Gold, kraters, and treasur(i)es in the first book of Herodotus' *Histories* **Harvard CHS Open House: 04/13/2017** Dr Maria G. Xanthou, Teaching Fellow, University of Leeds



[1.] Occurrences of the word χρυσός in Herodotus' Histories:

Total: 155 occurrences in all nine books First Book: 46 Second Book: 12 Third Book: 26 Fourth Book: 21 Fifth Book: 3 Sixth Book: 3 Sixth Book: 6 Seventh Book: 17 Eighth Book: 7 Ninth Book: 19

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[2.] Bacchylides fr. 14 M.

Λυδία μὲν γὰρ λίθος μανύει χρυσόν, ἀνδρῶν δ' ἀρετὰν σοφία τε παγκρατής τ' ἐλέγχει ἀλάθεια. [...] Translation: For the Lydian stone reveals [the quality of] gold, but wisdom and all-conquering truth prove the virtue of men [...]

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[3.] Herodotus 6.125.1-6

οἰ δὲ Άλκμεωνίδαι ἦσαν μὲν καὶ τὰ ἀνέκαθεν λαμπροὶ ἐν τῆσι Ἀθήνῃσι, ἀπὸ δὲ Ἀλκμέωνος καὶ αὖτις Μεγακλέος ἐγένοντο καὶ κάρτα λαμπροί. [2] τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ Ἀλκμέων ὁ Μεγακλέος τοῖσι ἐκ Σαρδίων Λυδοῖσι παρὰ Κροίσου ἀπικνεομένοισι ἐπὶ τὸ χρηστήριον τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖσι συμπρήκτωρ τε ἐγίνετο καὶ συνελάμβανε προθύμως, καί μιν Κροῖσος πυθόμενος τῶν Λυδῶν τῶν ἐς τὰ χρηστήρια φοιτεόντων ἑωυτὸν εὖ ποιἑειν μεταπέμπεται ἐς Σάρδις, ἀπικόμενον δὲ δωρέεται χρυσῷ τὸν ἂν δύνηται τῷ ἑωυτοῦ σώματι ἐξενείκασθαι ἐσάπαξ. [3] ὁ δὲ Ἀλκμέων πρὸς τὴν δωρεὴν ἑοῦσαν τοιαὐτην τοιάδε ἐπιτηδεύσας προσέφερε: ἐνδὺς κιθῶνα μέγαν καὶ κόλπον βαθὺν καταλιπόμενος τοῦ κιθῶνος, κοθόρνους τε τοὺς εὕρισκε εὐρυτάτους ἑόντας ὑποδησάμενος, ἤιε ἐς τὸν θησαυρὸν ἐς τόν οἱ κατηγἑοντο. [4] ἑσπεσὼν δὲ ἑς σωρὸν ψήγματος πρῶτα μὲν παρέσαξε παρὰ τὰς κνήμας τοῦ χρυσοῦ ὅσον ἐχώρεον οἱ κόθορνοι, μετὰ δὲ τὸν κόλπον πάντα πλησάμενος τοῦ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἑς τὰς τρίχας τῆς κεφαλῆς διαπάσας τοῦ ψήγματος καὶ ἄλλο λαβὼν ἑς τὸ στόμα, ἐξήιε ἐκ τοῦ θησαυροῦ ἕλκων μὲν μόγις τοὺς κοθόρνους, παντὶ δὲ τεῷ οίκὼς μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνθρώπῳ: τοῦ τό τε στόμα ἑβέβυστο

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καὶ πάντα ἐξώγκωτο. [5] ἰδόντα δὲ τὸν Κροῖσον γέλως ἐσῆλθε, καί οἱ πάντα τε ἐκεῖνα διδοῖ καὶ πρὸς ἔτερα δωρέεται οὐκ ἐλάσσω ἐκείνων. οὕτω μὲν ἐπλούτησε ἡ οἰκίη αὕτη μεγάλως, καὶ ὁ Ἀλκμέων οὖτος οὕτω τεθριπποτροφήσας Όλυμπιάδα ἀναιρέεται.

The Alcmeonidae had been men of renown at Athens even in the old days, and from the time of Alcmeon1 and then Megacles their renown increased. [2] When the Lydians from Sardis came from Croesus to the Delphic oracle, Alcmeon son of Megacles worked with them and zealously aided them; when Croesus heard from the Lydians who visited the oracle of Alcmeon's benefits to him, he summoned Alcmeon to Sardis, and there made him a gift of as much gold as he could carry away at one time on his person. [3] Considering the nature of the gift, Alcmeon planned and employed this device: he donned a wide tunic, leaving a deep fold in it, and put on the most spacious boots that he could find, then went into the treasury to which they led him. [4] Falling upon a heap of gold-dust, first he packed next to his legs as much gold as his boots would contain; then he filled all the fold of his tunic with gold and strewed the dust among the hair of his head, and took more of it into his mouth; when he came out of the treasury, hardly dragging the weight of his boots, he was like anything rather than a human being, with his mouth crammed full and all his body swollen. [5] Croesus burst out laughing at the sight and gave him all the gold he already had and that much more again. Thus the family grew very rich; Alcmeon came to keep four-horse chariots and won with them at Olympia.

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[4.] Herodotus 1.1.1

Ήροδότου Άλικαρνησσέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἤδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα έξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἕργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἐλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, τά τε ἄλλα καὶ δι' ἣν αίτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.

This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man not be forgotten in time, and that great and marvelous deeds, some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other.

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[5.] Herodotus 1.12.5-13.2

Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀναπαυομένου Κανδαύλεω ὑπεκδύς τε καὶ ἀποκτείνας αὐτὸν ἔσχε καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὴν βασιληίην Γύγης' τοῦ καὶ Ἀρχίλοχος ὁ Πάριος, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον γενόμενος, ἐν ἰάμβῷ τριμέτρῷ ἐπεμνήσθη. Ἔσχε δὲ τὴν βασιληίην καὶ ἑκρατύνθη ἐκ τοῦ ἐν Δελφοῖσι χρηστηρίου.

[2] and presently he stole out and killed Candaules as he slept. Thus he made himself master of the king's wife and sovereignty. He is mentioned in the iambic

verses of Archilochus of Parus who lived about the same time. So he took possession of the sovereign power and was confirmed in it by the Delphic oracle.

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[6.] Herodotus 1.14.1-17

τὴν μὲν δὴ τυραννίδα οὕτω ἕσχον οἱ Μερμνάδαι τοὺς Ἡρακλείδας ἀπελόμενοι, Γύγης δὲ τυραννεύσας ἀπέπεμψε ἀναθήματα ἐς Δελφοὺς οὐκ ὀλίγα, ἀλλ' ὅσα μὲν ἀργύρου ἀναθήματα, ἕστι οἱ πλεῖστα ἐν Δελφοῖσι, πἀρεξ δὲ τοῦ ἀργύρου χρυσὸν ἄπλετον ἀνέθηκε ἄλλον τε καὶ τοῦ μάλιστα μνήμην ἄξιον ἕχειν ἐστί, κρητῆρές οἱ ἀριθμὸν Ἐξ χρύσεοι ἀνακέαται. 2. ἐστᾶσι δὲ οὖτοι ἐν τῷ Κορινθίων θησαυρῷ σταθμὸν ἔχοντες τριήκοντα τάλαντα' ἀληθέϊ δὲ λόγῳ χρεωμένῳ οὐ Κορινθίων τοῦ δημοσίου ἐστὶ ὁ θησαυρός, ἀλλὰ Κυψέλου τοῦ Ἡετίωνος. οὖτος δὲ ὁ Γύγης πρῶτος βαρβάρων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν ἐς Δελφοὺς ἀνέθηκε ἀναθήματα μετὰ Μίδην τὸν Γορδίεω, Φρυγίης βασιλέα. 3. ἀνέθηκε γὰρ δὴ καὶ Μίδης τὸν βασιλήιον θρόνον ἐς τὸν προκατίζων ἐδίκαζε, ἐόντα ἀξιοθέητον'ξκεῖται δὲ ὁ θρόνος οὖτος ἕνθα περ οἱ τοῦ Γύγεω κρητῆρες. ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς οὖτος καὶ ὁ ἄργυρος, τὸν ὁ Γύγης ἀνέθηκε, ὑπὸ Δελφῶν καλέεται Γυγάδας ἑπὶ τοῦ ἀναθέντος

Thus the Mermnads robbed the Heraclidae of the sovereignty and took it for themselves. Having gotten it, Gyges sent many offerings to Delphi: there are very many silver offerings of his there; and besides the silver, he dedicated a hoard of gold, among which six golden bowls are the offerings especially worthy of mention. 2. These weigh thirty talents and stand in the treasury of the Corinthians; although in truth it is not the treasury of the Corinthian people but of Cypselus son of Eetion. This Gyges then was the first foreigner whom we know who placed offerings at Delphi after the king of Phrygia, Midas son of Gordias. 3. For Midas too made an offering: namely, the royal seat on which he sat to give judgment, and a marvellous seat it is. It is set in the same place as the bowls of Gyges. This gold and the silver offered by Gyges is called by the Delphians 'Gygian' after its dedicator.

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[7.] Herodotus 1.50.3

έποιέετο δὲ καὶ λέοντος είκόνα χρυσοῦ ἀπέφθου, ἕλκουσαν σταθμὸν τάλαντα δέκα' οὗτος ὁ λέων, ἐπείτε κατεκαίετο ὁ ἐν Δελφοῖσι νηός, κατέπεσε ἀπὸ τῶν ἡμιπλινθίων ἐπὶ γὰρ τούτοισι ἴδρυτο καὶ νῦν κεῖται ἐν τῷ Κορινθίων θησαυρῷ, ἕλκων σταθμὸν ἕβδομον ἡμιτάλαντον' ἀπετάκη γὰρ αὐτοῦ τέταρτον ἡμιτάλαντον.

He also had a figure of a lion made of refined gold, weighing ten talents. When the temple of Delphi was burnt, this lion fell from the ingots which were the base on which it stood; and now it is in the treasury of the Corinthians, but weighs only six talents and a half, for the fire melted away three and a half talents.

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[8.] Herodotus 1.51.1-3

έπιτελέσας δὲ ὁ Κροῖσος ταῦτα ἀπέπεμπε ἐς Δελφούς, καὶ τάδε ἄλλα ἄμα τοῖσι, κρητῆρας δύο μεγάθεϊ μεγάλους, χρύσεον καὶ ἀργύρεον, τῶν ὁ μὲν χρύσεος έκειτο έπὶ δεξιὰ έσιόντι ές τὸν νηόν, ὁ δὲ ἀργύρεος ἐπ΄ ἀριστερά. 2. μετεκινήθησαν δὲ καὶ οὗτοι ὑπὸ τὸν νηὸν κατακαέντα καὶ ὁ μὲν χρύσεος κεῖται έν τῶ Κλαζομενίων θησαυρῶ, ἕλκων σταθμὸν εἴνατον ἡμιτάλαντον καὶ ἔτι δυώδεκα μνέας, δ δε άργύρεος έπι τοῦ προνηίου τῆς γωνίης, χωρέων άμφορέας έξακοσίους: έπικίρναται γὰρ ὑπὸ Δελφῶν Θεοφανίοισι. 3. φασὶ δὲ μιν Δελφοὶ Θεοδώρου τοῦ Σαμίου ἕργον εἶναι, καὶ ἑγὼ δοκέω: οὐ γὰρ τὸ συντυχὸν φαίνεταί μοι ἕργον εἶναι.

When these offerings were ready, Croesus sent them to Delphi, with other gifts besides: namely, two very large bowls, one of gold and one of silver. The golden bowl stood to the right, the silver to the left of the temple entrance. 2. These too were removed about the time of the temple's burning, and now the golden bowl, which weighs eight and a half talents and twelve minae, is in the treasury of the Clazomenians, and the silver bowl at the corner of the forecourt of the temple. This bowl holds six hundred nine-gallon measures: for the Delphians use it for a mixing-bowl at the feast of the Divine Appearance. 3. It is said by the Delphians to be the work of Theodorus of Samos, and I agree with them, for it seems to me to be of no common workmanship.

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