

CHRESMOLOGUES AND *MANTEIS*: INDEPENDENT DIVINERS AND THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

JOHN DILLERY

Toward the beginning of Book 7 of his *History*, in the narrative of the events leading up to Xerxes' decision to invade Greece, Herodotus recounts an important episode. In addition to his hot-headed cousin Mardonius, there were a number of non-Persian hangers-on at the court of Xerxes who were pushing for invasion: messengers from the Aleuadae of Thessaly, the Pisistratids, and a man the Pisistratids had brought with them, "Onomacritus, an Athenian man, a *chrêsmologos* and an arranger (*diathetês*) of the oracles of Musaeus, having made up their quarrel with him." The detail about an earlier quarrel between Onomacritus and the sons of Pisistratus prompts Herodotus to digress:

For Onomacritus was driven out of Athens by Hipparchus the son of Pisistratus, having been caught by Lasus of Hermione in the act of introducing into the work of Musaeus an oracle that the islands lying off Lemnos would disappear under the sea (7.6.3).

Herodotus tells us that Hipparchus took this action in spite of the fact that earlier Onomacritus had been a close associate. But later, having come to Susa with the Pisistratids, whenever he came into the king's presence, his patrons would make solemn testimonials about him, and he would recite a selection from his oracles: if there were prophecies portending disaster for Xerxes, these he left out, uttering instead the ones that seemed to promise success.

I will examine this passage in detail later, but there are two problems I want to take up here that will help define issues that will form the subject of this paper. First, the relationship between Onomacritus and the Pisistratids is remarkable for the many turns it seems to take: he is first in favor with them, then, despite his closeness, is exiled by Hipparchus, only to be brought back into the Pisistratid orbit again later while the tyrants are resident in Persia. Whatever the reason the Pisistratids drove the chresmologue out of Athens was clearly not in effect later in Susa, but we have to assume that there was a serious breach between Onomacritus and the tyrants in order to have a reconciliation later. But it may also be that the Pisistratids would not

have exiled Onomacritus if they did not have to, implying that external agency—popular dissatisfaction?—with the oracle-monger forced their hand. This in turn suggests another possibility, namely that the discovery of Onomacritus' fraud was a public one, in a setting that the Pisistratids could not control. In any case, the revelation by Lasus of Onomacritus' interpolation seems to require some sort of performance of the oracle in question, for how else could the chresmologue be caught "red-handed"?

Clearly the relationship between Onomacritus and the Pisistratids was complex. But however we try to reconstruct it, the episode of his exposure suggests that his authority was tied to his patrons. One axis of inquiry that this paper will follow will be precisely the issue of how the independent diviner—be he chresmologue, *mantis*, or some other figure—stood in relation to the community he served, or, to put it another way, how his authority was defined. Another axis will concern a related topic: how do the activities of the independent diviner relate to the problem of oral and written culture. Although the crime of Onomacritus is often referred to by moderns as "forgery", in fact Lasus of Hermione is spoken of as catching him "in the act" of interpolating an oracle, that is, a context where the prophecies of Musaeus were being recited. The issue of the authority of the independent religious expert is deeply implicated in the broader one of early Greek notions regarding the probative power of the written word.

These two axes, the authority of the diviner and his relation to the oral vs. literate divide, will be charted here against a review of the *chrêsmologos* and *mantis* over time. It so happens that the Onomacritus episode in Herodotus presents in brief the main periods for the independent diviner: the world of myth/legend (Musaeus), the archaic period (Onomacritus), and the classical period (Herodotus' reception of the story). I will follow these rough divisions in my discussion. I do not aim at a comprehensive presentation of *manteis* and chresmologues. Rather, what I do here is trace the main developments in the function of independent divination by looking at important, representative figures. But first, a word on terminology.

I. *Mantis*, *Chrêsmologos*, *Prophêtês*. *Dependent and Independent Divination*

Difficulties attend the interpretation of both agent nouns in Greek with which we are here concerned—*mantis* and *chrêsmologos*. Despite

the protests of Rohde and Wilamowitz,¹ *mantis* seems to be related to the verb μάνινομαι and the noun μανία, all from the IE root *men-, thus linking the concept of “seer” or “diviner” with “madness”.² These earlier scholars objected that this derivation of the word laid too much stress on the ecstatic element of prophecy, and that the term was instead to be connected to μηνύω and the notion of revelation.³ However, the link between *mantis* and divine inspiration or madness is one that the Greeks themselves recognized (e.g. Plato, *Phdr.* 244c; cf. *Euthyphr.* 3c), and should not be seriously questioned.⁴ The central function of the *mantis* was to interpret the divine will through omens (most often of birds) and sacrifice. Curiously, the term could even rarely be applied to the gods themselves. In the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, Apollo refers to *manteia* as something that is the exclusive possession first of Zeus and then, he implies, himself (*h.Merc.* 533-38). Archilochus speaks of Zeus as the “most reliable (ἀψευδέστατος) *mantis* among the gods” (F 298 West²). Plato refers to Apollo as a *mantis* as well (*Lg.* 686a), and Pausanias records that at Amphiclea the people refer to the same deity as their *mantis* (10.33.1). Indeed, the very term used in connection with the Pythian priestess at Delphi, πρόμαντις (e.g. Hdt. 6.66.2-3, 7.141.2), implies that Apollo was thought of as the *mantis* there as well.⁵ As for *chrēsmologos*, the difficulty lies not in the etymology but in the force of the -*logos* element. Although the idea of a “compiler” and hence “purveyor” of oracles (χρησμοί) is regularly emphasized,⁶ because of the ambiguity of the -*logos* suffix, the word

¹ E. Rohde, *Psyche*, W. Willis, trans., 8th ed. (New York 1925), 311 n.41; U. v. Wilamowitz, *Glaube der Hellenen* (Berlin 1931), vol. I, 40 n.2.

² See, e.g., P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque* (Paris 1984), vol. II, 665 s.v.; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, J. Raffan, trans. (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 112. Also P. Roth, *Mantis: the Nature, Function, and Status of a Greek Prophetic Type* (Diss. Bryn Mawr 1982), 9-18 with notes.

³ Revived by M. Casevitz, “*Mantis: le vrai sens*,” *REG* 105 (1992): 1-18; J.N. Bremmer, “The Status and Symbolic Capital of the Seer,” in R. Hägg, ed., *The Role of Religion in the Early Greek Polis* (Stockholm 1996), 98.

⁴ Chantraine, *Dictionnaire* (n.2), vol. II, 665, does note that there is no parallel in Greek for masculine agent nouns that end in -*tis* (μάρπτις “seizer” is an emendation at Aes. *Supp.* 826 of μάρπις).

⁵ E. Fascher, Προφήτης (Giessen 1927), 32-33; S. Georgoudi, “Les Porte-Parole des Dieux: Réflexions sur le Personnel des Oracles Grecs,” in Chirassi Colombo and T. Seppilli, eds., *Sibille e Linguaggi Oracolari. Mito, Storia, Tradizione*, I (Pisa and Rome 1998), 331-5. Cf. LSJ s.v. πρόμαντις.

⁶ E.g. J.H. Oliver, *The Athenian Expounders of the Sacred and Ancestral Law* (Baltimore 1950), 6-10; Chantraine (n.2), vol. II, 1276 s.v. χρησ-. Cf. D. Potter, *Prophets and Emperors* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 95.

can also mean one who “utters” oracles, and in fact some scholars stress this meaning.⁷ In a passage that is important in a number of ways, though late, Pausanias clearly understands *chrêsmologos* as a predicate that denotes one who “speaks” oracles. Commenting on a forged set of oracles attributed to Amphiarauus, he writes: “apart from the ones they say were made mad by Apollo long ago, no one of the *manteis* was a speaker of oracles (*chrêsmologos*); rather, they were expert at explaining dreams and interpreting the flights of birds and the innards of sacrificial victims” (Paus. 1.34.4). For Pausanias it is actually the divinely inspired *chrêsmologos* who utters oracles, whereas the *mantis*, unless one of those from long ago (τὸ ἀρχαῖον), is an expert in interpretation. While it looks as though Pausanias is separating the *mantis* from madness, on closer inspection it is clear that he is arguing against a prevailing view, and indeed must concede that heroic *manteis* were “maddened” by Apollo.

This passage raises another problem that concerns both *mantis* and *chrêsmologos*: the two terms can to some extent overlap, with *chrêsmologos* taking on some of the force of *mantis* in the meaning “soothsayer” and hence “seer”.⁸ In rare cases the two words can even be used to describe the same man: thus, in the scholia to Aristophanes *Birds* 521, the Athenian Lampon is called both a *mantis* and a *chrêsmologos* (see below), and relatedly, in a fragment of Sophocles, the famous *mantis* of legend Musaeus may have been identified as a *chrêsmologos* (*TrGF* IV F 1116), though this text is problematic. But it needs to be said that the two terms were normally thought of as separate. Thucydides clearly believes that, while the words denote figures whose divinatory abilities are allied, they are not synonymous (Thuc. 8.1.1); Aristophanes shares this view in yet another description of an important Athenian religious expert, Hierocles (*Peace* 1046-7).⁹

Greek also has other words that denote persons who seem to be roughly identical either with *chrêsmologos* or *mantis*. Oliver argued some time ago that the “expounder” of sacred matters (ἐξηγητής) at Athens was similar in function to the *chrêsmologos*, and was roundly criticized

⁷ E.g. M.P. Nilsson, rev. Oliver (n.6), *AJP* 71 (1950): 421-2; R. Garland, “Religious Authority in Archaic and Classical Athens,” *ABSA* 79 (1984): 113; S.D. Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (Oxford 1998), 269.

⁸ Cf. Potter, *Prophets and Emperors* (n.6), 11.

⁹ A.W. Argyle, “Χρησμολόγοι and Μάντιες,” *CR* 20 (1970): 139.

for doing so.¹⁰ In fact an exegete at Athens was responsible for the interpretation of sacred law (see esp. Plato *Euthyphr.* 4c, Isaeus 8.39).¹¹ By the later fourth century, however, it seems pretty clear that little separated the *exégētai* from other religious experts (e.g. Theophrastus *Char.* 16.6). As for terms allied to *mantis*, Plato often employs the adjective χρησµωδός substantively, and twice with the rare term θεοµάντις, to indicate a prophetic soothsayer whose divine inspiration is akin to the poets (note esp. *Ion* 534c, *Ap.* 22c, *Meno* 99c). In Homer the adjective θεοπρόπος is likewise used substantively as a synonym for *mantis* (e.g. *Il.* 12.228, *Od.* 1.415), whereas elsewhere it can mean a messenger sent out by a city to obtain an oracle (cf. *Hdt.* 7.140.1), and is thus also akin to θεωρός. Another relevant term is προφήτης. Although this noun can overlap considerably with *mantis*, the main difference between the two is that the *prophētēs* is usually attached to a specific god at a particular cult site, with responsibility for communicating the divine will.¹² In this sense we can speak of the *prophētēs* as a “dependent” diviner, whereas the *mantis* was not usually connected to a specific cult, and was thus “independent”. But we should not expect exactitude in this distinction either. Thus, for instance, in his hymn to Apollo Ptoius, Pindar mentions a *naopolos mantis* (F 51d Maehler), a figure that obviously must be connected in some official way to the temple (*naos*).¹³ I will treat *manteis* and chresmologues as distinct, and the two as different from other comparable figures with more obvious ties to particular cult, but the boundaries are no doubt not as firm as I have drawn them.¹⁴ In general what distinguished the independent diviner from other religious figures, of civic cult and major sanctuaries, was that in the main their competence had more to do with expertise

¹⁰ Oliver, *Athenian Expounders* (n.6), ch.1, with Nilsson’s review (n.7), also K. Hanell, *Gnomon* 25 (1953): 522-27. Cf. Garland, “Religious Authority” (n.7), 114-5. Note *IG I³* 131 and 137 (mid and late 5th): Apollo Pythius as ancestral *exégētēs* of Athens, with Plato *Resp.* 427c, and *Ath. Mitt.* 1941, 184 lines 8-9 (c.200). Cf. H.B. Mattingly, “Athens, Delphi and Eleusis in the late 420s,” in *The Athenian Empire Restored. Epigraphic and Historical Studies* (Ann Arbor 1996), 184-5 = *PACA* 9 (1966): 63-64.

¹¹ J. Mikalson, *Athenian Popular Religion* (Chapel Hill 1983), 40-41.

¹² Fascher, Προφήτης (n.5), 32-40. There are cases where *prophētēs* seems to mean an independent diviner, e.g. Aeschylus *Ag.* 409 (see below).

¹³ Georgoudi, “Personnel des Oracles Grecs” (n.5), 329-30.

¹⁴ Cf. M.-L. Haack, “Haruspices publics and privés: Tentative d’une distinction,” *REA* 104 (2002): 111-33.

and skill and less with inspiration, though the seers of myth prove an exception to this rule.¹⁵

II. *The Independent Diviner in Myth and Legend*

Agamemnon rebukes Calchas at the beginning of the *Iliad*: “*mantis* of evil, never yet have you spoken to me anything good; | always it is pleasing to your heart to prophesy evils, | and you never utter a good word nor have you accomplished one” (1.106-8). It is telling that the first description of an independent diviner we have in Greek literature is a negative one. And note, too, that Agamemnon’s words imply that Calchas was regularly consulted by the army up to that point, so that his function as *mantis* is imagined as anterior to the action of the poem. Indeed later writers such as Aeschylus seem almost certain to have understood Agamemnon’s remarks to apply to the earlier sacrifice at Aulis of Iphigenia, an event mandated in a prophecy delivered by Calchas, even though the ancient scholia on this line of the *Iliad* may reject the connection.¹⁶ One of the recurring features of *manteis* in myth is their opposition to the authority of kings. Teiresias is perhaps most familiar in this regard, especially as we see him in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*.¹⁷ In Homer the opposition of the seer/prophet to the chieftain can even be seen within the circle of the leader’s close associates. The warrior-seer Polydamas in the *Iliad* is described as Hector’s close companion (ἑταῖρος), born on the same night as the Trojan captain (18.251); yet twice he finds himself having to steer Hector on a safer course (12.61-79, 13.726-47), and on two other occasions is violently rebuked by him for urging a more cautious plan of action (12.230-50, 18.285-309).¹⁸ Although he is

¹⁵ A.D. Nock, “Religious Attitudes of the Ancient Greeks,” in Z. Stewart, ed., *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Oxford 1972), vol. II, 539.

¹⁶ The bT scholia: τὸ γὰρ Ἰφιγενείας ὄνομα οὐδὲ οἶδεν ὁ ποιητής, an observation due to the Alexandrian stricture to “explain Homer from Homer” (R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* [Oxford 1968], 227). On *Iliad* 1.106 and Ag. 186, E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus Agamemnon* (Oxford 1950), vol. II, 115 n.2.

¹⁷ S.C. Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London 1978), 255; cf. G.E.R. Lloyd, *The Ambitions of Curiosity. Understanding the World in Ancient Greece and China* (Cambridge 2002), 36.

¹⁸ The uniformity of Polydamas’ speeches has occasioned analyst speculation: D. Lohmann, *Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias* (Berlin 1970), 178-82; and B. Hainsworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary* (Cambridge 1993), vol. III, 325 ad II. 12.61-79.

nowhere actually called a *mantis*, in his speech in Book 13, Polydamas claims that being an adviser “in whom Zeus has placed a far-seeing mind” (732) is opposed to the one whom the divine has made a fighter (730), as well as other forms of expertise (dancer, bard 731); and in Hector’s famous rejection of Polydamas’ interpretation of “bird-signs,” seer-craft is rejected *tout court*, in words reminiscent of Agamemnon’s reply to Calchas in Book 1 (12.231-50). The *mantis* and the chieftain are ultimately oppositional forces; while Polydamas is Hector’s “alter ego,” he is also the paired opposite of the great Trojan leader.¹⁹

The most detailed picture of the *mantis* we have in Homer is of Theoclymenus from Book 15 of the *Odyssey* (223-81). He, too, is at odds with powerful figures: he has slain a kinsman who has many brothers and relatives who hold great power among the Achaeans (272-4); and of course later in the epic he relates his gruesome vision of the suitors just before their slaughter, and thereby earns their ill-timed ridicule, Eurymachus’ in particular (20.351-70). But the bulk of the digression in *Od.* 15 given to Theoclymenus concerns his family—a family, it turns out, composed almost entirely of seers: his lineage begins with Melampus (225), who in turn fathered Antiphates and Mantius (242) (the latter, though not identified as such, in all likelihood a seer given his name); Antiphates’ grandson is none other than the renowned *mantis* of the Seven against Thebes, Amphiaraus (244), while Mantius’ own son Polyphides is made by Apollo “the best seer by far among men, after the death of Amphiaraus.” (252-3) Theoclymenus is the son of this Polyphides (256). Just as important as this succession of *manteis* are the sad tales attached to almost all of them: it is worth noting in particular that Melampus suffers terrible treatment at the hands of the hero Neleus, that Amphiaraus is betrayed by his wife Eriphyle, and that Polyphides is driven into exile by his own father because of a feud. And we are entitled to add to the genealogy the sons of Amphiaraus, namely Alcmaeon and Amphilocheus, both Epigoni of the Theban cycle of myth. While clearly mentioned (248), they are not identified as seers in the lineage of Theoclymenus, but we know from (admittedly) late accounts that Alcmaeon was married to Manto (note the name), a daughter of Teiresias, and that Amphilocheus was a companion of Calchas, and was later divinized and made an oracular

¹⁹ Cf. J.M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: the Tragedy of Hector* (Chicago 1975), 143.

source at Mallus in Cilicia,²⁰ reputed to be second to none in accuracy (Paus. 1.34.3: *μαντεῖον ἀψευδέστατον*—note Zeus above). Pausanias adds an alternative genealogy that makes Clytius, the founder of the Clytidae (see below), of this lineage as well, the son of Alcmaeon and grandson of Amphiarus. We are told that he migrated to Elis because of anger at his maternal uncles for killing his father (Paus. 6.17.6).

Even more than the figure of Polydamas, Theoclymenus' presence in the *Odyssey* has excited a great deal of analytic skepticism.²¹ Setting aside the question of its compositional relationship to the whole of the *epos*, Erbse's defense of it is worth noting here. The massive genealogical digression is meant to convince the audience that Theoclymenus is a master seer who has inherited his ability from his family, and hence we can be sure of his predictions towards the end of the poem.²² This is surely the point of the vignette, and whether an authentic part of the *Odyssey* or not, it presupposes that being a seer is something that runs in families and is something furthermore that often pits the possessor of mantic ability against powerful figures. The genealogy of Hagesias, son of Sostratus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 2),²³ the honorand of Pindar's *Olympian* 6, also suggests that independent divination ran in families, for he was of the prophetic Iamidae, "the sons of Iamus," that boasted several seers. There were in fact at least three families that could claim many generations of diviners: the Clytidae, Telliaidae, and the Iamidae (cf. Philostr. *VA* 5.25, Cicero, *de Div.* 1.91). An inscription survives from Olympia which records *manteis* from both the Clytidae and Iamidae consecutively from Olympiads 186 (39 BC) to 261 (AD 265).²⁴

²⁰ Apollodorus 3.6.2, 3.7.7, 3.10.8. "Amphilochus" is the name both of the brother and the son of Alcmaeon, and the two were often conflated.

²¹ See A. Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford 1989), vol. II, 245-6 ad *Od.* 15.223-81. Cf. Polydamas, n.18.

²² H. Erbse, *Beiträge zum Verständnis der Odyssee* (Berlin 1972), 53-4; rejected by Hoekstra, n.21. Note that Apollo at Aes. *Eum.* 18 is described as the "fourth" in his line to be a *mantis*.

²³ P. Kett, *Prosopographie der historischen griechischen Manteis bis auf die Zeit Alexanders des Grossen* (Diss. Nürnberg 1966). All subsequent diviners identified by Kett numbers, where possible.

²⁴ L. Weniger, "Die Seher von Olympia," *ARW* 18 (1915): 53-115. Cf. U. v. Wilamowitz, *Isthylos von Epidauros = Neue philologische Untersuchungen* 9 (Berlin 1886), 179-85. The Clytidae are "Clytiadae:" see Weniger 59 and Hdt. 9.33.1. Add Telmessus in Caria, a city of seers (Arrian, *An.* 2.3.3, Cicero, *de Div.* 1.91); its most famous son, Aristander, Alexander's *mantis*. See also A.S. Pease, *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Divinatione Liber Primus* (Urbana 1920), vol. II, 257-8 ad loc.

But Theoclymenus' genealogy goes beyond merely stressing the frequency of seers in his lineage: his ancestors are among the most famous *manteis* of Greek myth, suggesting perhaps both the unimpeachable aristocratic pedigree of his family, and yet simultaneously the "outsider" status of some of its members (Melampus a prisoner; Polyphides an exile; Theoclymenus an outcast murderer). This aspect suggests that while certainly aristocratic, these warrior-seers are also detached from the elite. Considerable epic lore especially surrounded both the figures of Melampus and Amphiaraus. The "Departure of Amphiaraus" (Ἀμφιαράου ἐξέλασις), in which the hero knowingly goes to his doom, was a well known legend that formed a part of the Epic Cycle (*Theb.* T 7 & 8, F 9 Bernabé). Moreover, he had an oracular shrine at Oropus, one that, to judge from Herodotus' account of Croesus' test of oracles (1.49, 52), was held in high esteem, a rival even to Delphi. Herodotus is also the authority for a strange rule concerning Oropus: the Thebans could not consult this oracle because the priestess there once gave them a choice: Amphiaraus could either be a *mantis* to them or a warrior, but not both. They chose the latter (Hdt. 8.134.2). The story of Melampus and his descendents was told in both the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (FF 37, 135-6 Merkelbach-West) and *Melampodia* (FF 270-79 Merkelbach-West), as well as by the mythographer Phercydes of Athens (FF 114-18 Fowler).²⁵ Indeed, Melampus gets most of the attention in the digression in Book 15 of the *Odyssey*, and his story is also told in even more detail in Book 11 (281-97):²⁶ a native of Pylos, he defeats Neleus after much travail, gives Neleus' daughter Pero to his brother to wed, and himself goes off to Argos to be king. Herodotus presents us with a related account that features Melampus extorting half the kingdom of Argos and one-third for his brother as a price for his healing of maddened women (Hdt. 9.34; see below). Pindar reports an alternative version of the same legend (*Pae.* 4.28-31 Maehler): Melampus did not go off to Argos to be king, for this would have entailed giving up his mantic ability, as though the two spheres of activity could not reside in the same person—being a seer and being a king.²⁷ Recall, too, that the Thebans could not have the services of an Amphiaraus who was both warrior and *mantis*.

²⁵ M.L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Oxford 1985), 79-82; I. Löffler, *Die Melampodie. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion des Inhalts* (Meisenheim am Glan 1963).

²⁶ Cf. A. Heubeck, *Der Odyssee-Dichter und die Ilias* (Erlangen 1954), 20-21.

²⁷ Cf. I. Rutherford, *Pindar's Paeans* (Oxford 2001), 287-88. Bacchylides does

A passage from the *Melampodia* deserves special attention. F 278 Merkelbach-West recounts that Calchas and Amphilochus, the son of Amphiaraus, were on their way back from Troy (cf. Hdt. 7.91) when they encountered near Claros the Argonaut and *mantis* Mopsus, who in this story is in fact the son of Manto, the daughter of Teiresias (see above; she is also sometimes the wife of Alcmaeon).²⁸ The two seers agree to a riddle-competition; Calchas loses, and then dies of grief.²⁹ The account comes to us by way of Strabo (14.1.27), who reports that both Pherecydes (F 142 Fowler) and Sophocles (*TrGF* IV F 180) told the same story with minor differences. The *topos* of the “Rätselkampf” or riddle-competition followed by the death of the loser is a fairly common one in Greek myth (cf. Oedipus and the Sphinx),³⁰ and indeed is linked to the broader theme of the competition between learned men (e.g. the *certamen* of Homer and Hesiod; the contest between the Seven Sages for the Tripod of Miletus/Cup of Bathycles).³¹ But with that said, the story of Calchas and Mopsus raises the idea of a competition between *manteis*, one that I will return to when we look again at the story of Onomacritus and Lasus.

While the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* provide us with information about several famous seers of myth and their relationship to other heroes, we also catch glimpses in the *Odyssey* specifically of nameless religious experts. In Book 1 Telemachus extends the Homeric formula “I/we put no stock in prophecy” (οὔτε θεοπροπίης ἐμπάζομαι/ἐμπαζόμεθ’, ἦν... *Il.* 16.50, *Od.* 2.201), and mentions “the sort of prophecy that my mother investigates, having summoned a seer (θεοπρόπος) to the house” (*Od.* 1.415-6). Aeschylus, too, presents outsiders who are retained by

place Melampus in Argos, for he goes from there to found a cult of Apollo (*Pae.* 4.50-54 Maehler).

²⁸ Cf. D. Lyons, “Manto and *Manteia*: Prophecy in the Myths and Cults of Heroines,” in Chirassi Colombo and Seppilli, eds., *Sibille e Linguaggi Oracolari* (n.5), 232-3, 236.

²⁹ For more on “riddles,” see Struck in this volume, xxx - xxx.

³⁰ K. Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen* (Berlin 1912), 28-9; cf. O. Immisch, “Klaros. Forschungen über griechische Stiftungssagen,” *Jahrbücher für classischen Philologie* Supp. 17 (1890): 160-65; Löffler, *Melampodie* (n.25), 48-9.

³¹ Cf. B. Graziosi, “Competition in wisdom,” in F. Budelmann and P. Michelakis, eds., *Homer, Tragedy and Beyond. Essays in honour of P.E. Easterling* (London 2001), 57-74; J.S. Clay, *Hesiod’s Cosmos* (Cambridge 2003), 178-80; K. Kuiper, “Le Récit de la Coupe de Bathyclès,” *RÉG* 29 (1916): 404-29; W. Wiersma, “The Seven Sages and the Prize of Wisdom,” *Mnemosyne* 1 ser.3 (1934): 150-54; A. Kerkhecker, *Callimachus’ Book of Iambi* (Oxford 1999), 35 and n.153.

the royal house to interpret dreams and other divine signs (*Ag.* 409 δόμων προφήται, *Cho.* 32 δόμων ὀνειρόμαντις).³² But most illuminating is another passage from the *Odyssey*. When Eumaeus responds to Antinous' insulting remark about bringing the beggar to the palace, the swineherd responds: "now who, going out himself, summons an utter stranger from elsewhere |, unless he be one of those who are public workers (δημιοεργοί) |, a *mantis*, or a healer of ills, or a builder in wood |, or even a divine bard who can delight with his singing..." (*Od.* 17.382-85).

I cannot hope to discuss fully a passage whose significance Walter Burkert has devoted an entire book to.³³ But what must be noted here is the social status of the *mantis* that seems to be indicated: the seer to whom Eumaeus refers is clearly of the class of "public workers," an intermediate group between the nobility and their retainers and slaves. For Burkert this passage evokes the highly mobile world of cultural interaction between East and West in the dark and early archaic periods. He argues that the first independent diviners were itinerant experts, and that many of them were non-Greeks from the Near East. He notes, for instance, that "Mopsus," mentioned above, is a Cilician name found at Karatepe belonging to a king, and that far from being a descendant of Teiresias, he was an easterner whom the Greeks appropriated; moreover, even if Greek, it is Mopsus of Cilicia in Asia who defeats Calchas.³⁴ Burkert asserts that these figures were pivotal in the transfer of "oriental" wisdom to the West.³⁵ Morris supports Burkert's understanding of the significance of *Od.* 17.383, and adds a number of other cases that she sees preserved in the material record: mobile, polyglot eastern priests familiar with the religious practices of a number of cultures.³⁶ It is worth remembering here

³² Fraenkel, *Agamemnon* (n.16), vol. II, 214 ad loc. Cf. Fascher, Προφήτης (n.5), 13-14.

³³ *The Orientalizing Revolution. Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age*, M.E. Pinder and W. Burkert, trans. (Cambridge MA 1992), esp. 6-7 and n.29.

³⁴ W. Burkert, "Itinerant Diviners and Magicians: A Neglected Element in Cultural Contacts," in R. Hägg, ed., *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C.: Tradition and Innovation* (Stockholm 1983), 117.

³⁵ Burkert, *Orientalizing Revolution* (n.33), ch.2, esp. 23-5; also idem, "Itinerant Diviners and Magicians" (n.34), 115-19.

³⁶ S.P. Morris, *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art* (Princeton 1992), 107-8, and cf. 115-6. Also M.L. West, *The East Face of Helicon. West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth* (Oxford 1997), 610-11.

that, according to Herodotus, Melampus learned seercraft (*mantikê*) in Egypt, and brought it, along with other religious lore, to the Greeks (Hdt. 2.49.2).³⁷ But this is not the place to discuss the processes by which knowledge and expertise, religious and otherwise, were spread to the Greek world.³⁸ It is enough to note that Eumaeus' words from the *Odyssey* leave no doubt that the seer was often an outsider, called in by aristocrats for his specialist knowledge. Indeed, Finley argued that while some seers and doctors in all likelihood had to be noble (the heroic ones discussed above), the passage makes clear that others came from a group of non-elite specialists.³⁹ Solon, too, produces a similar list of experts that includes the *mantis* (West² 13.37-62: merchant, farmer, craftsman, poet, *mantis*, healer).⁴⁰ An anecdote from Herodotus even suggests that these specialists could form friendships among themselves: the famous doctor Democedes of Croton engineered the release from Darius' prison of an Elean *mantis* who had served Polycrates of Samos (Hdt. 3.132.2; cf. 124.1).

The nameless, itinerant religious expert of the *Odyssey* seems a fitting bridge to the legendary seers of Greek tradition. These figures are to be contrasted with the heroic *manteis* insofar as they have no role in Archaic epic poetry, and are even less well-known than their epic brethren, indeed often only names that are attached to later collections of oracles: Orpheus, Musaeus, and Bacis, as well as shamans such as Epimenides, Aristeeas, and Abaris.

Orpheus is an exceedingly complex and multifaceted figure.⁴¹ Although frequently mentioned along with Musaeus as a poet who predates Hesiod and Homer,⁴² the description of him as a *mantis* is

³⁷ A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II Commentary 1-98* (Leiden 1976), 224-5.

³⁸ Cf. K.A. Raaflaub, "Influence, Adaptation, and Interaction: Near Eastern and Early Greek Political Thought," in S. Aro and R.M. Whiting, eds., *The Heirs of Assyria = Melammu Symposia I* (Helsinki 2000), 51-64; N. Wasserman, rev. West's *East Face of Helicon*, *SCI* 20 (2001): 261-67.

³⁹ M.I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (Harmondsworth 1979), 55; cf. 37.

⁴⁰ Cf. [Aes.] *PV* 475-506 (medicine, *mantikê*, and metallurgy). At Soph.'s *Ant.* 360-67 divination is oddly absent, even though humanity has found many helps for the uncertainties of the future, including medicine.

⁴¹ I.M. Linforth, *The Arts of Orpheus* (Berkeley 1941); F. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens in vorhellenistischer Zeit* = Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 33 (Berlin and New York 1974); M.L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford 1983), esp. Ch. 1; and Graf, "Orpheus: A Poet among Men," in J. Bremmer, ed., *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London and Sydney 1987), 80-106.

⁴² West, *Orphic Poems* (n.41), 40 and n.2: the sequence of the early poets is uni-

relatively late: the Atthidographer Philochorus (4th/3rd) is credited by Clement of Alexandria as “recording” (ἱστορεῖν) that Orpheus was in fact a *mantis* in the first book of his *Peri Mantikês*, a point also made by the scholiast to Euripides’ *Alceste* (*FGrHist* 328 FF 76, 77; cf. Kern F 332).⁴³ Jacoby argued that because Orpheus is absent from the Onomacritus/Lasus story in Herodotus, there were in the mid-fifth century no oracles yet ascribed to him.⁴⁴ On the other hand, already in Herodotus, Musaeus is referred to repeatedly as an author of a collection of oracles (Hdt. 7.6.3, 8.96.2, 9.43.2), and, as mentioned above, may even have been called a chresmologue by Sophocles (*TrGF* IV F 1116), though this fragment is problematic. The great difficulty regarding Musaeus is that he is little more than a name to us; in fact, even this is suspect, meaning as it does “belonging to the Muses,” all too convenient for a poet-figure.⁴⁵ Some time before the end of the fifth century he was made the originator of the lineage of the Eumolpidae of Eleusis (cf. Plato *Resp.* 363c = DK 2 A 5a, Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 208 = DK 2 A 6).⁴⁶ Aristophanes speaks of Musaeus as a source of both oracles and cures for disease (*Frogs* 1033), and a number of poetic works were later ascribed to him: *Precepts*, *Eumolpia*, as well as a theogony, a piece entitled *Sphaera*, and some hymns.⁴⁷

Bacis, too, is an extremely shadowy figure. Herodotus attributes to him no less than four oracles, twice pairing him with Musaeus (8.20.2, 8.77.1-2, 8.96.2, 9.43.2, the last two also Musaeus). But unlike Musaeus, Herodotus more often than not actually quotes Bacis, once even citing an eight-line text as part of a programmatic statement he makes in his own voice urging the need to accept unambiguously stated oracles (ἐναργέως Hdt. 8.77.1-2).⁴⁸ It seems as though for Herodotus,

form (Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, Homer); Hippias D-K 86 B 6, Aristophanes *Frogs* 1032-35, Plato *Ap.* 41a, Chrysippus *SVF* II, 316.12.

⁴³ Cf. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung* (n.41), 17 and n.65.

⁴⁴ F. Jacoby, *FGrHist* IIIb vol. 2, 262 n.7.

⁴⁵ West, *Orphic Poems* (n.41), 39: the name is “a patent artificiality.”

⁴⁶ Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung* (n.41), 17-18; West, *Orphic Poems* (n.41), 41.

⁴⁷ Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung* (n.41), 13; West, *Orphic Poems* (n.41), 41-44.

⁴⁸ Cf. A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité* (Paris 1879, repr. Bruxelles 1963), vol. II, 107; D. Asheri, “Erodoto e Bacide. Considerazioni sulla fede di Erodoto negli oracoli (Hdt. VIII 77),” in M. Sordi, ed., *La profezia nel mondo antico* (Milano 1993), 63-76; Ph.-E. Legrand, “Hérodote croyait-il aux oracles?” in *Mélanges A.-M. Desrousseaux* (Paris 1937), 275-84. See also below.

Bacis was a more reliable source, presumably because he demonstrated precise oracular prediction, and Musaeus did not. Indeed, it is generally the case that the oracles of Bacis seem to have been better known and more influential than those of Musaeus.⁴⁹ Later authorities doubt Musaeus is even the author of the work attributed to him, believing it instead to be by Onomacritus, with the possible exception of a hymn to Demeter (e.g. Paus. 1.22.7, Clem. *Str.* 1.864 Migne). As with Musaeus, there is potentially a problem even with Bacis' name. Rohde argued some time ago, partly on the grounds that the tyrant Pisistratus had the nickname "Bacis" (scholia to Aristophanes *Peace* 1071; Suda s.v. Bacis), that the term was in reality a title denoting an inspired χρησμοδός (cf. *Peace* 1119); he is called a *chrêsmologos* in the same testimonium. It is certainly the case that many "Bacides" were later known (cf. Clem. *Str.* 1.865 Migne), just as there were many Sibyls.⁵⁰ The scholiast to Aristophanes (on *Kn.* 123, *Peace* 1071, *Birds* 962), as well as Aelian (*VH* 12.35), note that there were in fact three Bacides: one from Eleon in Boeotia, one from Athens, and one from Arcadia. Because his oracles cited by Herodotus all have to do with the Persian War, especially the battle of Salamis, and because the Boeotian Bacis was thought to be the eldest, it is sometimes claimed that there was an actual ecstatic prophet by this name who was active at Eleon at the beginning of the 5th century.⁵¹ This seems to me to be too strong a claim; indeed, if one of the nicknames of Pisistratus was genuinely "Bacis," it would have to be demonstrably wrong. What is more, the application of the ἐπίθετον to the tyrant would have little meaning if there were not oracles attributed to a Bacis already in the 6th.⁵² It is certainly the case that by the time of Aristophanes, he was precisely a stock figure whose legendary status was taken for granted, as in the famous scene in the *Knights* when the Sausage Seller claims that Bacis had a brother named "Glanis" (*Kn.* 1004: a type of catfish),

⁴⁹ See D-K 2 A 1, 4, 5, and cf. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination* (n.48), vol. II, 111; L. Prandi, "Considerazioni su Bacide e le raccolte oracolari greche," *CISA* 19 (1993): 51-62.

⁵⁰ Rohde, *Psyche* (n.1), 292 and n.58; cf. I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, "Die Weissagungen des Bakis," in his *Untersuchungen zur Religionsgeschichte* (Amsterdam 1966), 233-4; J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* (Berkeley 1978), 159.

⁵¹ E.g., D.M. MacDowell, *Aristophanes and Athens* (Oxford 1995), 195; A.H. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes* vol. 2. *Knights* (Warminster 1981), 150 ad 123.

⁵² Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (n.7), 273-4 ad 1070-1.

also a *mantis*.⁵³ The scholiast to Aristophanes *Peace* 1071 reports that many miracles were attributed to Bacis by the fourth century historian Theopompus of Chios, among which was the purification of maddened women at Sparta, and that it was Apollo who made him a purifier (*FGrHist* 115 F 77). This is significant testimony for it suggests that Theopompus regarded Bacis as a kind of shamanistic holy-man, a characterization he also promoted in connection with Pherecydes of Syrus and Epimenides of Crete.⁵⁴

We are on somewhat firmer ground when we turn to Epimenides, but only just. The Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia* reports that he purified Athens after the slaughter by the Alcmeonids of the followers of Cylon who had fled to "the altar of the goddess" for protection (*Ath. Pol.* 1.1 and Heraclid. Lemb. *Ep.*); indeed it was through the expulsion of the Alcmeonids that he effected the purification of the city. If accurate, this notice suggests that he was active in the late 7th and early 6th.⁵⁵ On the other hand, Plato seems to think he was active in the late 6th and early 5th, and prophesied about the Persian Wars (*Lg.* 642d-e), though in this dating he seems very much in the minority. Epimenides was believed to have authored verse oracles, the most famous of which was the dictum cited by Paul in his Epistle to Titus (1.12): "Cretans are always liars, wicked beasts, good-for-nothing stomachs" (Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύδονται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί *FGrHist* 457 F 2).⁵⁶ In the scholia to Lucian he is even referred to as a chresmologue (*FGrHist* 457 T 8a apparat.). Svenbro argued that Epimenides combines several aspects of the ancient holy man: purifier, exegete, and oracle. The common thread uniting all these activities is that he "possessed knowledge that could guide people safely through a crisis."⁵⁷

Diogenes Laertius provides a very full life of Epimenides (1.109-15

⁵³ Cf. O. Weinreich, "Die Seher Bakis und Glanis. Ein Witz des Aristophanes," *ARW* 27 (1929): 57-60; Trencsényi-Waldapfel, "Die Weissagungen des Bakis" (n.50), 232-3.

⁵⁴ Pherecydes, seer and shaman: Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F 71 = D-K 7 A 1 (Diogenes Laertius 1.116-7).

⁵⁵ H. Diels, "Über Epimenides von Kreta," *Sitz. der kgl. pr. Akad. der Wiss. Berlin* (1891): 388-92 (= Diels, *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte der antiken Philosophie*, W. Burkert, ed. [Hildesheim 1969], 37-41); P.J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford 1981), 81-2.

⁵⁶ Paul makes this statement in connection with people who look very much like *agurtai* (see below).

⁵⁷ J. Svenbro, *Phrasikleia. An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece*, J. Lloyd trans. (Cornell 1993), 136.

= *FGrHist* 457 T 1, DK 2 A 1), but containing many folkloric elements, several from Theopompus (*FGrHist* 115 FF 67a, 69). The son of Phaestius, he was from Knossos; sent one day to look for lost sheep he dozed off in a cave and slept for 57 years. Thanks to this miracle he became famous throughout Greece and was widely regarded as most beloved of the gods. In addition to purifying Athens, he allegedly also brokered a treaty between that city and Knossos. He died in extreme old age (154 or 157 years). He was believed to have been given special food by the Nymphs, but was never seen actually to eat. Diogenes also claims to know two letters written by him to Solon, one of which he quotes; he also reports that Epimenides wrote both poetry (a *Theogony* and a poem on the Kouretai and Korybantēs) and prose treatises (*On Sacrifice*, *On the Cretan Constitution*, and *On Minos and Rhadamanthos*). Perhaps most remarkably, he states that the Spartans still guard Epimenides' body in obedience to an oracle (Sosibius of Sparta, *FGrHist* 595 F 15). The *Suda* provides even more spectacular details: during his life his soul was able to leave his body whenever it wished, and when he died, his corpse was found to be tattooed with writing (τὸ δέρμα εὐρήσθαι γράμμασι κατάστικτον), giving rise to the proverbial expression "Epimenidean skin" for "secret things" (DK 3 A 2 = *Suda* s.v. Epimenides), no doubt oracular in nature. Dodds was right to see in all this material the pattern of the Greek shaman: a clairvoyant capable of supernatural feats, whose very life seems to defy death (waking after long sleep, apparent fasting, psychic excursion).⁵⁸

Of chief importance from Epimenides' life for this discussion is his position as an outsider who, as an agent of the divine, solves the internal problems of Athens. As we saw also with the heroic *mantis*, he has a complex relationship to the elite: although a foreigner, he is imagined as being on friendly terms with Solon, and yet is also responsible for the expulsion of the Alcmeonids. Also important in his story is the issue of writing. Svenbro observed that with the tattooed corpse of Epimenides we see a rare fusion of writer and his writing.⁵⁹ I would push this further and suggest that the story of the writing on his body, as well as the proverb, seem to be about the control of

⁵⁸ E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951), 141; cf. Svenbro, *Phrasikleia* (n.57), 138. Similar shamanistic *manteis*—Aristeas and Abaris, both noticed by Herodotus (4.13-16, 4.36); see J.D.P. Bolton, *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (Oxford 1962).

⁵⁹ Svenbro, *Phrasikleia* (n.57), 140-41.

Epimenides' oracular wisdom: the early *manteis* were important primarily as sources of oracles for later figures, and often disputes arose as to what were their authentic prophecies. Do we not see reflected in the bizarre tale of Epimenides' written body a unique solution to this difficulty? The *mantis* becomes himself the repository of his authentic prophecies regarding the future. In Epimenides' case, there could be no argument about whether an oracle was a later, forged addition. And note, too, that his body was kept in Sparta, a place where it also happens that we have one of the earliest references to the storage of written oracles (Hdt. 6.57.4: the kings and Pythioi are guardians of the oracles), but more on this below.

III. *The Independent Diviner in the Archaic and Classical Ages*

Of course it is illusory to divide the material on independent diviners between an earlier, mythical period, and a later, historical one, for the first category is but a creation of the second. Nonetheless the divide is useful if only because it forces us to recognize that when the historical *mantis* and chresmologue do appear, they do so equipped with important predecessors. Lloyd has written eloquently of both the continuities and ruptures evident in the move between the bronze age to the archaic and then classical periods. He noted that the emergence of the city state in particular necessitated a corresponding increase in the centers of authority, "both what *we* should call political, and religious and intellectual, leadership" (his stress). It is for this reason that there seems to be such an explosion of "wise men" figures in the seventh and sixth centuries, among whom are precisely our *manteis* and chresmologues, some of whom I have already discussed.⁶⁰ Humphreys has also spoken of the same period as one that saw a massive elaboration of the structuring of Greek society, during which time the independent diviner emerged as one of highly differentiated group of religious authorities.⁶¹ I do not want to dispute these observations, but it does need to be pointed out that while societal differentiation may indeed have been widespread in the archaic, one that resulted in an extension and elaboration of leadership of all types, the independent

⁶⁰ G.E.R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge 1979), 249.

⁶¹ Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (n.17), 254.

diviner especially comes into view because of the attempts of political leaders to control the channels of religious authority. We have differentiation, yes, but also an attempt at the consolidation of authority. The independent religious expert, be he *mantis* or chresmologue, was always precisely that, independent. His activities might be in the service of powerful chiefs, or, in the case of fifth century Athens and Sparta, of an entire *polis*, but he seems always positioned outside the political structure of the state, essential to but also separate from the governance of the *polis*. Allied to this point is the noteworthy fact that, excepting those from Athens, most of the figures we will be looking at in this section come from the NW Peloponnese, Elis especially, the home of the Iamidae (cf. Hdt. 9.33.1, Paus. 6.2.5), and other nearby areas (Arcadia, Acarnania—directly north across the Gulf of Corinth), regions that all lacked large urban settlements (the city of Elis proper only came into existence at the end of the first quarter of the fifth century).⁶² Even at Athens, where the strongest case can be made for the incorporation of the independent diviner into the apparatus of the state, it will be seen upon close inspection that he was still acting for himself, but often in ways that coincided with the interests of the city.⁶³

Without doubt the two most active periods for independent divination in the Greek world were the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars which bracket the fifth century. It is also true that a thread of continuity exists between these two nodes of activity in the role that Athenian diviners play in the expansion of that city's empire in the intervening years. In this period, in addition, the term *chrêsmologos* emerges. To be sure Herodotus employs it to describe earlier figures such as Ono-

⁶² Diod. 11.54.1, Strabo 8.3.2; see C. Morgan, *Athletes and Oracles. The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the eighth century BC* (Cambridge 1990), 51. Olympia was unusual—not an independent *polis*, rather a marginal “inter-state sanctuary.” Morgan, *Athletes and Oracles*, 223-33; and F. de Polignac, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State*, J. Lloyd, trans. (Chicago 1995), 38-9.

Of the seers in Kett's *Prosopographie* (n.23), one-third come from the western part of the Greek mainland and neighboring islands; the next region is Athens and Attica, with c. one-fifth. Although W.K. Pritchett, “The Military *Mantikê*” in *The Greek State at War* Part III: Religion (Berkeley 1979), 52-3; and Kett himself, *Prosopographie* 82, dispute that there was any one region that was associated with seers, otherwise important places such as Corinth and Sparta can claim very few (1 and 2 respectively), and they are often shadowy figures. I make no claims about origins, just frequency.

⁶³ Cf. J.K. Davies, “Greece after the Persian Wars,” *CAH²* V (Cambridge 1992), 30.

macritus, but there are no uses of the term antedating the historian. Before this time we see chiefly *manteis*, even if later authorities call them chresmologues. But earlier than these more active periods, we have three sets of solid evidence for independent diviners: references to seers in Greek literature; the strong interest in divination at the court of Pisistratus and his sons; and the existence of certain families connected with independent divination, with genealogies going back into the archaic period. We should also add two other supporting sets of material—not completely firm perhaps, rather inferences from later practice: the almost certain presence of diviners in colonization, and their documented role in military campaigns. I will pursue all these lines of approach, moving roughly from the archaic to the classical periods.

First, there are several references in Greek literature before the Persian Wars to *manteis*. Many of these have already been discussed, but it needs to be added that, with the exception of epic material, they are chiefly generic: an individual, named person is never identified as a *mantis*, though (as we saw above) a deity can be. Importantly, however, poets can assume the persona of a *mantis* in their poetry: thus Archilochus evidently speaks as one in an obscene fragment (F 25.5 West²),⁶⁴ as does Theognis later, if we accept Nagy's interpretation of the lines in question (681-2).⁶⁵ Similarly, Pindar styles himself a prophet of the Muses (*Pae.* 6.6 Maehler). In the first two cases, the poets appears to be uttering *ainigmata* ("riddles") that conceal hidden truths.⁶⁶ More typical are references to the whole class of *manteis* as experts, such as we saw in Solon 13.53. Another good example is Theognis line 545, where the poet tells Cyrnus that he feels compelled to judge a legal case fairly, "employing *manteis*, bird omens and burning sacrifices" to bring about a just verdict.

While the larger subject of tyrants and divination is a familiar one that falls outside the limits of this paper,⁶⁷ I wish to focus on the activity

⁶⁴ Archilochus F 183 West² refers to a *mantis*, Batousiades son of Selleus, but we do not know if he was called *mantis* in the poem.

⁶⁵ G. Nagy, "Theognis of Megara: A Poet's Vision of his City," in T.J. Figuera and G. Nagy, eds., *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis* (Baltimore 1985), 24-5; cf. eundem, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore 1990), 426 and n.58.

⁶⁶ Nagy, "Theognis of Megara" (n.65), 25 n.2 connects Theog. line 682 with Solon 13.51-4, as well as with Theoclymenus at *Od.* 20.367-8.

⁶⁷ E.g., Morgan, *Athletes and Oracles* (n.62), 178-83; H. Brandt, "Pythia, Apollon

of independent diviners at the courts of tyrants and kings. They are often seen as counselors to strongmen. Herodotus reports, for instance, that Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, was advised by *manteis* not to go to Oroetes, who had set a trap for him (3.124.1). And *manteis* twice show up in helping to decide succession disputes for the kingship at Sparta (Hdt. 6.69.3: the removal of Demaratus;⁶⁸ Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.3 Leotychidas unsuccessfully supported by Diopeithes).⁶⁹ But the number of references to the activity of independent diviners at the court of Pisistratus and his sons in particular is so striking as to constitute a second category of evidence by itself for archaic *manteis* and chresmologues; indeed, David Lewis has called it “a quite abnormal assembly.”⁷⁰ Although the sources are invariably later (mainly Herodotus), the period of the tyranny at Athens presents us with a wealth of references to mantic activity by the Pisistratids themselves, as well as the first notices we have of chresmologues.

It is best to begin with Pisistratus’ third and last attempt to establish his tyranny at Athens. Herodotus tells us that, just before the battle of Pellene in 546, Pisistratus was given a divine signal that he would be successful:

Then, under the urging of divine guidance (θείη πομπῇ χρεώμενος), Amphilytus, the Acarnanian chresmologic man (χρησμολόγος ἀνὴρ), stood by Pisistratus; he approached him and prophesied in hexameter verse, speaking as follows: “the cast is thrown, the net has been spread out, | the tunny-fish will dart throughout the moonlit night.” Now he prophesied these things being in an inspired state (ἐνθεάζων), and Pisistratus received the oracle and said that he accepted what had been prophesied and led on his army (Hdt. 1.62.4-63.1).

The tuna are of course the Athenians who are taken by surprise in the subsequent combat, and are forced to accept the rule of Pisis-

und die älteren griechischen Tyrannen,” *Chiron* 28 (1998): 194-212.

⁶⁸ Cf. W. Burkert, “Demaratos, Astrabakos und Herakles. Königsmythos und Politik zur Zeit der Perserkriege (Herodot 6, 67-69),” *MH* 22 (1965): 166-77.

⁶⁹ Diopeithes, Kett, *Prosopographie*, no. 22. He may be the same as the diviner attacked in comedy. J. Hatzfeld, *Xénophon Helléniques* (Paris 1936), I 131.1 ad loc. for the connection; cf. P. Krentz, *Xenophon Hellenika* 2.3.11-4.2.8 (Warminster 1995), 177 ad loc. See Arist. *Birds* 988, *Knights* 1085, *Wasps* 380. Many doubt: e.g. N. Dunbar, *Aristophanes Birds* (Oxford 1995), 550 ad loc. Note also that King Agesilaus has his “own” *mantis* at Aulis, Plut. *Ages.* 6.5.

⁷⁰ “The Tyranny of the Pisistratidae,” in *CAH*² IV (Cambridge 1988), 293. Cf. H.A. Shapiro, “Oracle-Mongers in Peisistratid Athens,” *Kernos* 3 (1990): 335-45.

tratus, this time for good. It is important to connect the passage to points made in the preceding sections. Note that the term *chrêsmologos* is here used as an adjective to describe Amphilytus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 6), modifying the noun *anêr*. Clearly the force of the collocation is "chresmologue," but one who prophesies, that is, who functions in a way that we might expect of a *mantis*.⁷¹ What is more, he is from Acarnania, western Greece, a region associated with itinerant independent diviners.⁷² While it might be tempting to suppose that Herodotus is trying to diminish Amphilytus' authority by describing him with a term that has derogatory force, especially at Athens, we should note the overall tone of the passage. The historian clearly wants us to believe that Amphilytus was in fact divinely inspired: in his own voice he reports that the chresmologue was under divine guidance (θείη πομπῇ χρεώμενος),⁷³ and when he resumes his narrative after reporting the hexameter oracle, he again notes that Amphilytus was possessed by a god (ἐνθεάζων).⁷⁴ It is also worthwhile pointing out that unlike the diviner in myth who is often in conflict with the chieftain, here he authorizes the leader's plans and is evidently a close associate.

In the very next section Herodotus tells us that one of Pisistratus' achievements after he gained control of Athens was the purification of Delos, something he undertook ἐκ τῶν λογίων ("because of a prophecy")—an admittedly vague phrase, but one that suggests an independent diviner and not an institutional oracular response.⁷⁵ Finally, in connection with Pisistratus himself, it is important to remember that, according to the scholiast on Aristophanes *Peace* 1071, he had the nickname "Bacis." It is hard to know what precisely the significance of this might have been (the scholiast does not explain), but at the very least it connects *mantikê* with the tyrant himself. This does not have to mean that Pisistratus was believed to have acted as a *mantis* himself, though we shall soon see that one of his sons evidently did. It may

⁷¹ Cf. B.M. Lavelle, "The Compleat Angler: Observations on the Rise of Peisistratos in Herodotus (1.59-64)," *CQ* 41 (1991): 317 n.3. Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.3: another "chresmologic" man.

⁷² Cf. W.W. How and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus* (Oxford 1928), vol. I, 85 ad loc.; Fontenrose, *Delphic Oracle* (n.50), 158.

⁷³ See J.E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Cambridge 1938, repr. 1960), s.v. πομπή. Also LSJ s.v. χράω III.1; J. Kirchberg, *Die Funktion der Orakel im Werke Herodots*, *Hypomnemata* 11 (Göttingen 1965), 70.

⁷⁴ Lavelle, "Rise of Peisistratos" (n.71), 318, 323-4.

⁷⁵ Plural for singular: Powell, *Lexicon* (n.73), s.v. λόγιον.

perhaps imply only that he was widely known to have had an interest in these matters.⁷⁶ It is further reasonable to suppose that Pisistratus saw the advantages of being connected to the machinery of revealing divine will,⁷⁷ but there is no reason to assume that the nickname was a cynical manipulation.⁷⁸ The tyrant and his sons were conventionally observant when it came to religious matters (cf. Thuc. 6.54.5).

As for Pisistratus' sons, Herodotus provides us with a lot of evidence suggesting that divination was of more than passing interest to them. Perhaps most importantly, we are told that when Cleomenes of Sparta took the Acropolis of Athens as part of an attempt to restore Hippias to power (c.504), he found there and kept "oracles (χρησμούς) that the Pisistratids had owned before, but on being driven out [of Athens], had left in the temple" (Hdt. 5.90.2). This can only mean that the Pisistratids had a collection of written oracles in their possession;⁷⁹ a significant matter, for this passage and the one dealing with the hereditary responsibility of the kings and Pythioi of guarding oracles at Sparta (Hdt. 6.57.4) are our two earliest references to the storage of written prophetic texts. From Herodotus we also gather that the sons of Pisistratus themselves were involved in mantic matters. So, on the night before he was assassinated in the *pompê* of the Great Panathenaia of 514, Hipparchus had a dream that so disturbed him that he took it to "dream-interpreters" (ὄνειροπόλοι) for an explanation (Hdt. 5.56.2). Hippias, for his part, interpreted his own dream shortly before the battle of Marathon—indeed, he also reinterpreted it later in light of an ominous event (Hdt. 6.107.2-4). Further, in response to Sosicles' advice that the Spartans not reinstall Hippias, the tyrant swore by the gods that the Corinthians would some day regret that they did not support his return to Athens; while itself unexceptional, the oath takes on special significance because Herodotus goes on to explain that Hippias replied in this way "inasmuch as he was the most expertly knowledgeable of men concerning oracles" (οἷά τε τοὺς χρησμούς ἀτρεκέστατα ἀνδρῶν ἐξεπιστάμενος Hdt. 5.93.2).

⁷⁶ Cf. C. Catenacci, *Il tiranno e l'eroe. Per un' archeologia nella Grecia antica* (Milan 1996), 109 and n.194; A. Giuliani, *La città e l'oracolo. I rapporti tra Atene e Delfi in età arcaica e classica* (Milan 2001), 26 and n.4.

⁷⁷ Thus F. Schachermeyr, "Peisistratos von Athen," in K.H. Kinzl, ed., *Die ältere Tyrannis bis zu den Perserkriegen. Wege der Forschung* 510 (Darmstadt 1979), 99.

⁷⁸ Cf. Lewis, "The Tyranny of the Pisistratidae" (n.70), 294.

⁷⁹ Cf. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer* (n.65), 158-59.

Not only does this passage make Hippias out as a kind of oracular expert, his oath becomes a kind of prophetic statement,⁸⁰ and Hippias, a chresmologue/*mantis*. Here, most remarkably, the independent diviner is not an associate of the chieftain, as Amphilytus was, he is the political leader himself.

It is against this wider background of Pisistratid interest in divination that we must look again at the Onomacritus episode from Herodotus. The event occurred in the kingship of Xerxes, before the invasion of 480, but Herodotus' *logos* makes reference also to Onomacritus' earlier activities at the court of the Pisistratids, in the last decades of the sixth century. When Herodotus reports that Hipparchus exiled the diviner despite their closeness, we are bound to ask, Why? Lewis assumed that Hipparchus had a genuine interest in oracles, and that it was basically religious scruple that compelled him to exile his friend and associate: for Hipparchus oracles were not "a mere political tool."⁸¹ Alternatively, it might be that Hipparchus had no choice in exiling Onomacritus, an explanation that at least accounts for their later reconciliation. This suggestion is related to the larger issue of the setting of the episode. We are told by Herodotus that Onomacritus was "caught red-handed" by Lasus, inserting (ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ ἀλούς...ἐμποιέων) into the oracles of Musaeus the prophecy concerning the disappearance of Lemnos under the sea (7.6.3). There can be no doubt what Herodotus meant with the phrase ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ ἀλούς, for an exact parallel occurs earlier in Book 6: king Leotychidas of Sparta is caught "in the act of sitting" (ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ δὲ ἀλούς...ἐπικατήμενος) upon a glove full of coins with which he had been bribed (Hdt. 6.72.2). The present participle in both cases (ἐμποιέων/ἐπικατήμενος) tells us precisely what action the man in question was caught "red-handed" doing (ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ ἀλούς): concealing graft on the one hand, and intruding a spurious prophecy on the other. Strictly speaking, if Lasus had caught Onomacritus forging in writing an oracle of Musaeus ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ, this would mean he would have had to have been standing over Onomacritus' shoulder when he wrote the verses. While it is certainly true that the other word Herodotus uses to describe Onomacritus in addition to chresmologue, the term "arranger" (*diathetês*), suggests

⁸⁰ Hippias' claim proves true (*ex eventu* no doubt). Cf. How and Wells, *Commentary on Herodotus* (n.72), vol. II, 55 ad loc.: it becomes "prophecy." Note that Orestes at Aes. *Cho.* 540ff. acts as his own dream-interpreter and *mantis*.

⁸¹ Lewis, "The Tyranny of the Pisistratidae" (n.70), 294.

an expert in the handling of written work (“an editor” or “redactor” almost), I do not think that this is the leading concept in the episode. It is possible, even probable, that Onomacritus also interpolated the Lemnos prophecy into Musaeus’ work in writing.⁸² But that is not how Lasus caught him. It is much more likely that Onomacritus was reciting the oracle.⁸³ And note that this is exactly what he does later at the court of Xerxes—he “recites” or “performs” his prophecies (Hdt. 7.6.4, 5: κατέλεγε, χρησμοδῶν).⁸⁴

A passage from Theognis will help to make this point more clearly. At lines 805-10 Theognis makes the following observation:

An envoy (θεωρόν) sent to Delphi, Cynus, must take care
to be more true than scale or rule or lathe,
that man to whom the priestess of the god imparts
the oracle from out the wealthy shrine.
Any addition would negate the remedy,
and any cut would be a sacrilege (West trans.).

Are we to imagine that Theognis is here warning about messengers to oracular shrines (*theōroi*) who tamper with the written oracles before returning home, by either adding to them our cutting things out? For those who imagine Onomacritus being caught by Lasus in the act of writing out the interpolation regarding Lemnos, this passage would seem to offer a parallel. But there is nothing in these lines that requires us to understand that the divine communication was written down by the *theōros*. Quite simply the messenger is to repeat the oracle he heard and not introduce any changes, either by adding or removing words. This is what Onomacritus must have done. Neither the chresmologue nor the *theōros* was authorized to produce the oracle in question, only to “perform” it.⁸⁵ The *theōros* is merely a vehicle for conveying the divine communication.

But in what scenario can we imagine the Pisistratids both consult-

⁸² Cf. Paus. 1.34.4: Iophon of Knossos, an *exégētēs*, produced hexameter responses attributed to Amphiarus, but which Pausanias suspects. See Fontenrose, *Delphic Oracle* (n.50), 163 and n.27.

⁸³ The verb ἐμποιέω can mean a written interpolation: e.g. Dion. Hal. 4.62.6, where written oracular texts are revealed as false by the absence of acrostics, but the circumstances are utterly different.

⁸⁴ Nagy, *Pindar's Homer* (n.65), 159. On “recite” for καταλέγω, cf. Xenophon *Smp.* 6.3: an actor reciting tetrameter verses.

⁸⁵ L. Maurizio, “Delphic Oracles as Oral Performances: Authenticity and Historical Evidence,” *CLAnt* 16 (1997): 315-6.

ing Onomacritus for his oracular expertise, and yet also having Lasus on hand to catch him in his deceit? Privitera suggested that Lasus' revelation of Onomacritus' fraud is very much like a contest between wise men. He further speculated that both men had been consulted for their opinions as to the meaning of some of Musaeus' oracles, and that Lasus' interpretation won out;⁸⁶ presumably, in the process, he revealed Onomacritus' understanding to be based on a fraudulent interpolation. It is tempting to speculate that Onomacritus and Lasus were involved in a public performance of oracular texts, and that this performance had a competitive aspect. There is a legendary antecedent of sorts for this: the story from the Hesiodic *Melampodia* featuring a riddle-competition between Calchas and Mopsus. Lasus himself was famous as a controversialist in antiquity: Aristophanes in *Wasps* (1410-11) preserves a barb he uttered in a contest with Simonides, and his quips were so well-known that they gave rise to a whole class of acidic one-liners, *lasismata*—"Lasus-isms" (Hesychius s.v.). Athenaeus preserves a story that emphasizes Lasus' ability to pun off of familiar terms, as well as to use word-play to duck responsibility (Athen. 8.338b-c). Furthermore, he is closely associated with the beginnings of dithyramb, specifically as the originator of the contest in dithyrambic poetry at Athens under the Pisistratids.⁸⁷ In other words, Lasus was a figure widely-known as expert in manipulating expressions and seeing novel meanings in them, and was no stranger to public contests. Such a man might very well be involved in a contest of interpretation with Onomacritus.

But however we are to understand the Onomacritus/Lasus episode in Herodotus, one thing is certain: Onomacritus' negative characterization. Herodotus tells us in no uncertain terms that he gave Xerxes the interpretations the king wanted to hear: he suppressed the ones foreboding difficulties for the planned invasion of Greece, and privileged the ones that suggested victory (7.6.4). We might suspect the same in connection with his interpolated oracle about Lemnos years earlier, for the Pisistratids had a long-standing interest in the area.⁸⁸ We should note, too, that when the Pisistratids praised his abilities at

⁸⁶ G.A. Privitera, *Lasos di Ermione* (Roma 1965), 48.

⁸⁷ A.W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb Tragedy and Comedy*, 2nd ed. rev. T.B.L. Webster (Oxford 1962), 13-15. Lasus was also famous for lipogrammatic verse: Athen. 10.455c-d (and cf. *PMG* 704), an "asigmatic" hymn to *Demeter*, as well as *Centaur*s.

⁸⁸ Cf. Lewis, "The Tyranny of the Pisistratidae" (n.70), 298-9.

Xerxes' court, they spoke σεμνοὺς λόγους about him. The adjective σεμνός cuts two ways: it can indeed mean "holy" or (of humans) "august," but it can also mean "haughty" or "boastful." In fact, Oedipus in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* (556; cf. 953) even refers contemptuously to Teiresias as a σεμνομάντις, that is, a self-promoting prophet who trumpets his own abilities and who provides conveniently supportive oracles for his employers.⁸⁹ To be sure the *semnoi logoi* are spoken by the Pisistratids and not by Onomacritus himself, but this should not stop us from seeing that this is the sort of person Onomacritus is according to Herodotus. He is our first clear case of the negatively shaded chresmologue. Amphilytus was similarly supportive of his strongman, but is not at all negatively characterized; indeed, Herodotus seems to go out of his way to assure us that Amphilytus' oracle was in fact divinely inspired.

I have already mentioned (p. 174) the third category of evidence suggesting the presence in the archaic period of independent diviners: the popular belief that being a seer was something connected to families—that the ability to prophesy could be inherited from one generation to the next. Generations of Iamidae and Clytidae, for example, are recorded in the massive inscription from Olympia (p. 174 and n.24). To be sure, the date of the document falls well outside our time frame, but there is other evidence supporting the view that these prophetic families were active in the archaic and early classical. In the introduction to *Olympian* 6, Pindar refers to the Iamid Hagesias as "the steward of the prophetic altar (βωμῷ τε μαντείῳ ταμίας) of Zeus in Pisa" (line 5), a phrase Boeckh understood to be a reference to a hereditary office; indeed, later in the poem Pindar states that the oracular altar has been around since the foundation of the Olympic Games, as have the Iamidae (lines 70-71).⁹⁰ The impression one has from Pindar is that this family produced *manteis* from the time of the mythical *Stammvater* (Iamus) down to his latest descendant (Hagesias). Herodotus, too, knows of the continuity of the Iamid line. He implies that the same family was already well known for their *manteis* at the end of the sixth century, for he mentions the Iamid Callias (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 41) as present during the war between Croton and

⁸⁹ See, e.g., R.C. Jebb, *Sophocles. The Oedipus Tyrannus* (Cambridge 1914), 82 and J.C. Kamerbeek, *The Plays of Sophocles. The Oedipus Tyrannus* (Leiden 1967), 127 ad loc.

⁹⁰ A. Boeckh, *Pindari Opera* 2.2 (Leipzig 1821), 152.

Sybaris in 510 (Hdt. 5.44.2), and again later in 479, when the Iamid Teisamenus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 64) was in the ranks of the Spartans at Plataea (9.33.1).⁹¹

Mention of these Iamidae raise two further areas to be considered in connection with independent diviners in the archaic period, areas that move us into the classical: colonization and warfare. Pindar's *Olympian* 6 is not only important as evidence for the belief in the transmission of *mantikē* over generations, it is also noteworthy for being our sole indication that *manteis* took part in colonization, and unfortunately even this passage is highly problematic. At the very beginning of *O.* 6, Hagesias is called the "joint-founder" (συνοικιστήρ line 6) of Syracuse. Inasmuch as Hagesias was the winner of the mule race at Olympia in either 472 or 468, and Syracuse founded in 733, the description is palpably impossible. Indeed, the scholia to the line assert that the claim is not true, but add that it was made "to praise" Hagesias, and that he was descended from men who did participate in the founding of the city (τῶν συνοικισάντων). Alternatively, it has been suggested that the foundation referred to is not the original one of 733, but the synoecism and refoundation of Syracuse in 485.⁹² However we interpret the reference, it is our only evidence for the participation of *manteis* in colonization efforts in the archaic period. Malkin has drawn attention to this striking absence, but argues nonetheless that it is "probable" that independent diviners were involved in most colonizing missions.⁹³ By contrast, there is of course an abundance of information relating to the role of Delphi in early Greek colonization.⁹⁴

We do have clear cases of independent diviners involved in colonization, but they are later, almost all coming from the mid to late fifth century, and all Athenian imperial ventures, or nearly so. In 446 the cities of Euboea revolted from Athens. Pericles made two expeditions to the island, and following the second, crushed the revolt. The inhabitants of Hestiaea in particular were expelled from their city

⁹¹ Hdt. 9.33.1 is in fact τὸν [Teisamenus] ἔόντα Ἡλείῳ καὶ γένεος τοῦ Ἰαμιδέων Κλυτιάδην (-δου in S). Valckenaer deletes Κλυτιάδην; Hude brackets.

⁹² I. Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece* (Leiden 1987), 96-7; cf. N. Luraghi, "Un *mantis* eleo nella Siracusa di Ierone: Agesia di Siracusa, Iamide di Stinfalo," *Klio* 79 (1997): 76-77.

⁹³ Malkin, *Religion and Colonization* (n.92), 112.

⁹⁴ Malkin, *Religion and Colonization* (n.92), 17-91. Cf. A.S. Pease, "Notes on the Delphic Oracle and Greek Colonization," *CP* 12 (1917): 1-20.

for the earlier “murder” of Athenian crews, and went by agreement to Macedonia (Thuc. 1.114, Theopompus *FGrHist* 115 F 387). They were replaced by settlers from Athens.⁹⁵ Hestiaea became known as Oreus, technically a cleruchy. During or shortly after the crisis Athens imposed a loyalty oath on Chalcis (*IG* I³ 40 = ML 52) that was to be guaranteed by sacrifice. In lines 64-66 of the inscription we are told that “the sacrifices required by the oracles on account of Euboea shall be performed as quickly as possible by Hierocles and three men chosen by the Boule from among its members” (Fornara trans.). The significance of this text comes out clearly when we set it beside an episode from Aristophanes’ *Peace*, produced some twenty-four years later (in 421). When Trygaeus and his slave are preparing a sacrifice, they catch sight of a garlanded figure:

TRYGAEUS. Now roast these nicely, because here comes somebody wearing a laurel crown.

SLAVE. Now who in the world is that? Looks like a charlatan (ἀλαζών). Is he a seer (μάντις)?

T. Certainly no seer, but evidently Hierocles, the oracle monger (χρησμολόγος) from Oreus (1043-47; Henderson trans.).

In the scene that follows Trygaeus and Hierocles engage in a competition of oracular citation, one that can be paralleled in other of Aristophanes’ plays. Scenes of this type have led Nilsson and others to suggest that there is a reality behind the humor: there were in fact competitions in the presentation of oracles in the Athens of Aristophanes’ day and before. Such a view connects perhaps with what we imagine may have occurred in the Onomacritus/Lasus episode, as well as with other cases (the “wooden wall” oracle and others involving anonymous chresmologues: see below).⁹⁶

The Hierocles whom we see in the *Peace* must be the same as the one mentioned in *IG* I³ 40 (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 39).⁹⁷ The two texts are not unconnected, for it seems that not only was Hierocles

⁹⁵ Cf. D. Lewis, “The Thirty Years’ Peace,” *CAH*² V (Cambridge 1992), 135.

⁹⁶ W. Furlley, *Andokides and the Herms. A study of crisis in fifth-century Athenian religion*, *BICS* Supp. 65 (London 1996), 96 and n.18, citing M.P. Nilsson, *Cults, Myths, Oracles and Politics in Ancient Greece* (Göteborg 1951, repr. 1986), 130-42; F. Staehlin, *Das Motiv der Mantik im antiken Drama* (Giessen 1912), 172ff. (non vidi).

⁹⁷ So, e.g., Lewis, “The Thirty Years’ Peace” (n.95), 135; R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford 1975), 143; Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (n.7), 268-9 ad 1045-7.

responsible for sacrifices that promoted the subjugation of Euboea, he was himself a cleruch who settled in what was Hestiaea. As the scene plays out in Aristophanes' comedy, we see in Hierocles a man we are clearly meant to dislike. He sticks his expert nose in what is not his business, namely the sacrifice to the goddess Peace, for he evidently wants to subvert Trygaeus' plan in part because he does not want to lose his dining privileges in the Prytaneum.⁹⁸ Eupolis also mentioned Hierocles in a play of the same year, suggesting that he was widely known as a supporter of the Peloponnesian War.⁹⁹ Further, Hierocles' interest in the sacrifice is similarly self-interested—he wants the free food (e.g. 1050) and sheepskins (1124). It is tempting to connect this characterization to the events of 446/5; as a religious expert he helped to promote the settlement of Euboea in which he himself personally stood to profit as a colonist/cleruch. Olson even speculates that he may have himself spoken the oracles that required the sacrifices he himself later performed.¹⁰⁰ When Trygaeus corrects his slave at the beginning of the scene and declares that Hierocles is no *mantis* but rather a *chrēsmologos*, I think we are meant to understand precisely an unscrupulous diviner who functions in ways that further the state's interests, but who is in fact completely motivated by self-interest. How independent he was is difficult to tell, for being either a *mantis* or a chresmologue normally meant being a religious expert who did not have an official position; and yet, dinner in the Prytaneum may imply that he was involved in service to the state, most likely as an *exēgētēs*.¹⁰¹ However we decide the issue, the passage from Aristophanes makes clear in no uncertain terms that *mantis* was a positive term, whereas *chrēsmologos* had distinct negative connotations. To be sure, negative shadings of *mantis* are found in tragedy, but that seems to be because that genre did not admit the term *chrēsmologos*.¹⁰²

It is highly significant that we see a similar figure connected to the foundation of Thurii in 444, one year after the Athenian settlement of Euboea. Indeed, in this case he is an oikist himself: Lampon (Kett

⁹⁸ Mattingly, "Athens, Delphi and Eleusis" (n.10), 186-7.

⁹⁹ Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (n.7), 269 ad 1045-7. It is the Scholia to *Peace* 1046 that give us the Eupolis fragment (*PCG* F 231).

¹⁰⁰ Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (n.7), 269 ad 1045-7.

¹⁰¹ Olson, *Aristophanes Peace* (n.7), 277 ad 1084-5, citing *IG* I³ 131.9-11.

¹⁰² Cf. J.D. Mikalson, *Honor Thy Gods. Popular Religion in Greek Tragedy* (Chapel Hill 1991), 92. Recall that in a vexed fragment of Sophocles Musaeus is called a chresmologue (above p. 179).

Prosopographie no. 46). Ancient testimonia say that Lampon was a *mantis* and personal friend of Pericles, and that he was sent out by him as one of the founders of Athens' "panhellenic" colony at Thurii, near the site of old Sybaris in S. Italy.¹⁰³ We do not know much about Lampon's activities in this venture, other than that, together with one Xenocritus, he acted as leader of the expedition,¹⁰⁴ though there may have been as many as ten oikists altogether. The scholia to Aristophanes *Clouds* 332 provide crucial detail. Explaining *θουριομάντεις*, the scholiast notes:

ten men were sent out [to Thurii], of whom also Lampon the *mantis* was one, whom they were calling an *exégētēs*. He was also one of those who were often involved in political affairs (ἦν δὲ καὶ τῶν πολιτευομένων πολλάκις). He was seeming continuously to bring forward arguments about the colonizing mission to Thurii (λόγους δὲ συνεχῶς εἰσάγειν ἐφαίνετο περὶ τῆς εἰς Θούριον ἀποικίας).

Here was a *mantis* who was well-known for being involved in politics, who was an ardent supporter of the colony at Thurii in particular, and who, it turns out, happened to be one of the leaders of the mission. Just as Hierocles the year before, Lampon was an advocate for a large state enterprise (colonization) that he stood to gain from personally as one of its chief officials. Is it any surprise, then, that he too is pilloried in comedy as a gluttonous chresmologue (Aristophanes *Birds* 332, 987-8, Cratinus F 66 *PCG*)? And there may be evidence that Thurii was not Lampon's only sponsorship of state policy that was of personal advantage to him. In a decree aimed at regulating the offering of first-fruits at Eleusis, probably from 422 (*IG* I³ 78 = *ML* 73), and mandated by "ancestral custom and the oracle of Delphi" (κατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ τὴν μαντείαν τὴν ἐν Δελφῶν lines 4-5, 24-5, 34), we find him adding a rider that in effect made himself the sole drafter of a regulation regarding olive-oil (lines 59-61). To be sure this measure need not have opened the door to impropriety, but the fact that Lampon managed to "mak[e] himself a committee of one" excites speculation:¹⁰⁵ we know that huge amounts of grain were to

¹⁰³ Diod. 12.10.3-4, scholia to Aristophanes *Clouds* 332, Photius and Suda s.v. *θουριομάντεις*; cf. Plut. *Per.* 6.2.

¹⁰⁴ Note, though, that at Diod. 12.10.5, prospective colonists receive a cryptic oracle from Delphic Apollo regarding the location of the colony; precisely something requiring Lampon's expertise.

¹⁰⁵ P. A. Stadter, *A Commentary on Plutarch's Pericles* (Chapel Hill and London 1989), 83; cf. R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972), 303-4.

be deposited at Eleusis, and that wheat and barley not needed by the cult were to be sold and the proceeds used for gilding the horns of victims and for votives (lines 37-44).¹⁰⁶ The same can be assumed for the olive-oil; in other words, a lot of cash was going to be changing hands.

Lampon was a very important man. Thucydides lists him as the first Athenian signer of the Peace of Nicias (Thuc. 5.19.2, 24.1), about a year after *IG I³ 78* (Spring 421). As with Hierocles, it is difficult to get a precise understanding of his official position at Athens. The scholiast notes that he was popularly known as an *exégētēs*, a detail supported by Eupolis (F 319 *PCG*). And yet the scholia to *Birds* 521 identify him as “sacrificer, chresmologue, and *mantis*.” The terminology is clearly somewhat fluid, as we have seen elsewhere. But it is important to know in what capacity Lampon acted as an officer of Athens. The scholia to *Clouds* 332 are crucial in this regard: Lampon was first a *mantis*, but he could also be called on occasion an *exégētēs*. I take this to mean that Lampon was always thought of as an independent diviner, but that there were times when he was employed by Athens in matters which required his expertise. When that was the case, he might take on other titles, such as *exégētēs*. In other words, the independent diviner was not always technically independent; but even when he was employed by the *polis*, he still managed to promote plans that coincided with his own interests, in particular plans of colonization. Indeed, there seems to have been an expectation that *manteis* and chresmologues would be involved in such plans, for the popular assumption that we see reflected in comedy is that these religious experts are in fact greedy and self-serving charlatans. Or, as Creon observes in a heated exchange with Teiresias from Sophocles’ *Antigone*, a play roughly contemporary with the colonization expeditions to Euboea and Thurii (dating to 442 or 441),¹⁰⁷ “the whole tribe of *manteis* is money-loving” (τὸ μαντικὸν γὰρ πᾶν φιλάργυρον γένος 1055; cf. Eur. *Ba.* 257). To this Teiresias responds, “and the race born from tyrants loves shameful gain:” the assumption that is operative here is that both classes of fully autonomous and independent agents—the tyrant and the *mantis*—will pursue their own self-interest.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. W. Burkert, “Athenian Cults and Festivals,” *CAH²* V (Cambridge 1992), 261.

¹⁰⁷ Play’s date: M. Griffith, *Sophocles Antigone* (Cambridge 1999), 1-2.

An intriguing counter example to Hierocles and Lampon is the Ambraciot *mantis* Silanus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 62), found in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. When Xenophon contemplates founding a city on the coast of the Black Sea, he summons Silanus to help with the interpretation of a divinatory sacrifice (Xen. *An.* 5.6.16). As Malkin has shown, the passage implies that *manteis* were needed at precisely these points in a colonizing mission.¹⁰⁸ However, rather than endorse the plan, Silanus reveals Xenophon's intentions to the army of Greek mercenaries in order to scuttle it (*An.* 5.6.17).¹⁰⁹ But if Silanus' action is opposite to the colonizing efforts of Hierocles and Lampon, his ultimate purpose was the same: personal gain. As Xenophon tells us, Silanus wanted desperately to return to Greece quickly and in one piece, for he had in his possession three thousand darics, a gift from Cyrus the Younger (*An.* 5.6.18). This staggering amount was given to Silanus by Cyrus for a prophecy the prince took to promise success in his war with Artaxerxes II (*An.* 1.7.18), an episode that makes one think again of Onomacritus at the court of Xerxes years before: a Greek *mantis* gives a favorable prophecy to a Persian dynast at the start of a war he will lose. Another relevant case of later colonization that involved diviners is the foundation of Messene in 369. Pausanias relates the story that Epaminondas, the Theban general, knew of an oracle of Bacis that had prophesied the foundation of Messene, having found it in books written by a priestly family; having determined the site for the city, he consulted *manteis*, and when they reported that the sacrifices were favorable, he ordered the foundation stones to be laid (Paus. 4.27.4-5).

These examples of independent diviners and their often self-interested involvement in colonization prompts a further observation. By the mid-fifth century, in Athens at least, a new term is found to describe the seer: ἀγύρτης, a "begging-diviner."¹¹⁰ In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* of 458, Cassandra speaks of her torment as a *mantis* mocked by her own people, and then likens herself to "a wandering begging-seer"

¹⁰⁸ Malkin, *Religion and Colonization* (n.92), 102-4.

¹⁰⁹ Xenophon himself possesses knowledge of divination and so is able to keep an eye on the military *mantis*: *An.* 5.6.29.

¹¹⁰ Lexicographers treat the secondary meaning "beggar" as more prominent. Popular too: *agurtai* meaning "Galloi," priests of Cybele, e.g., Hesychius and the Suda s.v.

(φοιτὰς ὡς ἀγύρτρια 1273).¹¹¹ The diviner who seeks personal gain had become so familiar that a stereotype had emerged, and a new meaning given to a *nomen agentis* that dates back to Homer at least.¹¹² So, in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, we find Oedipus heap scorn upon the *mantis* Teiresias in the following way: "this crafty *agurtēs* who has sight only when it comes to profit, but in his art is blind" (δῶλιον ἀγύρτην, ὅστις ἐν τοῖς κέρδεσιν ἰ μόνον δέδορκε τὴν τέχνην δ' ἔφθ τυφλός 388-9, Lloyd-Jones trans.). Plato, later, is fully aware of ἀγύρτης as a technical term, and provides even more detail about its meaning when in the *Republic* he has Adeimantus observe:

Begging priests (ἀγύρται) and soothsayers (μάντις) go to rich men's doors (ἐπὶ πλουσίων θύρας ἰόντες), and persuade them that they possess a power procured from the gods by means of sacrifices and incantations to cure in conjunction with pleasurable festivals (μεθ' ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἐορτῶν) any wrong of a man, either his own or his forbears...(*Resp.* 364b-c).

There can be no doubt about Plato's general point: the independent diviners of his day seem to specialize in solving the problems of the rich. Important to note is the manner in which the "cure" is effected: the phrase "with pleasurable festivals" (μεθ' ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἐορτῶν) does not indicate means or instrument, rather it refers to a "joint efficient cause"—that is, it is presumably at these banquets, "in conjunction with them," that the diviner performs his "healing" of the wealthy man.¹¹³ In other words, just as in comedy, the essential greed and self-interest of the independent religious expert is signaled by his gluttony. His knowledge is clearly fraudulent, for we learn later in the *Republic* that authentic wise men do not go banging on the doors of the wealthy (*Resp.* 489b-c).¹¹⁴ It is perhaps also significant that these very same *agurtai* cite pre-existing texts, namely Hesiod and Homer, to justify the need for their craft (*Resp.* 364d-e), a practice that recalls Onomacritus and his use of Musaeus. Note, though, that the attacks

¹¹¹ See Fraenkel, *Agamemnon* (n.16), vol. III, 590-1 ad loc.

¹¹² ἀγύρτης is not found before Aeschylus. However, the denominative ἀγυρτάζω occurs at *Od.* 19.284 (a *hapax*), where it has no pejorative sense: Chantraine, *Dictionnaire* (n.2), vol. I, 9 s.v. ἀγείρω. [Eur.] *Rh.* 503 and 715 may pick up the *Od.* passage.

¹¹³ Cf. Smyth no. 1691.1 and Schwyzler II 485. Cf. Thuc. 6.28.1: ἀγαλμάτων περικοπαὶ τινες πρότερον ὑπὸ νεωτέρων μετὰ παιδιᾶς καὶ οἴνου γεγενημένα.

¹¹⁴ J. Adams, *The Republic of Plato* (Cambridge 1902), vol. I, 80-81, ad 364b suggests ἐπὶ πλουσίων θύρας ἰόντες was proverbial, citing *Resp.* 489b-c. Cf. Hp. *Morb.Sacr.* 1: similar figures attribute epilepsy to the divine.

on independent diviners, as well as the abusive terms for them, focus on the venality of the practitioner, not on the notion of prophecy itself. The Greeks were quite aware that a prophecy could be tailor-made to fit a situation, and specifically the interests of the diviner, as many scenes in Aristophanes amply demonstrate. But the fault lay with the diviner, and did not bear on the legitimacy of prophecy.¹¹⁵

Judging by the hostility towards independent diviners in comedy, tragedy and Plato, and in particular in the term *agurtês*, we would not be able to guess the enormous importance and honor they enjoyed because of their exploits on the field of battle.¹¹⁶ We caught a glimpse of this aspect of the *mantis*/chresmologue with the prophecy of Amphilytus before the battle of Pellene, for he was evidently there; recall, too, the Iamids Callias in the war between Sybaris and Croton, and Teisamenus later at Plataea. In a few remarkable cases, independent diviners, specifically *manteis*, are not only present in battle, they play important military roles, either leading an attack or devising special tactics for combat or escape (Hdt. 6.83.2, 8.27.3; Thuc. 3.20.1).¹¹⁷ Aeschylus even produced the *hapax legomenon* στρατόμαντις ("army-seer" Ag. 122), and Herodotus speaks of Deiphonus as *mantis* to the Greek *stratiê* at Mycale (Hdt. 9.95, Kett *Prosopographie* no. 18). But mostly what we will see are diviners, chiefly *manteis*, who give the divine sanction for combat after inspecting sacrifice (*ta hiera*, *ta sphagia*: see e.g. Thuc. 6.69.2, Xen. *An.* 1.8.15),¹¹⁸ and who are not infrequently the

¹¹⁵ Lloyd, *The Ambitions of Curiosity* (n.17), 36. Also H. Klees, *Die Eigenart des griechischen Glaubens an Orakel und Seher*, Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 43 (Stuttgart 1965); Nock, "Religious Attitudes" (n.15), 539; D. Lateiner, "The Perception of Deception and Gullibility in Specialists of the Supernatural (Primarily) in Athenian Literature," in R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell, eds. *Nomodeiktês: Greek Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor 1993), 179-95; T. Harrison, *Divinity and history: The religion of Herodotus* (Oxford 2000), 142.

¹¹⁶ Pritchett, "The Military *Mantikê*" (n.62), 47-90. Cf., e.g., S. Eitrem, "Mantis und ΣΦΑΓΙΑ," *SO* 18 (1938): 9-30; M. Jameson, "Sacrifice before Battle," in V.D. Hanson, ed., *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience* (London and New York 1991), 197-228; F.T. van Straten, *Hiera Kala* (Leiden, New York, Köln 1995), 156-7.

¹¹⁷ The first case: Cleander of Phigalea in Arcadia (Kett *Prosopographie*, no. 42), who seems to lead a slave revolt at Tiryns. The second: Tellias of Elis (Kett *Prosopographie*, no. 67), who comes up with an ingenious plan for a night assault for the Phocians in their war with the Thessalians. The third: Theaenetus (Kett *Prosopographie*, no. 31), who proposes the escape of the Plataeans in 428/7. He is paired with a general (Eupompides): again the seer and military leader together.

¹¹⁸ See n. 115 above. In the Thuc. passage the sacrifices and subsequent start of hoplite combat come *after* missile and light armed attacks, suggesting this sort of fighting was not a sanctioned part of battle.

formal initiators of conflict themselves. But rarely they could also be involved in the resolution of conflict and the maintenance of peaceful relations. So, recall that in legend Epimenides brokered a peace between Knossos and Athens. There is documentary evidence from the historical period that suggests this function as well. An inscription of c.550 from Olympia makes clear that *manteis* were overseers of a treaty between the Anaitoi and Metapioi (*Inscr. Olymp.* no.10 = Bengtson *Staatsverträge des Altertums* II² no.111, *SEG* 11.183), and a Spartan treaty (end 5th, start 4th?) with the Aetolians, or specifically a subgroup of them named the Erxadieis, seems also to have involved the activity of a *mantis*.¹¹⁹

Perhaps the most eloquent and yet briefest evidence we have for diviners in combat are two casualty-lists on stone from the classical period mentioning *manteis* as war dead. In the record of war dead from the Erechtheid tribe for 460 or 459 from Athens (*IG* I³ 1147 = *ML* 33), we find at the end of the second column: ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ | vacat | Τελένικος | μάντις (lines 128-9; Kett *Prosopographie* no. 66). Similar is *SEG* 29.361, an Argive casualty-list from c.400. The third line reads: [...c.5..] μάντις. In both cases the men in question are one of a small group of individuals who are identified by office. So, in *IG* I³ 1147 we also have two *stratēgoi* and four citizen archers mentioned in places of prominence (beginning and end of columns) out of a total of 177 men; and in *SEG* 29.361 we find a *probasileus*, a *stratagos*, and a *iareus*, all at the beginning of the text with the *mantis*. The vast majority of men on both lists are identified simply by name and group affiliation (tribe in the Athenian case, phratry in the Argive).

In addition to these casualty-lists, there are two inscribed texts of a different sort from Attica that also refer to *manteis* in combat, specifically naval fighting in the Corinthian War. In 1957 J. Papademetriou

¹¹⁹ W. Peek, "Ein neuer spartanischer Staatsvertrag," *Abhand. Säch. Akad. der Wissen., Phil.-hist. Klasse* 65.3 (Leipzig 1974), 3-15; conveniently found in P.A. Cartledge, "A new 5th-century Spartan treaty," *LCM* 1 (1976): 87-92. Cartledge dates to c.425; D.H. Kelly, "The new Spartan treaty," *LCM* 3 (1978): 133-41, to 388. Line four: .[ν]μονος μαν[τι].... A dating formula seems required; thus Cartledge translates "when ...]nmon was se[er]." But while dating by priest is common (see, e.g., P. Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer* [Munich 1920], 39 and n.7, A. Chaniotis, *Historie und Historiker in den griechischen Inschriften* [Stuttgart 1988], 186-93), dating by *mantis* is not. Note the related phenomenon of the storage of treaties in sanctuaries: H. Bengtson, "Zwischenstaatliche Beziehungen der griechischen Städte im klassischen Zeitalter," in his *Kleine Schriften* (Munich 1974), 215.

published a set of two inscriptions from a tombstone found at Menidi (*SEG* 16.193).¹²⁰ Above a relief showing an eagle clasping a serpent in its talons is the legend Κλειόβολος Ἀχα[ρνενὺς] μάντις. The title and image work together, for the relief depicts the sort of omen a *mantis* was expected to interpret (indeed the quintessential one—an eagle clutching a serpent: Homer *Il.* 12.200-7). Below the image is the following epigram:

Γλαύκο παῖ Κλεόβολε θανόντα σε γαῖα κα[λύπτει]
ἀμφοτέρων μάντιν τε ἀγαθὸν καὶ δορὶ μ[άχεσθαι]
ὄν ποτ' Ἐρεχθέως μεγαλήτορος εἶπεν ἀ[ληθῶς]
δῆμος ἀριστεύσαντα καθ' Ἑλλάδα [κῦδος ἀρέσθαι]

Son of Glaucus, Cleobulus, having died the earth conceals you,
both *mantis* and one good at fighting with the spear,
whom once the people of proud Erechtheus declared rightly
had won glory throughout Greece, having shown your valor.¹²¹

This Cleobulus was none other than the maternal uncle of Aeschines the orator (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 43). In interpreting the text, Papademetriou drew on a passage from Aeschines' *On the False Embassy* (from 343). Defending his family from the attacks of Demosthenes, Aeschines mentions his father's opposition to the Thirty Tyrants, and then goes on to say, "...our mother's brother, our uncle Cleobulus, the son of Glaucus of the deme Acharnae, was with Demaenetus of the family Buzygae, when he won the naval victory over Chilon the Lacedaemonian admiral" (Aesch. 2.78, Adams trans.). Relying on the sequence of Spartan nauarchs, Papademetriou argued that this battle must have occurred in the summer of 387, during the last phase of the Corinthian War.¹²² But it is difficult to reconcile this conflict with our historical narratives (e.g. Xenophon *Hell.* 5.1.10-13). Harris has more recently made the case that the battle in question is the one found at *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia* 9-11 (Chambers), involving the defeat not of Chilon, but Milon, in 397/6.¹²³ At whichever engagement Cleobulus

¹²⁰ "Ὁ θεῖος τοῦ Αἰσχίνου Κλεοβούλος ὁ Μάντις," *Platon* 9 (1957): 154-62.

¹²¹ This is the text Papademetriou prints. G. Daux, "Notes de lecture," *BCH* 82 (1958): 364-66 has several reservations. See also Pritchett, "The Military *Mantikē*" (n.62), 57.

¹²² Papademetriou, "Κλεοβούλος ὁ Μάντις" (n.120), 161; J. & L. Robert, *BÉ* 1958 no.217, agree.

¹²³ E.M. Harris, *Aeschines and Athenian Politics* (New York and Oxford 1995), 23-4.

was present, the tone of the epigram is clear: he was a warrior-*mantis* very much in the mold of the heroic Amphiaraus and his kindred. Indeed, Papademetriou compared the second line of the epigram to Pindar *O.* 6.17 where Adrastus laments the loss of his comrade Amphiaraus: ἀμφοτέρων μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ δουρὶ μάρνασθαι, "both a *mantis* and one good at fighting with the spear."¹²⁴ Clearly we have here a view of the independent diviner that is at odds with the stage-version, a point confirmed in the negative by Demosthenes. Although Aeschines' mother and father come in for stinging abuse in Demosthenes' own *On the False Embassy* (281) and *De Corona* (129-30), in language similar to what we see on the comic stage, Cleobulus is absent, as though such a figure could not be so attacked.¹²⁵

The other Corinthian war era text is similar to Cleobulus' tombstone. A *stèle* preserves two enactments by the Athenian government, one a decree of the Boule and the other a decree of the Ecclesia, granting one Sthorys of Thasos (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 61) both Athenian citizenship and the right to eat in the Prytaneum (*IG* II² 17 + *SEG* 15.84 + *SEG* 16.42 = Osborne *Naturalization* no. D8).¹²⁶ The texts date to 394/3, and seem to suggest that Sthorys won these privileges for serving as a *mantis* at a major naval battle (see esp. lines 26-8: τὰ γενόμενα περὶ τῆς Ἰ ναυμαχίας [μαντευσάμενος ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν τῶν εἰσι-ἱτηρηρίων). Osborne argued that the engagement can be none other than Cnidus, at which the Athenian admiral Conon soundly defeated the Spartan forces under Peisander. Sthorys was in all likelihood attached to Conon's staff, and by the time of the grant of citizenship was actually receiving an official salary.¹²⁷ Significantly, Xenophon reports that an eclipse of the sun took place at the same time as the battle (*Hell.* 4.3.10: Aug. 14, 394), something the historian took as a divine sign of the Spartan disaster,¹²⁸ and which Sthorys would no doubt have made much of too, but naturally from an Athenian perspective. Indeed, one almost has to say that the eclipse was among the very omens he interpreted. Of course, we have no way of

¹²⁴ Papademetriou, "Κλεοβούλος ὁ Μαντις," (n.120) 160.

¹²⁵ Cf. Papademetriou, "Κλεοβούλος ὁ Μαντις," (n.120) 161; and the Roberts (n.122).

¹²⁶ M.J. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens* (Brussel 1981-82), vol. I, 44-45.

¹²⁷ Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens* (n.126), vol. II, 46-47.

¹²⁸ Cf. G. Cawkwell, *Xenophon A History of My Times*, R. Warner trans. (Harmondsworth 1979), note on 203.

knowing if Sthorys was made the butt of jokes in Attic comedy in the same fashion we see Hierocles and Lampon were for the same privilege of dining in the Prytaneum. I would note that unlike them, but like other diviners we have already seen going back to the legendary period, Sthorys is an outsider, a non-Athenian who gains the coveted privilege of Athenian citizenship.

Xenophon also reports the death in battle of a *mantis* roughly contemporary with both Sthorys and Cleobulus, namely the anonymous seer serving with Thrasybulus and the democrats from Phyle at the battle of Munychia (late winter, 403). Xenophon goes out of his way to inform us that the *mantis* fell in the front of the battle lines, charging the enemy, and that he lies buried at the ford of the Cephissus river. What is more, the same *mantis* had prophesied victory for the democrats if they held off their attack until one of their own number had been killed or wounded, a prophecy he himself fulfilled in an almost sacrificial manner (Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.18-19). Of course the diviner who knowingly goes to his death is very familiar, beginning with the mythical Amphiaraus (note also Idmon, A.R. 1.140, 443).

It was noted some time ago that the manner in which Xenophon speaks of the *mantis* at Munychia, namely as “*the seer*” (with the definite article), implies that they were regular members of Greek armies.¹²⁹ Indeed, if we look back at the Persian Wars, our literary sources offer an abundance of evidence, some of which I have already mentioned. What is more, the battle of Thermopylae in particular provides a parallel to the anonymous *mantis* of Munychia. Herodotus tells us that the Greek forces at Thermopylae had early warning of their immanent destruction from the reports of lookouts and enemy deserters, but most notably because of Megistias, an Acarnanian *mantis* and descendant of Melampus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 50), who “having looked upon the sacrifice declared the death that awaited them together with the dawn” (Hdt. 7.219.1). Herodotus then tells us that the oracle at Delphi had informed the Spartans at the outset of the war that either their city must be destroyed by the invading Persians, or one of their kings must fall in battle (7.220.3). Finally, he reports a controversy concerning the departure of almost all the non-Spartan

¹²⁹ E.g. B. Büchsenschütz, *Xenophons griechische Geschichte* (Leipzig 1891), vol. I, 98 ad loc.; G.E. Underhill, *A Commentary on the Hellenica of Xenophon* (Oxford 1900), 70 ad loc.

Greek forces before the battle in the pass: some say they deserted, but Herodotus supports the view that king Leonidas ordered them to go. His proof is Megistias, for when he was ordered to leave Thermopylae, he chose not to, preferring instead to send away his son (7.221). Herodotus also records the diviner's epitaph in his treatment of the honored dead of the battle:

μνήμα τόδε κλεινοῖο Μεγιστία, ὃν ποτε Μῆδοι
 Σπερχεῖον ποταμὸν κτεῖναν ἀμειψάμενοι,
 μάντιος, ὃς τότε Κῆρας ἐπερχομένας σάφα εἰδὼς
 οὐκ ἔτλη Σπάρτης ἡγεμόνας προλιπεῖν.
 ...τὸ δὲ [ἐπίγραμμα] τοῦ μάντιος Μεγιστίω Σιμωνίδης ὁ
 Λεωπρέπεός ἐστι κατὰ ξεινίην ὁ ἐπιγράψας (7.228-3-4 = Peek *GVI*
 no. 94)

This is the memorial of renowned Megistias, whom the Medes slew, having first crossed the Spercheius, the *mantis*, who though he saw clearly Death coming then, did not dare abandon the lords of Sparta. Simonides the son of Leoprepes is the one who wrote the epigram of Megistias on account of their friendship.

The parallels with the story of the seer of Munychia are striking. Both episodes feature a *mantis* who foretells his own death but does not flee. Both also feature an alternative, scapegoat prophecy: victory will ultimately come to the communities involved (the democrats of Athens; Sparta) if a representative from each (the anonymous seer; Leonidas) dies in battle.¹³⁰ It is interesting to note, too, that only Leonidas and Megistias are named in memorial epitaphs of the battle, both by Simonides,¹³¹ even though Herodotus knows the names of other men who distinguished themselves there (Hdt. 7.226-7). In this regard the Thermopylae texts are similar to the casualty lists in privileging leaders and seers. While Megistias was, like so many other diviners we have met, an outsider, he is put on the same level as Leonidas, one of the most famous kings of Sparta. Herodotus tells us specifically that they both knew in advance the outcome of the battle (Hdt. 7.219.1 Megistias, 220.4 Leonidas); hence both their deaths are self-sacrificial, and both receive a poem remembering them by Simonides. The pairing of leader and seer that we saw as far

¹³⁰ Cf. J. Dillery, "Reconfiguring the Past: Thyrea, Thermopylae and Narrative Patterns in Herodotus," *AJP* 117 (1996): 229, 240-41.

¹³¹ For Leonidas, see *PMG* 531 = Diod. 11.11.6.

back as Hector and Polydamas is also operative here. It is certainly found in other comparable, historical figures: the equally heroic and doomed Nicias and his seer Stilbides for instance (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 63; Plut. *Nic.* 23.7; cf. Thuc. 7.50.4). Furthermore, the friendship of Megistias with Simonides reminds us of the essential closeness of the two *technai*—*mantikê* and poetry—something we see already in the *Odyssey* and which is common in the archaic period (the lists that include both as areas of expertise).¹³²

There is a very good reason for the heroic overtones. As the recently published Plataea Elegy of Simonides has shown with unmistakable clarity, the Persian Wars were represented in the literature of the fifth century in ways meant to recall the world of epic.¹³³ Indeed, in West's reconstruction of both F 11 and F 14 of Simonides' poem, the *mantis* Teisamenus plays a major role: his expertise is first identified as being crucial to the eventual victory at Plataea, and his decisive pre-battle prophecy is recorded at some length.¹³⁴ In this reconstruction, Teisamenus was very likely cast as a heroic seer. It needs to be said, however, that West's interpretation of F 11 and F 14 is not universally accepted.¹³⁵ Our most complete extant description of the battle is still Herodotus' narrative, and it is not at all ambiguous about Teisamenus' role. If we look at him there, as well as his opposite number, Hegesistratus (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 30), serving on the Persian side in the same engagement, a similar, but also subtly different view of the *mantis* emerges from that which may be found in the poem by Simonides.

According to Herodotus, just prior to the battle of Plataea, both the Greek and Persian armies offered sacrifices. He continues:

For the Greeks, the one sacrificing was Teisamenus, the son of Antiochus. For he was the man who was serving on this expedition as *mantis*. This man, though Elean by birth and of the clan of the Iamidae [a

¹³² For more on the connection between poetry and prophecy, see Struck in this volume, 147-65.

¹³³ See esp. D. Boedeker and D. Sider, eds., *The New Simonides: Contexts of Praise and Desire* (New York 2001).

¹³⁴ F 11.42 West²: Ἰαμίδεω τέχνηαι μάν]τιος ἀντιθέου[. F 14, which West identifies as Teisamenus' prophecy, preserving 17 lines of text.

¹³⁵ I. Rutherford, "The New Simonides. Toward a Commentary," in Boedeker and Sider, eds., *The New Simonides* (n.133), 48 suggests that F 14 is spoken by a divine figure. Note also that Parsons and others read "Cecrops" at line 42 of F 11, not "*mantis*." On these matters see now M.A. Flower and J. Marincola, *Herodotus Histories Book IX* (Cambridge 2002), 317-18.

Clytiad],¹³⁶ the Spartans made into one of their own citizens (ἐποιήσαντο λεωσφέτερον Hdt. 9.33.1).

For Herodotus the most remarkable fact about Teisamenus was that he won the privilege of full Spartiate status, something that was completely without parallel before or since (9.35.1). This odd fact is explained in an elaborate *logos*. Childless, Teisamenus went to Delphi to inquire about the matter, but was told by the *Pythia* that he was destined to win five contests. Misinterpreting this to mean athletic contests, he started to train and nearly won the pentathlon at Olympia.¹³⁷ The Spartans knew better. They understood “contests” to mean “battles,” and “tried, by offering him a wage, to make Teisamenus a leader in war, together with the Heraclid kings” (μισθῷ ἐπειρῶντο πείσαντες Τεισαμενὸν ποιέεσθαι ἅμα Ἡρακλειδέων τοῖσι βασιλεῦσι ἡγεμόνα τῶν πολέμων 9.33.3). Another extraordinary fact: before the grant of citizenship, Teisamenus was offered a joint-command with the kings of Sparta! Although some doubt the offer,¹³⁸ the implication is clear: Teisamenus is to be put on the same level with the kings, a phenomenon we have seen elsewhere. The seer, alert to the Spartans’ urgency, raised his price: he demanded full citizen rights. The Spartans at first refused, but when they saw the threat of Persia looming, they conceded. But then Teisamenus raised his price higher still: he demanded citizenship for his brother, Hagias, as well as for himself. Herodotus tells us that Teisamenus was here “imitating Melampus” (ἐμμέετο Μελάμποδα 9.34.1), who had similarly won for himself half the kingdom of Argos, and one-third for his brother Bias (see above). The Spartans agreed to both of Teisamenus’ demands, and with him as diviner, they won the battles of Plataea, Tegea, Dipaees, Ithome and Tanagra (9.35.2). At Plataea he determined that victory would belong to the Greeks if they did not cross the Asopus river and attack the Persians first, but rather received the initial assault (9.36).

Herodotus states that the Persian commander, Mardonius, also made

¹³⁶ The reading of the MSS is τὸν ἔοντα Ἡλεῖον καὶ γένεος τοῦ Ἰαμιδέων Κλυτιάδην (-δου S). Valckenaer deleted Κλυτιάδην, followed by Hude, who brackets. See also Flower and Marincola, *Herodotus Book IX* (n.135), 166 ad loc.

¹³⁷ Flower and Marincola, *Herodotus Book IX* (n.135), 320-22, discuss *IG VII 1670*, which may be a dedication by Teisamenus celebrating an athletic victory. See also Paus. 3.11.6-7. Also consult A. Schachter, “The Seer Tisamenos and the Klytiadai,” *CQ* 50 (2000): 292-95.

¹³⁸ Cf. How and Wells, *Commentary on Herodotus* (n.72), vol. II, 302 ad 9.33.3.

use of Greek rites before Plataea, and that his diviner was Hegesistratus of Elis, of the clan Telliadae (9.37.1). We learn that he was earlier caught by the Spartans and condemned to death on the grounds that “they had suffered many injuries (πολλά τε καὶ ἀνάρσια) at his hand.” Hegesistratus effected his escape by cutting off part of his foot, which he later lost completely, and fleeing to Tegea. When he had healed and gotten himself a wooden foot, “he made himself openly hostile to the Spartans” (κατεστήκεε ἐκ τῆς ἰθῆς Λακεδαιμονίοισι πολέμιος 9.37.4). Thus, though handsomely paid by the Persians, he was at Plataea as a *mantis* “both because of his hatred of the Spartans and because of the money” (κατὰ τε τὸ ἔχθος τὸ Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ κατὰ τὸ κέρδος 9.38.1). His enmity for the Spartans ultimately resulted in his death, for he was caught by them later on Zacynthus while acting as a *mantis* (μαντευόμενος 9.37.4) and was executed.

These brief biographies of Teisamenus and Hegesistratus are clearly meant to be read together: they are linked by μέν and δέ (9.33.1, 37.1). But even more than the formal connection, they are united by a common theme: the independent diviner who advances his private interests while serving a non-native power. Of course Teisamenus does become a Spartan, and so is in a sense helping his own state, but that does not alter the fact that he was working for a *misthos*—a payment—at least initially from a foreign *polis*. Both Teisamenus and Hegesistratus seem to have more in common with the Athenian Hierocles and Lampon than with Megistias, the *mantis* of Munychia, or the warrior-seers found on casualty lists. Yet Herodotus’ characterization is not uniformly negative in either case. A connection to the heroic past is explicit in the stories of both men, for Teisamenus imitates Melampus, and Hegesistratus’ self-mutilation is described in the language of heroic accomplishment (it was “the most manly deed of all that we know:” ἀνδρηϊότατον ἔργον πάντων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν 9.37.2). They both seem more like Sthorys later, and Teisamenus especially so (both receive grants of citizenship). All three seers work for wages and are rewarded, and yet all three are also combat-*manteis* who accomplish deeds worthy of record. They seem to be intermediary between the heroic warrior-seer and the unscrupulous chresmologue of the Attic stage. The essential fact about this group is that they demonstrate how a tension exists between the *polis*-framework and the individual specialist from outside. Indeed, the activity of the independent diviner in the period of the Persian Wars, a high-watermark for the *polis*, seems to be a fossil of an earlier era when authority was attached to individuals and their

families, and not institutions or offices of state.¹³⁹ Teisamenus makes himself a peer with the kings of Sparta, and Hegesistratus declares a personal war upon the same *polis*, as though a state himself. The seer contests with the *polis* for supreme authority.¹⁴⁰ It is a situation not that different from the one imagined by G. Herman in relation to Greeks and inter-state diplomacy: in the spaces created by the world of the *polis*, the elite individual still finds a way to function autonomously, independent from, but still connected to his community.¹⁴¹ It also bears noting that this same individual's own motivations are complex: Teisamenus wants to join the community he negotiates with, and his services are to be performed for a wage. The issue of *misthos* seems always close to the surface in the case of chresmologues, but here too it is prominent. There is a clear tension between Teisamenus seeking entry into elite status (the Spartiate class), and working for this end as a wage.¹⁴² The story of Evenius of Apollonia (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 26) is the inverse of Teisamenus: he is deprived of proper compensation through trickery, but Herodotus makes clear that the price for settling his claim against his native city could have been substantially more than it turned out to be (Hdt. 9.93-94). He too wields unparalleled authority, after a fashion.

At each of the major battles of the Persian Wars of 480-79 in mainland Greece, independent diviners are found and play important roles. We have already met Megistias at Thermopylae, and Teisamenus and Hegesistratus at Plataea; and in fact there was at least one other at that battle, Hippomachus of Leucas (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 40), who served with the Greeks allied to the Persians (Hdt. 9.38.2). Remember, too, Deiphonus at Mycale. At Salamis, divination not only played a part, one could say that it is central to Herodotus' understanding of the entire engagement. Chresmologues are involved in the dispute over the interpretation of the famous "wooden wall" prophecy delivered at Delphi some time before the battle, and the oracles of Bacis, Musaeus, and a named chresmologue are confirmed in the discussion

¹³⁹ Davies, "Greece after the Persian Wars" (n.63), 30-1.

¹⁴⁰ J.-P. Vernant, "Parole et signes muets," in Vernant et. al., *Divination et Rationalité* (Paris 1974), 14.

¹⁴¹ G. Herman, *Ritualised friendship and the Greek city* (Cambridge 1987).

¹⁴² The problem of wage-earning and *banausia*: cf. P. Brunt, "Aspects of the social thought of Dio Chrysostom and the Stoics," *PCPS* 19 (1973): 10-11 (= *Studies in Greek History and Thought* [Oxford 1993], 212-13).

of its aftermath. And one can argue that Themistocles plays the role of a diviner in much the same way that we saw the Pisistratid Hippias earlier. The events of Salamis call for special attention.¹⁴³

As part of his defense of the view that Athens was the chief reason for the successful repulse of Xerxes' invasion and thus the salvation of Greece (Hdt. 7.139), Herodotus notes that not even the direst of warnings from Delphi deterred the Athenians from resisting the invader. Those dire warnings were two oracular responses given to an Athenian delegation sent to Delphi at some indeterminate point shortly before the war.¹⁴⁴ The first was a twelve-line hexameter oracle delivered by the *Pythia* telling the Athenians to flee their city for it was to be destroyed by the Persians (7.140.2-3). When the Athenians made ready to leave the sanctuary, devastated by the prediction of utter ruin for their *polis*, one Timon of Delphi suggested that they approach the oracle a second time and ask for another prophecy. This they did, and the priestess responded with a second twelve-line hexameter oracle (7.141.3-4). This prophecy the envoys wrote down, and then went back to Athens (συγγραψάμενοι ἀπαλλάσσοντο ἐς τὰς Ἀθήνας 7.142.1), where a controversy arose over its interpretation. Reference to a "wooden wall" (τεῖχος...ξύλινον line 6) that would not fail led some older citizens to argue that, inasmuch as the citadel of Athens was once protected by a thorn-hedge, the acropolis was what the oracle meant, and hence it was to serve as the Athenians' refuge and should be defended. Another group argued that "wooden wall" meant Athens' fleet. But they were stumped by another phrase in the oracle, "divine Salamis," a place that would bring death to "women's sons" (line 11). A group of χρησμολόγοι, none named, interpreted this to mean that the Athenians would be defeated at Salamis (7.142.3). At this point Herodotus mentions Themistocles for the first time in his *History*: "there was a certain man among the Athenians who had recently come to prominence, whose name was Themistocles, called the son of Neocles" (7.143.1). He provided the decisive further clarification, in opposition to the chresmologues, that if the reference to

¹⁴³ For more on the wooden wall, see Johnston in this volume, 298.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. J.A.S. Evans, "The Oracle of the 'Wooden Wall'," *CJ* 78 (1982): 24-29; P.B. Georges, "Saving Herodotus' Phenomena: The Oracles and the Events of 480 BC," *CLAnt* 5 (1986): 14-59; A.J. Holladay, "The Forethought of Themistocles," *JHS* 107 (1987): 182-87; N. Robertson, "The True Meaning of the 'Wooden Wall,'" *CP* 82 (1987): 1-20.

Salamis meant Athens' defeat, "divine" would not be appropriate, rather "cruel" ($\hat{\omega}$ σχετλή for $\hat{\omega}$ θείη 7.143.1).¹⁴⁵ Later we hear of Themistocles' advocacy of earmarking the Laurium profits for funding the construction of 200 warships, reported in a retrospective digression *after* his advice regarding the "wooden wall" oracle, even though it must have occurred earlier (7.144).

In the immediate context of the battle of Salamis, Herodotus reports that an oracle of Bacis predicted dire consequences for Euboea from the Persian invasion, indeed in such unambiguous terms that he essentially faults the Euboeans for not heeding it (Hdt. 8.20; cf. 8.77). Following the battle, when describing the wreckage washing up on the Colias promontory near Halimous, Herodotus states again that a prophecy of Bacis was fulfilled by the outcome, but adds that Musaeus had also predicted the victory, as well as "an Athenian chresmologue named Lysistratus" (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 48), who years before had uttered a prophecy that all the Greeks had forgotten: "the Colian women shall roast their food with oars" (Hdt. 8.96.2).

In this array of information regarding Salamis, spread through a large portion of narrative, certain themes emerge that connect with many familiar concepts: the heroic diviner, the ambiguous chresmologue, the problem of oracles and writing, Herodotus' own controversial views. The heroic seer is of course Themistocles. His entry into Herodotus' text is clearly marked; the story-teller introduction ($\eta\gamma\alpha\rho\ \delta\epsilon\ \tau\omega\upsilon\varsigma$ "there was a certain man...") serves not to diminish him, but rather to draw notice.¹⁴⁶ Secondly, although he is not identified as such, he gives an exegesis of the second prophecy that an expert normally performed. This understanding of Themistocles as a diviner is not unique to Herodotus, but seems part of a historiographic tradition, implying that it was fairly widespread. Thucydides, in a summation of his character, calls him "the best conjecturer of what was to happen even in the remote future" ($\tau\omega\upsilon\varsigma\ \mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omega\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\pi\iota\ \pi\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\sigma\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\kappa\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\varsigma$), and mentions specifically his ability to foresee the

¹⁴⁵ In Homer $\sigma\chi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\lambda\iota\omicron\varsigma$, -η, -ον is almost always first in a line (e.g. *Il.* 2.112, 16.203, 24.33), but not second, as here (though note *Il.* 3.414).

¹⁴⁶ C. Fornara, *Herodotus: An Interpretative Essay* (Oxford 1971), 68, citing Xen. *An.* 3.1.4: $\eta\gamma\alpha\rho\ \delta\epsilon\ \tau\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\ \tau\eta\ \sigma\tau\tau\alpha\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha\ \Xi\epsilon\nu\omicron\phi\omega\upsilon\varsigma\ \text{'}\text{Αθηναιο}\varsigma$. Note also *Hell.* 4.1.29, 5.4.2 and 25. For a parallel from Hdt., 3.4.1. Cf. A. Bloch, "Über die Entwicklung der Ausdruckfähigkeit in den Sprachen des Altertums," *MH* 1 (1944): 245-48. Common in folktales: W. Aly, "Märchen," *RE* 27 (1928), 258.

good and bad in the unseen (Thuc. 1.138.3). To a degree this characterization of Themistocles is simply due to him being a far-sighted statesman, much like Pericles. But there is probably something more as well. Parker pairs Thucydides' first observation in particular with a fragment of Euripides stating "the best *mantis* is he who guesses well" (μάντις δ' ἄριστος ὅστις εἰκάζει καλῶς F 973 Nauck), implying that the passage in Thucydides is meant to suggest Themistocles' mantic qualities.¹⁴⁷ Plutarch, for his part, reports a number of divinatory acts by him in his *Life*. Indeed, in his own narrative of Themistocles' advocacy of a navy for Athens, Plutarch notes that he won the Athenians over not with reason but with the use of "divine signs and oracles" (σημεῖα δαιμόνια καὶ χρησμούς Plut. *Them.* 10.1); his interpretation of the controversial line regarding Salamis from the second oracle is discussed in this context (10.3). We should remember, too, that as a *mantis*-figure in Herodotus' narrative, Themistocles stands opposed both to the elders of Athens and to "the chresmologues." What is more, he is an outsider, for Herodotus alludes to his low estate as a possible bastard ("called the son of Neocles"). Of course, his later career, and in particular his Medism, will make Themistocles seem, if anything, more like a chresmologue than a *mantis*,¹⁴⁸ but in the story of Salamis he plays the role of the clairvoyant religious expert who can see what other experts and authorities cannot. The controversy surrounding the interpretation of "divine Salamis" takes on the look of a competition, along the lines of what we see with Onomacritus and Lasus, Trygaeus and Hierocles, or perhaps even Calchas and Mopsus.

The chresmologues in the story of the "wooden wall" oracle pose several acute difficulties. It is unusual for a diviner not to be named in Herodotus and other historians, though it is not without parallel (the *mantis* of Munychia). Secondly, we have not yet seen a case where religious experts of any sort act as a group, expressing their views as a collectivity. And finally, inasmuch as they seem to be acting as a kind of board of oracular interpreters, it is difficult not to see them

¹⁴⁷ R. Parker, "Greek States and Greek Oracles," in P. Cartledge and F.D. Harvey, eds., *CRUX. Essays presented to G.E.M. de Ste. Croix on his 75th Birthday* (London 1985), 323-4 and n.88, citing Vernant, "Parole et signes muets" (n.140), 14. Cf. S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1991), vol. I, 223, ad loc.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. W. Blösel, "The Herodotean Picture of Themistocles: A Mirror of Fifth-century Athens," in N. Luraghi, ed., *The Historian's Craft in the Age of Herodotus* (Oxford 2001), 179-97.

as state officials of some kind, that is, as dependent, not independent diviners. Oliver's solution to this puzzle was simply to assume that the chresmologues of the story were in fact a quasi-official board, and as such were precursors to the *exêgêtai* of Athens.¹⁴⁹ But serious objections were raised regarding the details of his argument (see above n.10). It seems to me that two types of evidence help to solve the problem of the group of anonymous chresmologues in Herodotus' account.

First, groups of anonymous chresmologues, and indeed other diviners, are also found in Thucydides, similarly clustered around the start of war or other catastrophic events. At 2.8.2 Thucydides refers with barely veiled scorn to chresmologues chanting their prophecies throughout the Greek world on the eve of the conflict. At 2.17.1 he makes reference to a Delphic oracle regarding a prohibition on building in the Pelasgian Field (*to Pelargikon*; cf. Lampon and *IG* I³ 78.54-7), whose relevance Thucydides seems to reject, but no doubt in response to a more popular view. And at 2.21.3 he tells us that amid the panic caused at Athens by the first Spartan invasion of Attica in the summer of 431, "chresmologues were chanting oracles of various sorts, which [the Athenians] were each inclined to listen to" (*χρησμολόγοι τε ἦδον χρησμούς παντοίους, ὧν ἀκροᾶσθαι ὡς ἕκαστος ὥρμητο*).¹⁵⁰ Although Herodotus' narrative speaks of οἱ χρησμολόγοι, as though a specific group, I believe that Gomme was right to see a fundamental similarity between the chresmologues of 480 and those of 431:¹⁵¹ the coming of war brings into the open, and perhaps even into one place, those whose business it is to make predictions. Thucydides' text makes the point even clearer with the addition that different people sought different chresmologues, depending on their own inclinations. This must mean that there was hardly an official board of chresmologues who spoke with one voice. Recall, too, the possibility suggested by the scenes of competitive oracular citation in Aristophanes that there may have been contests of chresmologues. Similar oracular disputes arose at the time of the plague in Athens (Thuc. 2.54.2-5), and may also have after the mutilation of the herms (cf. Thuc. 6.27.3).¹⁵² It

¹⁴⁹ Oliver, *Athenian Expounders* (n.6), esp. 8.

¹⁵⁰ See A.G. Laird, "ὡς ἕκαστος in Thucydides," *AJP* 27 (1906): 37-8.

¹⁵¹ A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1956), vol. II, 75, ad loc.

¹⁵² Cf. J. & L. Robert, *BE* 1946/47 no.78; Furley, *Andokides and the herms* (n.96), Ch. 6. Note also Arginusae: Diod. 13.97.5-7.

is certainly the case that after the failure of their expedition to Sicily, the Athenians were angry with independent religious experts as a group: they “were furious with the chresmologues and *manteis* and however many others who encouraged their hope through divination (θειόσαντες) that they would capture Sicily” (Thuc. 8.1.1).¹⁵³ Again there was literally no one board that was being attacked, nor one particular oracular interpretation, rather the general point which had been endorsed by a number of soothsayers that the invasion of Sicily was a good idea. It is true, however, that Thucydides has Nicias and the Athenians delay their departure from Sicily by “thrice nine days” because of the interpretation of a lunar eclipse by a group of *manteis* (7.50.4). L. Radermacher observed some time ago, the years from 431 to 413, that is from the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war to the disaster in Sicily, constitute the period of greatest activity for chresmologues and other diviners at Athens.¹⁵⁴

Another way to look at the chresmologues of the “wooden wall” episode is to compare them with the only other instance of a group of unnamed diviners that Herodotus features extensively, namely the *manteis* of the Scythians.¹⁵⁵ We are told that Scythia possesses many *manteis*, and that they perform divination with the help of bundles of rods (ῥάβδοι). Another group of Scythians diviners, the androgynous Enarees, prophesy by means of tree bark (Hdt. 4.67.1-2). The only case of divination that we actually see the Scythian *manteis* engage in, however, involves episodes when their king falls ill. The assumption is that someone has perjured himself by swearing falsely on the king’s hearth, and has thus caused the ruler’s sickness (4.68.2). Three *manteis* are summoned, and with their rods they determine who the guilty party is. The individual is brought before the king and *manteis*, and (not surprisingly) usually denies the charge. A further six *manteis* are then called in, and should they determine that the man is guilty, the matter ends there and the accused is beheaded and his property divided among the original three seers. But if the second group acquit him, more groups of *manteis* are summoned, and if, finally, a majority pronounce the man innocent, the first set of *manteis* are declared

¹⁵³ Cf. B. Jordan, “Religion in Thucydides,” *TAPA* 116 (1986): 119-47; and S. Hornblower, “The religious dimension to the Peloponnesian War, or, what Thucydides does not tell us,” *HSCP* 94 (1992): 169-97.

¹⁵⁴ L. Radermacher, “Euripides und die Mantik,” *RhM* 53 (1898): 504-9.

¹⁵⁵ Groups of unnamed *manteis* are also found at Hdt. 3.124.1, 6.69.3.

“false diviners” (ψευδομάντιας) and are burnt alive and their sons executed, the standard punishment for other misdeeds committed by *manteis* in Scythia (4.69.2).

The story is of course an ethnographic fantasy, but as such, it provides insight into Herodotus’ own understanding of diviners, especially when they act corporately. There are striking differences with concepts we have already met in connection with the Greek seer: the Scythian *mantis* is clearly not independent, but very much under the authority of the king; his method of divination is unparalleled; the fraudulent practice of his art is punished with gruesome death, not exile. But there are intriguing, if inexact parallels. The “true” seer is rewarded not only with life, but also with property—he gains materially through successful divination. He is also, in addition to being a diviner, a doctor and a judge—the first an area of expertise in the Greek world often linked in lists to the *mantis*, as we have seen.¹⁵⁶ But of direct importance is the unanimity of the entire assemblage of *manteis*, summoned to address the problem of the state (the health of the king) at risk. Hartog has suggested that the Scythian diviners literally produce the truth when a majority reach through divination the same findings.¹⁵⁷ The fantasy of the entire passage is most felt, I think, in the absurd—indeed illogical—method by which this majority is determined.¹⁵⁸ As with the “board” of chremologues at Athens, the unanimity of the group of diviners is an illusion, required as a counterpoise to the individual who may or may not be endangering the community, but who is at the center of a state crisis.

The most vexing and difficult feature in Herodotus’ story of the “wooden wall” oracle is the detail that it was written down, and furthermore that this assertion occurs so closely to the historian’s own contention, which he knows to be controversial, that by choosing to resist the invasion of the Persians, Athens saved Greece. It is routinely observed that the standard practice for the recording of oracles in Herodotus is for them to be put down in writing.¹⁵⁹ The same three

¹⁵⁶ Cf. F. Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, J. Lloyd trans. (Berkeley 1988), 127-32. Note also *iatromantis* at Aes. *Eum.* 62.

¹⁵⁷ Hartog, *Mirror of Herodotus* (n.156), 131-2.

¹⁵⁸ If new sets of *manteis* are required when the second group finds in favor of the accused, prolonging the process until “a majority” (πλεῖνες Hdt. 4.68.4) is produced is irrelevant, indeed illogical.

¹⁵⁹ E.g. Nagy, *Pindar’s Homer* (n.65), 160; D.T. Steiner, *The Tyrant’s Writ: Myths*

episodes are cited: the “wooden wall” oracle, Croesus’ test of oracular shrines (Hdt. 1.47-48), and the oracle given to Mys the Carian at Ptoium (8.135). It is never pointed out that these are in fact also the only cases of oracles being put down in writing in Herodotus out of literally more than one hundred oracular transmissions,¹⁶⁰ and that in each of these three instances an argument can be made that the manner of recording the divine message is of particular importance given the context. In each episode, the inquirer(s) writes down the oracle, not an officer of the shrine. Croesus sends out messengers in order to transcribe the answer each famous oracle will produce in response to the question: what is the king of Lydia doing now? He needs precise recordings in order to determine which oracle is accurate; it is a process of comparison and verification (indeed note the elaborate detail in Herodotus’ description of Croesus’ investigation of the texts, 1.48.1: he unrolls each one and scans them). Mys puts his prophecy in writing because the prophet through whom Apollo communicated remarkably and unexpectedly spoke not in Greek but Carian; he needs to write the oracle down in order to preserve it when those charged with its preservation (three Thebans) were unable to do so,¹⁶¹ and presumably also so that he can translate it for his commander Mardonius.¹⁶² Which brings us back to the “wooden wall” oracle.

Herodotus’ description of the reaction of the Athenian envoys to the oracle mentioning “wooden wall” and “divine Salamis” is crucial. He notes that “this prophecy seemed to them, and in fact was, gentler

and *Images of Writing in Ancient Greece* (Princeton 1994), 80; W.V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), 55 and 83; and idem, “Writing and Literacy in the Archaic Greek City,” in J.H.M. Strubbe, R.A. Tybout, H.S. Versnel, eds., *ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑ: Studies on Ancient History and Epigraphy Presented to H.W. Pleket* (Amsterdam 1996), 67 and n.44 is much more cautious.

¹⁶⁰ E. Levy, “Devin et Oracles chez Hérodote,” in J-G. Heintz, ed., *Oracles et Prophéties dans l’Antiquité* (Paris 1997), 345-6.

¹⁶¹ The Thebans are sent ὡς ἀπογραφωμένους τὰ θεσπιεῖν ἔμελλε (Hdt. 8.135.2).

¹⁶² L. Robert, “Le Carien Mys et l’Oracle du Ptôon (Hérodote, VIII, 135),” *Hellenica* 8 (Paris 1950): 23-38; and G. Daux, “Mys au Ptôon (Hérodote, VIII, 135),” in *Hommages à Waldemar Deonna, Collection Latomus* 28 (Bruxelles 1957), 157-62. In connection with Croesus’ test, Asheri noted that either a Lydian envoy must have known Greek, or perhaps an official at Delphi knew Lydian, making more explicable the need for a written response. It had to be translated: D. Asheri, *Erodoto. Le Storie Libro I* (Milan 1988), 292 ad loc., citing the Mys episode. Note, too, at Aes. *Eum.* 31 the need for the applicants to the oracle at Delphi to be Hellenes.

than the first, [and] having written it down they departed for Athens” (ταῦτά σφι ἡπιώτερα γὰρ τῶν προτέρων καὶ ἦν καὶ ἐδόκεε εἶναι, συγγραψάμενοι ἀπαλλάσσοντο ἐς τὰς Ἀθήνας 7.142.1). Although much attention has been paid to the set of oracles, and the second response in particular, no one to my knowledge has bothered to explain why only the second one is described as being written down. The answer is straightforward. Herodotus wanted to show in the historical record that the second oracle was more definitive than the first—in some strange way it had to replace the first. For this process of replacement to be effective in a world that was still largely oral, Herodotus had to make clear that the second oracle was preserved in a way that marked it as different in form from the first, and which furthermore made it appear to have a higher claim to reliability. It is surely the case that he was going against more common attitudes here; for most people, the oral preservation of an oracle was perfectly acceptable, indeed probably the norm.¹⁶³ This is suggested by Herodotus’ apparent insistence on bolstering the reality and accuracy of the second oracle in other ways. Remember, we are told not only that the second was written down, but that it seemed, *and in fact was* (καὶ ἦν καὶ ἐδόκεε εἶναι),¹⁶⁴ “more gentle” (ἡπιώτερα) than the first—a point that Herodotus makes on his own authority.¹⁶⁵

This was a matter of interpretation, and obviously hotly contested, to judge from Herodotus. I find it extremely suggestive that chresmologues again figure in a story involving prophecy, writing, and controversy. These were issues that also came up in the story of Onomacritus and Lasus. It seems as though the fewer intermediary stages there were between a divine communication and its reception and interpretation, the less room there was for controversy. In such a context, chresmologues are invariably going to be regarded with suspicion. Unlike the *mantis* who is authorized to observe and interpret an omen that others can see, or to inspect *ta hiera* at a sacrifice, the chresmologue is often involved either in the presentation of an already delivered oracle, or its interpretation, or most often, both. He is one remove away

¹⁶³ See the appendix.

¹⁶⁴ Note the verb “was” (ἦν) in the sense “[truly] was;” cf. Hdt.’s use of τὸ ἐόν to mean “the truth,” e.g. 1.30.3; Powell (n.73) *Lexicon* 104.

¹⁶⁵ C. Dewald, “Narrative Surface and Authorial Voice in Herodotus’ *Histories*,” in D. Boedeker, ed., *Herodotus and the Invention of History*, *Arethusa* 20 (Buffalo 1987), 147–70.

from the position occupied by the *mantis*. The fact that he is usually, though not always, connected to writing adds a further complication. Writing has great corroborative power, indeed the “wooden wall” story, if my interpretation is correct, precisely demonstrates this. But it is also a source of suspicion. Thus, in Aristophanes, the fact that Lysistrata (*Lys.* 767-8) and Philocleon (*Wasps* 800) can produce written oracles that have already been composed for emergencies illustrates the popular distrust of a chresmologue’s basic tool—the previously recorded prophecy.¹⁶⁶ It is true that the storage of written oracles was not unprecedented—recall that Herodotus reports that both the Spartans and Pisistratids had collections of them. But I would argue that these were exceptions, and in the case of the Pisistratids at least, also suspect. This story also involves Cleomenes, a man with dubious motives as well as a track-record for meddling with the interpretation of divine communication (see esp. Hdt. 6.66.2-3, 79-84). As Thomas has shown, the fifth and fourth centuries were transitional periods where oral and literate cultures coexisted.¹⁶⁷ Herodotus in particular is a figure poised on the divide between them. Still largely “oral” in outlook, he also betrays a strong “documentary mentality,” borrowed perhaps from non-Greek cultures, as though aware of an authoritative role for writing in the preservation of the past.¹⁶⁸

The controversy surrounding the “wooden wall” oracle involves not just the contest between Themistocles and the chresmologues. The episode also is central to a larger argument that Herodotus is trying to make. As the historian has told us himself, he believes, contrary to general opinion, that Athens was the central reason for Greek salvation in the war with Xerxes (Hdt. 7.139.1-2). It has for some time been observed that the second oracle, and in particular

¹⁶⁶ Cf. J. Henderson, *Aristophanes Lysistrata* (Oxford 1987), 168 ad loc. For more on previously recorded prophecy, see Graf in this volume, 51-53.

¹⁶⁷ R. Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989), and eadem, *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge 1992).

¹⁶⁸ O. Murray, “Herodotus and Oral History,” *Achaemenid History* 2 (1987): 109-110 (= Luraghi, ed., *The Historian’s Craft* (n.145), 36-38; and cf. eundem, in the same volume, “Herodotus and Oral History Reconsidered” 318). Also, W. Burkert, “Lydia between East and West or How to date the Trojan War: A study in Herodotus,” in J.B. Carter and S.P. Morris, eds., *The Ages of Homer* (Austin 1995), 139-48; J.G. Taylor, *Framing the Past: the Roots of Greek Chronography* (Diss. Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor 2000), 87-8. For more on the relation between orality and literacy in oracles, see Frankfurter and Klingshirn in this volume.

the line relating to Salamis, must be *post eventum* and cannot in fact have been delivered as we have it in Herodotus some time in 481 or early 480, before the battle of Salamis itself.¹⁶⁹ And yet it is in the second oracle that we see the divine authorization of Athenian action against the Persians. It is true that the two oracles at 7.140-41 are represented as “dire warnings” which, despite that fact, did not persuade the Athenians to abandon the cause of Greece (7.139.6). But that statement really applies only to the first oracle; it may have applied to the second but for the timely interpretation of Themistocles. Robert Parker has sensibly argued that neither oracle is *post eventum*, but rather were the real alternatives faced by the Athenians at the time.¹⁷⁰ However we are to understand the pair of oracles, Herodotus is very clear when he states that, after the gods, the Athenians were the chief reason for Greek victory (7.139.5). It is in connection with this sentiment that we sense also the force of the second oracle: the gods and Athens together engineered the stunning victory of Salamis. Themistocles and the chresmologues are placed at this point in the narrative because the scene endorses Herodotus’ larger claim: Athens’ successful leadership in the war was divinely ordained. Herodotus relies on the popular distaste for chresmologues, especially when viewed as a group, in order to create an authoritative position for Themistocles and for himself.

CODA: FOURTH CENTURY DIVINERS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

As we move from the fifth to the fourth centuries, we see continuities but also differences in the activity and function of the independent diviner in the Greek world. The biggest development is the almost total disappearance of the chresmologue. Later ones are found, to be sure. Thus, Diodorus refers to Boeotian chresmologues who approached Epaminondas with oracles claiming that the Spartans would be defeated at Leuctra in 371 (15.54.2).¹⁷¹ As we saw, Plato in the *Republic* can still imagine *argurtai* peddling their expertise to the

¹⁶⁹ See, e.g., C. Hignett, *Xerxes’ Invasion of Greece* (Oxford 1963), 442-3; J.F. Lazenby, *The Defence of Greece 490-479 BC* (Warminster 1993), 101.

¹⁷⁰ Parker, “Greek States and Greek Oracles” (n.147), 318.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.7, Paus. 6.13.2-4, Plut. *Pel.* 20.

rich. Aristotle reports that the general Iphicrates once called Callias a *μητραγύρτης* (*Rh.* 1405a), and Callias' self-promotion as the *dadouchos* of Eleusis is documented by Xenophon in an Athenian embassy to Sparta, also in 371 (*Hell.* 6.3.3-6).¹⁷² But there is no doubt that the highpoint for chresmologues in the Greek world was the fifth century, and chiefly the periods of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, at least until 413 and the failure of the Athenian expedition to Sicily. In other words, the fortunes of the chresmologues mirror very much the fortunes of Athens. That is largely because, with notable exceptions, chresmologues, regardless of where they may have come from originally, were primarily an Athenian phenomenon. Inasmuch as Athens was the largest, most bureaucratic, and probably most literate *polis*, the chresmologue was ideally suited to this community. But as the city underwent significant change as a result of the disaster in Sicily and subsequent domestic upheaval (the oligarchic coups of 411 and 404), there was no longer room or tolerance for this particular type of independent diviner. We should take Thucydides at his word when he says the Athenians were angry with the chresmologues, though with the *manteis* as well (Thuc. 8.1.1). Until the Sicilian expedition, diviners were common at Athens in particular and seemed to have played important public roles there. This calls for an explanation. The elaboration of the state that took place in the archaic and which continued into the classical was especially felt at Athens. As Davies and Ostwald have suggested, the leadership once enjoyed by the aristocracy there, especially through the religion of the *genê*, was made to give way to increasing popular control of divine matters.¹⁷³ The chresmologue in particular, but the *mantis* as well, must be understood as interruptions in this process: both look like articulations of an elite response to this erosion of authority whereby aristocrats sought to continue to exercise control over religion as independent diviners. They could even take on quasi-official status, as we see with Hierocles, Lampon, and perhaps the chresmologues of 481.

Seen in this light, Euthyphro's remarks at *Euthyphr.* 3c look like an

¹⁷² J. Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of his Times* (London 1995), 243 and n.10.

¹⁷³ J.K. Davies, *Wealth and the power of wealth in classical Athens* (Salem 1984), 112-14; M. Ostwald, *From popular sovereignty to the sovereignty of law* (Berkeley 1986), 170-71. Cf. J. Ober, *Mass and elite in democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989), 57-8; D.D. Feaver, "Historical Development in the Priesthoods of Athens," *TCS* 15 (1957): 123-58.

expression of the aristocracy's reaction to this tension. As Euthyphro observes in his discussion with Socrates, some time shortly before the philosopher's trial in 399:

For my own part, when I speak in the Assembly about matters of religion, and tell them in advance what will occur, they laugh at me as if I were a madman, and yet I never have made a prediction that did not come true. But the truth is, they are jealous of all such people as ourselves (*Euthyphr.* 3c, Cooper trans.).

Euthyphro is not a chresmologue, he is a *mantis* (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 27), and yet he is clearly the object of popular hostility. Socrates himself seems to take relish in showing him up as a religious fanatic and is scandalized by his prosecution of his own father for murder. Indeed, the *manteis* do continue, but in Athens at any rate, some of them had to absorb much of the hostility that was once directed at the chresmologues.

In point of fact, the *mantis* seems to be further incorporated into the business of state at Athens in the fourth century. The Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia*, in the section relating to the current state of the constitution of Athens in the late 330s, speaks of religious officials "who are to make sacrifices ordered by oracles (μα[v]τεντὰ ἱερά), and if good omens are required they see to it with the *manteis*" (*Ath. Pol.* 54.6, Moore trans.)—a passage that suggests the further institutionalization of the diviner. Philochorus, too, seems to envision an official *mantis* operating in the Tetrapolis in his own day (*FGrHist* 328 F 75). But there could also be more familiar *manteis* at Athens and elsewhere in the late classical and early hellenistic period. Indeed, in his own career, Philochorus especially comes to mind. A *mantis* and *hieroskopos* (Kett *Prosopographie* no. 69), he was put to death in 260 by Antigonos Gonatas for his support of Ptolemy II Philadelphus during the Chremonidean War (Suda s.v. Φιλόχορος = *FGrHist* 328 T 1). In him one senses we have a successor to the heroic *manteis* of warfare, such as Megistias and the anonymous seer of Munychia, patriots and men whose views mattered to dynasts.

Yet Philochorus was also different from his earlier brethren. He was a man of books and learning—recall that he even wrote a treatise on his own area of expertise, *Peri Mantikês* ("On Seercraft:" *FGrHist* 328 FF 76-79). Importantly, like the chresmologues before him, he also made a collection of oracles "not in meter" (Plut. *De Pyth. Or.* 403E

= *FGrHist* 328 T 6).¹⁷⁴ Similarly, from the beginning of the fourth century there is Symmachus, son of Eumedes, of Pellene, who tells us that he wrote up an honorary inscription in hexameters for the Lycian dynast Arbinas (*SEG* 28.1245). He also informs us that he is a “blameless *mantis*” (μάντις ἄ[μύμων] line 18). Much here does not surprise us: the epic language, and the familiar role—an independent Greek diviner serving a foreign ruler in Asia Minor. Yet Symmachus too, like Philochorus, is also a writer. Being a *mantis* became a much more technical enterprise that overlapped with other literary pursuits. I should mention in this connection the speculation that has surrounded the so-called Derveni Papyrus (end of 5th, start of 4th ?).¹⁷⁵ Kahn has suggested that it was written by a person very like the Platonic Euthyphro, and Tsantsanoglou more generally that it is likely the work of a *mantis*.¹⁷⁶ It has even been argued that Philochorus used the treatise in his own scholarship.¹⁷⁷ There is also the case of Thrasyllus and Polemaenetos (Kett *Prosopographie* nos.38 and 59 respectively). Isocrates reports in a speech dating probably to the 390s that a Siphnian, Thrasyllus, became a guest-friend to a *mantis* by the name of Polemaenetos. On his death, Polemaenetos left to Thrasyllus his books on divination (βίβλους τὰς περὶ τῆς μαντικῆς, Isoc. 19.5), and gave him a share of his property too. According to Isocrates, from that point on Thrasyllus became an itinerant *mantis* himself and lived (disreputably) in several cities (19.6). The point to note is that being a *mantis* is now not something one gets only through family affiliation or inspiration; it can be learned in books, ones perhaps very like the Derveni Papyrus. If we look closely at Socrates’ criticisms of Euthyphro, we note that they are directed especially at the latter’s Orphic bookishness (Plato *Euthyphr.* 6b-c; cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 948-54). Of course this is not to say that more conventional understandings of the source of mantic ability had

¹⁷⁴ I do not take up whether oracular responses were delivered originally in meter: cf. Fontenrose, *Delphic Oracle* (n.50), 193-94.

¹⁷⁵ For more on the Derveni Papyrus, see Struck in this volume 152-54.

¹⁷⁶ See C.H. Kahn, “Was Euthyphro the Author of the Derveni Papyrus?,” and K. Tsantsanoglou, “The First Columns of the Derveni Papyrus and their Religious Significance,” in A. Laks and G.W. Most, eds., *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus* (Oxford 1997), 63 and 98-99 respectively.

¹⁷⁷ W. Burkert, “Star Wars or One Stable World? A Problem of Presocratic Cosmogony (*PDerv.* Col. XXV),” in Laks and Most *Derveni Papyrus* (n.176), 174 n.32. Note the reservations of A. Henrichs, “*Hieroi Logoi and Hierai Bibloi*: The (Un)written Margins of the Sacred in Ancient Greece,” *HSCP* 101 (2003): 232-33 and nn. 83-84.

disappeared. Thus, on a nearly contemporary stele from the late fifth or early fourth century, the family of one Meidon from Myrrhinus in Attica is listed in an inscription which ends: "I Meidotelus conceal here [in burial] Calliteles, *mantis* son of an honored *mantis*, a wise man and just" (*SEG* 23.161.29-30). The notion that the mantic art persisted in families was clearly still believed.

One of the most noteworthy documents that suggests very clearly a different world from that which we have seen in the course of this paper is an inscription from Colophon dating to c.200-150, first published by J. and L. Robert in 1992.¹⁷⁸ In it one Menophilus of Smyrna is thanked by the people of Colophon for agreeing to be director of their oracular shrine at Claros. The remarkable thing about this text is that Menophilus is actually identified as a chresmologue (line 4). We have come a long way from the time when "chresmologue" meant a charlatan who often ran into difficulties in the community he served, and who certainly would not have been identified as one on a public inscription thanking him for his services. Yet now *chrêsmologos* is a term to be found in an honorific inscription. But some details remain the same. Menophilus is still an outsider who has found a role to play in the religious life of a neighboring community. There is continuity as well as rupture.

We have gone in this essay from the largely oral world of the diviner of myth and legend to the diviner of the book. Along the way a number of larger issues have intersected with the discussion at several points. Indeed, it is fair to say that we have found the religious expert involved in a number of oppositions: a heroic figure who can even sacrifice himself in battle vs. the despised *agurtês* who practices divination in order to profit by it, that is, for a wage; a high-born elite vs. an outsider of doubtful status; an independent figure who can dictate terms even to powerful states vs. a lackey who rubber-stamps the ambitions of potent autocrats. One of the most useful oppositions to look at again here at the end of this essay is the orality/literacy divide, for through this opposition we see the issue of divination and authority most clearly.

I began this paper with the Onomacritus episode and ended with the "wooden wall" oracle. Both are stories from Herodotus that

¹⁷⁸ "Décret de Colophon pour un Chresmologue de Smyrne appelé à diriger l'Oracle de Claros," *BCH* 116 (1992): 279-91 (= *SEG* 42.1065).

feature chresmologues and controversy. Both also raise the problem of writing: in the first case, I tried to show writing was not in fact involved, whereas in the second it was, but was marked and had special importance. Further, I tried to suggest in connection with the second passage that writing introduces into the understanding of divine revelation an intermediary stage, separating the divinatory moment, if you will, from its interpretation and application. It meant that there was potentially a link in this chain that gave human intervention a point of access, and thus the risk that the original communication would be tampered with. The *mantis* communicated the divine will instantly, but the chresmologue worked with what had been revealed long ago. This fact exercised quite an influence on the Greek imagination. Anxiety about the reliability of an older communication newly performed and applied is surely what explains the bizarre story of Epimenides and his tattooed body. It is also at work in Herodotus' forceful defense of Bacis' authority at 8.77. As a criticism, Greek awareness of "after-the-fact" revelation is central to the Aristophanic critique of the underhandedness of chresmologues. The ancient Greeks obviously knew of a number of *post eventum* prophecies, such as the one concerning the "wooden walls" and "divine Salamis," and yet they developed a false-consciousness or cognitive dissonance regarding the matter,¹⁷⁹ perceiving both the patent fictionality of such texts, but needing them nonetheless. Salamis had to be divinely authorized. Chresmologues inhabited precisely a no-man's-land between orality and literacy—channels of divine authority originally transmitted orally, but then mediated through the written text.

Manteis could occupy this space as well, and could be tarred with the same brush—serving in matters of public interest, but ones that happened also to reward them handsomely. But they, even more than the chresmologues, also performed another task in the world of the Greek imagination. Inasmuch as they had more direct access to the divine, already in Homer they represented opportunities for the Greeks

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Dillery, "Reconfiguring the Past" (n.130), 241-2. This essay was completed in draft form when H. Bowden's splendid article, "Oracles for Sale," in P. Derow and R. Parker, eds., *Herodotus and his World. Essays from a Conference in Memory of George Forrest* (Oxford 2003), 256-74 appeared. Although there is some overlap, his tack is substantially different from mine. I do note that his view of the "wooden wall" story as one "designed with an Athenian audience in mind" (273) has obvious and important implications for my own argument. I thank J.S. Clay, J.E. Lendon and J. Mikalson for bibliographic help and discussion.

to think about alternative courses of action, and what is more, about alternative structurings of their societies—worlds where the individual diviner, often an outsider, was on a par with the leader of a community or the community itself. His authority was autonomous and parallel to the authority of the state.

Appendix: Documentary Evidence for Early Written Oracles

It is difficult to determine if it was standard for oracles to be written down in the Greek world in the archaic and classical periods, for our evidence is slender. Burkert maintains that “the preservation of oracular utterances was doubtless one of the earliest applications for the art of writing in Greece, which began to spread around 750” (*Greek Religion* [n.2] 117); Harris basically agrees, asserting that the recording of oracles was one of the first uses of writing (see above n.159). A major difficulty in testing the accuracy of these claims is that the responses themselves were probably written on perishable material: e.g., L.H. Jeffery suggested on the basis of Euripides F 627 Nauck² that the replies at Delphi were on leather (διφθέραι μελεγγραφεῖς: *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, rev. ed. with Supplement by A.W. Johnston [Oxford 1990], 58, 100). Zeus’ oracle at Dodona was unusual; the responses were written on small bronze, then later, lead sheets or strips (Jeffery, *LSAG* 58-9).

But actual oracles are exceedingly rare in archaic documents, and the earliest so far attested seems not to be an oracle at all, rather sacred legislation: *LSAG* 240 no.5 (Cumae). The text, which may be as early as the late seventh century, was interpreted by M. Guarducci to be an actual oracular *sors* in which it was stated that “Hera does not allow further prophecy” (“Un antichissimo responso dell’ oracolo di Cuma,” *Bull. Comm. Arch. di Roma* 72 [1946-48]: 129-41; cf. eandem, *Arch. Class.* 16 [1964]: 136-8; *Epigrafia Greca* [Rome 1967], I.229-30; Jeffery, *LSAG* 238). However, Renehan, building on earlier scholars, has shown that the text should be read instead: “Hera forbids oracular consultations in the morning” (“Hera as Earth-Goddess: a New Piece of Evidence,” *RhM* 117 [1974]: 193-201; cf. *SEG* 40.816). Guarducci’s reading: ἥερε οὐκ ἔδει ἐπιμαντεύεσθαι. Renehan’s: ἥερε οὐκ ἔδει ἥρι μαντεύεσθαι. Renehan, in addition to supporting the older reading, also notes that ἐπιμαντεύεσθαι is not an equivalent of ἀναμαντεύεσθαι. He argues that the inscription represents a “polar expression” essentially ordering potential consultants of the shrine to visit only in

the evening. In other words, this is a regulation, not an oracle.

The earliest recorded oracles that can with some security be dated come from the last quarter of the sixth century. One is the oldest response on lead from Dodona (Jeffery *LSAG* 230 no.13), recording an inquiry made by Hermon. The other is an inscribed bone tablet from Berezan (Borysthenes) from the N. shore region of the Black Sea (*SEG* 36.694). Although its meaning is in doubt, the main text has been interpreted as an oracle from Didyma settling a religious controversy between Olbia and Borysthenes: ed. prin., A.S. Rusyayeva, *VDI* (1986) no.2, 25-64, supported and enlarged by W. Burkert, "Apollo of Didyma and Olbia," *VDI* (1990) no.2, 155-60 (cf. *SEG* 40.611), and by S.L. Solovyov, *Ancient Berezan* (Leiden 1999), 96-7, and id., "On the history of the city-states of the Lower Bug area: Borysthenes and Olbia," in J. Boardman, et al., eds., *North Pontic Antiquities in the State Hermitage Museum* (Leiden 2001), 117-8. The comments at *SEG* 36.694 register strong reservations, however, as does L. Onyshkevych, "Interpreting the Berezan bone graffito," in V.B. Gorman and E.W. Robinson, eds., *OIKISTES: Studies in Constitutions, Colonies, and Military Power in the Ancient World, Offered in Honor of A.J. Graham* (Leiden 2002), 161-77. There is a handful of others down to the end of the fifth: a fragmentary text from Didyma (*LSAG* 343 no.36 = *IGA* no.489, end of 6th); more lead strips from Dodona (*LSAG* 228, 230 nos.15-17, 5th); possibly ML no.38 (5th) celebrating a victory of Selinus, if lines 7-11 can be read as a series of divine injunctions. There is also a stele from Troizen recording an oracular response, dedicated by Euthymides (late 5th: *LSAG* 182 no.6 = *IG* IV 760, *SIG*³ 1159).

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