. v. Wet.*, N.R., part 7 No. 3 (Amsterdam 1944) 139, note 3.

started a series of ravishings of women :

- A. Phoenicians rape Io
- B. Greeks rape Europa
- B'. Greeks rape Medea
- A'. Paris of Troy rapes Helen.

A + B are a complete cycle of vengeance: *ταῦτα μὲν δὴ ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα σφι γενέσθαι* (1.2, 1). The second series (B' + A') is in reverse and thus the fault of the Greeks, as the Persians point out (*ibid.*); the rape of Helen was in retaliation for the rape of Medea, and the cycle should have been complete again. Instead the Greeks start a new cycle:

- B''. The Trojan War, to be followed by:
- A''. The Persian War, as the reader immediately supplies.

Some conclusions may be drawn from this brief analysis of the poem :

1. Events can be connected in two meaningful ways, the first of which is the chain of acts of vengeance originating at a certain point (it has an *ἀρχή*), but which need not have an observed end (Greeks and Persians are still enemies when Herodotus writes). The other is the cycle of the ups and downs of human affairs, which does not have a known beginning and end, but proceeds in phases.

2. As Pagel saw, the *aitiē* concept leads immediately to the *tisis* concept; both ideas are contained in the Persian account, and are accepted by Herodotus who merely shifts the blame. For the Persian account blames the Greeks, who actually went to war for the sake of a woman, while the Phoenicians (the true first offenders) had merely committed a private wrong. Herodotus ridicules this account, perhaps because the Trojan War belongs to the mythical period of history, which is outside the historian's knowledge,¹² but more probably because he wishes to put the blame on the Asiatic side. Thus Herodotus here clearly defends his own nationals against the accusation that they were ultimately responsible for the Persian

¹² Pohlenz (above, note 2) 7 and note 2. However, in 7.20, 2 the Trojan war is listed among the wars *τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν*, although this knowledge is called traditional (*κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα*) and is thereby implicitly distinguished from direct knowledge, which would be based on observation or the interrogation of witnesses. Pohlenz has overstressed the point; Herodotus does not by any means follow a general rule that the mythical period is unknowable. Cf. also Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 626, notes 2 and 5.

Wars. In the Lydian narrative he further implements this opinion by showing how Croesus subdued the Ionians for no good cause. But as the narrative progresses, it becomes clear that the Greeks, and especially the Athenians by their participation in the Ionian Revolt, assume a definite, though minor, responsibility as well. The proem and the Croesus story deal only with the beginning of the hostility and are not Herodotus' final word. We note that the *tisis* idea arouses in the historian a nationalistic attitude to be tempered later by a more objective one.

3. Having named the first aggressor, Herodotus speaks immediately of the cycles of fortune, an observation which at once engenders a more detached attitude in the historian of the wars, since both sides in the struggle would of course be affected equally by this cycle. Furthermore, by equalizing the three successive cycles of vengeance of the Persian account, Herodotus also alludes to the idea of balance, or equilibrium, in history.¹³ Although here mentioned in connection with vengeance, the idea of balance may transcend both the single act of vengeance and the single cycle of fortune. Balance is a kind of regulatory phenomenon by which history maintains itself constantly through cycles of prosperity and destruction. The same idea is basic to the structure of the whole work, which begins when Croesus, by conquest and alliance, breaks the equilibrium between East and West, and ends when this equilibrium is momentarily re-established through the breaking of the Hellepontine cables (9.114, 1; 121). The beginning of the interaction between Asia and Europe is a disturbance of their equilibrium, for they are meant to be separate, as is stated in the Persian account (1.4, 4) and reaffirmed at the end of the work (9.116, 3). The unity of the work consists partly in the fact that it deals with the disregard by the kings of the East of a principle said to be traditional with the Persians.

4. The conflict between involvement and detachment on the part of the historian, or, in other words, the conflict between a nationalistic and a "philosophic" type of history, is not resolved by the proem, nor anywhere else in the Histories. Instead, the tension between these two antithetical attitudes furnishes much of the interest of the work. In the proem, each of them is connected with a different group of causes: *aitiê* (as immediate motivation) and

¹³ See Pagel (above note 2) 30-33, and ff.

tisis on the one hand, and the expansionism of the Oriental monarchies on the other. Other combinations, however, are possible, as will be seen in section 5.

5. This view of the workings of history strongly affects the presentation of the subject of the work in the proem, which establishes at the end of the Persian account (1.4, 4) a basic hostility (an *ἐχθρη παλαιή* as it is called in the Aeginetan Logos, 5.81, 2). The beginning of this enmity, in the Persian view, is the Trojan War (1.5, 1), while in Herodotus' view it is the attack of Croesus on the Asia Minor Greeks. Hence, in the phrase *δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι*, "who was responsible for the beginning of the fight between Greek and Barbarian"¹⁴ the *πόλεμοι* referred to are *all* the struggles between Greeks and barbarians from Croesus to Xerxes. The Persian Wars are not mentioned in the proem except by implication: the *Mēdika* are the culmination of a long struggle which is one phase in the cycle of fortune.

4. TYPES OF CAUSATION

The analysis of the proem has shown a number of contrasting features of Herodotus' historical view, which are there reduced to the tension between human motivation and the overall view of the cycle of fortune. However, there are, in addition, incidental causes which appear throughout the work in a seemingly haphazard manner. Herodotus knows of many reasons for events, among them political causes such as Croesus' fear of the growing power of Persia as a cause for his preparations for war (1.46, 1), or Sparta's fear of the growing power of Athens (5.91, 1) as the reason for her abortive plan to restore Hippias to power.¹⁵ The Spartans fight Argos over a piece of land (1.82, 1). There are religious causes such as the oracle which without further explanation told (or permitted?) the Paeonians to fight Perinthus (5.1, 2), or the serpents which caused the Neurians to leave their land (4.105, 1); economic causes, such as the flourishing state of Sparta leading to "restlessness" and war against Tegea (1.66, 1),¹⁶ or the need for money which caused the

¹⁴ For the meaning of the aorist *ἐπολέμησαν* see Stein's commentary. Cf. Pohlenz (above, note 2) 5.

¹⁵ The same motif recurs in 1.185, 1 (Queen Nitocris watches the "restlessness" of the great power of the Medes).

¹⁶ This motif also recurs several times, since it has a connection with the idea of *hybris*; cf. the state of Persia before the Scythian expedition (4.1, 1), the prosperity of Miletus before the attack on Naxos (5.28) and of Aegina before the undeclared war with Athens (5.81, 2).

attack of Samian fugitives on Siphnos (3.57 and 58).¹⁷ The Athenians who remained on the Acropolis during Xerxes' invasion did so partly because of poverty (8.51, 2). Some events are explained by population movements due to attacks by neighboring peoples (cf. 4.13 and 4.11, of the Scythians). It is not the purpose of this paper to give a complete list of these minor causes, but to point to some underlying principles.¹⁸ For all these cases have in common that the cause is merely a matter of historical observation, and does not involve either the *tisis* concept or any conception of fate. It is characteristic of Herodotus' view of causation that these minor causes are often added to what are to Herodotus more important reasons for action. A well-known example concerns Mardonius' decision to attack at Plataea. This is explained by Herodotus as due to stubbornness (9.41, 4), and only later, in a speech by the Macedonian Alexander to the Athenian guards, do we hear that Mardonius was running out of food (9.45, 2). Herodotus fails to explain how this was possible when there was a fortified camp and a retreat at Thebes, nor does he mention the food shortage in its proper place when Mardonius is about to make his decision.

Minor causes, furthermore, are often reasons for a state of mind, which in turn causes the event. The ethical, or psychological, element in Herodotean causation is so strong that, from this point of view, there is no distinction between a private quarrel and a national one. "Ἐγκοτος — a grudge — may be borne by an individual against another (9.110, 1), but it also causes wars (6.73, 1: Cleomenes at Aegina; 6.133, 1: Miltiades at Paros) and is twice used in connection with public injuries between nations (3.59, 4 and 8.29, 1). Private reasons may cause great events: Syloson wants to be restored in Samos (3.139 f.), the Peisistratids in Athens (7.6, 2–5), Pheretima wants to avenge her son (4.162 ff.; 205), Democedes, the Greek physician from Croton, loves his liberty so much that he leads a Persian expedition of spies into Greece (3.129–138).¹⁹ These motives are climaxed by the behavior of Themistocles, whose patriotism is surpassed only by his selfishness. The importance of

¹⁷ Cf. the prosperity of Naxos as a factor in the Mileto-Persian attack (5.28).

¹⁸ It also is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the connections established by Herodotus between stories by means other than causation. Material can be found in Jacoby in *RE* (above, note 1) cols. 380–92; Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 604–5; H. Fränkel, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens* (Munich 1955) 86.

¹⁹ Cf. the Egyptian doctor who becomes involved in the events leading to Cambyse's Egyptian campaign (3.1, 1) and Phanes who helps Cambyse on his way (3.4 ff.).

personal motivation accounts for the mention of women causing wars, as in the proem, for Cambyses' Egyptian campaign (3.1 ff.), and in the Darius-Atossa scene (3.134 ff.). In each case the motivation is absurd, and the cause a ludicrous one. As the Persians themselves say in 1.4, 2-3, one should not pay too much attention to women. The "Helen motif," as I would call it, is a travesty of ethical motivation in Herodotus.²⁰

Because of the incidental nature of political or economic causes, vengeance is for Herodotus the prime ethical cause; it is also the primary means for tying events together.²¹ In addition, there is a corresponding connecting motif of gratitude which makes allies of nations in war, e.g. the Spartans support a Samian faction *εὐεργεσίας ἐκτινύοντες* (3.47, 1); or in peace, as in the cooperation of Samians and Theraeans in Libya (4.152, 5);²² or private gratitude may lead to war, as in the case of Darius' reinstatement of Syloson in Samos for the gift of a cloak (3.139-40), or in Pheretime's demand for intervention in Libya (4.165-67). In this last instance three motives are combined: Pheretime wants to avenge her son; she enlists the assistance of the Persians who had benefited by Arcesilaus' surrender of Cyrene; and these entreaties fall on willing ears, since the Persians are anxious to conquer Libya anyway (4.167, 3). This passage points the way to an understanding of the relations of vengeance (and the similar motif of obligation) and expansionism. Pheretime's arguments are merely the provocation of a power already intent on conquest. The provocation motif will appear later to be of great significance in the conflicts between Greeks and Persians.

It is important, therefore, to distinguish between fundamental and incidental causes in Herodotus, and it is clear that expansionism is more basic (because it is more persistent) than vengeance. It will be shown in the following section that in a good portion of the narrative (the campaigns of the Mermnad dynasty in Asia, including Croesus' Greek campaigns; the Median and early Persian conquests of Asia) vengeance is nearly absent, and expansionism is the only operative motive. Already for Croesus, expansionism is a

²⁰ This is Myres' *cherchez la femme* motif; see Myres (above, note 7) 16 and 135. A. Hauvette, *Hérodote historien des guerres médiques* (Paris 1894) 187, says that Herodotus is joking when he has the Persians discuss the raping of women.

²¹ Pagel (above, note 2) 17 and 43.

²² Cf. 1.18, 3 (Chians and Milesians); 1.69, 3 - 70, 1 (Spartans and Croesus); 5.99, 1 (Eretrians and Milesians).

tradition which he follows blindly because it is at the same time his own irrational desire. Personal desire and necessity imposed by tradition coincide and, in Croesus' case, may be contrasted with a free decision motivated by vengeance, or by other causes presupposing action and counteraction. Causation, in Herodotus, is thus connected with his views on the nature of historical action in its nexus of freedom and necessity, which I have treated elsewhere.²³ The exact relations between these factors will be clarified in the course of a discussion of the major actions of the Histories and their causal connections.

5. THE GROWTH OF ASIATIC POWER

The unity of Herodotus' work lies in large measure in the fact that he has treated the struggle between East and West primarily in the context of the historical development of the East. This idea has as its corollary the theme of the growth and decay of an Oriental power driven by its own expansive desire, a cause which therefore acquires a fundamental importance for the structure of the work. In this Oriental aspect, the Histories are similar to, and were certainly influenced by the *Persians* of Aeschylus, in which the Graeco-Persian conflict is seen from the Oriental point of view.²⁴

The theme of the rise and fall of the East also explains to a large extent the present position of the Logos of the Rise and Fall of the Mermnad Dynasty, or Croesus Logos (1.6–91). As has been noted repeatedly by scholars, this logos would find its chronological place at the point of Croesus' conquest by Cyrus (1.130, 3 = 141, 1), and various reasons have been assigned for the shift (if such it was) of this portion of the narrative to the beginning of the work.²⁵ The main reason, however, can be found by an analysis of the structure of the first part of the Croesus Logos, the History of the Mermnadae before Croesus (1.7–25). This section is introduced by a mention of Croesus at the height of his power (1.6), i.e. at a

²³ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 32.

²⁴ Hauvette (above, note 20) 125, note 2 and 284; Pohlenz (above, note 2) 184–85 and 231; *TAPA* 85 (1954) 27–30.

²⁵ I do not want to discuss here the question whether this "displacement" is original with the work or indicates a change of plan. See, among others, De Sanctis (above, note 11); Powell (above, note 11) 9 ff., 24 and 52; Jacoby in *RE* (above, note 1) cols. 337–341; Pohlenz (above, note 2) 10; Focke (above, note 1) 11; Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 585, note 3; Hellmann (above, note 2) *passim*; van Otterlo (above, note 11) 143–44.

point reached in the narrative only at 1.28. The initial statement mentions two factors about Croesus:

- (1) He ruled all Asia west of the Halys river,
- (2) He was the first to subdue the Greeks *systematically*.²⁶

These statements are repeated in chiasmic order at the end of the history of the Mermnadae where they are separated from each other by the story of Croesus' plan to attack the Greek islanders (1.27):

- (1) Conquest of Asia Minor Greeks, 1.6, 2 = 1.26.
- (2) Empire over Western Asia, 1.6, 1 = 1.28.

It is clear, therefore, that the Croesus Logos (1.6–91) is put first for thematic reasons: the conquest of the Greeks initiates the theme of the East–West conflict, and the mention of Croesus' empire initiates the theme of the rise of Asiatic power. The latter theme, by its outer position in the chiasmic order, is marked clearly as the more important of the two, for it leads directly to the Persian logoi. The East–West conflict is subordinated to the theme of Asiatic expansionism; the latter is the main theme of the work.

The Croesus Logos proper deals with the downfall of Croesus from the height he had reached at the beginning of the account of his rule (1.29–91); it is introduced by the Solon and Atys episodes (1.29–33; 34–45). The first (or planning) section of this logos describes Croesus' testing and consultation of Greek oracles with the resultant investigation of Athens' and Sparta's power (1.46, 2–70); it is framed by the first of a series of statements concerning the causes of Croesus' war with Cyrus:

- I (1) Croesus became aware of the destruction of Astyages by Cyrus,
- (2) he noticed the Persians were gaining in power,
- (3) his plan was to destroy their growing power before they became really powerful (1.46, 1; the last statement briefly repeated, 1.71, 1).

Croesus' fear, the psychological motive which seems so similar to Thucydides' truest, but unavowed, motive for the Spartan decision

²⁶ Systematically: *καπεστρέψατο . . . ἐς φόρον ἀπαγωγῆν*, 1.6, 2. See Pohlenz (above, note 2) 11 and notes. At the end of the Croesus Logos, the conquest of Ionia by the Lydians occupies again the inner position (1.92, 1), while the conquest of Lydia by the Persians (through which the unity of Asian empire was achieved) has the outer position (1.94, 7 = 130, 3 = 141, 1).

to fight Athens,²⁷ is here combined with other causes in a thoroughly un-Thucydidean fashion. One of these is not completely intelligible at this point: for the downfall of Astyages affected Croesus by reason of a family relationship which is explained only later, in 1.73, 2–75, 1. Croesus realized that a new power had usurped the throne of his former friend and ally, and this alone constituted a direct threat. He further realized that the Persians had grown from servants to be masters of Eastern Asia, and he knew that they would continue to grow. So far, it was a matter of self-protection. But the second and third sections of the logos of Croesus' downfall (which deal with Sandanis' advice, 1.71–72, and with the account of the relations between Astyages and Croesus, 1.73, 2–75, 1) are framed by a partially repeated set of motivations (1.73, 1 = 1.75, 2), seemingly at odds with the main motivation of 1.46, 1:

- II (1) Croesus, through γῆς ἕμερος, wished to add to his portion of empire (by conquering Cappadocia, and no doubt even Persia).
 (2) He was made confident by the oracles he had received.
 (3) He desired to take vengeance on Cyrus for the treatment of Astyages.

The inconsistency concerns the first of these reasons: was Croesus' war an offensive or a defensive one? According to Herodotus, it was both. This is a logical point of view, for destruction of Cyrus meant the acquisition of his empire: whoever won would unify Asia.²⁸ To these complex reasons, a third group is added: at the end of the last section of the logos (dealing with the campaign and capture of Croesus, 1.75, 2–90), the Pythia, upon the request of Croesus, gives two other reasons for his downfall:

- III (1) The curse on the house of Gyges,
 (2) Croesus' misunderstanding of the oracles.

Of these, the curse had of course been present throughout the narrative (cf. 1.13, 2); one may therefore think of this reason as all-embracing.

²⁷ See above, note 10.

²⁸ It seems to me that in this way the inconsistency can be resolved; differently Powell (above, note 11) 9 ff., who uses it to build up a theory of the origin of the work. Similar combinations of offensive and defensive motivation occur elsewhere in Herodotus: in 7.5, 2 Mardonius tries to persuade Xerxes to attack Greece (a) to gain fame, and (b) as a preventive war. In 9.97, the Persians prepare their position at Mycale both for the offensive and the defensive; the parallels suggest that the text is sound. Pohlenz (above, note 2) 202 and note 1 also attempts to combine the causes in the account of Croesus. For a different treatment of this group of motivations see W. A. A. van Otterlo (above, note 11) 143.

Now it is possible to combine all these elements into a total picture, somewhat as follows: Croesus was doomed to be the last of the Mermnadae (III 1), but the exact form of his destruction was due to a variety of factors among which the basic motive was Croesus' irrational desire for expansion (II 1). Two additional factors appeared immediately before the campaign: fear of Persia's power (I 2-3) and desire for vengeance on Cyrus (I 1 and II 3). Finally, in the course of his preparations, Croesus misunderstood the oracles (II 2 and III 2); thus *atê* led him to destruction.

Yet Herodotus himself does not anywhere bring all these elements together in this fashion, but uses the individual features of causation for structural purposes and does not isolate them from the events with which they belong. First, an immediate factor — fear — when Croesus takes notice of the Persians, introduces the planning section; secondly, the main complex of expansionism, overconfidence, and vengeance is implicit in the preparations and campaign sections; finally, the metaphysical contrast of necessity and free will closes the Croesus Logos. There is an increase here in depth of understanding which parallels the organization of the action. Thucydides would have rejected it: only the first (and to Herodotus, most ephemeral) cause would have been really acceptable to him. This increase in understanding, together with an intimate connection of causation and events, is more important to Herodotus than either consistency or the logical analysis of causation. Among the causes, vengeance (and thus *aitiê*) is subordinate and partial; expansionism is more pervasive, since it runs through the whole Croesus Logos; but fate and *atê* are raised even above that.

The richness of causation of the downfall of Croesus contrasts strongly with the absence of causation in the earlier section on the history of the Mermnadae before Croesus. The reason, in part, is that Croesus is the *archê* of the Histories, but a more important consequence of this construction is that it shows Croesus, the first representative of Asiatic power, subduing his enemies (including the Asiatic Greeks) without any need for external motivation, merely according to his *will to power*. The accusations against the Greeks (*aitiai*) are therefore clearly labeled as fabrications.²⁹ Will to

²⁹ Herodotus 1.26, 3; cf. a similar statement about the Assyrians in 1.76, 2. Croesus' purpose was empire (1.6, 2 = 1.27, 1, cf. also 1.28), his motive expansionism; hence he also planned to subdue the island Greeks (1.27 f.). Aggression was traditional in the Mermnad dynasty: e.g., Alyattes had "received" the war against Miletus from his

power, of course, is the same as expansionism, and elsewhere the Greeks are never attacked without external motives: in the Croesus Logos, these themes are implicit in the description of events, and their causal nature is not indicated. The Lydo-Persian war, on the other hand, is a different matter. It is the cause of the overthrow of a dynasty, and of the unification of Western and Eastern Asia. Changes of dynasty are to Herodotus major fixed points in the progress of power, and he always points up the conditions of action which lead to such events. This he does by proemial statements at the beginning of the main sections, or by *aitiê*-sections such as 1.73–75, 2 in the Croesus Logos. The unification of Asia is therefore seen not as a natural development, but as a violent act which forms the basis for Cyrus' further expansion. The guilty party is, however, Croesus, not Cyrus: this point could be brought home only by putting the Croesus Logos first, since Croesus is the main actor here. This interpretation agrees fully with the structure of the beginning of the logos in which the East-West conflict is subordinated to the theme of the course of Asiatic power.

In the story of Cyrus, the patterns established by the Croesus Logos are followed in a more elaborate form. Here also Asiatic expansionism proceeds without the mention of the vengeance motif³⁰ either in the course of Median conquest or of Cyrus' own campaigns in inner Asia. Asia is Persian domain (1.4, 4 = 9.116, 3) and specific causes for conquest are not needed. Cyrus simply campaigns against the nations "who were in his way" (1.153, 4); he enters upper Asia Minor "subduing each nation, and omitting none" (1.177). Herodotus shows that Persia, through its conquest of Lydia, had become the champion of Asiatic expansionism, with Cyrus the Founder at once carrying the process of conquest nearly

father (1.17, 1 = 18, 2). For the same reason, Gyges' attacks on Miletus, Smyrna, and Colophon (1.14, 4), similar attacks by Ardys (1.15) and Alyattes (1.16, 2) including the Milesian war (1.17 ff.), and Croesus' subjugation of the Asia Minor Greeks (1.6, 2; 26, 1 and 3; 27–8) are all introduced without specific motivations. Thus Croesus' actions are based on tradition, but at the same time they are his own irrational desire.

³⁰ A single exception is 1.103, 2, where Cyaxares captures Nineveh *τιμωρέων* . . . *τῶ παρρί*, who had fallen during an unsuccessful siege of the city. At the same time, however, Cyaxares is merely completing a "received" war of aggression, although Herodotus does not say so specifically. The war is therefore not primarily motivated by vengeance, and Pagel (above, note 2) 17 makes too much of this single instance. See further, Bischoff (above, note 10) 19–20. Harpagus' Ionian campaign will be discussed in section 6.

to completion. This is the meaning of the phrase that through the conquest of Lydia Cyrus "came to rule over all of Asia."³¹

The causes of this Persian achievement are symbolized in the stories of Cyrus' birth, survival, and accession. Cyrus was exposed, but he survived through divine fortune as he himself believed (1.126, 6), and thus he seemed to be under the tutelage of the gods (1.124, 1 — Harpagus' letter to Cyrus). On the human level, his accession was in large part brought about by Harpagus who was intent upon vengeance on Astyages the king of the Medes. At the same time, Astyages "had to come to a bad end" (to use a Herodotean phrase).³² The causal connection is therefore largely on a metaphysical level: Cyrus' good fortune and Astyages' fate are the basic factors, to which is added Harpagus' vengeance. Metaphysical causation is also the main basis for Cyrus' motivations of the campaign against the Massagetae, in which he met his death.³³ Cyrus undertook it, driven on by "his origin, the belief that he was more than a mere man," and secondly by his luck in warfare: wherever he went to war, "that nation was unable to escape him" (1.204, 2). Thus Cyrus' divine fortune becomes the cause of his downfall, for it arouses in him the blind belief that he is not subject to misfortune.³⁴ Because of this, he thinks of himself as "inescapable," as the "fate" of his enemies.³⁵ At the same time, his downfall is due to the vengeance which Tomyris is taking for her son.

Cambyses is seen by Herodotus primarily as the son of a great father whose policies he carries out, for a campaign against Egypt had already been planned by Cyrus (1.153, 4). Cambyses' projected campaigns against Ethiopia, Ammon and Carthage have no *aitiê* sections; the offensive behavior of the Ethiopian king does not cause the attempted campaign. The campaign against Egypt is the

³¹ 1.130, 3. The phrase is much discussed in connection with the question of the original position of the Croesus Logos; see above, note 25. I take the aorist ἤρξε in the same meaning as ἐπολέμησαν of 1.1 and as ἡγήσατο in 1.95, 1; see above, note 14. Further Bischoff (above, note 10) 42.

³² This is implied by his having two dreams concerning the offspring of Mandane, 1.107, 1 and 108, 1-2.

³³ Cyrus' unsuccessful wooing of queen Tomyris (1.205, 1) is not a true cause of this war, but an attempt to conquer the Massagetae peacefully.

³⁴ Cf. the words of Croesus to Cyrus (1.207, 2) and Cyrus' words about himself (1.209, 4).

³⁵ In 1.204, 2 Cyrus' luck is described in words suggesting acts of fate: *ὅκη γὰρ ἰθύσει στρατεύεσθαι ὁ Κύρος, ἀμήχανον ἦν ἐκείνο τὸ ἔθνος διαφυγείν*. This recalls, e.g., the words of the Pythia in 1.91, 1: *τὴν πεπρωμένην μοῖραν ἀδύνατά ἐστι ἀποφυγείν καὶ θεῶ* and similar passages. Cf. Hellmann (above, note 2) 69.

first Persian campaign with an *aitiê* section; this follows directly upon the ethnographic logos on Egypt (3.1–3). Amasis had insulted the royal house of Persia by sending the daughter of his defeated enemy to be the mistress of the Persian king.³⁶ This motif (the ludicrous nature of which is apparent in its similarity to the Helen motif) must, I think, be considered subsidiary to the *unexpressed* cause of Cambyses' campaign, namely that he had received the war from his father.³⁷ Its prime function is thematic: it emphasizes dynastic pride, a pride which is completely destroyed by Cambyses when he exterminates the members of his own family and thus leaves no male offspring upon his death. However, a minor motif is added to this, for the spurious marriage was engineered by an Egyptian doctor whom Amasis had mistreated by sending to Persia, away from *his* family (3.1, 1); he was intent on vengeance on Amasis. The Egyptian campaign has an *aitiê* section, partly for geographical reasons, for Egypt, in all probability, is not part of Asia to Herodotus and thus does not "belong" to the Persians.³⁸ But more important

³⁶ Herodotus tells three versions of this story, but in each one the dynastic motif is paramount: in the first version, Cambyses is furious because his concubine is not the daughter of the present king of Egypt; the second version is rejected by Herodotus because the Persians see to the purity of their line of succession, and because he knows that Cambyses was of pure descent; in the third, the honor accorded to a concubine is felt to be an insult to Cambyses' mother that calls for vengeance.

³⁷ The motif is clearly stated for Alyattes' war against Miletus; see above, note 29. It is, I believe, implied also for Cyaxares' campaign against Nineveh (above, note 30) and especially for Xerxes' war against the Greeks.

³⁸ In 2.17, 1 Herodotus says that the *area* of Egypt is the boundary between Asia and Libya; see Stein's commentary. His whole interest in this section (2.17, 1–18, 3) is to prove that Egypt is a unified geographical and ethnic concept, and that the boundary between Asia and Libya cannot be the Nile, as this would split Egypt into two parts. In 4.39, 1 he states that the southern peninsula of Asia ends *νόμω* near the canal of Darius, i.e. near the Suez canal, cf. 4.41. This region is a decisive point also for the stories of the circumnavigation of Africa (4.42) and of Arabia (4.44); when Cambyses marches into Egypt, the story of the waterless desert (a river story in reverse, as it were, 3.4, 3–7, 2) emphasizes once again the break between Asia and Egypt. This would seem to indicate that Egypt is not in Asia, and the statement in 3.88, 1 that Cambyses "reconquered" Asia must refer to wars not elsewhere mentioned in Herodotus rather than to the Egyptian campaign; see also How and Wells *ad loc.* There are even more definite indications that Egypt is not in Libya: for these, see Ph.-E. Legrand, *Hérodote, Index analytique* (Paris 1954), s.v. *Λιβύη*, especially Hdt. 2.18, 2; 4.197–98; and 4.41. The answer to the problem is that Herodotus does not care much about the exact boundary between Asia and Libya (cf. 2.19, 1 and 3.115, 1) and that earlier Ionic speculation had considered at least the Delta as a separate geographic entity (Jacoby, *FGH Hist* 1, 328–29). Hence Herodotus merely indicates that Egypt lies between Asia and Libya and stresses the ethnic difference more than the geographical. He also does not stress the fact that Ethiopia is clearly in Libya (3.17, 1). All this contrasts strongly with the emphasis on the distinction between Asia and Europe. See generally, How

is the ethnic difference: Egypt, by virtue of its civilization (its *nomoi*), is sufficiently different from Asia to make the conquest of it an extraordinary event for which a special reason was required: therefore, an *aitiê* section is appropriate.

A full analysis of the structure of the following Darius Logoi is beyond the scope of this paper. The pattern of the Croesus and Cyrus Logoi may however be followed here also: (1) Accession (there is no section on Darius' origins), here connected with the Revolt of the Magi (3.61-87); (2) Height of Power (3.88-117); (3) Campaigns, ending in this case in frustration (cf. 7.4) rather than defeat. The element of fate is confined to the last speech of Cambyses (3.65, 3), but the element of vengeance is strong, both in the story of the original six conspirators (3.73, 2) and that of Prexaspes (3.74-75). Darius himself is the clever man who is lucky as well, a view which is symbolized in the story of the neighing of the horse: originally intended as a divine judgment, it is turned to victory by Darius' clever groom. Victory is then confirmed by a thunderclap (3.85-86).

Thus the Accession Logos establishes a favorable view of Darius. By contrast, the Campaign Logoi emphasize Darius as a despot, limited and frustrated. Symbolic of this view is the Darius-Atossa scene which forms a prelude to the campaigns proper (3.133-34). Darius brags to his wife about his plans to conquer Scythia (3.134, 4). The motivations are personal: as Atossa puts it to him, he is to show the Persians who is their real master, and he must prevent idleness and unrest. Yet in this very scene Darius is shown to be the slave of his wife who incites him to fight a war against the Greeks, a request to which he accedes in some measure. The course of Darius' campaigns shows further that most of his plans to enlarge the empire miscarry. Successes are minor, or consist of the pacification of revolts; but Scythia, Libya, Mt. Athos and Marathon are failures. In Darius, the Persian empire finds its limits. These limits, by and large, are the confines of Asia.

There are no suitable campaigns of Darius in Asia to test the idea that such campaigns against non-Greeks have no *aitiai* added; his major campaigns, so far as they are aggressive, are in Libya and

and Wells' Commentary 2, 317. Also J. O. Thomson, *History of Ancient Geography* (Cambridge 1948) 66 and note 1; Myres (above, note 7) 34 and 154; *RE* Suppl. 4, s.v. "Geographie," col. 555. Differently, Jacoby in *RE* s.v. "Hekataios," cols. 2704-5, cf. 2681-2. Legrand, *Index analytique*, proposes conflicting solutions, s. vv. 'Ασιη and Αιβηη.

Europe. The emphasis on objective motivation in the majority of these campaigns is, however, indirect proof of the correctness of our contention.³⁹ Causation assumes a major role as soon as Persia oversteps her native domain. The significance of the Scythian Logos lies partly in this fact; it presages the Graeco-Persian wars in this respect. The logos opens with an *aitiê* section in which the campaign is explained as vengeance for the earlier rule of the Scythians in Asia (4.1–4),⁴⁰ a vengeance which becomes operative through excessive wealth; the ethnographic logos follows. The Campaign proper (4.83–143, 1) is in two parts which are separated by a geographical picture of Scythia, and by a council of the Scythians and their neighbors (4.102–20). In this council scene (4.118–19) which may be compared to the Greek councils before the invasion of Xerxes, the Scythians try to enlist the help of their neighbors. They point out that Darius' aim is not vengeance, as he professes, but conquest of all that is in his way (3.118, 5). In opposition to this, the majority of the Scythian neighbors believe that vengeance is all Darius desires. "You invaded their country without us and ruled the Persians for the time which the god gave you to rule; the Persians, driven on by the same god, are paying you back in kind" (4.119, 3). In their view, vengeance is a direct instrument of fate, for the cycles of vengeance are directed by the divine. The neighbors are wrong, of course, in their optimistic estimate of Darius' intentions, but cycles of vengeance equalized by the divine through allotment of time are indeed a possible Herodotean principle.⁴¹

³⁹ More precisely, the campaigns against Perinthus (5.1–2) and the Thracians (5.3–10) have no *aitiê* sections, but the campaigns of Otanes against the Greek cities near the Hellespont have the sentence added that "he enslaved and subdued them all, accusing some of having failed to join the Scythian expedition, and others of harming the army of Darius on its return from the Scythians" (5.27, 2; cf. a similar statement in 4.144, 3). The words immediately preceding, however — *αἰρῆν δὲ τοῦτον ἦδε* — probably do not belong with this sentence, but once introduced an explanation of the death of Lycaretus which is not now extant; see Stein's commentary; Pohlenz (above, note 2) 15, note 1; J. Wells, *Studies in Herodotus* (Oxford 1923) 118 f. For the Paeonians (5.12–17, 1), see the end of this section. The main wars in favor of my argument are the Scythian, Libyan, and Greek wars.

⁴⁰ Compare 7.20, 2, where the vengeance motif is re-emphasized.

⁴¹ See above, note 3 on the winged snakes; also the proem, 1.2–4. Time is allotted in 2.139, 2 (Ethiopian rule in Egypt), and 2.133, 3 (150 years of misery for Egypt), but in neither case is there a connection with vengeance. The neighbors of the Scythians are referring to the 28 years of Scythian rule in Asia (1.106, 1 = 4.1, 2 and 3). The 28 years are thus comparable to the 505 years of Heraclid rule in Lydia (1.7, 4) which had to come to an end with Candaules (1.8, 2), or with the termination of the Mermnad and Median dynasties, which also involved a "necessity."

Expansionism is overlooked by the neighbors, but is adduced by the Scythians as it had been in the Darius-Atossa scene: hence the Scythians present a truer picture of the situation than do the neighbors.

Metaphysical causation is almost entirely absent from the Scythian Logos: vengeance is paramount, expansionism is quietly assumed. This strong emphasis on purely human motivation is somehow to be connected with the fact that the Scythians are representatives of Europe and of freedom. The reciprocal invasions of Scythia and Asia find a parallel in the reciprocal invasions of Greece and Asia from the time of the Trojan War. Between the *ideas* of Asia and of Europe there exists an ineradicable hostility.⁴² The Scythians are not innocent victims, but independent agents who have done an injustice to the Persians. Vengeance is therefore the trigger that releases Persian desire for expansion. Hence the problems that arise in the Scythian Logos are paramount also in the account of the *Mêdika* and the logos is thus a connecting link between the two main parts of the Histories.⁴³ In a similar manner, the Libyan campaign is motivated by vengeance and expansionism; about that, more later.

As a further elaboration of the Asia-Europe conflict, and to serve as a link between the Scythian campaign and the Ionian revolt, Herodotus has developed the slight incident of Darius' transfer of the Paeonian Thracians from Europe to Asia.⁴⁴ Two would-be Paeonian tyrants go to Sardis, show Darius their sister's European virtues and whet his appetite for the hard-working women of Europe.⁴⁵ Consequently, the Paeonians are transferred from Europe

⁴² In general, see Pohlenz (above, note 2) 203-6. H. E. Stier, *Grundlagen und Sinn der Geschichte* (Stuttgart 1945) 317 ff.

⁴³ In general, see Powell (above, note 11) 57-60. Note especially the following parallels: (1) Expansionism is mentioned by the Scythians to their neighbors (4.118, 1); it reappears in the *Mêdika* as the conquest of all of Greece. (2) Earth and water is demanded both of the Scythians and the Greeks (below, note 62). (3) The idea of a general levy in Persia appears in 4.83, 1 and at various points in the *Mêdika* (6.48, 2; 95, 1; 7.1. 2; 19, 2 ff.). Both in the Scythian and Greek campaigns these preparations precede the answers given to the demands of earth and water. (4) Vengeance plays a similar role in the motivation of the Scythian campaign (cf. also the speech of the Scythian neighbors, 4.119, 3-4) and the *Mêdika*. (5) The idea of *μηδισμός* occurs first in connection with Megabazus' Hellenistic campaign (4.144, 3), a sequel to the Scythian campaign, and in the Libyan campaign (4.165, 3). The idea of provocation, however, is not found in the Scythian campaign.

⁴⁴ Herodotus 5.1, 1-2, 1; 12-17, 1; 98.

⁴⁵ This motif corresponds to Atossa's desire for Greek handmaidens (3.134, 5).

to Asia. The initiative here rests with the two Paeonians who provoke Darius into exercising his native greed.⁴⁶ As mentioned in section 4, the provocation theme is used later by Herodotus with great emphasis in his account of the wars between Persians and Greeks.

In summary, we have noticed three kinds of causes: immediate causes, among which vengeance is paramount; permanently operative causes, primarily expansionism, but also vengeance when it expresses a permanent hostility; finally, metaphysical causes, based on "necessity," rather than free choice, but which also include *atê*, false hope, and the like. It may be noted also that on each level, causation may appear as an objective factor, or as a subjective (psychological) one. For the mind of man is inextricably connected with the objective world. Causes may appear also as a part of the description of events, and their arrangement is basically a matter of structuring events rather than of logical consistency. A distinction is made by Herodotus between wars with peoples in regions that "belong" to the Persians, i.e. Asiatic peoples, and nations which do not "belong" to them, the Egyptians and the nations of Europe and, in part, Libya. On the whole, the vengeance motif is not used exclusively by Herodotus, as Pagel had thought, but is only one component of larger complexes of causation.

6. GREEKS AND PERSIANS

The major actions of the Greeks and Persians are part and parcel of the larger structure of the Histories, whose form is determined by the overall scheme of the rise and fall of Asiatic rule. The picture of causation reflects this scheme insofar as metaphysical causation and expansionism play the same role here as in the other events. At the same time, there is a decided increase in the use of minor causes, particularly the vengeance motif. The Graeco-Persian wars are thereby not only better explained, but also structured more clearly. Three groups of actions must be considered in this connection: the Ionian, Samian, and Libyan wars.

Of the three conquests of Ionia by the East, the first, occurring under Croesus, is motivated only by expansionism: it is placed at the beginning of the Croesus Logos (1.6, 2 - 3; 26). The Ionians

⁴⁶ To Herodotus, the Paeonians were Teucrians who had at one time migrated to Europe from Asia, and are now shifted back to Asia and later (5.98) are returned to Europe. See Stein *ad* 7.20, 2.

were set free by the fall of Croesus and they offered themselves to Cyrus under the same conditions that had existed previously, but they were refused by him since they had not earlier broken their allegiance to Croesus. Cyrus tells them the story of the piper (1.141, 1–2), which shows that he considers them his enemies from the start. This enmity is thus put at the beginning of the *logos*, while the specific *aitiê* (the harboring of the fugitive Pactyes [1.154–161]) is placed before the actual campaign; these two features frame the preparations of the Ionians, their meeting at the Panionium and their embassy to Sparta, together with some related matters (1.141, 4–153), thus keeping the preparations section distinct from the campaign section. The *aitiê* section proper, then, embodies the provocation theme, but the harboring of Pactyes is not the real reason for the enslavement of the Ionians — that reason (vengeance for the hostility of the Ionians before Croesus was defeated) is mentioned at the beginning. The preparations section starts out with Ionian deliberations, a feature which we had noticed in the Scythian campaign, but nowhere else with respect to non-Greek peoples.⁴⁷

Even stronger is Ionian initiative in the Ionian Revolt (5.28–6.32) which begins with Ionian action. This might seem natural, but the Babylonian Revolt (except for a very short section at the beginning) is not structured like this, and Greek initiative is shown only in three campaign *logoi* in the work — Cyrus' Conquest of Ionia, the Ionian Revolt, the Conquest of Samos — until the turning point at Salamis changes this also. The central importance of the Ionian Revolt lies in the fact that it is the immediate *aitiê* of the Persian Wars, and its own motivation is in turn very complex. It begins with an *aitiê* section (5.28–35):

- a. Miletus at height of power because of aristocratic constitution received earlier.
- b. Naxian affair
 - 1a. Provocation: Naxian fugitives.
 - 1b. True motive of Aristagoras: increase in power.
 - 1c. True motive of Persians, suggested by Aristagoras to Artaphernes: expansion to Euboea.
 2. Campaign: foiled by disunity.

⁴⁷ The case of Croesus and his campaign against the Persians is not comparable, for in the Croesus *Logos* Croesus and the Lydians take the place, as it were, of the Median and the later Persian empires, since Herodotus obviously considered Croesus the main power in Asia before Cyrus.

- c. Aristagoras' motives for starting Ionian Revolt: financial difficulties and fear of Persian reprisals, both the result of the failure at Naxos.
- d. Histiaeus' letter to Aristagoras advises revolt; *his* motive is his desire to return to Miletus (5.35, 4; the "Democedes motif").

This section is followed by a preparations section (5.36–98) and a campaign section in two parts (5.99–116 and 5.116–6.32). The Ionian Revolt is thus treated in the manner of an aggressive war, with the Ionians as the aggressors; in the second campaign section the Persians gain the initiative and defeat the Ionians. The *aitiê* section emphasizes Ionian responsibility, a responsibility which in turn devolves upon Aristagoras and Histiaeus, whose motives are typical of slaves: Aristagoras is afraid of his masters, Histiaeus wishes to escape them. The Ionian Revolt, to Herodotus, was a slave revolt, and he had little sympathy for it.⁴⁸

Within the framework of the Revolt, several minor events have elaborate *aitiê* sections. One is the Naxian affair, itself a cause for the Ionian Revolt, which has a section giving the immediate provocation, as well as the true reasons, i.e. the desire for aggrandizement of Greek tyrant and Oriental ruler alike. Secondly, Athenian participation in the revolt is motivated in two ways: Aristagoras was able to persuade the democratic multitude because of the instability of public opinion (5.97, 2), but this would not have been possible without the pre-existing state of hostility between Athens and Persia on account of the tyrant Hippias.⁴⁹ Finally, the Cypriote Revolt, a logos which is used to set apart the two sections of the Ionian Campaign Logos (5.104–16), has its own *aitiê* section (5.104) which is separated from the revolt proper by stories about Darius (5.105–7).

One of these stories is the shooting of the arrow and Darius' demand that a servant remind him daily of the Athenians. The story expresses the connection between the Ionian Revolt and the Persian Wars, through the vengeance motif. The whole complex

⁴⁸ See the significant saying of the Scythians about the Ionians when they find that the Ionians have brought Darius safe across the Danube (4.142); at Lade, the Ionians prove that they prefer slavery to hard work (6.11–12). Hence the Ionian desire for freedom is not treated as a cause for the revolt by Herodotus, but is implied only at the beginning of the preparations section of the Revolt (5.37, 2); differently, Maddalena (above, note 2) 60.

⁴⁹ So also Pohlenz (above, note 2) 201–2, but this reason has been overlooked by those who ridicule Herodotus' account of the Athenian participation in the Ionian Revolt.

of the Ionian Revolt is itself causal of the *Médika*, and is therefore interspersed with motifs in support of this. There are the twenty Athenian ships; the burning of Sardis; the story of the arrow; and at the end the effect of the destruction of Miletus upon the Athenians. In this way the Ionian Revolt becomes the "beginning of the evil" (5.97, 3). The position of the arrow episode is therefore purposely central; it occurs in the account of the Cypriote revolt, which is itself the center of the Ionian Revolt. The Ionian Revolt is a masterful narrative, completely subservient to the causal nexus of the Histories.⁵⁰

In the Samian and Libyan Logoi the provocation theme appears in an even more sinister form: here Greeks are intent upon enslaving their own nationals. The *Samika* appear in the Histories as three semi-independent logoi: the Spartan War against Samos (3.39–60); Oroetes' Murder of Polycrates (3.120–25); and the Persian Capture of Samos (3.139–49). Of these the first and the last are important to the present argument.

The Spartan War, the first invasion of Asia by the Dorian Spartans (3.56, 2), balances the first penetration of Greece by the Persians led by Democedes (3.138, 4); it is given a double *aitiê* section, to which belongs the famous story of the ring of Polycrates:

I Accession and Prosperity of Polycrates

A (First *aitiê* section): Amasis renounces pact of friendship with Polycrates;⁵¹ Polycrates offers his enemies as troops to Cambyses for campaign against Egypt; they appeal to Sparta (3.43–46).

⁵⁰ Myres (above, note 7) 103 and 125 gives a different analysis of the structure of the revolt, which is not clear to me.

⁵¹ The breaking of the pact establishes hostile relations which make possible Polycrates' participation in Cambyses' Egyptian campaign; at the time when Cambyses collected troops, Amasis was still alive (3.1, 1, cf. 3.10, 2). Herodotus indicates this causal relationship only through the repetition of *πέμψας δὲ . . . κήρυκα* in 3.43, 2 = 3.44, 1, but it is similar to the underlying enmity between Athens and Persia at the time of Aristagoras' visit to Athens (above, note 49). Likewise, in 8.109, there are two motives for Themistocles' speech advising against pursuit of Xerxes: one is the negative attitude of the Spartans, the other Themistocles' desire to ingratiate himself with Xerxes; only the second, however, is mentioned specifically as a cause. Pohlenz' (above, note 2; 76, note 3) claim that the use of the aorists *πέμψας* and *ἔδεχθη* (3.44, 1) is ambiguous is not valid, for these aorists continue others used previously in the same pluperfect sense. In 3.39, 1, the Spartans "had made" a campaign against Samos, i.e. before Cambyses' madness, and Polycrates "had acquired" the rule; in 3.44, 1, the Samians "had called" the Spartans. Each section of the logoi is written backwards in time, as becomes even more apparent in the Corinthian narrative; cf. also 6.40, 1. The reason for this is the fact that at the point when the Polycrates story is introduced, the campaign of Cambyses (with which it is contemporary) is already past history. The

B (Second *aitiê* section): Sparta attacks Polycrates, either out of gratitude to certain Samians, or as a punishment for Samian piracy; added are reasons for Corinthian participation in the war (3.47–53).

II Spartan Campaign against Samos.

The complexity of motivation in section A gives place in section B to one of the longest Herodotean series of acts of vengeance, in the story of Corinthian participation in the war, a story which is written in reverse, as is the whole *logos* (see note 51). Corinth helps Sparta because of an alliance with her; she does so eagerly because the Samians had once returned 300 captured Corcyraean boys to Corinth's enemy Corcyra. This had happened under Periander, and since tyranny was now dead in Corinth, this reason would not have made the Corinthians fight Samos except for their traditional hostility to Corcyra dating back to the founding of the colony (3.49, 1). This hatred was so strong (Herodotus claims) that it furnished the real motivating cause for successive acts of vengeance, of which the war against Polycrates is one instance. This is a model of all *aitiê* connections in Herodotus, especially in its functioning through several generations,⁵² and in its connection with an *underlying* cause.

The emphasis on causation in this *logos* cannot be explained by the actual significance of the Spartan campaign, which is a failure. It is due rather to the symbolic significance of the campaign as a transgression of a Greek nation by crossing into Asia; this brings about a view of the event parallel to the views about the Persian encroachment in Europe and Libya.⁵³ The Persian conquest of Samos (3.139–49) is another step in this series of mutual encroachments. This *logos* lacks a section on the history of Samos,⁵⁴ since that is given in the two preceding Samian *logoi*, and consists only of a double *aitiê* section and the account of the campaign.

reference (in 3.44, 1) to the Samian exiles as to those "who later on founded Cydonia in Crete," which Pohlenz finds obscure, is clear enough if the reader thinks of the numerous instances in Herodotus of exiles founding colonies.

⁵² In general, see D. W. Prakken, *Studies in Greek Genealogical Chronology* (Lancaster 1943). Note that the point of the stories is the destruction of the young. It is the Heracleitan definition of a generation (as the span between acts of procreation) in reverse; see H. Fränkel (above, note 18) 251–2 = *AJP* 59 (1938) 89–91.

⁵³ Several scholars have noted the parallelism between Polycrates and the Oriental kings in Herodotus. See, e.g., H. Fohl, *Tragische Kunst bei Herodot* (Rostock 1932); Bischoff (above, note 10) 75–7; G. C. J. Daniels, *Religieus-historische studie over Herodotus* (Antwerp 1946) 160–63.

⁵⁴ Herodotus apparently never contemplated ethnographic *logoi* for Greek peoples.

A (First *aitiê* section): Syloson, exiled by his brother Polycrates, had given Darius his cloak; he demands to be restored in Samos without bloodshed (3.139–41).

B (Second *aitiê* section): Maeandrius, Polycrates' caretaker, tries to establish democracy in Samos, but is unsuccessful; he takes over the tyranny and he and his family become the vilest of tyrants (3.141–43).

Remarkable in this story is the nobility of Darius and of the Persians: Darius will not enslave the Samians, he will only pay back his benefactor Syloson. The conquest of Samos therefore has no direct connection with the plans of conquest developed in the Darius-Atossa scene, although that scene indicates a basic willingness of the Persians to conquer Greek territory, a willingness that becomes operative here through the request of Syloson (below; note 60). Out of a purely private motivation grows one of the bloodiest actions of the Histories, through the fault, not of the Persians, who try to prevent bloodshed as long as possible, but of a Samian family who bring about the total destruction of their island. The provocation theme could not be handled in a more sinister manner.

The Libyan Logos (4.145–205) is in many respects similar to the Capture of Samos. The naked historical fact here is a punitive expedition of the Persian governor of Egypt against the Greek city of Barca in the Cyrenaica, which was already under Persian overlordship (see 3.13 and 4.165, 2); to this Herodotus adds a Persian attempt to capture Cyrene.⁵⁵ Out of these comparatively minor events Herodotus has constructed a major logos with two main ideas: during this expedition the Persians reached the westernmost point of their expansion (4.204), and the campaign involved the Greeks as colonizers of Libya.⁵⁶ The campaign is nevertheless subordinated to the short logos of Megabazus' operations in Europe.⁵⁷ The *aitiê* section and the historical section are in this logos combined into one: for the history of Cyrene, and its colonization, is ostensibly told to explain how Pheretima came to demand vengeance on the

⁵⁵ How and Wells, *ad* 4.203, doubt the historicity of this event, but see, e.g., *CAH* 4 (Cambridge 1926) 24. Cf. Myres (above, note 7) 166–68. A. T. Olmstead, *History of Persia* (Chicago 1948) 148–9, states that in 512 B.C. a satrapy of Libya (Putaya) was formed by the Persians; if this identification of Putaya is correct, the knowledge of such a satrapy on Herodotus' part may further explain the importance attributed by him to the events described in the Libyan Logos.

⁵⁶ Powell (above, note 11) 8 considers 4.167, 3 a pretext on the part of Herodotus for attaching the Libyan Ethnographic Logos, saying that Herodotus had no reason to conjecture a plan for Libyan conquest. Better Pohlenz (above, note 2) 28–9.

⁵⁷ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 24, note 16.

Persians in Egypt for the death of her son (4.145, 1, cf. 4.167, 3). This vengeance motif served, however, merely as a pretext for the Persians, whose purpose was the conquest of Libya (4.167, 3). This statement in turn introduces the ethnographic description of Libya; hence this section also is subordinated to the explanation of the causal complex. The causation is double: vengeance and expansionism are combined. Aryandes the governor of Egypt is here imitating his master Darius (cf. 4.166).

Herodotus seems to be intent on establishing the exact degree of guilt of the Greeks in those events in which they are enslaved by the Persians. At the same time, the Greeks act here more independently than any other great nation, with the exception of the Scythians. It is this very freedom of action which is seen under the form of guilt. By blaming the Greeks, Herodotus establishes the Greeks as free agents, i.e. as tragic actors in the sense of Attic tragedy. Far from restricting the greatness of the Greeks, the vengeance motif raises them to grandeur: this is the central idea of Herodotus' treatment of the Persian Wars themselves.

7. CAUSES OF THE MÊDIKA

The great complex of personal motivations and objective causes of the Persian Wars follows the patterns heretofore observed for other military actions in the Histories, but it is on a much larger scale, since in Herodotus' conception the Persian Wars are the turning point in the Asiatic attempt at world conquest, which is the main theme of the work. In the proem, the first cause mentioned is the basic hostility (*ἔχθρη παλαιή*) between Greece and Asia, due (according to the Persians) to the Trojan War, but in Herodotus' view due to Croesus. However, the Ionian, Libyan, and Samian Campaigns show us that Herodotus did not consider the Greeks "blameless" for the frictions between Europe and Asia, but portrayed the struggle as one of mutual transgression. This is apparent already in the Cyrus and Cambyses Logoi where Herodotus notes the first contacts between the two adversaries.⁵⁸ The Spartans had formed an alliance with Croesus and thus they became Cyrus' enemies; at the beginning of his reign they warned him of attacking the mainland Greeks (1.70, 1; 83; 152, 3). In their war against Polycrates,

⁵⁸ Pohlenz (above, note 2) 12 ff. On the causes of the *Mêdika* see also Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 602 and note 4. R. W. Macan, *Herodotus the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Books* 2 (London 1908) 122-26.

the Spartans fought an ally of Cambyses (3.44). In Cambyses' Egyptian campaign, Greeks appeared on the Egyptian side (3.11). These events, together with the *logoi* about the Ionians, exemplify the basic hostility between the two continents. The more fundamental cause of expansionism is symbolized in the three dreams in which a figure "overshadows" the continents: for Astyages it was a vine growing from his daughter's womb; for Cyrus it was Darius with wings on his shoulders; for Xerxes, an olive sprig.⁵⁹

The immediate chain of causation of the Persian Wars begins with the Democedes story at the start of Darius' reign (3.129–138).⁶⁰ Two motifs are implied here: first, the notion that personal motives may cause a war, and secondly that a woman may cause seemingly "necessary" events: the similarity to the motivation of the Egyptian campaign of Cambyses is striking. In Darius' answer to Atossa, expansionism is again clearly marked as the prime motive for the Persian, as well as the Scythian, wars. Mutual transgression between Europe and Asia is symbolized in the Spartan war against

⁵⁹ F. Egermann, "Das Geschichtswerk des Herodot. Sein Plan," *NJAB* 1 (1938) 249. There are four dreams foreshadowing a Persian ruler and the extent of his empire. The first two, in which Astyages dreams about Cyrus (1.107, 1 and 108, 1), refer to a rule over all of Asia. The third (1.209, 1), in which Cyrus dreams about Darius, speaks of Asia and Europe. The last (7.19, 1), in which Xerxes dreams about his own rule, refers to the whole world, but indicates that this world rule will suddenly collapse. The images for Cyrus and Xerxes are a vine and an olive wreath, and the verb used is *ἐπιωχέειν* (1.108, 1 = 7.19, 1); for Darius the image is the winged figure of the king overshadowing (*ἐπισκιάζειν*, 1.209, 1 and 4) with one wing Europe, with the other Asia. The dream concerning Darius foreshadows a rule less firm than that of Cyrus; that of Xerxes altogether negates his aspirations to world empire.

⁶⁰ Powell (above, note 11) 51 follows Jacoby (see *TAPA* 85 [1954] 24, note 15) in considering the Democedes story a later addition and points to the inconsistency that Darius promises Atossa to turn first against Greece, but that after having sent there the party of spies he does not act on the results: the conquest of Samos, which was in fact the first conquest of Darius and was directed against Greeks, has nothing to do with the party of spies. The difficulty is real; Pohlenz (above, note 2) 203 merely slides over it. I think one must assume here, as similarly in a number of other places (see above, notes 49 and 51), that Herodotus, regardless of the time when he put in the Democedes story, implied that it showed a basic willingness on the part of Darius to attack the Greeks; that this willingness became operative when Samos was offered for conquest for totally different reasons; and that it found further application when Darius decided to invade Greece. It is again the principle of an *underlying* cause. The Democedes story is of fundamental importance in connection with the Persian Wars, for without it the idea of the total conquest of Greece (as opposed to a punitive expedition against Athens and Eretria only) hangs in the air and has no *ἀρχή*. The idea of a total conquest of Greece is first briefly hinted at at the time of the Mt. Athos expedition (6.44, 1) and is from then on quietly presupposed, e.g. in 6.94, 1 and in the demands for earth and water. The latter first appear in the Scythian campaign (below, note 62) and Scythians and Greeks are also coupled in the Darius-Atossa scene.

Polycrates and the party of spies sent into Greece by Darius. As the result of the Scythian campaign, Histiaeus starts on the road to rebellion, and a foothold is gained by the Persians at the Dardanelles. The Ionian Revolt, in turn, constitutes a provocation of the Persian king by Athens and Eretria, and is thus a further link in the chain of *mutual* transgression. Herodotus carefully indicates the exact nature of the Greek guilt. During the occupation of Sardis, an unknown Greek soldier set fire to one of the houses, but the spreading of the fire was accidental, and the burning of the sanctuary of Cybele was a further accident (5.101–102, 1). The latter was used by the Persians as a pretext (*σκηπτόμενοι* 5.102, 1) for the burning of Greek sanctuaries, e.g. at Eretria (6.101, 3), and this was a prime reason for Athenian resistance to the Persians (8.144, 2). Thus the Greeks were nearly blameless at the beginning, but that did not alter the nature of the reprisals.⁶¹

Between the end of the Ionian Revolt and the start of Xerxes' campaign Herodotus establishes a firm connection, which is overlaid by *logoi* on Greek history that do not concern us here. The connection between Marathon and the Ionian Revolt is made through the account of the conquests of the Phoenician navy at the Hellespont (6.33, cf. 5.27); the Hellespont is used by Mardonius, after the pacification of Ionia, as the starting point for his campaign against Eretria and Athens (6.43, 4 ff.). The expansionist idea is contained in the Persian demand for earth and water (6.48, 1–2).⁶² The connection of all these events is emphasized in 6.94, a chapter which might be called the proem to Marathon: while the Athenians were fighting the Aeginetans, Darius pursued his own designs, being reminded continually by his servant of the Athenians (cf. 5.105), and being urged on by the Peisistratids, who wanted to be restored (cf. 5.96, 1). The connection is here with two sections occurring within the narrative of the Ionian Revolt; in the statement which follows it is with the demand of earth and water (6.48): "Darius desired to use this *prophasis* to subdue those Greeks who would not give him earth and water." Earth and water, then, symbolize

⁶¹ Similarly, Gyges was nearly blameless of the murder of Candaules (*TAPA* 85 [1954] 36), and yet the Mermnad dynasty suffered for it.

⁶² This demand is first made by Darius of the Scythians; instead of earth and water, the Scythian king sends a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows (4.126–34). This story is of central importance for the Scythian Logos, which describes the first large-scale attempt at Persian domination of Europe. All other requests of earth and water are likewise directed at Europeans; see Powell's *Lexicon* (above, note 5) s.v. γῆ 2.

total expansion, while the entreaties of the Peisistratids express the provocation theme, and the servant's reminders the vengeance motif. The last two motifs are shown to be subsidiary to the idea of expansion.

After Marathon, the expedition of Datis and Artaphernes returns to Asia (6.118–19), but Darius is even more intent on vengeance (7.1), which in turn is carried out by Xerxes. The Logos of Xerxes' Campaign begins with Darius' legacy to Xerxes, who is to pursue the wars against Greece (7.1–4), but it is otherwise structured like a gigantic campaign logos, the first portion of which combines the *aitiê* section with an account of the plans for the campaign:

7.1–18: *aitiê* and planning section.

1. Legacy of Darius (7.1–4).
2. Entreaties of Mardonius, Aleuadae, Peisistratids (7.5–6).
3. Persian Council (7.8–11).
4. Dreams of Xerxes (7.12–18).

This section is the climax of Herodotus' thought on the subject of causation; it brings together the various motifs scattered through the work. Xerxes inherited the war from his father — this motif had been found in the Mermnadae and Median Logoi, and it had been implied in the Egyptian Campaign of Cambyses. The second motif (persuasion by evil councillors) is attached to the first by means of the motif of Xerxes' ambivalence, which distinguishes Xerxes from all other Herodotean characterizations.⁶³ Mardonius' arguments are: (a) the need for revenge on the Athenians, (b) the need for glory and supreme power, and (c) the beauty and fertility of Europe, which make it a worthy acquisition for the king. Apart from the rhetorical *topoi* of this and the following speeches⁶⁴ there is here a new element in the breaking apart of the theme of expansionism into the notions of imperial greatness and imperial advantage. The pleas of the Aleuadae and the Peisistratids are based on personal motives⁶⁵ — that of the Peisistratids is the desire to return to Athens (5.96, 1). The king is persuaded largely by the oracles that a Persian is to bridge the Hellespont.⁶⁶

These motivations are complete in themselves and sufficient.

⁶³ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 26 and 31.

⁶⁴ See E. Schulz, *Die Reden im Herodot* (Diss. Greifswald 1933).

⁶⁵ Aleuadae: 7.6; 130, 3; 172, 1. Peisistratids: 5.96, 1; 6.94, 1; 7.6, etc.

⁶⁶ An oracle that spoke of the yoking of the Hellespont by a Persian was used by Herodotus as an important source; see H. Reynen in *Hermes* 83 (1955) 374–77.

The following two sections are therefore not necessary to explain why the Persian Wars were fought; they are loosely added for a discussion of the principles of motivation involved in Xerxes' decision.⁶⁷ The Council is motivated by Xerxes' desire "to hear the opinions of the nobles of Persia and to speak out his wishes before all," (7.8, 1, cf. 8d, 2) although he had already made up his mind to fight. Yet in the wish to hear opinions the notion is inherent that the desirability of the campaign is still under discussion; thereby Herodotus shows that he has borrowed the motif from councils in which advice is sought by the king. The situation is very similar to the council after Salamis, where Xerxes, having first made up his mind that he will flee, then asks for the advice of Artemisia and accepts it, since it coincides with his own desire (8.97; 103). In both scenes Herodotus' main purpose is to characterize Xerxes, but in the first scene he is also concerned with showing Xerxes' situation, i.e. the motives and the historical forces that have made this campaign unavoidable.

In a sense, then, Xerxes' opening speech in the Council is a summary of the whole work. He begins by stating that expansionism has been traditional with the Persians since Cyrus took the overlordship of Asia from Astyages, and that this expansionism is fated: "a god leads us thus" (7.8a, 1). He mentions "the nations which" Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius "have subdued and added to the empire." His personal motive is the desire to be the equal of his predecessors; he can do this only by adding to his dominion. Atossa's reproach to the young Darius had been: "you rest, nor do you add any further nation or power to Persian dominion." Likewise, Xerxes is afraid lest he "add less power to the Persians" (than Darius had done; 7.8a, 2, cf. 7.8b, 1). But while Darius sought war in order to show himself a true master, Xerxes' main motive is to emulate his forefathers. Xerxes' reasons for fighting the Greeks are twofold: (a) vengeance on the Athenians "who began the unjust deed" (7.8b, 2), and (b) conquest of all of Europe: "we will show Persia to be coterminous with Zeus' sky" (7.8c, 1). Hence the conquest is (as Mardonius had pointed out to Xerxes) both just and profitable. "Thus the yoke of slavery will be imposed on those that are guilty and on those that are blameless" (7.8c, 3), a sentence which serves as a summary of the relation between vengeance and

⁶⁷ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 30 ff.

expansionism.⁶⁸ Mardonius further explains this paradox when he supports Xerxes' position in a short speech immediately afterwards (7.9, 2); the Persians have conquered the Sacae, Indians, Ethiopians, and Assyrians, "as well as other nations . . . who have done no injury to the Persians," and now they must take vengeance on the Greeks "who started the injustice." The nations who did no injury to the Persians are mainly in Asia.⁶⁹ This fact corresponds very closely with Herodotus' own description of the conquest of Asia.

Artabanus' answer to Xerxes also has features of a summary, but is given from the opposite point of view: Artabanus cites the failures of Persian expansionism, and thereby shows that Xerxes should stay at home and let Mardonius fight the Greeks. This angers the king. In his final speech, Xerxes returns to the notion that he must preserve Persian tradition, since the struggle between Athens and Persia is one for world dominion (7.11, 2-3). The Athenians were the first to attack Asia (one is reminded also of the Spartan War against Polycrates) and they will do it again if Persia does not act first. "Neither side has it in its power to retreat, but it is a struggle of doing or suffering, with the purpose of letting all Asia come under the sway of the Greeks, or all of Europe under that of the Persians; for there is no middle ground in this hostility." This is an immoder-

⁶⁸ Stein, in his commentary on 7.8c, 3, remarks that *οἱ τε ἀναιρίοι* is merely a rhetorical figure. It is more a question, I think, of that polarity of thought of which Hermann Fränkel has made us aware. In our case the expression: those that are guilty and those that are not = all men, is real enough, since Herodotus in his work has followed this very distinction. See also Bischoff (above, note 10) 55, note 1.

⁶⁹ The exception are the Ethiopians. The common assumption is that Mardonius is referring to the Libyan, not to the Asiatic, Ethiopians, despite the fact that he couples them with the Assyrians; the reason for this interpretation is no doubt that Herodotus mentions the conquest of "Ethiopians adjoining Egypt" by Cambyses (3.97, 2), while he nowhere speaks of the conquest of the Asiatic Ethiopians. This reason is insufficient, since Herodotus omits a good many Asiatic conquests. Nevertheless, the common interpretation is probably correct, as the different tribes of Libyan Ethiopians are much more frequently mentioned in the work than are the Asiatic; see Powell's *Lexicon* (above, note 5) and Legrand, *Index analytique* (above, note 38). The phrase in Mardonius' speech: *Σάκας μὲν καὶ Ἰνδοὺς καὶ Αἰθιοπᾶς τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίους* (7.9, 2), probably owes its order merely to alliteration. Compare, also in a speech, 8.100, 4: *Φοίνικες τε καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ Κύπριοι τε καὶ Κίλικες*; 1.153, 4: *ἡ τε . . . Βαβυλῶν . . . καὶ τὸ Βάκτριον ἔθνος καὶ Σάκας τε καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι*. A similar order, for personal names, occurs in 9.85, 1, contrast 9.71, 2. In all these cases, the order appears to be rhetorical (8.113, 2 differs, following perhaps a military order). Mardonius' idea that the (Libyan) Ethiopians were blameless accords well with Herodotus' own account of Cambyses' attempt to conquer Ethiopia.

ate view of the campaign, due to *hybris*, but it is based on the Herodotean notion of an underlying hostility (*ἐχθρη παλαίη*).

The speeches of the Council scene all assume that the Greek campaign is simply a matter of choice for Xerxes.⁷⁰ Within the realm of choice, the question of causation becomes the question of personal motivation. Nevertheless, the reasons given by Xerxes and Mardonius are the same that play such an overwhelming part in the general picture of causation in the Histories as a whole, both in the portions concerned with the *Mēdika* and in the rest. The Council scene is therefore proof that in the main Herodotus' conception of historical causation is unified, and not haphazardly put together to fit variant, and perchance contradictory, requirements of the moment.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Herodotean *logos*, as a unit of narrative, is to a large degree self-contained, but nevertheless related to its surroundings by overt references and thematic connections. Despite this, the *logos* is intended to be a reproduction of tradition, a tradition accessible to the historian by *opsis* and *historiē*, and criticized by him on the basis of *gnômē*.⁷¹ Herodotus conceives of the art of the historian in the metaphor of the judicial interrogation of witnesses.⁷² Now it is characteristic of witnesses that in telling a fact they also have an opinion about it, and therefore the modern distinction between a diplomatic fact and its analysis is alien to Herodotus. Just as tradition reflects the events (*ta genomena*), in the same manner the *logos* reflects the tradition. Therefore, certain aspects of the writing of history — such as the interconnection of events by causation — are to Herodotus part of the events themselves, and he is able to maintain the fiction that he is merely a reporter of objective fact.⁷³ The aim of the *logos* is *atrekeiē*, the "straight" truth; the *logos* wants to be *ho eôn logos*, a mirror of reality; it aims at travelling the right road.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 33.

⁷¹ Hdt. 2.99, 1, etc.

⁷² B. Snell, *Die Ausdrücke für den Begriff des Wissens in der vorplatonischen Philosophie* (*Philologische Untersuchungen* 29, Berlin 1924) 59–71. R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford 1946) 25–8.

⁷³ E.g., Hdt. 7.152, 3.

⁷⁴ Hdt. 1.95, 1. See O. Becker, *Das Bild des Weges und verwandte Vorstellungen im frühgriechischen Denken* (Berlin 1937) 101–38. Walzer (above, note 11) 579–80.

Such a view precludes too strict a patterning of causation. It demands rather that the historian follow the complexity of events as they are reflected in the tradition without seemingly doing violence to it, and without smoothing out its contradictions at all points. At the same time historical reality demands to be intelligible, i.e. it must be seen in its complex relatedness. Causation is one of a number of means by which this relatedness is perceived.

In organizing the parts of the Histories, Herodotus was forced to find a principle of connection other than mere chronology (for chronology does not explain anything). This principle was by necessity a causal principle, for it answered the question (in Toynbee's phrase): how has this come out of that?⁷⁵ Herodotus found it in the expansionism of the Eastern Empires, even though he did not use a single term for it, nor a word which would have enabled him to isolate it as a *cause*. This feature of the Orient presented itself to him as all-pervasive and it dwarfed the more familiar *aitiai* such as vengeance. Throughout the work, therefore, one can observe that *aitiê* is only a partial factor within a larger framework of causes. Herodotus thus developed, on a purely human level, the distinction between basic and ephemeral causes in history, a notion which is well known from its further development in Thucydides.⁷⁶ Thus he was able to observe two periods in Oriental history: from the successors of Deioces to the battle of Salamis we have the period of Oriental expansion, from Croesus on that part of it which affected the Greeks. But expansionism as the underlying cause of these periods was understood by Herodotus to be controlled by the divine in some form. Hence we find, further, the opposites of choice and necessity: Persian expansionism, as shown in the dream scene of Book 7, appears more and more as a matter of necessity and not of choice.⁷⁷ The view that certain aspects of the course of history are necessary has the advantage for the historian that it frees him from concern with the immediate present and allows him greater objectivity.

One might be tempted therefore to acquiesce in a number of polar statements describing Herodotus' view of causation, but nothing could be more misleading. Human versus divine, immediate versus permanent, free versus necessary, are not pairs that can

⁷⁵ A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* 10 (Oxford 1954) 81.

⁷⁶ See above, note 10.

⁷⁷ *TAPA* 85 (1954) 36-7.

be simply equated, and the individual terms are not members of two isolated worlds. As has been shown in the case of Croesus' War against Cyrus, in the Accession of Darius, in the Spartan War against Polycrates, in the Scythian and Libyan Logoi, and elsewhere, Herodotus is capable of constructing *individual* schemes of causal complexes, and thereby emphasizing the unique character of events to a much greater degree than Thucydides. In the same way, he also is able to shift the *aitiê* sections to that part of the narrative where they will give due emphasis (witness, e.g., the different positions in the Egyptian and Scythian Campaign Logoi) or to omit them altogether. The *aitiê* section, which is an important structural feature in the work, relies upon the immediacy of the *aitiê* concept to establish *close* relations between events; it is also used to show the relative importance of events for the central group of actions, the Graeco-Persian wars: it increases therefore in importance as the work progresses. In this way, causation is used to enable the logos to travel the "straight road."

This concern with uniqueness prevents Herodotus from schematizing opposites into two simple levels. A prime example is the causal complex of Croesus' war against Cyrus, where we have found three levels: immediate causes, "permanent" causes (such as expansionism and vengeance), and metaphysical causes such as the curse on Gyges' house. It would be erroneous as well to generalize from this scheme; the factors named here (for example vengeance) appear in a different light in different places. In the speech of the Scythians before their neighbors, vengeance is said to be an instrument of the divine (which allots the time during which it can function); but elsewhere it functions without any ulterior reason.

One remarkable application of the distinction between immediate and permanent causes is the great use made of the *aitiê* concept to explain the conflicts between the Greeks and the Persians. What is gained thereby is first of all an increase in understanding: for we see the Greeks as free dramatic agents incurring guilt for actions that lead in turn to their greatest victories. From the structural point of view this means that from the beginning of his work Herodotus is intent on directing the reader's attention to the very special place the Greeks held within the drama of Persia's rise and fall.

* * * * *

We have found that causation plays indeed a large part in the thought and construction of the Histories, but it would clearly be

wrong to claim that causation could explain the total structure of the work. The basis of Herodotus' use of causation is rather the belief that it cannot be completely known by the historian. In this respect again, causation is merely one aspect of events, and events in general are only incompletely known to tradition and thus the historian's knowledge is also incomplete. Herodotus is not a scientific historian, but he leaves many aspects of events, among them sometimes their causal connection, to intuition rather than to explicit deduction.

Secondly, the causal factor itself is in Herodotus based on certain abstract notions which are themselves no longer liable to derivation, but function as ultimate realities in history. Expansionism is one of them and on the Greek side *aretê* is another. There are conditions Herodotus knows about that have helped to bring about expansionism in the East: the main factor was the rapid internal and external unification of the East. There were also conditions that helped to raise *aretê* in Greece above the level achieved in the Orient, among them poverty and constant strife. But both these traits cannot be entirely derived from these conditions. This is even more true of metaphysical causes and their equivalents in the workings of history: necessity, retribution, change of fortune, balance. There may be an ultimate explanation for all of these in the divine world, but the historian is not primarily concerned with such an explanation. All of these are ultimate realities so far as history goes, and their description constitutes the true mythical element in Herodotus. The workings of these forces is understood by the historian primarily by means of intuition, but Herodotus' approach is not therefore an irrational one. While they cannot be explained causally, they can be clarified by various analogies and mutual relationships with other elements in history. *Aretê* is not caused by poverty, but there is a relationship of balance between them: what a nation lacks in riches, it gains in valor.⁷⁸ A direct proportional relationship exists between the country and the customs of Egypt: Egyptian customs differ from those of the rest of mankind *not because* Egypt's geographical situation differs from the rest of the world, but *just as* it is different.⁷⁹ These forms of analogy include also equalization and opposition: cycles of retribution are equalized, choice and necessity are often opposed.

⁷⁸ Hdt. 9.122, 3; cf. 7.102, 1 and elsewhere.

⁷⁹ Hdt. 2.35, 2.

Thus causation is only a partial factor in Herodotus. In this paper I have also shown its limitations: minor causes are loosely treated, *aitiê* sections are given only in proportion to the importance of the subject matter, the Croesus logos has no causation in its first part, vengeance plays a well-defined, but restricted role, the failure of expansionism is not explained by real historical factors but only by metaphysical ones. The rationalism of Herodotus follows the modes of thought of the Pre-Socratic philosophers in its insistence on proportional relationships and analogy; it is all the more remarkable that within this framework Herodotus has developed the tool of true historical causality to a large extent. Unlike Thucydides, however, Herodotus has not made a system out of causation. He treats it as one aspect of events that are not completely knowable by the historian. The advantage of this intuitive method, as stated above, is its flexibility and the large degree of meaningful connection it achieves. Pure chance plays a smaller role in the Histories than in later historians, where those elements that cannot be directly explained causally are attributed to fortune.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ W. F. Otto in *Grosse Geschichtsdenker*, ed. R. Stadelmann, (Tübingen 1949) 30: Herodotus and all mythical historiography emphasize the unique, the "decisive act of chance" better than does scientific history. This is not true chance, of course; cf. also Schmid-Stählin (above, note 1) 615 f. Bischoff (above, note 10) 20–25 gives lists of Herodotean passages that mention chance prominently, but the total impression of this chapter is misleading: the lists are too inclusive, and they do not show that often what seems due to chance has other causes as well; the important thing about Herodotus' references to chance is that they are so scattered. Cf. also Daniels (above, note 53) 26.