What's in a Name? The Representation of Herodotos' Prose Predecessors

Modern scholarship has agreed that Herodotos is engaging with his predecessor, Hekataios, in his *Histories*, especially in Book 2. Although we could approach this relationship from a variety of perspectives, Herodotos' application of the term λογοποιός to Hekataios is quite peculiar. Some scholars have interpreted this title as possessing neutral or even positive connotations. For example, Oswyn Murray has suggested that Herodotos "would have described himself as [one]" (2001, 24-5). Yet, more recently, Leslie Kurke (2011) and John Dillery (2018) have read this term as pejorative in usage, just like how Ktesias had apparently applied it to Herodotos (BNJ 688 T 8). However, both these approaches overly generalize Herodotos' relationship with Hekataios, whether positively or negatively, and gloss over the complexity of Herodotos' engagement with his predecessor.

In this paper, I will analyze the context in which λογοποιός appears in the *Histories*. Unlike past scholarship that has tried to read this term as generally positive or negative throughout the text, I believe Herodotos' usage of λογοποιός fluctuates between favorable and hostile tones. I will first discuss Hekataios' role in the Ionian Revolt, where Herodotos depicts him as an unheeded wise advisor (5.36, 125). As Irene de Jong has argued, Herodotos presents his predecessor in Book 5 as a narrative *alter ego*, since Hekataios uses the same literary tools Herodotos has incorporated elsewhere in the *Histories* (2004). For example, Hekataios catalogues the nations under Persian rule and emphasizes the importance of naval supremacy for overcoming the power of the Persian Empire in 5.36. Even though Herodotos labels Hekataios as a λογοποιός in both these passages, the context prompts the reader to view Hekataios as the voice of reason during the ill-fated Ionian Revolt and therefore as an extension of Herodotos' narrative voice.

Next, I will examine the description of Hekataios' supposed visit to Egypt and the Temple of Amun in Memphis (2.143). Unlike Book 5, where Herodotos represents his predecessor as a narrative *alter ego*, he instead distances himself from Hekataios in Book 2. Not only does Herodotos refrain from tracing his ancestry back to a deity (ἐμοὶ οὐ γενεηλογήσαντι ἐμεωυτόν), but

he also records how the priests of Amun used Hekataios' signature rationalization of mythology against him. In essence, Herodotos characterizes Hekataios, who supposedly claimed that Greek tales were "numerous and ridiculous" (BNJ 1 F 1a), as believing men could have divine pedigree. By placing the rebuke of this idea in the mouths of the Egyptian priests, Herodotos indicates that Hekataios, at least in this respect, was lacking as a *histor*, especially in comparison to Herodotos with his Book 2 Egyptian *logoi*. This stark contrast between these depictions of Hekataios begs a reader of the *Histories* to consider why Herodotos has constructed his text in this way.

Finally, I will conclude this paper with the second character whom Herodotos calls a λογοποιός: Aisop (2.134). It is tempting to read this passage as denigrating Aisop's reputation. Herodotos claims that Iadmon owned Aisop as a slave and juxtaposes the cognate terms, λογοποιός and μουσοποιός, in a contrast between Aisop and Sappho. This attribution of slave status to Aisop and the comparison to a poetess of Sappho's status could imply that Aisop's fables should be valued less in Herodotos' view. Yet, the evidence Herodotos presents to prove Iadmon's ownership over Aisop involves recompensation (ποινή) for Aisop's murder. Herodotos uses the word ποινή three other times, where an unjustified murder was committed and had to be repaid (3.14, 7.134, 136). Much like with Hekataios, Herodotos' relationship with Aisop is not straightforward. Therefore, because the term λογοποιός appears in such various contexts, the nuances of this word cannot be simplified to a purely derogatory insult or a neutral occupational title.

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