

Personal Names and the Study of the Ancient Greek Historians*

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AN INFLUENTIAL TREND IN THE STUDY of the Greek historians is the sceptical approach which stresses the formulaic and rhetorical features of the texts, and disputes their factual truthfulness. W. K. Pritchett, in a notably bad-tempered book, has called this the 'Liar School' of historiography. He was thinking of the study of Herodotus. This so-called 'school' is supposed to include, all in the back row of the same badly behaved classroom, François Hartog, Stephanie West, and, above all, Detlev Fehling.¹ But there is also what can be called a Liar School of Thucydides, whose recalcitrant pupils would I suppose include Virginia Hunter and Tony Woodman. I do not think there is exactly a Liar School of Polybius, although James Davidson and others have started to treat him too as an artful rhetorician. There is certainly a Liar School of the vulgate Alexander-historians.²

* I am delighted to be able to contribute to a volume in honour of Peter Fraser, a friend to whose teaching and example I owe so much. I recall with particular pleasure and gratitude the classes on hellenistic history which he gave for many years in All Souls and which I attended in the 1970s. Greek personal names featured even then: Podilos, 'Footy' as Peter called him, comes vividly to mind. (For this man see M. Holleaux, *Études d'épigraphie et d'histoire grecques*, iv (Paris, 1952), 146–62, and J. Crampa, *Labraunda: Swedish Excavations and Researches* iii (1), 'The Greek Inscriptions (Period of Olympichus)', (Lund, 1969), 93 f.). I am grateful to various members of the audience on 11 July 1998 for comments after the delivery of the paper, and to Carolyn Dewald for some subsequent comments on and corrections to the written version.

¹ W. K. Pritchett, *The Liar School of Herodotus* (Amsterdam, 1993); see also F. Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* (London, 1988); S. West, 'Herodotus' Epigraphical Interests', *CQ* 35 (1985), 278–305 and *CR* 31 (1981), 243 ff., review of Lateiner; D. Fehling, *Herodotus and his 'Sources'* (Liverpool, 1989).

² V. Hunter, *Thucydides the Artful Reporter* (Toronto, 1973); A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (London, 1988); J. Davidson, 'The Gaze in Polybius' Histories', *JRS* 81 (1991), 10–24.

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Modern defenders of the ancient historians have responded to the sceptical challenge in different ways. One approach is to refuse to allow the significance or even the presence of formulaic patterns or numbers. Thus it is certainly true that the number 2,000 occurs frequently in Herodotus and Thucydides for a field force of hoplites; Fehling treats such multiples of 10 and 20 as ‘typical numbers’, and tells us (230) that such powers of ten ‘convey the arbitrary character expected in organizations created by powerful autocrats’.³ But the decimal basis for military activity is hardly arbitrary if we think of Kleisthenes of Athens (not an autocrat) and his tribal reforms with their undoubted military aspect; and the turn-out of 2,000 is surely intrinsically plausible for a field force and is anyway not confined to non-Greek armies in Herodotus, and is applied frequently to Greek i.e. non-autocratic armies in Thucydides. In any case, a respectable statistician would insist that the number of occurrences of 2,000 has to be weighed against the number of occurrences of different totals for similar groups. This is an obvious point not always remembered.

Another way is to apply external controls. Pritchett’s entire book is an exercise in this method. The range of controls which can be applied to an author as rich as Herodotus is very extensive. Thus Pritchett’s chapter on the Scythians, which is a sustained attack on François Hartog, draws on archaeological and ethnographical data as well as on ancient and modern literary testimony. Actually Hartog was aware of the relevance of the sort of archaeological material assembled by, for instance, Rostovtzeff, though he thought that there were mis-matches between the archaeology and Herodotus’ text. The same technique can be used for Xenophon, at least in the *Anabasis*. For the austere Thucydides and for Polybius, the range of controls is smaller because they contain less ethnography and anthropology. This is where epigraphic and particularly onomastic evidence comes in, a category of evidence almost wholly ignored in arguments of the kind I have been discussing above.

It is surprising to me that personal names should have so little interested the great commentators on Herodotus and Thucydides. There were indeed honourable exceptions like Wilamowitz, but his studies of the name-rich chapters of Thucydides (4. 119 and 5. 19), the ‘signatories’ to the treaties of 423 and 421, were simply ignored by Gomme, whose authority was such that subsequent commentators and scholars ignored them also. To some extent

³ Fehling (above n. 1), 230 for ‘powers of ten’.

this general neglect of onomastic evidence by historiographers was because until the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names (LGPN)* there was no properly scientific way of establishing whether a particular name was common everywhere, or rare anywhere, or common but only in a specific region. It is the last possibility, obviously, which interests or ought to interest the student of the Greek historians. Why? Because, surely, if it can be shown that Herodotus or Thucydides or Xenophon⁴ or Hieronymus of Cardia or Polybius or Appian uses a name for, say, a Thessalian from Pharsalus which epigraphy (by which I mean of course *LGPN*) allows us to say is common in Thessaly and especially common at Pharsalus, then the presumption must be that the ancient historian in question did his research and wrote the name down and in a word got it right. That is, we have an important and sophisticated, but deplorably under-utilized, control on the accuracy and authenticity of a historiographical text. I shall raise in a moment, and try to answer, possible objections to this claim.

Let me start with Herodotus and two spectacular and fairly recent epigraphic finds which bear on his control of detail. They are both attestations in suitable epigraphic contexts of personal names which also occur in Herodotus, both as it happens from book 4, though in very different sections. The first is Sostratos of Aigina (4. 152), the second is Skyles, the unfortunate bilingual half-Scythian (4. 78). First Sostratos—in 1970 a stone anchor⁵ was found at Tarquinii in Etruria bearing a dedication to Apollo by Sostratos of Aegina, a name known from Herodotus as that of an exceptionally wealthy trader, who may of course be related rather than identical to the man now attested in Etruria. David Harvey pointed this out in 1976;⁶ medievalists use the term ‘floating kindreds’⁷ for cases such as this, where we can plausibly

⁴ For Xenophon note the interesting unpublished observation of M. D. Reeve, cited by A. Andrewes in A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K. J. Dover, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 5 (1981), 5, n. on Thuc. 8.1.1: at Xen. *Mem.*, 3.5.1., τοῦ πάνυ Περικλέους (used to distinguish Perikles from his homonymous son) may allude to the etymology of Perikles’ name, ‘the really famous one’. For Xenophon’s signalling of an ethnic used as a personal name, see below, 154, and Introduction, 10 f. From Xenophon’s *Hellenica*, note that Polycharmos of Pharsalos (4.3.8) may now be attested in the Pharsalian dedication at P. Aupert, *BCH* 99 (1975), 658 (= *CEG* 792). *LGPN* IIIB will show the name to be well established in Thessaly—but it is not rare anywhere.

⁵ For the anchor see *LSAG*² 439 no. E. The text runs Ἀπόλλωνος Αἰγινάτα ἐμί. Σόστρατος ἐποίησε ἡο—, ‘I belong to Aiginetan Apollo; Sostratos [son of . . .] had me made’.

⁶ D. Harvey, ‘Sostratos of Aegina’, *PdelP* 31 (1976), 206–14 at 207.

⁷ T. Reuter, ‘The Medieval Nobility in Twentieth-century Historiography’, in M. Bentley (ed.) *Companion to Historiography* (London, 1997) at 190.

posit a prosopographic link of some sort which, though strictly indeterminate, may be enough for the social and economic historian as opposed to the biographer or political historian for whom strict identity is crucial. Since the publication of *LGNP* IIIA, which contains the Peloponnese broadly defined so as to include Aigina, we can see that Sostratos is not a rare name generally; from Aigina itself, however, there are just three instances, the other two (i.e. the ones apart from our man) both from the Roman period, perhaps examples of historical names, in this case names given for their Herodotean associations.⁸ Oswyn Murray showed in a classic paper in 1972 how popular an author Herodotus was in the post-classical period.⁹ This is thus an example where *LGNP* forbids us to construct arguments based on the rareness of the name; we must be content to register the exotic context in which the inscription was found, confirming Herodotus' picture of Sostratos as a spectacular entrepreneur. I leave out of account the so-called SO-amphorae or wine jars, ingeniously connected to SO-stratos by Alan Johnston, though these trade marks may be relevant.¹⁰

The other name is Skyles, whose mother was Greek and whose father was Scythian, and who tried to lead a double life in Olbia as a culture-Greek but was detected and came to a miserable end after he went too far and actually got himself initiated into Bacchic, that is, Dionysiac worship. From the tie-up with the Thracian families of Teres and Sitalkes we can date Skyles to about 460 BC. His sad story, which resembles the nearby story of Anacharsis (4. 76–7) with a neat, perhaps over-neat symmetry, has been seen by Hartog as a kind of sermon on the need to respect cultural frontiers. The whole Skyles episode, then, is for Hartog an elegant literary construct and part of an imaginary Scythia,¹¹ a nomadic culture which is the mirror-image of the autochthonous Athenians. Hartog's word 'imaginary' seems to be what has enraged Pritchett,¹² though Hartog surely means not that Herodotus made it all up but that his work was an intellectual construct (what Pat Easterling has called a 'mental map'¹³) in that he structured and selected his material according to principles of balance and reciprocity (Greeks/others;

⁸ See *LGNP* IIIA, 416 (78 men called Sostratos, including the three Aiginetans, who are nos 7–9).

⁹ O. Murray, 'Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture', *CQ* 22 (1972), 200–13.

¹⁰ A. W. Johnston, *PdelP* 27 (1972), 416–23.

¹¹ Part One of Hartog's book (above n. 1) is called 'The Imaginary Scythians: Space, Power and Nomadism'.

¹² Pritchett (above n.1), 191–226, 'Hartog and Scythia', esp. 191, 213, 219.

¹³ P. E. Easterling, 'City Settings in Greek Poetry', *Proceedings of the Classical Association* 86 (1989), 5–17 at 5.

Scythians/Athenians) and so forth. Hartog's accusations about mis-matches do, however, imply that Herodotus was willing to sacrifice accuracy to elegance, and strictly it is only on this fairly limited terrain that controls of the Pritchett sort become relevant. The gold ring I am about to mention is not intended to align me with the positivist Pritchett against Hartog, who is less interested in the relationship between Herodotus' text and the world than in the inner relationships inside Herodotus' text. (That is, Pritchett has not refuted Hartog; they are simply doing different kinds of thing.) But it is of some interest to know that Skyles probably existed and was as historical as the Thracian kings with whom Herodotus connects him, just as ten years ago it was satisfying to find the names of younger relatives of precisely those royal Thracian kings inscribed in Greek on the gold and silver plate from Rogozen in Bulgaria—I refer to Sadokos and Kersebleptes, long known to us from the pages of Thucydides and Demosthenes.¹⁴

I return to Skyles himself. Many years ago, a gold ring was found south of Istria, though it was properly published only in 1981. It has the name Skyles in the genitive (*ΣΚΥΛΕΩ*) engraved round its bevel,¹⁵ and it also has on it in Greek what looks like an order to one Argotas, a Scythian name, presumably a subordinate of Skyles. How far we take the ring as proof that Herodotus knew what he was talking about depends on how common the name was in that part of the world. Elaine Matthews, after checking unpublished *LGN* files, kindly tells me that it is exceedingly rare anywhere, rather surprisingly as it is, I suppose, a 'Tiername' and related to the ordinary Greek word for a dog; there are certainly none in published *LGN* volumes, in contrast to Sostratos. However, as Laurent Dubois observes in his edition of the Greek dialect inscriptions of Olbia, the name Skyles occurs in Greek on bronze coins of Nikonika not far away (c. 450).¹⁶

Sostratos and Skyles are relatively big names, but as always with social history it is the smaller names which are as, or more, revealing—for instance, the name Alazeir, which Herodotus (4. 164) gives as the name of the father-in-law of Arkesilaos III of Cyrene. The name is local, possibly Berber, and

¹⁴ B. F. Cook (ed.) *The Rogozen Treasure: Papers of the Anglo-Bulgarian Conference, 12 March 1987* (London, 1989); Z. Archibald, *CAH* 6² (1994), 454 and *The Odrysian Kingdom of Thrace: Orpheus Unmasked* (Oxford, 1998), ch.11, 'Metalware and Silver Plate of the Fourth Century BC'. For Sadokos see Thuc. 2.29.5; for Kersebleptes, Dem. 23 *passim* (spelling him Kerse-).

¹⁵ L. Dubois, *Inscriptions grecques dialectales d'Olbia du Pont* (Geneva, 1996), 11–15 no. 4; J. Boardman, *The Diffusion of Classical Art in Antiquity* (London, 1994), 196, 339 n. 33.

¹⁶ Dubois (above n.15), 11, suggesting that this is Herodotus' Skyles.

presumably means a bull, for that is the only way of making sense of the Delphic oracle given to Arkesilaos about the killing of a bull. Now the name Ἀλάδδερ son of Battos occurs in a grave-inscription of the first century BC from Cyrene, and from Barke-Ptolemais we have the name Ἀλάττειρ on a coin.¹⁷ There is no doubt on this evidence that Herodotus' information about North African nomenclature was first-rate.

Thucydides is more sparing with personal names than Herodotus; there are 473 named persons in Thucydides as compared to 940 in Herodotus, almost exactly half the Herodotean total over a roughly comparable length of text. Moreover, there are some heavy and unbalancing concentrations in particular chapters of Thucydides. There are thirty-six, for example, in 5. 19 alone (repeated in 5. 23)—the names of those who swore to the two treaties of 421 BC. Other differences also exist between Herodotus and Thucydides in their attitude to names; I have pointed out elsewhere¹⁸ that Thucydides, unlike Homer, Herodotus, the tragedians, Pindar, and Plato, does not play games with names. Thus in Homer, the names Achilles and Odysseus are charged with meaning: 'grief to the army' and 'charged with odium' respectively, or so we are told; and Gregory Nagy has observed that sons are often given names which express paternal qualities, thus Telemachos Eurysakes and Astyanax.¹⁹ These are not quite name-games, but the renaming of Alkyone as Kleopatra in the *Iliad* (9. 555–62) is close to being such a game: it has often been noticed that Kleo-patra is Patro-klos back to front.²⁰ Herodotus also likes punning with names, like the Aiginetan Krios, the 'ram', or Leon the handsome 'lion' from Troezen who 'may have reaped the fruits of his name' when he was sacrificed by the Persians, or Hegesistratos of Samos, whose name means 'leader of the army'—when the Spartan king Leotychidas asks this man his name, he replies 'host-leader', and Leotychidas says 'I

¹⁷ *SGDI* 4859=*BCH* 98 (1974), 264 ff.; for Alatteir see *BMC Cyrenaica* clxxviii no. 40c + clxxxii; 105 no. 45 (*LGPN* 1, 24). On the name Panionios at Hdt. 8. 105–6 see my forthcoming paper.

¹⁸ S. Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London, 1987), 94. To that discussion add Plato, *Grg.*, 463e2 for Polos the 'colt', with E. R. Dodds' note. For Pindar see F105a (Snell/Maehler), with C. Dougherty, *The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Archaic Greece* (New York and Oxford, 1993), 97: play on the name Hiero. Note also *FGrHist.* 566 Timaios F 102 (Hermokrates and the herms). For tragedy see E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus Agamemnon* (Oxford, 1950) on line 687; cf. also R. B. Rutherford, *Homer Odyssey Books XIX and XX* (Cambridge, 1992), note on lines 406–9. Cf. below, 145.

¹⁹ G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore, 1979), 146 n. 2 to para. 9; cf. J. Svenbro, *Phrasikleia* (Ithaca, 1993), 68f.

²⁰ See J. Griffin, *Homer Iliad IX* (Oxford, 1995), 135, 138 and cf. above, 50.

accept the omen'.²¹ The kind of thing Leotyichidas was doing with Hegesistratos is related to the type of divination known as 'kledonomancy', by which chance utterances are treated as portents of the future.²² If Thucydides avoids this sort of thing it may partly be due to his different attitude to religion: *nomen omen* was not a congenial equation to a man of his secular outlook. Thucydides does, however, show an interest in place-names, like the identity of Pylos and Koryphasion, or the etymology of the names for Sicily early in book 6.²³ As for personal names, he goes polemically out of his way to deny the identity of the historical Thracian name Teres and the mythical Thracian name Tereus,²⁴ and in book 8 he makes a sophisticated point about the Spartan Endios. He there says (8. 6) that Alcibiades was a family friend, a *πατρικὸς ξένος* of Endios; indeed (Thucydides continues) this was how the Spartan name of Alcibiades had come into his, Alcibiades', family, for Alcibiades was the name of Endios' father. This is fascinating stuff, obviously too fascinating to be written by Thucydides (!), and Classen therefore bracketed it all. Steup and Andrewes, however, rightly declined to follow him.²⁵ It is hard to parallel this remark of Thucydides in any other ancient author, showing what an acute social historian he was when he bothered to play the role. His remark is good because it more or less explicitly recognizes two features of Greek naming: (1) exchange of names between different cities for reasons of *xenia*, friendship,²⁶ and (2) the alternation of names between grandparent and grandchild.²⁷ This second phenomenon is, so my anthropologist friends tell me, common in traditional central African societies, the idea being that you should not name the child of your loins after yourself but should nevertheless assert

²¹ Hdt. 6. 50 (Krios); 7.180 (Leon, with M. H. Jameson in M. H. Jameson, C.N. Runnels and T. H. van Andel, *A Greek Countryside: The Southern Argolid from Prehistory to the Present Day* (Stanford, 1994), 74); 9. 91 (Hegesistratos). Cf. 5. 65. 4: Peisistratos, an explicitly Homeric name.

²² See D. H. Roberts, *Apollo and his Oracle in the Oresteia* (Göttingen, 1984), 14, 29.

²³ Thuc. 4. 3. 2 (Koryphasion); 6.2–5 (the Sikelika, e.g. 6. 2. 2, 6. 4. 4, 6. 4. 6).

²⁴ Thuc. 2. 29.3. For the polemic see C. P. Jones, *Kinship Diplomacy in the Ancient World* (Harvard, 1999), 30 and K. Zacharia, *JHS* supp., forthcoming.

²⁵ See the commentaries ad loc. On 8. 6 see also Habicht in the present volume (above, 119).

²⁶ G. Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge, 1987), 19 f., 135 n. 50, citing among other examples Hdt. 3.55 (Archias' son called Samios because of the Samian connection); see below n. 27. Cf. below, 154.

²⁷ For this see also Hdt. 3. 55 (Archias again, see n. 26 above: grandfather and grandson) and 6. 131.2. Agariste the mother of Perikles 'got her name from Agariste the daughter of Kleisthenes'; also Thuc. 6. 54. 4: Pisistratos son of Hippias 'had his grandfather's name'. See also Eur., *Ph.*, 769 (Menoikeus) and Pindar, *Ol.*, 9. 63 ff. (Opous) with Svenbro (n. 19), 75 ff. Cf. below, 150.

continuity.²⁸ (The Greek avoidance of father–son homonymity was of course far from absolute—the famous fourth-century Athenian politician and orator Demosthenes was Demosthenes son of Demosthenes from the deme of Paiania.)

All that said, it remains true that Thucydides does not splash names around or exploit them as Herodotus does.²⁹ This does not mean, though, that names in Thucydides are not significant. On the contrary I have argued elsewhere that the name of the Spartan Alkidas, one of the three oikists of Herakleia, was a very appropriate name (though Thucydides does not say so) because Alkidas or Alkeides is an alternative name for Herakles.³⁰ The second oikist, Damagon, ‘leader-out-of-the-people’ is also suitable, and now Woodman and Martin have pointed out that the third oikist, Leon, is named after Herakles’ own animal the lion.³¹ Again, there are some choice examples in Thucydides’ book 4, where Brasidas goes up through hostile Thessaly and needs help from Sparta’s friends in that part of the world. Chapter 78 gives some fine Thessalian names, notably Strophakos, Hippolochidas, a suitably horsey name for an aristocratic Pharsalian, Nikonides of Larisa, Torumbas, and Panairos.³² Now Strophakos is a good Thessalian name, which occurs

²⁸ For the continuity point see E. Csapo and M. Miller, ‘The Politics of Time and Narrative’, in D. Boedeker and K. Raaflaub (eds), *Democracy, Imperialism and the Arts in Classical Athens* (Harvard, 1998), 87–125 at 98. But they do not explain the usual avoidance of direct father–son naming. For modern Greece, note the interesting remarks of C. Stewart, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture* (Princeton, 1991), 56–8.

²⁹ I do not find convincing the attempts of Michael Vickers to detect complicated name-play in Thucydides, for instance in his otherwise valuable article ‘Thucydides 6. 53.3–59: Not a Digression’, *DHA* 21 (1995), 193–200 at 196 f., where he suggests that Thucydides uses the words ‘violently’ (βίᾱ) and ‘violent’ (βίᾱιον) at 6. 54.3 and 4 because the Greek word for ‘violence’ (βίᾱ) lurks in the name Alcibiades.

³⁰ See *HSCP* 92 (1992), 189, and *Commentary on Thucydides*, 1 (Oxford, 1991), 507. In the mythographer Apollodorus, the alternative name of Herakles is spelt Ἀλκείδης (2. 4. 12) but Ἀλκίδαζ is simply the Doric form of this name, which Thucydides gives correctly and *more suo* (see below, 138). I am grateful to the editors of *LGN* for confirmation of this interpretation (which does not accept the apparent implication of Bechtel, *HP*, 36 f., where Ἀλκείδης and Ἀλκίδαζ are listed separately, as derived from Ἀλκε- (*αλκω) and Ἀλκι- respectively); in *LGN* II s.v. Ἀλκίδαζ the four men from Lakonia (nos 2–5) include the Ἀλκείδης so spelt by Herodotus (6.61.5), again *more suo* (see below, 138). P. Poralla, *Prosopographie der Lakedaimonier* (Breslau, 1913) lists all three classical instances under Ἀλκίδαζ.

³¹ A. J. Woodman, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 3* (Cambridge, 1996), 492.

³² I have given epigraphic references for these names in my *Commentary on Thucydides*, 2: *Books 4–5.24* (Oxford, 1996), 102 f. and in my notes on 4. 78, with (for Strophakos in particular) acknowledgements to Christian Habicht and to S. Tracy, *Athenian Democracy in Transition: Attic Letter-cutters of 340–290 BC* (Berkeley, 1995), 88. For a possible epigraphic attestation of a Thessalian mentioned in Xen. *Hell.* see above n. 4. Aristocratic horsey names: see above, 41.

(with an omega in the first syllable) in an Athenian inscription³³ which Christian Habicht has recognized as a list of Thessalians, and there is a Strophakos with an omicron at precisely Pharsalos.³⁴ It is a little more surprising to discover that Nikonides, which sounds a common sort of formation, is actually very rare, at least outside Thessaly, where it is pretty common. Lastly there is Torumbas, emended by Olivier Masson from the manuscripts' Torylaos, an item missed by Alberti in his excellent new text of Thucydides, where he prints Torylaos without comment.³⁵ Masson's Torumbas is daring but attractive in view of the Torymbas attested in an inscription from Thessaly.³⁶ There is an obvious problem of circularity here, though—Thucydides' accuracy can be affirmed on the strength of Strophakos, but hardly on the strength of Torumbas because that is an emendation from something else. We have no way of telling whether Thucydides wrote the name down wrong or whether Torylaos is a scribal corruption. (In this connection I note that badly corrupt names in Quintus Curtius Rufus are a special problem, into which, however, I cannot enter here, for reasons of space.)

These things are, however, matters of degree and it would be a very austere principle to refuse to allow that a personal name has corroborative value if it differs slightly from an epigraphically attested form. There is a good example in Arrian, who early in book 3 of the *Anabasis* describes an episode of the history of the island of Chios and names a man called Phesinos as one of three ringleaders of an anti-Macedonian rising.³⁷ Now it has long been noticed (Pomtow,³⁸ Berve,³⁹ the honorand of the present volume, Peter Fraser,⁴⁰ and George Forrest, who pointed it out to me in an epigraphy class twenty-five

³³ *IG* II² 2406, 7.

³⁴ *IG* IX(2) 234, 89

³⁵ O. Masson, 'Quelques anthroponymes rares chez Thucydide', *Miscellanea Manni* 4 (1980), 1479–88 = *OGS*, 321–30, 1486–8 = *OGS*, 328–30; G. B. Alberti, *Thucydidis Historiae*, II: *Libri III–V* (Rome, 1992), 170.

³⁶ *IG* IX(2) 6a, 6.

³⁷ Arr. *Anab.*, 3.2.5 with A. B. Bosworth, *Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, 1 (Oxford, 1980), 267.

³⁸ Ditt. *Syll.*³ 402 n. 13.

³⁹ H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographische Grundlage* (Munich, 1926), 2.381.

⁴⁰ P. M. Fraser, 'The Kings of Commagene and the Greek World', in S. Sahin, E. Schwertheim and, J. Wagner (eds), *Studien zur religion und Kultur Kleinasiens: Festschrift für K. Dörner zum 65. Geburtstag am 28. Februar 1976* (Leiden, 1978), 359–74 at 367, discussing the occurrence of the name in the intriguing Chian list of names *SEG* 17, 381 (perhaps, as Fraser suggests, a list of gymnasiarchs?). A Phesinos occurs at C line 9.

years ago) that Phesinos is a characteristically Chian name. In *LGPN I*, which includes the Aegean islands, there are twenty-six men called Phesinos, all from Chios; most of them are attested on inscriptions or coins, and there is a clear early hellenistic example, Oineus son of Phesinos, in a Chian decree found at Delphi.⁴¹ In the other two volumes of *LGPN* there is just one, from Sicily and dating from the second to third centuries AD. It is only a slight catch that what the best manuscripts of Arrian actually have is ‘*φισινον*’; it is surely legitimate to emend this and still maintain that the name is a tribute to the truthfulness of Arrian or his sources. Incidentally, it would be wrong to emend the orthography of personal names in literary texts so as to make them conform with local epigraphically attested forms. Mausolus in Demosthenes’ speech *On the Freedom of the Rhodians* should remain *Μαύσωλος* and not be ‘emended’ to *Μαύσσωλλος* merely because that is how he appears on the inscriptions of Carian Labraunda. Similarly, we should respect the different attitudes of the historians to dialect forms. For Herodotus, Lichas becomes Liches, and King Leonidas becomes Leonides, whereas Thucydides keeps the Doric forms Lichas, Archidamos, and Sthenelaidas, not Liches, Archidemos, and Sthenelaides, and the Aeolic forms Pagondas and Skirphondas, rather than Pagonides and Skirphonides. This Thucydidean preference, perhaps part of a more ecumenical attitude, may be relevant to his willingness to retain dialect forms in the two treaties (5. 77 and 79) between Argos and Sparta (though he stops short of putting speeches into dialect!). Thucydides has Leotychides at 1. 89, as Peter Rhodes points out to me, but this is surely under the influence of Herodotus, who featured this man prominently. At 5. 52 the manuscripts have Hegesippidas, but this is usually emended to Hag- in view of the Doric spelling of this name at 5. 56.

So far I have been speaking about ways in which *LGPN* confirms a historian’s authenticity because the name is demonstrably rare, or can be shown to be generally rare but common in the region the historian is writing about. But of course *LGPN* can settle arguments in a negative way, or rather it can weaken arguments for identity, by showing that a historically interesting name was onomastically common. Let us take another Thucydidean example, a topical one in view of a recent epigraphic debate which puts in question the traditional dates of fifth-century Athenian inscriptions. I refer to the claim by Mortimer Chambers, based on new techniques of laser

⁴¹ Ditt. *Syll.*³ 402, 39.

enhancement, that the Athenian alliance with the Sicilian city of Egesta (ML 37) dates not from 457 but from 418 BC, the archonship of Antiphon not Habron.⁴² This dating (or the slightly earlier date of 421/0, archonship of Aristion) had always been advocated by Harold Mattingly and his followers.⁴³ One subsidiary argument concerns the name of the proposer of the amendment to the decree, Euphemos. This, as it happens, is also the name of the Athenian speaker at the Camarina debate reported by Thucydides in his Sicilian book 6 (6. 81), and scholars of the Mattingly school⁴⁴ have long toyed with the attractive possibility that Thucydides' Euphemos and the proposer of the Egesta amendment are one and the same, that is, this Euphemos is a western expert. But *LGPN* II has forty-three Athenian Euphemoi, over a dozen of whom come from the classical period, while other *LGPN* volumes attest many Euphemoi elsewhere in the Greek world. So we must be cautious⁴⁵ before saluting Euphemos as a twice-attested western expert. If he were in Homer, by the way, we should be told his name 'auspicious speaker' was significant (we may recall the Euphamos, the Doric equivalent of Euphemos, in Pindar, *Pythian*, 4).

We can be glad that Herodotus, Thucydides, and Arrian preserved all the personal names they did; but why did they do so? In the cases of Herodotus and Thucydides the mention of a personal name is, I think, one way in which the authors in question guarantee the reliability of the information given, and this may be true even where the person named is not explicitly named as a source. A well-known instance in Herodotus is the story of the Persian/Theban banquet before the battle of Plataea; the story is explicitly attributed by Herodotus (9. 16) to Thersandros of Orchomenos, a most unusual example of a named source-attribution in the *Histories*. I suspect that Thucydides' Thessalians perform something of the same function of authenticating the surrounding narrative, although Thucydides, *more suo*, does not cite them as sources. The view usually taken by Gomme is that such small circumstantial details were merely evidence that Thucydides had not worked up his material, and that the names would have disappeared in the

⁴² M. H. Chambers, R. Gallucci and P. Spanos, 'Athens' Alliance with Egesta in the Year of Antiphon', *ZPE* 83 (1990), 38–63.

⁴³ H. B. Mattingly, *The Athenian Empire Restored* (Ann Arbor, 1996), 1, 4, 99–106, 264, 272, 276, 473–6.

⁴⁴ Mattingly (above n. 43), 473 f.; J. D. Smart, 'Athens and Egesta', *JHS* 92 (1972), 128–46 at 135 f. n. 55.

⁴⁵ I am here indebted to the late D. M. Lewis, who pointed out to me on a postcard many years ago in this connection that the name Euphemos was fairly common at Athens.

final version. This does not work, though, for Brasidas' Thessalian friends because they come in the pre-Delion narrative and it is only after Delion, about chapter 100, that the case for incompleteness becomes at all plausible (though in my view not really plausible even then). If we look at the distribution of names and patronymics between cities, a similar conclusion emerges. Ronald Stroud has recently studied the names and patronymics of Corinthians in Thucydides and points out that there are exceptionally many of them; he suggests that Thucydides spent his exile in Corinth, was specially well informed about Corinth, and drew heavily on Corinthian informants.⁴⁶ I have reservations about some of this, especially the location of the exile,⁴⁷ but Stroud is surely right that the density of Corinthian names and patronymics is one clue to the identity of Thucydides' oral informants for affairs in Greece and of course Sicily, especially anything involving Syracuse, the daughter city of Corinth.

As for Arrian, it is a small tribute to him that he transcribed the name Phesinos correctly from one of his two main sources, presumably Ptolemy; more credit goes to Ptolemy himself for getting the name right. Perhaps the most spectacular crop of names in Arrian is not in his *Anabasis* at all but in the *Indike*. I refer to the list of trierarchs assembled in 326 BC on the banks of the river Hydaspes (*Indike*, 18). Arrian's source, probably Nearchus, gives names, patronymics, and places of origin or fief-holding. It is from this list that we learn that Eumenes of Cardia's patronymic was Hieronymos; this precious statement of filiation is the basis for the usual assumption that another Hieronymos, the great historian Hieronymos of Cardia, was a close relation of Eumenes who figures so prominently in Hieronymos' narrative of the early Successors.⁴⁸ The list of trierarchs includes a Macedonian, Demonikos son of Athenaios, whose name meant nothing to us until 1984 when Paul Roesch published a Theban proxy decree from the 360s honouring one Athenaios son of Demonikos, surely the father of the trierarch in the *Indike*.⁴⁹ Roesch ingeniously suggested⁵⁰ that this was a naval family: the father perhaps provided ship-building timber for Epaminondas' naval programme and the son was a trierarch. However that may be, the inscription provides a check on the accuracy of the names recorded by Arrian in the

⁴⁶ R. Stroud, 'Thucydides and Corinth', *Chiron* 24 (1994), 267–302.

⁴⁷ See my *Commentary on Thucydides*, 2 (above n. 32), 21 ff.

⁴⁸ J. Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (Oxford, 1981), 8.

⁴⁹ *SEG* 34, 355.

⁵⁰ P. Roesch, *REG* 97 (1984), 45–60.

Indike, and surely permits us to suppose that an accurate list does indeed underlie it. Belief in the connection between Eumenes and Hieronymos is thereby strengthened.

All this is interesting if one finds names interesting. I want to end by considering the obvious literary objection. What if Thucydides (to confine ourselves to him) inserted Strophakos as local colour into his narrative (what Roland Barthes called the ‘reality effect’)⁵¹ or just to enhance his own credibility? The Greek novelists took pains to make their personal names sound authentic. Thus Habrokomes in Xenophon of Ephesus is taken from the older Xenophon’s *Anabasis*, not from the *Cyropaedia*. In other words, the novelist borrows not from the novel but from the work of history, thus gaining in verisimilitude; compare Michael Crawford in the present volume on Petronius and Phlegon (below, 145 ff.), or the way Chariton sets his novel in the Syracuse of Thucydides, or the way the *Metiochus and Parthenope* is set in the Samos of Herodotus’ Polykrates and includes the real-life Metiochos son of Miltiades. Ewen Bowie has recently discussed reasons for choices of personal names in Heliodorus, including Egyptian-sounding names apparently chosen ‘simply to impart Egyptian decor’, though Bowie shows that more sophisticated, intertextual, motives may also have been at work—the desire to evoke earlier works of literature.⁵²

Quite apart from the difference in dates and atmosphere, nobody is likely to want to say that Thucydides or even Herodotus behaved like Xenophon of Ephesus or Heliodorus. But what of Ephorus or the more spicy Alexander-historians like Curtius? Diodorus’ account of the aftermath of the Syracusan defeat of Athens contains a debate about what to do with the Athenian prisoners, and includes a long speech by a man called Nikolaos, otherwise unknown to history and thought by Jacoby⁵³ to be a sheer invention by Ephorus (see Diod. 13.19–28). The name is plausible enough, ‘victory of the people’, and from *LGPN* we learn that the name Nikolaos occurs in Syracusan and Corinthian contexts. One sixth-century Corinthian example occurs, oddly enough, in the work of another Nikolaos, Nikolaos of Damascus,⁵⁴ who is

⁵¹ See R. Barthes, ‘The reality effect’, in T. Barthes, tr. R. Howard, *The Rustle of Language* (Berkeley, 1989), 141–8; cf. E. Csapo and M. Miller (above n. 28), 117.

⁵² E. L. Bowie, ‘Names and a Gem: Aspects of Allusion in Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*’, in D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling (eds), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-fifth Birthday* (Oxford, 1995), 269–80. Cf. *LGPN* I, preface, 1.

⁵³ Commentary on *FGrHist.* 566 Timaios F 99–102 (IIIb, 583).

⁵⁴ *FGrHist.* 90 Nikolaos F 59. 1–2.

generally thought to have drawn on precisely Ephorus. So the Diodoran Nikolaos of 413 BC is perhaps an example of an invented name for a fictional character, included as local colour in the writings of a serious classical Greek historian.

A wholly invented personality, if that is what Nikolaos is, comes as a bit of a surprise in the context of the Peloponnesian War. Modern students of the Alexander-historians are more hardened: at one time we were told by W. W. Tarn⁵⁵ that Bagoas the eunuch, who features in Curtius and elsewhere, was an invention designed to disparage Alexander, who is supposed to have got drunk in public and kissed Bagoas; then E. Badian insisted that Bagoas was real,⁵⁶ and now Hammond and Gunderson have returned to something like the Tarn position.⁵⁷ The name at any rate is perfectly plausible, for among the trierarchs on the Hydaspes (see again Arrian, *Indike*, 18) is a solitary Persian called Bagoas son of Pharnouches. As always with such arguments, however, one can say either that the trierarch strengthens the idea that the eunuch was authentic, or that the trierarch shows that the inventor of the eunuch knew how to construct a plausible character. Thus, at one extreme, Robin Lane Fox actually goes so far as to identify trierarch and eunuch, and adds the further conjecture that Bagoas' father, Pharnouches, was a well-attested hellenized Lycian who features in Arrian's *Anabasis* book 4 (3. 7; 5. 2 ff.), where he is given a military command which he bungles badly.⁵⁸ At the other extreme we have Berve, who absolutely rejected the identification of trierarch and eunuch, and who pointed to stereotypical eunuchs called Bagoas in Pliny the Elder and Ovid.⁵⁹

The problem of the plausible onomastic fiction is found in less exotic contexts than Bagoas' sexual encounter with Alexander. There is a serious discrepancy between Polybius and Appian on the causes of Rome's first Illyrian war; Appian has an appeal by the Adriatic island city of Issa to which Rome was honourably responding.⁶⁰ Peter Derow pointed out twenty-five

⁵⁵ W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great, 2: Sources and Studies* (Cambridge, 1948), 319–26, 'Alexander's Attitude to Sex'.

⁵⁶ E. Badian, 'The Eunuch Bagoas: A Study in Method', *CQ* 8 (1958), 144–57.

⁵⁷ N. G. L. Hammond, *Alexander the Great, King Commander and Statesman* (London, 1980), 322 n. 114; L. L. Gunderson, 'Quintus Curtius Rufus: On his Historical Methods in the *Historiae Alexandri*', in W. L. Adams and E. N. Borza, *Philip, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* (Lanham, MD, 1982), 177–96.

⁵⁸ R. Lane Fox, *The Search for Alexander* (London, 1980), 260 f.

⁵⁹ Berve (above n. 39), 2.98 n.3, citing Pliny, *NH*, 13.41 and Ovid, *Amores*, 2. 2. 1. Note Berve's 99 n. 1, arguing against the identification of eunuch and trierarch.

⁶⁰ Plb. 2.2 ff.; App., *Illyrike*, 7.

years ago⁶¹ that Appian's name for one of the Issian ambassadors, Kleemporos, is attested in an Issian inscription of the first century BC, and we can add that since 1973 there have been further epigraphic occurrences of this rare name in suitably Illyrian contexts.⁶² This looks like corroboration of Appian, but not everyone is convinced. W. V. Harris wrote in 1979, 'Derow interestingly shows that Appian gave the authentic name (Kleemporos) of an Issian ambassador, but his conclusion that Appian's over-all account is to be preferred does not follow.'⁶³ I am not sure if Harris' position is that the ambassador was indeed called Kleemporos but that nothing follows from this, or whether he means the whole tale is false including the authentic but plausible name Kleemporos. The English 'authentic' can express both truth and deceitful verisimilitude.

Do names then not help us at all in deciding whether a historian was truthful or a liar? Things are, I suggest, not as bad as that. It is a question of motive. It is possible for the sceptic to see reasons why an ancient Greek historian might have invented Nikolaos or Bagoas, or even Kleemporos: desire to balance a speech by Gylippos, desire to blacken Alexander's reputation by alleging discreditable drunken sexual activity, desire to present Roman motives for Adriatic involvement in a favourable light. The only conceivable motive for Thucydides inventing Strophakos the authentic-sounding Thessalian would be to provide novelistic colour or to convince us of his own accuracy. Are we to suppose he (so to speak) rang up some literary crony in Larisa and said, 'Look, I'm writing this novel about a war between Athens and Sparta set in the recent past, pure fiction of course but I want it to look as realistic as possible so I need a few convincing-sounding Thessalian names for the narrative I'm just getting to. Can you have a look at the local phone book and let me have half a dozen names?' These motives are not at all plausible for Thucydides. On the contrary, the precision with which epigraphy confirms the accuracy of his personal names is to my mind one of the most striking though least recognized confirmations of his general accuracy.

⁶¹ P. S. Derow, 'Kleemporos', *Phoenix* 27 (1973), 118–34, adducing R. K. Sherck, *Roman Documents of the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969), no. 24. Note Derow, 129 n. 40 for awareness of possible sceptical counter-moves: 'those who urge fabrication might assume, for example, that his [Appian's] source was a member of Caesar's staff in 56 or perhaps someone with an interest in Dalmatian epigraphy'.

⁶² *SEG* 31, 594; 596. See P. M. Fraser, 'The Colonial Inscription from Issa', in P. Cabanes (ed.), *L'Illyrie méridionale dans l'Antiquité*, II (Paris, 1993), 167–74 at 173 f. and nn. 79 and 80 ('names in -εμπορος seem in general to be very rare'; he goes on to cite Diemporos at *Thuc.* 2. 2. 1).

⁶³ W. V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* (Oxford, 1979), 195–6 n. 4.

Abbreviations

- BE* J. and L. Robert and others, *Bulletin Épigraphique* (in *Revue des Études grecques*, 1938–)
- Bechtel, *HP* F. Bechtel, *Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit* (Halle, 1917)
- CEG* P.A. Hansen, *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca*, vol. 1, *saeculorum VIII–V a. Chr. n.*; vol. 2, *saeculi IV a. Chr. n.* (Berlin, 1983, 1989)
- FD* *Fouilles de Delphes* 1– (Paris, 1909–)
- Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions* M.B. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, 2 vols (Meletemata 22; Athens, 1996)
- Hatzopoulos-Loukopoulou, *Recherches* M.B. Hatzopoulos and L. Loukopoulou, *Recherches sur les marches orientales des Téménides*, i (Meletemata 11; Athens, 1992)
- Letronne, *Oeuvres choisies* *Oeuvres choisies de J.-A. Letronne, assemblées, mises en ordre et augmentées d'un index par E. Fagnan* (Paris, 1881–5: 1 sér. *Égypte ancienne*, 2 vols, 1881; 2 sér. *Géographie et cosmographie*, 2 vols, 1883; 3 sér. *Archéologie et philologie*, 2 vols, 1883–5)
- LGPN* *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names I, The Aegean Islands, Cyprus and Cyrenaica*, eds P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews (Oxford, 1987); II, *Attica*, eds M.G. Osborne and S.G. Byrne (Oxford, 1994); IIIA, *The Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily and Magna Graecia*, eds P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews (Oxford, 1997); IIIB, *Central Greece*, eds P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews (forthcoming, 2000)
- LIMC* *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae* (Zurich and Munich, 1981–97)
- LSAG*² L.H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, 2nd edn, with supplement by A.W. Johnston (Oxford, 1990)
- ML* R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC*, revised edn (Oxford, 1988)
- OCD*³ S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds), *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1996)
- OGS* O. Masson, *Onomastica Graeca Selecta*, ed. C. Dobias and L. Dubois, 2 vols (Paris, 1990)
- Osborne, *Naturalization* 3–4 M. J. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens*, 3–4 (Brussels, 1983)

- PA* J. Kirchner, *Prosopographia Attica*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1901)
- Pape-Benseler W. Pape and G.E. Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* (Braunschweig, 1863–70)
- Parker, *Athenian Religion* R. Parker, *Athenian Religion: A History* (Oxford, 1996)
- Robert, *OMS* L. Robert, *Opera Minora Selecta: Épigraphe et antiquités grecques*, 7 vols (Amsterdam, 1969–90)
- SEG* *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, eds J.E.E. Hondius and A.G. Woodhead, 1–25 (Leiden, 1923–71); eds H.W. Pleket and R.S. Stroud, 26–7 (Alphen, 1979–80), 28– (Amsterdam, 1982–)
- SGDI* H. Collitz, F. Bechtel and others, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, 4 vols (Göttingen, 1884–1915)
- Sittig E. Sittig, *De Graecorum nominibus theophoris* (diss. Halle, 1911)