P Oxy 3376 and Herodotus 2.100.2: An Elaborate Chiasmus?

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December 2004

A large group of papyrus fragments of Herodotus from Oxyrhynchus was published in 1981 in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri,* Vol. 48, pp. 22–73. The importance of these papyri for the text of Herodotus is summarized as follows:

> The papyri of Herodotus here presented comprise the largest group ever published together…
>
> The interest of these papyri is textual. The main questions that we have to ask are, first, whether the papyri preserve true or plausible readings not found elsewhere and, second, what light they shed on the history of the text.
>
> A study of the present fragments enables us to see how the text was being shaped about a millennium before our medieval manuscripts were written. (p. 22)

Of particular interest for the study of rhetorical structures used by Herodotus, such as chiasm and ring composition, is a scribal correction and a conjectured reconstruction of P Oxy 3376 from the 2nd century C.E., fragments 11–16, col. i, lines 18–19, containing portions of the text of Herodotus' *History,* book 2, section 100. Below left is an image of the joined remains. The section of interest is outlined in the rectangle.
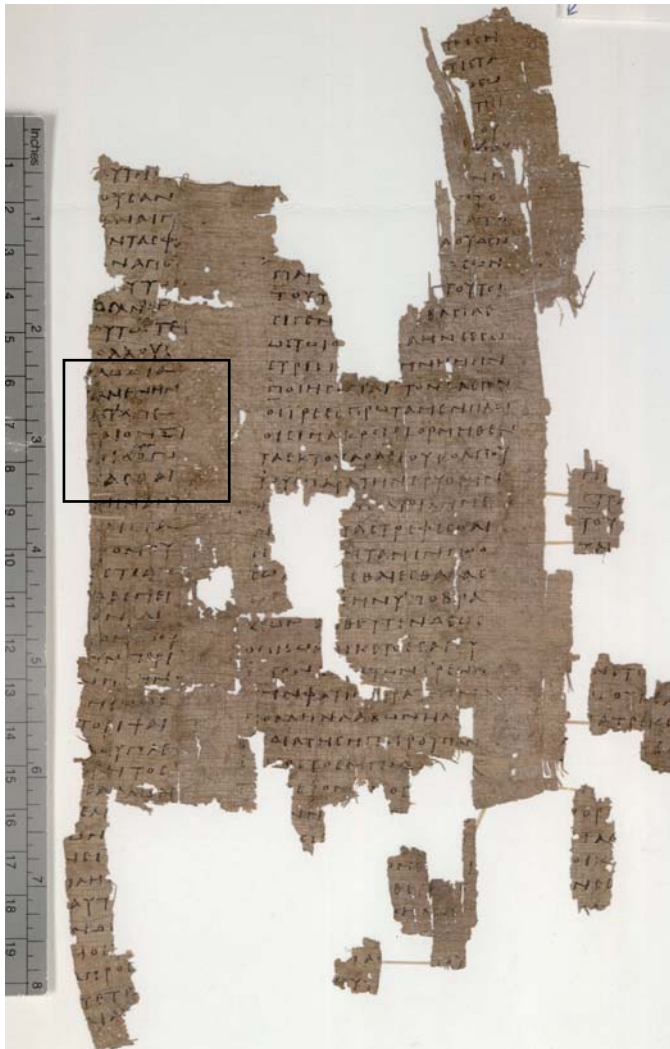
Below is an enlargement of the rectangular area and a transcription of this portion of the text as found in the edition, p. 50.
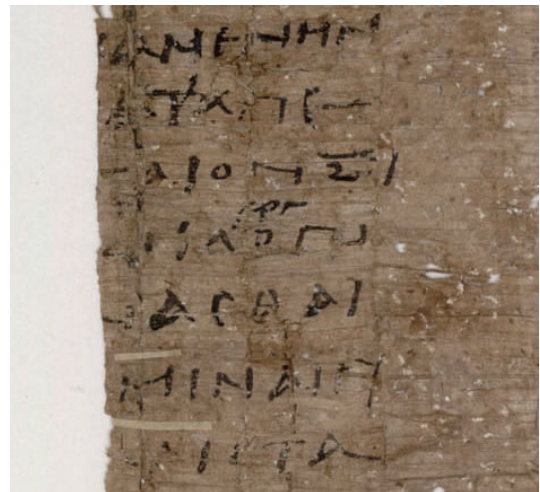
15 φθειραι ποιη]caμενην
    γαρ μιν οικη]μα[[τα]] πε
    ριμηκες υπο]γαιον ξει
            ερυ
       ]ωι λογω
     μηχα]ναcθαι
20   δε] μιν Αιγυ
  πτιων τους μ]αλιcτα

As seen in the enlarged selection, there is a brown vertical line, slightly darker than the background color of the papyrus sheet, at the right edge of the text column. This is a join of two papyrus sheets. A note on line 12 (just above our selection) indicates that at the end of that line there was an

> iota apparently added above the line, although the traces are complicated by writing on the under-sheet of the join, which here shows through gaps in the over-sheet. (p. 51)

In commenting on the text of lines 18 and 19, the editor, M. Chambers, notes:

> The papyrus departed widely from the transmitted text: (*a*) ξει[- is a unique variant; (*b*) εργω, written as a correction to λογω, perhaps by a second hand, is also a unique variant; (*c*) the space at the beginning of 19 will accommodate δε αλλα or simply αλλα, but is too short for νοωι δε αλλα. This suggests there was a corruption at an early date, which will account for the variants in codd.: ξει- (e.g. ξεί|[νια, ξει|[νί°α°αν) was clearly omitted; and νόῳ δὲ is now suspect (it is apparently the only example of this antithesis and of νόῳ δὲ in Herodotus). It is likely that the papyrus had υπο]γαιον ξει|[νια καινουν τ]ωι εργωι | [δε αλλα μηχα]να°θαι. Such an original version would give acceptable line-lengths and account for the corruptions. δε as the third word after τωι εργω would be acceptable Herodotean usage (cf. Powell, *Lexicon,* p. 80). It is possible that the original version was ξείνια καινοῦν τῷ λόγῳ, ἔργῳ δὲ ἄλλα μηχανᾶ°θαι, from which the entry in the Herodotus lexica καινῷ (hence codd. νόῳ δὲ) would be an easy corruption once ξει- was lost. Others must decide whether such an elaborate chiasmus is foreign to Herodotus. (p. 51)

Before attempting to answer the question regarding the possibility of "such an elaborate chiasmus," the textual issues are detailed first.

Modern editions (Rosén, Teubner 1987 and Hude, Oxford 3rd, 1927) read as in the first line below; the extant letters of the papyrus are below it, including the scribal correction above λογω, and after that is an English translation based on our editions.

οἴκημα περίμηκες ὑπόγαιον καινοῦν τῷ λόγῳ, νόῳ δὲ ἄλλα μηχανᾶσθαι

γαιον χει   τω λο^{εργ}γω   ασθαι

[*a very tall subterranean building, to inaugurate [it] in pretense, but in mind to contrive a plot*]

The reconstruction of M. Chambers is based upon the space available within the reconstructed column. There are no complete lines of text in col. i. In column ii the complete lines contain on average 18 characters per line (line 15 = 18; line 16 = 19; line 17 = 19; line 18 = 20; line 19 = 18; line 25 = 16; line 26 = 18; line 27 = 16; line 30 = 18). Chambers' reconstruction would be as follows (using the Sinaiticus.ttf font to complete the lines):
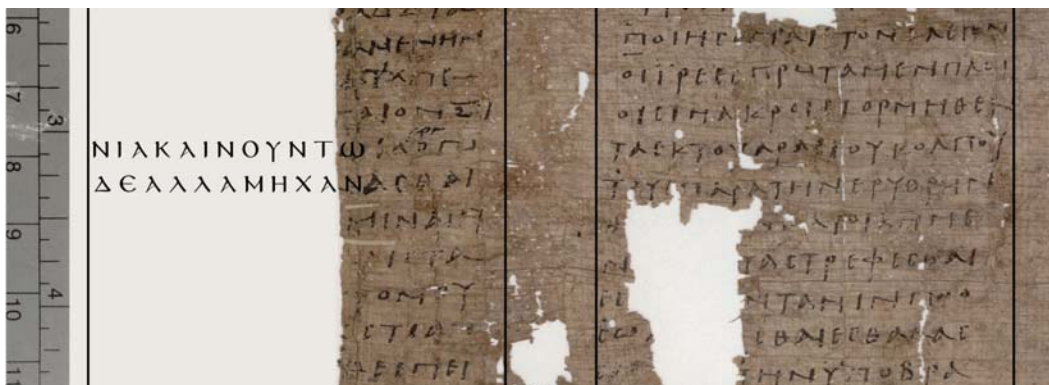
The resulting text reads (leaving the scribal correction in location):

ὑπόγαιον ξείνια καινοῦν τῷ λόγῳ, δὲ ἄλλα μηχανᾶσθαι
                                       ͛εργ

[a very tall] subterranean [building], to celebrate a dinner in pretense, but to contrive a plot

Now regarding Chambers' note in regard to νόῳ δὲ, there are two attested instances of νόῳ δὲ in Herodotus:

7.157.9 πρόσχημα μὲν ποιεύμενος ὡς ἐπ᾽ Ἀθήνας ἐλαύνει,
          ἐν νόῳ δὲ ἔχων πᾶσαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα ὑπ᾽ ἑωυτῷ ποιήσασθαι.

> *in pretext that he is attacking Athens,*
> *but <u>having it in mind</u> to bring all of Greece under him.*

8.19.1 Νόῳ δὲ λαβὼν ὁ Θεμιστοκλέης ὡς εἰ…

> 8.18: *When they broke away from one another, both sides were glad to hasten to anchorage. The Greeks, when they broke off and retreated from the battle were in possession of the dead and the wrecks; but they had been very roughly handled—and not least, the Athenians, one half of whose vessels were disabled—and at length they resolved to retreat into the inner parts of Greece.*

> 8.19.1: *But Themistocles <u>had the thought</u> that, if the Ionian and the Carian contingencies could be split off from the Persians, the Greeks might be able to conquer the rest...* [Translation by Greene (1987)].

The occurrence in 7.157 is in a non-chiastic, parallel structure with its correspondent, as follows:

πρόσχημα μὲν ποιεύμενος   ὡς ἐπ᾽ Ἀθήνας ἐλαύνει,
ἐν νόῳ δὲ ἔχων   πᾶσαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα ὑπ᾽ ἑωυτῷ ποιήσασθαι

The phrase πρόσχημα μὲν ποιεύμενος is semantically equivalent to τῷ λόγῳ. The phrases τῷ λόγῳ and τῷ ἔργῳ occur in juxtaposition in the following passages, but also in non-chiastic structures:

6.38 αὐτομόλου μὲν   τῷ λόγῳ,
      πολεμίου δὲ καὶ ὑποθερμοτέρου   τῷ ἔργῳ.

> *going over to the enemy   in pretense,*
> *but being hostile and incensed   in fact.*

7.155 οὕτω δὴ ὁ Γέλων,
       τῷ λόγῳ τιμωρέων τοῖσι Ἱπποκράτεος παισὶ
           Εὐκλείδῃ τε καὶ Κλεάνδρῳ
           οὐ βουλομένων τῶν πολιητέων κατηκόων ἔτι εἶναι,
       τῷ ἔργῳ ὡς ἐπεκράτησε μάχῃ τῶν Γελῴων,
           ἦρχε αὐτὸς ἀποστερήσας τοὺς Ἱπποκράτεος παῖδας.

> *So then Gelon*
> *in pretense taking vengeance for the cause of Hippocrates' sons*
>   *Euclides and Cleandrus,*
>   *to whom the citizens no longer wished to be obedient;*
> *in deed, when he had prevailed in battle over the Geloans,*
>   *he himself ruled, having robbed the sons of Hippocrates.*

The textual question remains: What are we to do with the scribal addition of εργ[ω] written directly above the word λογω? If the scribe meant it to *replace* λογω, we would have:

> ξείνια καινοῦν τῷ ἔργῳ, δὲ ἄλλα μηχανᾶσθαι
> *to celebrate a dinner in fact, but to contrive a plot*

which makes no sense.

It must be intended as a word to be *inserted* in the line, and the only logical place for it would be *after* λογω. Thus the scribe who corrected the papyrus intended us to read, as Chambers reconstructs, and in this structure:

> ξείνια καινοῦν
> 　　　　τῷ λόγῳ,
> 　　　　ἔργῳ δὲ ἄλλα
> μηχανᾶσθαι
>
> *to celebrate a dinner*
> 　　　　*in pretense,*
> 　　　　*but in fact*
> *to contrive a plot*

and the question is: is such a chiasmus foreign to Herodotus?

There is no stylistic problem here in view of all the work that has been done on chiasmus and ring composition in Herodotus. The above reconstruction would also add a *third* arrangement of λόγῳ and ἔργῳ in Herodotus, for while the examples from 6.38 and 7.155 above show a non-chiastic parallel arrangement, in 6.38 the terms occur at the *ends* of their respective phrases whereas in 7.155 the terms occur at the *beginnings* of their phrases. Thus, we would have the following arrangements:

2.100	_____	λόγῳ
	ἔργῳ	_____

6.38	_____	λόγῳ
	_____	ἔργῳ

7.155	λόγῳ	_____
	ἔργῳ	_____