

# Conversations in History: Arrian and Herodotus, Parmenio and Alexander

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Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ σπουδῇ αὐθις ἤγεν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸν ποταμὸν καὶ καταλαμβάνει ἤδη πεποιημένην ἐπ' αὐτοῦ γέφυραν καὶ διαβαίνει ξὺν τῇ στρατιᾷ εὐπετῶς. ἐντεῦθεν δὲ αὐθις σπουδῇ ἤλαυνεν ἐς Πέρσας, ὥστε ἔφθη ἀφικέσθαι πρὶν τὰ χρήματα διαρπάσασθαι τοὺς φύλακας. ἔλαβε δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐν Πασαργάδαις χρήματα ἐν τοῖς Κύρου τοῦ πρώτου θησαυροῖς. σατράπην μὲν δὴ Περσῶν κατέστησε Φρασαόρτην τὸν Ῥεομίθρου παῖδα· τὰ βασιλεία δὲ τὰ Περσικὰ ἐνέπρησε, Παρμενίωνος σώζειν ξυμβουλευόντος, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ ὅτι οὐ καλὸν αὐτοῦ κτήματα ἤδη ἀπολλύναι καὶ ὅτι οὐχ ὡσαύτως προσέξουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν ἄνθρωποι, ὡς οὐδὲ αὐτῷ ἐγνωκότε κατέχειν τῆς Ἀσίας τὴν ἀρχήν, ἀλλὰ ἐπελθεῖν μόνον νικῶντα. ὁ δὲ τιμωρήσασθαι ἐθέλειν Πέρσας ἔφασκεν ἀνθ' ὧν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐλάσαντες τὰς τε Ἀθήνας κατέσκαψαν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ ἐνέπρησαν, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα κακὰ τοὺς Ἕλληνας εἰργάσαντο, ὑπὲρ τούτων δίκας λαβεῖν. ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ σὺν νῶ δρᾶσαι τοῦτό γε Ἀλέξανδρος οὐδὲ εἶναί τις αὐτῇ Περσῶν τῶν πάλαι τιμωρία.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arrian *Anab.* 3.18.10–12: “Then Alexander resumed his march in haste to the river and found the bridge already built over it and easily crossed it with the army. Thereupon he pressed on in haste to Persepolis so as to arrive there before the guards plundered the gold. He took also the gold at Pasargadae in the treasuries of the first Cyrus. Then he made Phrasaortes the son of Rheomithras satrap over the Persians; and he burned down the Persian palace, although Parmenio advised him to preserve it, for other reasons and because it was not good to destroy what were now his own possessions and because in this way people in Asia would not be loyal to him—on the grounds that he did not intend to retain the rule of Asia but that he came as a conqueror only. But Alexander claimed that he wished to exact revenge from the Persians because when they marched against Greece they sacked Athens and burned the shrines and for as many other evils as

ARRIAN'S ACCOUNT of Alexander's stay at Persepolis stands apart from those of other authors in many ways. As A. B. Bosworth points out, it is "extraordinarily brief," with no indication that Alexander spent four months based in the Persian capital; nor does Arrian mention the Macedonian army's sack of the city. Further, where other sources dwell on the colorful figure of Thais, the Athenian courtesan who sets in motion the burning of the palace, Arrian says nothing of her and instead recounts an exchange, reproduced above, between Alexander and Parmenio, the senior general whom the conqueror inherited from his father.<sup>2</sup> While there is a robust tradition of Parmenio's attempts to guide Alexander, this particular occasion is unique to Arrian, and it introduces one of the historian's rare explicit criticisms of the Macedonian king.

There are various ways to approach these anomalies. Bosworth, for example, seeks to reconcile and combine the entire range of evidence for events in Persepolis, blending Arrian with the other authors as well as with information from elsewhere in the latter's narrative. As Bosworth notes, all authors touch on the idea of revenge that Alexander here asserts and Arrian dismisses. Identifying this passage as the first place where Arrian takes issue with the king, Bosworth also directs the reader to the passage where the historian revisits the arson and incorporates Alexander's regret.<sup>3</sup> This integrative approach has its merits, but the fact remains that Arrian's account is idiosyncratic. It is thus worth exploring the passage from other angles, taking into account its literary influences and effects and

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they inflicted on the Greeks; that for these he was getting justice. But it seems to me neither that Alexander did this, at least, with deliberation, nor that this act was revenge for the Persians of old."

<sup>2</sup> See A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* I (Oxford 1980) 329–333; quotation at 329. The other sources for Alexander's sojourn at Persepolis are Diod. 17.69.1–2, 70.1–3, 72.1–6; Curt. 5.5.1–4, 5.6.1–7.12; and Plut. *Alex.* 37.1–38.8.

<sup>3</sup> Bosworth, *Historical Commentary* I 331–332.

situating it in the context not of other sources, but of Arrian's view of history.

The prominence of Parmenio as a wise advisor, unique to Arrian's version of events at Persepolis, recommends Herodotus as a starting-point for an investigation of literary influence. The extent of Arrian's interest in imitation has long been recognized, as a trio of nineteenth-century studies amply demonstrates, investigating in turn his relationship to Thucydides, Xenophon, and Herodotus.<sup>4</sup> While Xenophon may be the dominant influence, appearing throughout the later historian's oeuvre and inspiring his cognomen,<sup>5</sup> Arrian could move nimbly from one predecessor to another. In the case of Herodotus, scholars have shown Arrian adopting both his style and his thinking.<sup>6</sup> A particularly interesting example of the latter is Christian Jacob's argument that Arrian uses Xenophon to make Alexander into a divinely inspired leader who can find a way forward for his men, and Herodotus to provide anti-models of generals who acted impiously.<sup>7</sup>

I intend to follow Jacob in taking an intertextual approach to Arrian. Allusion and intertextuality, while generally more associated with poetry, feature in classical historiography too: no one would dispute that Sallust, for example, modeled his style on that of Thucydides, despite differences of language and sub-

<sup>4</sup> For Thucydides, E. Meyer, *De Arriano Thucydideo* (Rostock 1877); for Xenophon, with comparative consideration of Herodotus and Thucydides, C. Renz, *Arrianus quatenus Xenophontis imitator sit* (diss. Rostock 1879); and for Herodotus, H. R. Grundmann, "Quid in elocutione Arriani Herodoto debeat," *Berliner Studien* 2 (1885) 177–268.

<sup>5</sup> On Arrian's use of Xenophon as a literary and personal exemplar see P. A. Stadter, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill 1980); on his stylistic influence see Renz, *Arrianus*, and H. Tonnet, *Recherches sur Arrien: sa personnalité et ses écrits atticistes* (Amsterdam 1988).

<sup>6</sup> For example, Grundmann, *Berliner Studien* 2 (1885) 199–232, looks at pleonasm, λέξεις εἰρομένη, and Ionicisms.

<sup>7</sup> C. Jacob, "Alexandre et la maîtrise de l'espace: L'art du voyage dans l'Anabase d'Arrien," *QJ* 34 (1991) 5–40.

ject matter.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, intertextual studies of the ancient historians are not so common that any consensus has emerged either about their techniques of allusion or about appropriate scholarly methodology in detecting and interpreting echoings, appropriations, and corrections.<sup>9</sup> The line of analysis offered here, then, may have its skeptics and critics, and it is best to begin by explaining clearly my underlying rationale and the criteria I am applying. No one, I think, would dispute either that Arrian engaged in what the Romans called *imitatio* or that he is making an allusion in the ‘Second Preface’ when he invokes the *Iliad* and positions himself as Homer to Alexander’s Achilles (1.12.1–5). In the latter case, Arrian identifies for his readers the earlier narrative they are to consider; but, as is generally the case for allusions, this instance is an exception rather than regular practice. Thus inevitably the reader must form his own judgment, both about what constitutes imitation and when another author or a particular part of an earlier text is being alluded to. I hope to show that, in addition to Parmenio’s role as a wise advisor, Arrian uses the topos of a sacked city, words from Herodotus’ lexicon, and the theme of vengeance to invoke and converse with his predecessor. In the course of demonstrating the fifth-century historian’s influence, I hope to show also that even while invoking his predecessor, Arrian remains consistent to his own view of the relationship between past and present.

### 1. *The Topos*

The central action in Arrian 3.18.10–12 is the destruction of the palace at Persepolis, and to some extent therefore it is but one instance of a topos in classical historiography, namely, the

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. P. Perrochat, *Les modèles grecs de Salluste* (Paris 1949) 1–39.

<sup>9</sup> The 2011 meeting of the APA included a seminar on “Allusion and Intertextuality in Classical Historiography” to address the theoretical aspects of this approach to classical historiography; the papers are available at [http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/Histos\\_WorkingPapers\\_APA\\_7Jan11.html](http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/Histos_WorkingPapers_APA_7Jan11.html). For published discussion see the thoughtful treatment in D. S. Levene, *Livy on the Hannibalic War* (Oxford 2010) 82–86, 97–98.

pillaging of the enemy's capital city. Nevertheless, an unnecessary prepositional phrase points the reader to a particular sack, that of Sardis by Cyrus: ἔλαβε δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐν Πασαργάδαις χρήματα ἐν τοῖς Κύρου τοῦ πρώτου θησαυροῖς. Arrian did not have to include the information that the gold was in the treasuries of the first Cyrus, but the identification of the location is not gratuitous if its purpose is to alert the reader to potential historical resonances. And indeed, the passage concerns them, for Alexander states that he wants to avenge the wrongs and damage inflicted by the Persians at the time of Xerxes' invasion: ὁ δὲ τιμωρήσασθαι ἐθέλειν Πέρσας ἔφασκεν ἀνθ' ὧν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐλάσαντες τὰς τε Ἀθήνας κατέσκαψαν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ ἐνέπρησαν, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα κακὰ τοὺς Ἕλληνας εἰργάσαντο, ὑπὲρ τούτων δίκας λαβεῖν. Of all the ways that Arrian might have related this notorious episode in Alexander's career, he chose first to highlight its connection to past events by mentioning Cyrus and then to dwell on Alexander's desire for revenge for the harm done to Attica and Greek shrines a century and a half earlier.

As noted above, Arrian alone omits Thais and instead reports a conversation between Alexander and Parmenio before the royal residence is burned. It would be helpful to know Arrian's source for this version of events, but at a minimum it is possible to discern that the episode probably did not tumble ready-made into his lap. As comparison with other accounts shows, he collapses time to bring into proximity Alexander's acquisition of Darius' gold and Parmenio's recommendation to protect the palace. In fact, the Macedonians spent several months at Persepolis, and the destruction of the palace seems to have occurred shortly before their departure.<sup>10</sup> In Arrian, only the appointment of Phrasaortes as satrap of Persia hints that capturing the treasuries and burning the palace were not practically consecutive. The exceptional brevity that Bosworth

<sup>10</sup> See J. R. Hamilton, *Plutarch, Alexander. A Commentary* (Oxford 1969) 98–99, for the chronology.

comments on thus achieves an illusion of near-simultaneity and thereby suggests a desire on Arrian's part to associate with one another Alexander's first and final acts at Persepolis, which not coincidentally both resonate with events from the past.

## 2. *Diction*

From a modern perspective, the most famous accounts both of the emergence of the Persians under Cyrus and of Xerxes' invasion are those of Herodotus, who also links them and who was well known to Arrian. In antiquity, however, Herodotus could not command such a monopoly. These events were recounted by other authors, who were also familiar to Arrian, specifically Ctesias in his *Persica* and Xenophon in the *Cyropaedia*. Moreover, it is possible that Arrian read yet other writers whom he never names but who nonetheless influenced him. So is it fair to assign special importance to Herodotus? Arrian's profound use of imitation requires critics always to leave open the possibility of multiple influences. Indeed, arguably, our appreciation of Arrian's ability to deploy models is limited only by our knowledge of the corpus at his disposal; the closer one looks, at any rate, the more there seems to be found.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, we must work with what we have. Authors unnamed or unknown to us, however rich their works may have been, necessarily remain in the realm of speculation. Of the authors available, Xenophon and Ctesias present two divergent scenarios. The *Cyropaedia* is intact and extant, able to be read as closely by us as by Arrian. In the case of the episode under consideration, it seems clear that, while Xenophon was engaging with Herodotus' depiction of both Croesus and Solon, Arrian chooses to bypass the fourth-century historian and to engage directly with the earlier author. The real chal-

<sup>11</sup> Thus J. Marincola, "Some Suggestions on the Proem and 'Second Preface' of Arrian's *Anabasis*," *JHS* 109 (1989) 186–189, responds to J. Moles, "The Interpretation of the 'Second Preface' in Arrian's *Anabasis*," *JHS* 105 (1985) 162–168, in part by adding Hellenistic historians to the literary sources for the second preface.

lenge lies with Ctesias; since we have only paraphrases and summaries, we cannot judge his impact on Arrian's narrative with anything close to certainty. This unavoidable problem is very real. All that can be said is that, in the case of the burning of Persepolis and the two historical moments to which Arrian refers, Photius' rendition of Ctesias' Persian history has erased any trace of similarity.<sup>12</sup>

Herodotus remains, and furnishes promising material, most particularly when he recounts the moment when the Persians first obtained wealth, that is, when Cyrus took Sardis from Croesus. The seizing of the gold provides the subject matter of the first exchange between the two men in Herodotus' treatment. With hallmark, fluid repetition, he dwells on the fact that vast treasure is changing hands (1.88.1–90.1):

ὁ μὲν ταῦτα ἔλεγε, Κῦρος δὲ αὐτὸν λύσας κατέϊσέ τε ἔγγυς ἔωτοῦ καὶ κάρτα ἐν πολλῇ προμηθίῃ εἶχε, ἀπεθώμαζέ τε ὀρέων καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ περὶ ἐκείνον ἔοντες πάντες. ὁ δὲ συννοίῃ ἐχόμενος ἤσυχος ἦν. μετὰ δὲ ἐπιστραφεῖς τε καὶ ἰδόμενος τοὺς Πέρσας τὸ τῶν Λυδῶν ἄστῳ κεραΐζοντας εἶπε· ὦ βασιλεῦ, κότερον λέγειν πρὸς σὲ τὰ νοέων τυγχάνω ἢ σιγᾶν ἐν τῷ παρεόντι χρή; Κῦρος δὲ μιν θαρσέοντα ἐκέλευε λέγειν ὅτι βούλοιοτο. ὁ δὲ αὐτὸν εἰρώτα λέγων· οὗτος ὁ πολλὸς ὄμιλος τί ταῦτα πολλῇ σπουδῇ ἐργάζεται; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· πόλιν τε τὴν σὴν διαρπάζει καὶ χρήματα τὰ σὰ διαφορέει. Κροῖσος δὲ ἀμείβετο· οὔτε πόλιν τὴν ἐμὴν οὔτε χρήματα τὰ ἐμὰ διαρπάζει· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ ἔτι τούτων μέτα· ἀλλὰ φέρουσί τε καὶ ἄγουσι τὰ σὰ. Κύρω δὲ ἐπιμελὲς ἐγένετο τὰ Κροῖσος εἶπε, μεταστησάμενος δὲ τοὺς ἄλλους εἶρετο Κροῖσον ὅτι οἱ ἐνορώῃ ἐν τοῖσι ποιευμένοισι. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ἐπιτε με θεοὶ ἔδωκαν δούλῳ σοι, δικαίῳ, εἴ τι ἐνορῶ πλέον, σημαίνειν σοι. Πέρσαι φύσιν ἔοντες ὑβρισταὶ εἰσὶ ἀχρήματοι· ἦν ὧν σὺ τούτους περιίδης διαρπάσαντας καὶ κατασχόντας χρήματα μεγάλα, τάδε τοι ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπίδοξα γενέσθαι· ὅς ἂν αὐτῶν πλείστα κατάσχη, τοῦτον προσδέκεσθαί τοι ἐπαναστησόμενον. νῦν ὧν ποιήσον ἠδὲ, εἴ τοι ἀρέσκει τὰ ἐγὼ λέγω. κάτισον τῶν δορυφόρων ἐπὶ πάσῃσι τῆσι πύλῃσι φυλάκους, οἳ λεγόντων

<sup>12</sup> *FGrHist* 688 FF 9 and 13 (Phot. *Bibl.* 72).

πρὸς τοὺς ἐκφέροντας τὰ χρήματα ἀπαιρέομενοι ὡς σφεα ἀναγκάως ἔχει δεκατευθῆναι τῷ Δίῳ. καὶ σὺ τέ σφι οὐκ ἀπεχθήσῃαι βίῃ ἀπαιρέομενος τὰ χρήματα, καὶ ἐκεῖνοι συγγνόντες ποιέειν σε δίκαια ἐκόντες προήσουσι. ταῦτα ἀκούων ὁ Κῦρος ὑπερήδeto, ὡς οἱ ἐδόκεε εὖ ὑποτίθεσθαι.<sup>13</sup>

In Arrian, the deed is reduced to a single simple formulation—*πρὶν τὰ χρήματα διαρπάσασθαι τοὺς φύλακας*—but one that encapsulates and recalls the act emphasized by Herodotus. And Herodotus' account is highly relevant for Arrian since the older historian marks his sack as the moment when the Persians became wealthy; as Croesus says, previously they were *ἀχρήματοι*. Croesus' advice to Cyrus preserves the gold that is captured by Alexander over two centuries later. Since it is the same gold, Arrian rightly reminds the readers of its origins and history. Both historians have the interlocutor make the same

<sup>13</sup> “Croesus said these things, and Cyrus in turn freed him and placed him close by and held him in high esteem; and looking upon Croesus he marveled greatly as did all around him. But Croesus kept silent in deliberation. Then, turning around and seeing the Persians pillaging the Lydians' town, he said, ‘King, in the current circumstances is it right for me to tell you what I happen to be thinking or to keep silent?’ Cyrus directed him to take heart and to say whatever he wished. Croesus began to question him by saying, ‘Why is this great crowd doing these things in much haste?’ Cyrus replied, ‘They are pillaging your polis and carrying off your gold’. But Croesus replied, ‘It is not my polis nor my gold that they pillage; for none of these things belong to me any longer; they are instead leading and driving away your property’. What Croesus said seemed observant to Cyrus, and dismissing the rest he asked Croesus what he noticed in what was being done. Croesus said, ‘Since the gods gave me as a slave to you, I think that it is right, if I see something to your advantage, to point it out to you. The Persians being violent by nature are poor. So if you overlook those plundering and acquiring great wealth, the following things seem likely to arise from them: whichever man acquires the most is likely to rise up against you. So now do this, if what I say is agreeable to you. Establish garrisons of spear bearers at all the gates, who should say to those carrying off gold, as they take it away, that it is necessary that they give a tithe to Zeus. You will not arouse hatred for yourself taking the gold by force, and they, recognizing that you are doing the right thing, will hand it over willingly’. Upon hearing this, Cyrus rejoiced, for he thought he was being advised well.”



point about the pillaging. Cyrus believes that his men are plundering Croesus' city, but Croesus points out that everything is now Cyrus': ὁ δὲ εἶπε· πόλιν τε τὴν σὴν διαρπάζει καὶ χρήματα τὰ σὰ διαφορέει. Κροῖσος δὲ ἀμείβετο· οὔτε πόλιν τὴν ἐμὴν οὔτε χρήματα τὰ ἐμὰ διαρπάζει· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ ἔτι τούτων μέτα· ἀλλὰ φέρουσί τε καὶ ἄγουσι τὰ σὰ. Parmenio tells Alexander οὐ καλὸν αὐτοῦ κτήματα ἤδη ἀπολλύναι, thereby reminding him that he is destroying his own property, not that of an enemy. Here, to be sure, the idea rather than the language is being recycled, but its presence reinforces the passages' similarity.

Another phrase found in both historians is worth noting: Croesus makes his observations to Cyrus after being sunk in deliberation: ὁ δὲ συννοίῃ ἐχόμενος ἤσυχος ἦν. Alexander, in Arrian's view, did not act out of deliberation when he burned the palace: οὐδ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ σὺν νῶ δρᾶσαι τοῦτό γε Ἀλέξανδρος.<sup>14</sup> Curiously, this appearance of *συννοίῃ* is a hapax in Herodotus and, equally, Arrian's *σὺν νῶ* appears nowhere else in his extant corpus. The echo is circumscribed but, given its unparalleled nature for the two authors, must be meaningful.

### 3. Character: The Wise Advisor

Thus far it might look as if Arrian is setting the reader up to think in terms of continuity: Croesus' gold becomes Cyrus', then the younger Darius', and finally Alexander's; Arrian is coupling his historiographical train to Herodotus'. The same inference initially emerges from another Herodotean feature in this passage: Parmenio as wise advisor. While as a character type the wise advisor is as old as Greek literature (e.g. Nestor in the *Iliad*), the figure is probably most associated with Herodo-

<sup>14</sup> Note that not all verbal echoes are material. Alexander proceeds to Persepolis in the same way that the Persians sack Sardis (*σπουδῆ*), but since in Arrian speed is Alexander's default mode, the appearance of the adverb here is hardly remarkable. Equally, the neutral term *φύλακες* is insufficient as an allusion. Herodotus' *δορυφόροι* would be a much stronger marker if it appeared in Arrian.

tus.<sup>15</sup> The type does not feature prominently in Arrian's *Anabasis*, where Alexander is almost all-knowing and all-wise. The king rarely seeks advice or even information, except for the reports of scouts and the recommendations of seers, and no one but Parmenio tries to guide him. Apart from the efforts of the latter, there is just one extended episode involving an advisor, or more precisely a 'tragic warner', and he is on the Persian side (2.6.3–7). Before Issus, Darius initially takes up a position that favors his superior numbers and strength in cavalry. As time passes and Alexander, engaged in other ventures, fails to appear, Darius grows restless and is inclined to seek out the Macedonian king, a move desired and recommended also by his entourage. Only Amyntas, a deserter from Alexander who had initially endorsed the advantages of Darius' position, urges him to remain, but in vain. The historian concludes the episode by saying that some divine chance led Darius to a site that canceled his advantages and aided Alexander; Arrian ends (2.6.7): *ἐχρῆν γὰρ ἤδη καὶ Πέρσας πρὸς Μακεδόνων ἀφαιρεθῆναι τῆς Ἀσίας τὴν ἀρχήν, καθάπερ οὖν Μῆδοι μὲν πρὸς Περσῶν ἀφείρησαν, πρὸς Μήδων δὲ ἔτι ἔμπροσθεν Ἀσσύριοι.*<sup>16</sup>

I return to this passage below. What matters here is simply that, because Arrian does not make much use of the advisor type, his deployment of Parmenio is distinctive in the narrative and, as noted, at Persepolis it is unique among the Alexander historians. Of course there was a well-established set of stories about Parmenio's aspiration to advise Alexander wisely. The major sources report different combinations of episodes, but the underlying idea is consistent: Parmenio regularly offered Alexander his advice and almost as regularly had his view rejected: from strategy at the Granicus, Miletus, and Gaugamela

<sup>15</sup> The fundamental discussions are H. Bischoff, *Der Warner bei Herodot* (diss. Marburg 1932), and R. Lattimore, "The Wise Adviser in Herodotus," *CP* 34 (1939) 24–35.

<sup>16</sup> "For it was fated at that time that the Persians be deprived of control of Asia by the Macedonians, just as the Medes had been deprived of it by the Persians, and the Assyrians still earlier by the Medes."

to martial tactics and negotiations with Darius, the older general failed to persuade his king to accept his guidance. As Elizabeth Carney has shown, the Alexander historians vary considerably in the way that they handle the advice episodes.<sup>17</sup> For example, Parmenio and Alexander may both be depicted as overly cautious or excessively bold; though Parmenio mostly regards Alexander as simply a Macedonian king, he sometimes envisions him as the head of the Persian empire; Parmenio's advice is generally wide of the mark, but not always so. Furthermore, Carney notes that not all episodes are recounted by all authors and identifies several that appear in only one source.

Carney's analysis leads to the important point that Alexander historians felt free to pick and choose among the Parmenio-Alexander exchanges, according to whatever presentation of the two they wished to offer. In my view Arrian's selection consists of six besides the Persepolis incident:<sup>18</sup> the crossing of the Granicus (1.13.2–7), use of the navy at Miletus (1.18.6–9), the medicine of Philip the Acarnanian (2.4.7–11), Darius' proposal for a settlement (2.25.1–3), scouting or attacking at Gaugamela (3.9.3–4), and the possibility of a nocturnal assault at Gaugamela (3.10.1–4). These provide useful points of comparison for Arrian's treatment of Persepolis.

At Persepolis, Arrian gives the perspectives of three men. First, Parmenio tries to convince Alexander that it is a bad idea to destroy one's own possessions and that the act of destruction will make him appear to his subjects as a raider rather than their new ruler. Second, Alexander expresses his desire to avenge the wrongs committed by Xerxes. Finally, Arrian himself thinks that Alexander acted thoughtlessly and that revenge

<sup>17</sup> E. Carney, "Artifice and Alexander History," in A. B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction* (Oxford 2000) 263–285, esp. 265–266.

<sup>18</sup> Carney counts the occasion where Parmenio hands over to Alexander a Persian spy (1.25.4–5), but because it is not clear what role, if any, Parmenio plays, I have not included it.

is not possible. Although these three positions are distinct, those of Arrian and Parmenio both advocate preservation of the palace while Alexander wants to destroy it. Since Arrian regards Alexander's course of action as wrong, he in effect approves Parmenio's advice. In the other advice episodes, by contrast, he tends to make Parmenio's recommendations look erroneous. At the Granicus, for example, Parmenio suggests waiting in order to launch the attack early the next morning, when the Macedonians will be able to surprise Memnon's forces, rather than crossing in disorder and trying to ascend the opposite bank under Persian fire; his closing argument is that a defeat at the outset is ruinous for a campaign. Alexander replies that after his easy crossing of the Hellespont, he would be ashamed to let the meager Granicus pose an obstacle and that a Macedonian show of cowardice here will hearten the Persians. He proceeds to order his forces for the assault. Famously, the Macedonians manage to rout the Persians despite the latter's superior position, and the outcome seems to vindicate Alexander's strategy (1.13.2–1.16.3).

This is the general pattern: Parmenio offers unsolicited advice and Alexander refutes it before immediately pursuing, successfully, his preferred course of action. At Miletus Parmenio wants to fight by sea, Alexander by land; the land campaign succeeds (1.18.6–1.19.4). When Alexander is on his sickbed, Parmenio advises him in a letter that Philip the physician is a double agent and is trying to kill him; Alexander drinks Philip's potion and recovers (2.4.7–11). On two other occasions Arrian gives Alexander a *bon mot* when the king is rejecting Parmenio's opinion. At the meeting of the Companions to debate Darius' peace offer (ransom for his family members, the Euphrates as the boundary of Macedonian and Persian territory, a marriage for Alexander to his daughter and alliance with himself), Parmenio is reported to have said that, if he were Alexander, he would be delighted to end war and danger on these terms, and Alexander stingingly replies that he would too, if he were Parmenio, but, since he is Alexander, he will answer as Alexander: that he has no need of money, that there is no reason to accept part of the territory instead of all of it, and that he can marry

Darius' daughter whether or not the king wishes to give her (2.25.1–3). On the eve of Gaugamela, Parmenio comes to Alexander's tent and recommends an assault by night, asserting that darkness will allow the Macedonians to catch the Persian soldiers unaware and discombobulated, as well as fearful from the absence of light. Alexander retorts with acid that it is shameful to steal victory and that Alexander must win openly and without trickery.<sup>19</sup>

Only once, in fact, does Arrian have Alexander pursue the path that Parmenio recommends. Before Gaugamela, Alexander proposes two alternatives to his officers: to attack immediately or, as Parmenio thinks best, to encamp and scout the area so that they can locate any traps and assess the Persians' position and strength. While the king adopts Parmenio's advice, Arrian avoids a scenario where Alexander seems dependent on the wisdom of his lieutenant. The scene instead revolves around Alexander assembling his commanders and sketching the options, one of which originated with Parmenio.

While Arrian's Alexander thus tends to disregard advice and to make Parmenio look meddling, it is too simplistic to think merely in terms of Arrian's aligning with the king and against his subordinate. To avoid reducing the advice episodes in general and the Persepolis episode in particular to a question of whose side Arrian is taking, it is worth considering more broadly the ways in which he locates himself in the intermittent dialogue between Parmenio and Alexander. One way in which classical historians enter into the conversations they craft for their historical actors is to exploit the gap between word and deed: the consequences of the actions taken allow the author to vindicate or undermine a speaker's position. This process can be as simple as a debate between diametrically opposed positions where subsequent events prove one speaker correct and

<sup>19</sup> As E. L. Wheeler points out, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery* (*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 108 [1988]) 32–33, Alexander's condemnation of 'stealing' victory is unusual; many Greeks use κλέπτω and its cognates positively in a military context.

the other wrong. As Christopher Pelling has shown, however, the conclusions to be drawn from wise advice, whether accepted or rejected, are not always straightforward.<sup>20</sup> Such is certainly the case with Arrian. At the Granicus one might regard Alexander's response as deeply ironic and arguably wrong. The uneventful crossing of the Hellespont resulted from the advance expedition of Parmenio and Attalus, which secured a beachhead. Thus Parmenio ought to have far greater authority when it comes to taking troops across bodies of water. Further, Alexander's strategy manifestly is dangerous, as events prove. For in the *mêlée* of fighting that the crossing provokes, Alexander's spear is smashed, and even in his *aristeia* he is nearly killed, rescued only by the quick action of Cleitus (1.15.6–8). And yet, though the king's plan was risky, it succeeded. Given Arrian's generally encomiastic treatment of Alexander and the short shrift he accords Parmenio, it seems far more likely that he expected his readers to admire Alexander's verve than to conclude that Parmenio was right and the king merely lucky.

At Miletus, Arrian chooses to echo in his own voice words that he initially had Alexander speak. In that episode, where Parmenio wants to use the navy and Alexander elects to attack by land, their debate turns on the interpretation of an omen. Parmenio argues that their fleet can win and that the landing of an eagle on the prow of one of Alexander's ships signifies that the Macedonians will be victorious at sea; the Macedonians will profit greatly if they triumph and have little to lose from a defeat. Alexander replies that Parmenio's judgment is wrong and that he has misconstrued the meaning of the eagle: there is nothing logical in pitting a small naval force against a larger one, he will not betray the Macedonians in this way, word of a defeat would cause the mainland Greeks to revolt, and, furthermore, because the eagle chose to land, that is where the Mace-

<sup>20</sup> C. Pelling, "Thucydides' Archidamus and Herodotus' Artabanus," in M. A. Flower and M. Toher (eds.), *Georgica: Greek Studies in Honour of George Cavell* (BICS Suppl. 58 [1991]) 120–142.

donians will be victorious: εἶναι μὲν γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀετόν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐπὶ γῆ καθήμενος ἐφαίνετο, δοκεῖν οἱ μᾶλλον τι σημαίνειν, ὅτι ἐκ γῆς κρατήσει τοῦ Περσῶν ναυτικοῦ (1.18.9). Summarizing and assessing at the end of the Miletus campaign, Arrian echoes the words with which Alexander interpreted the bird's meaning: καὶ τὸν ἀετόν ταύτη συνέβαλλεν, ὅτι ἐσήμηνεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῆς γῆς κρατήσειν τῶν νεῶν (1.20.1). In this episode, then, repeated language indicates a close identification of author and actor.

In the case of Darius' peace terms, which Alexander categorically refuses despite Parmenio's endorsement of them, Arrian takes yet another tack, introducing the conversation with λέγουσι (2.25.2). Greek authors use forms of λέγω/λόγος variously in establishing relationships between themselves and the information they impart: the intent may be either to enhance or to diminish the information's status; the writer may or may not be signaling its dubiety.<sup>21</sup> In Arrian, λεγόμενα constitute their own category of information. In the first preface, the historian says that he has taken Ptolemy and Aristobulus as his primary authorities but that he will occasionally include material from other authors, referring to such matter as λεγόμενα. There is strong scholarly consensus about the ways in which he deploys λεγόμενα to expand, enhance, and color his

<sup>21</sup> For example, H. D. Westlake, "ΛΕΓΕΤΑΙ in Thucydides," *Mnemosyne* 30 (1977) 345–362, argues against the view that in Thucydides λέγεται always equates to uncertainty; see also his comments on Xenophon (346) and Herodotus (361–362). V. Gray, "Thucydides' Source Citations: 'It Is Said'," *CQ* 61 (2011) 75–90, goes further, showing how Thucydides uses λέγεται to introduce an independent voice that can confirm his own and highlight places where he treats material of thematic significance. C. Pelling, "Educating Croesus: Talking and Learning in Herodotus' Lydian Logos," *CA* 25 (2006) 141–177, offers a brief recent discussion of the scholarly debate over Herodotus' use of information reported indirectly (157 n.59). B. Cook, "Plutarch's Use of λέγεται: Narrative Design and Source in *Alexander*," *GRBS* 42 (2001) 329–360, shows how in Plutarch λέγεται signifies authority rather than doubt or distance; there is useful bibliography on the subject of reported information in nn.2 and 3.

narrative. They may introduce traditional stories about Alexander or offer a contrasting perspective. They may also be a distancing strategy.<sup>22</sup> The diplomatic exchange with Darius is unquestionably in the category of canonical stories about Alexander: it appears also in Plutarch (29.4), Curtius (4.11.1–15), and even Diodorus (17.54.1–3), who does very little with the Alexander-Parmenio relationship. The traditional nature of the episode automatically establishes distance from Arrian. He has no special authority here and asserts none, making no comment about Parmenio's advice and Alexander's response; the exchange is left to speak for itself.

When on the eve of Gaugamela Parmenio comes to Alexander's tent to recommend an assault by night and Alexander insists that he must win not as a thief but openly and without trickery, Arrian shifts from one stance to another. Beginning with λέγουσι, he quickly adds that Alexander replied in the hearing of other people (ὅτι καὶ ἄλλοι κατήκουον τῶν λόγων). This combination gives the impression that the story is traditional and not specific to a particular source, but that Arrian regards it as true and wants his readers to accept its authenticity. He further supports its veracity by pausing to analyze and explain Alexander's haughty response, ascribing it to courage rather than arrogance and speaking *in propria persona* to delineate what he believes to be the king's reasoning: καὶ τὸ μεγαλήγορον αὐτοῦ τοῦτο οὐχ ὑπέρογκον μᾶλλον τι ἢ εὐθαρσὲς ἐν τοῖς κινδύνοις ἐφαίνετο· δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε, καὶ λογισμῶ ἀκριβεῖ ἐχρήσατο ἐν τῷ τοιῶδε (3.10.2).<sup>23</sup> The construction

<sup>22</sup> See E. Schwartz, "Arrianus," *RE* 9 (1896) 1238–1243 (= *Griechische Geschichtschreiber* [Leipzig 1959] 143–149), who is particularly concerned to point out that λεγόμενα cannot always be neatly separated from Ptolemy or especially Aristobulus; Stadter, *Arrian* 66–76 and 216 n.51; Bosworth, *Historical Commentary* I 20–21, and *From Arrian to Alexander: Studies in Historical Interpretation* (Oxford 1988) 39–40 and 61–63.

<sup>23</sup> "This vaunting of his did not appear to be arrogance, but rather self-confidence in the midst of danger; and he seems to me to have made an accurate calculation of the following kind." Interestingly, in making this counter-argument, Arrian borrows from Thucydides' lexicon. As Meyer, *De*



δοκεῖν δ' ἔμοιγε is paralleled by ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ in the Persepolis passage, with the crucial difference that here Arrian speaks as Alexander's proxy, while there he takes issue with his protagonist. For throughout the range of postures that Arrian adopts in these conversations, however close or distant he is, whether he interjects a comment or not, only at Persepolis does he outright disagree with Alexander. For Arrian to criticize the Macedonian king is rare, but not without parallels. Indeed the historian can and does take issue with his hero, and in far stronger language than here. With both the execution of Bessus and the punishment of Callisthenes, Arrian states directly that he cannot approve (οὐκ ἐπαινῶ) Alexander's conduct (4.7.4 and 4.12.6).<sup>24</sup> Still, his attitude towards Alexander often resembles hero-worship, and so any occasion when he parts ways with his hero requires a second look. Further, taking into consideration Arrian's overall treatment of Parmenio as a wise advisor, the triangle at Persepolis is exceptional. Arrian's Parmenio does not ordinarily give advice worth taking, and yet on that occasion the historian stands far closer to him than to Alexander.

#### 4. *Theme*

Here the evocation of Herodotus begins to look meaningful. Perhaps Arrian is disagreeing as much with his predecessor as with Alexander in rejecting the possibility of vengeance. When Alexander claims to want to be avenged (τιμωρήσασθαι) and to be seeking justice (δίκας λαβεῖν) for the ills that Xerxes' Persians visited upon the Greeks, he is assuming a Herodotean

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Arriano 13, pointed out over a century ago, Thucydides converted the adjective παράλογος into a masculine substantive by using it with the definite article. Arrian incorporates ἐκ τοῦ παραλόγου, "contrary to expectation," twice in his exposition of the flaws in Parmenio's plan. Further, he uses two substantives ending in -σις, another characteristically Thucydidean touch treated by Grundmann, *Berliner Studien* 2 (1885) 193.

<sup>24</sup> It is probably not a coincidence that the only other time Arrian uses the word τιμωρία is for the punishment of Bessus; in his lexicon it seems to signify a crude and meaningless type of justice.

understanding of the way the world works: the *ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα* that Herodotus presents as the governing logic in the sequence of wife-snatchings with which he begins.<sup>25</sup> John Gould expresses well the absolutely fundamental place of vengeance and reciprocity in Herodotus' thinking: "Herodotus' use of revenge as a mode of historical explanation is thus grounded not only in the craft of the storyteller but also in the model of reciprocal action which is built into his sense of the world."<sup>26</sup> As in the case of Herodotus' Glaucus (6.86), vengeance can take its time, and the destruction of the Persian palace can easily be recompense for the century-and-a-half old ravaging of Greece.

Diction, content, character, theme all link Herodotus' Sardis to Arrian's Persepolis, and yet there are important differences as well. Parmenio duplicates Croesus' point about not destroying one's own property, but he also warns Alexander against alienating future subjects, a point not in Herodotus. Where Cyrus accepts Croesus' advice and seeks more, Alexander's desire for vengeance makes Parmenio's opinion so irrelevant to him that he does not critique it, as on other occasions, but instead states his motives. Finally, Arrian uncategorically dismisses the possibility of vengeance. It looks, then, as if Arrian recognized the appositeness of the historical precedent, and yet wanted to qualify it. A version of the events at Persepolis that emphasized its Herodotean component made it possible for Arrian to engage in a conversation with his literary ancestor about the nature of history. The authors' views on change and permanence, as expressed in their respective prefaces, are at the heart of this conversation.

Concluding his fanciful account of what the Phoenicians and

<sup>25</sup> See Hdt. 1.2.1–3.2, where everyone pursues recompense; the quotation comes from 1.2.2. In "Herodotus' Proem: Space, Time, and the Origins of International Relations," *Αριάννη* 16 (2010) 43–74, Tim Rood persuasively argues against an overly simple 'tit-for-tat' reading of Herodotus' views here, but I think reciprocity and cycles remain a cogent part of any understanding of Herodotus.

<sup>26</sup> J. Gould, *Herodotus* (New York 1989) 85.

Persians say about the origins of East-West conflict, Herodotus spells out how his method will comport with his understanding of human affairs (1.5.3–4):

ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως  
 κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα  
 ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήμας προβήσομαι ἐς  
 τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως σμικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστυα  
 ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν  
 σμικρὰ γέγονε, τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά.  
 τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ὧν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῶντῳ  
 μένουσαν ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως.<sup>27</sup>

For Herodotus, history is a state of flux. The small becomes big, and the big becomes small. In the course of the events he narrates, Persia emerges from tiny beginnings, becomes all-mighty, and suffers defeat. Furthermore, it is just one in a succession of empires: the Persians displaced the Medes, who had previously dislodged the Assyrians.<sup>28</sup> This sequence, and Herodotus' confidence in retaliation and reciprocity, are entirely compatible with the philosophy of change as the only constant.

On the face of it, Arrian might seem to share Herodotus' outlook: he too knew the theory of the succession of empires. I have already noted the key passage. On the eve of Issus when Darius loses patience, overrides his own wise advisor, and abandons his geographically advantageous position to seek out

<sup>27</sup> “But concerning these matters I am not going to say that they happened this way or some other way. Instead, pointing out the man whom I know for myself to have been the first to begin unjust acts against the Greeks, I will go forward in my account, covering in detail small and great towns of men. For those that were great long ago, many of them have become small, and those that were great in my day, many were small before. And so, knowing that human happiness in no way remains in one place I will mention both equally.”

<sup>28</sup> On Herodotus and the succession of world empires see J. M. Alonso-Núñez, “Herodotus' Ideas about World Empires,” *AncSoc* 19 (1988) 125–133.

Alexander, Arrian comments that a divine force seemed to be impelling the Great King and concludes (2.6.7): “For it was fated at that time that the Persians be deprived of control of Asia by the Macedonians, just as the Medes had been deprived of it by the Persians, and the Assyrians still earlier by the Medes.” The historian writes from the chronological perspective of his historical actors, and yet he knows that the Macedonians conquered the Persian empire only to have it wrested from them by the Romans, who continued to control it in Arrian’s time and showed no sign of yielding it. What Arrian thought of the Romans’ position is unknowable: to include Rome in this passage would be to introduce an anachronism. The resulting silence offers no guidance about Arrian’s views. It is possible, however, that, rather than seeing Rome as yet one more phase in history’s endless oscillations, Arrian regarded it as the culmination of the sequence. As José Miguel Alonso-Núñez has discussed, two previous Greek historians who focus on Rome, Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, did so.<sup>29</sup> The intervening centuries had done nothing to challenge this idea, and Arrian may well have shared it. Certainly, while Herodotus lived in a time of palpable upheaval, the Mediterranean world was stable in Arrian’s time.

In any case, he sounds far more confident than Herodotus that there are absolutes in human history; one can become and, more importantly, remain the best. In striking contrast to the statement with which Herodotus’ preface closes, Arrian ends his with a claim about being preeminent (1.12.5): *καὶ ἐπὶ τῷδε οὐκ ἀπαξιῶ ἑμαυτὸν τῶν πρώτων ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῇ Ἑλλάδι, εἶπερ οὖν καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις.*<sup>30</sup> In other words, Arrian regards neither himself nor his protagonist as mutable with time. This view, that a great individual, and his chronicler, can take and hold first place, belongs to an under-

<sup>29</sup> J. M. Alonso-Núñez, “Die Abfolge der Weltreiche bei Polybios und Dionysios von Halikarnassos,” *Historia* 32 (1983) 411–426.

<sup>30</sup> “And for this reason I do not consider myself unworthy of first place in the Greek language, even as Alexander is first in Greek arms.”

standing of history as something other than constant flux. And this understanding is in turn compatible with Arrian's assertion that the Macedonian destruction of Persepolis is not *τιμωρία* for Xerxes' pillaging. It is not clear why the historian rejects the possibility of a connection in this particular instance: perhaps too much time passes between Xerxes and Alexander for the latter's retaliation to count; perhaps destroying one's own property and terrorizing future subjects can never be *τιμωρία*; perhaps he has another explanation in mind. It is, however, clear that Arrian does not regard reciprocity as the chief governing principle of human actions. On this point, he begs to differ with Herodotus.<sup>31</sup>

*September, 2011*

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<sup>31</sup> Work on this paper was supported by the Middlebury College faculty leave program, the Yale University Classics Department, and the James I. Armstrong Enrichment Fund. Tony Woodman and Chris Pelling read multiple drafts and gave invaluable help; the trenchant reading of the anonymous referees transformed the essay; Kent Rigsby and Barrett Smith provided scrupulous copy-editing and proofreading. It is a pleasure for me to thank them all.