

Swarthmore College

## Works

---

Classics Faculty Works

Classics

---

2013

## Herodotus

Rosaria Vignolo Munson

*Swarthmore College*, [rmunson1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:rmunson1@swarthmore.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-classics>



Part of the [Classics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rosaria Vignolo Munson. (2013). *Herodotus*. Volume 1-2.

<https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-classics/42>

This work is brought to you for free by Swarthmore College Libraries' Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Classics Faculty Works by an authorized administrator of Works. For more information, please contact [myworks@swarthmore.edu](mailto:myworks@swarthmore.edu).

Swarthmore College

## Works

---

Classics Faculty Works

Classics

---

2013

## Herodotus

Rosaria Vignolo Munson

*Swarthmore College*, [rmunson1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:rmunson1@swarthmore.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-classics>



Part of the [Classics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rosaria Vignolo Munson. (2013). "Herodotus". *Herodotus*. Volume 1-2,  
<https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-classics/42>

This work is brought to you for free by Swarthmore College Libraries' Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Classics Faculty Works by an authorized administrator of Works. For more information, please contact [myworks@swarthmore.edu](mailto:myworks@swarthmore.edu).

# Introduction

## I. HERODOTUS TODAY

### 1.1

In a review article called 'A Triumph for Herodotus', Peter Green largely attributes the resurgence of Herodotean studies over the last forty years or so to our emancipation from the narrower model of historiography inspired by Thucydides.<sup>1</sup> We have been gradually liberated to experience the pleasure of Herodotus' text, and among the general educated public the *Histories* have increasingly been treated as a big book we carry around in our heads, keep on our table, refer to, study, and above all enjoy. Indeed, it is not unlikely for journalists and travelling intellectuals nowadays to pack a copy of the *Histories* in their bags.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.2

Herodotus' work is a history of the interactions between the Greek city-states and their powerful Near Eastern neighbours that culminated in the Persian invasions of Greece in 490 and 480 BCE. It goes as far back as possible to explore the causes of this conflict, and it traces the rise of the Persians to be masters of a large multi-ethnic empire that conquered, or

<sup>1</sup> Green (2003). On Herodotus' popular revival, see also Daniel Mendelsohn's review in the *New Yorker* (2008) of the Robert Strassler's *Landmark Herodotus*.

<sup>2</sup> See Kapushinski (2007); Marozza (2008). Herodotus has also furnished material for recent movies, especially A. Minghella's *The English Patient* (1996), from the 1992 eponymous novel by Michael Ondaatje—for which see Harrison (1998)—and Zack Snyder's *Three Hundred* (2007); in the words of E. Hall (2008), 'Herodotus makes good box office'. For general interest historical books based on Herodotus, see especially Pressfield (1998), Holland (2005), Cartledge (2006).

attempted to conquer, many nations whose lands and cultures Herodotus systematically describes.

### 1.3

The reason why this universal history seems more relevant to our lives than to previous generations is that Herodotus thinks globally, as indeed must we. He did not sit at home in a library, but is an embodiment of the ancient traveller, trekking through Greece, Egypt, and Scythia, talking to people, and observing foreign customs. He measures walls, looks at shells and bizarre animals, listens to local stories, and in general pays attention to details. Herodotus is political: he explores the relation between geography and culture, and between cultures and their governments. He is interested in the role of women in societies ruled by men, and he understands the cross-cultural impulse to build empires.<sup>3</sup> He is a moralist, who shows us the difference between a just/necessary war and an unjust/optional one, correct and incorrect public actions, as well as the appropriate boundary line between an astonishingly broad-minded relativism and a necessary respect for values that must be universal and absolute—indeed sanctioned by god or the gods. Finally, Herodotus knows how to tell stories, and he fits many stories together in a single monumental story, his *logos*, in which he himself, his sources, and his audiences are also characters side by side with the peoples and individuals who make history. To illuminate how he does this at different levels enhances what we have called the pleasure of the text.

### 1.4

If the Herodotus renaissance has reached the general public, it has been particularly intense among classical scholars, for whom a special appeal of his work is that it demonstrates that history cannot rely on a single narrative.<sup>4</sup> For all their immediate charm, the *Histories* are a difficult work, often elusive and puzzling in their different connections and layers. Members of the current (sometimes factious) Herodotean scholarly community focus on different problems and take different

<sup>3</sup> Until recently 'contemporary political theorists and actors have tended to reach back not to Herodotus but to Thucydides for guidance' when examining the phenomenon of modern (American) imperialism; see Ward (2008) 4 for the quotation. But things have begun to change; besides Ward's book, see Harrison (2009).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob (1995) esp. 262–70.

approaches: sources, oral tradition, narratology, science, relevance of past history to Herodotus' own times; representation of, or information about, 'the other', and political ideology. All of us who have been engaged in these various projects have benefited from the insights of past scholarship, have questioned previous excessively ossified positions, and are still in the process of exploring what the *Histories* mean in their particulars and as a whole. One result of this cooperative task in the last few years has been a proliferation of important edited volumes on Herodotus in English.<sup>5</sup> With one exception (II Chapter 13), I have avoided including articles drawn from those collections, but I have learned a great deal from their breadth and organization.

## 1.5

In order to give a fair representation of different approaches, I have divided this *Oxford Readings* into two volumes, broadly corresponding to the two conspicuously different narrative genres whose combination arguably accounts for the unique essence of the *Histories*: the narrative of events of the past, and the atemporal description of cultures and lands. The main disadvantage of such a partition is that it risks reinforcing the old-fashioned assumption that in Herodotus historiography and ethnography are independent of one another and concerned with entirely different sets of problems. This is the less satisfactory aspect of the heritage of the most influential Herodotean scholar ever, Felix Jacoby; it proceeds from his theory (1913) that the ethnographical and the historiographical interests belong to different stages of Herodotus' career. According to Jacoby, in the first part of his life Herodotus travelled around the world observing and describing foreign peoples and places. It was not until he arrived in Athens, then under the leadership of Pericles, that he was prompted to investigate the past accomplishments that led to that city's greatness.<sup>6</sup> The main outlines of this developmental

<sup>5</sup> In particular, Irwin and Greenwood (2007) is exemplary for the way in which the introduction unifies diverse pieces into a communal conversation. See Boedeker (1987a); Bakker, de Jong, and van Wees (2002); Derow and Parker (2003); Karageorghis and Taifacos (2004); Dewald and Marincola (2006); Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012); Foster and Lateiner (2012). Strassler (2007) includes short essays on various Herodotean subjects. Pigeon (2008) collects articles on later Greek and Roman historians. See also the Herodotus issue of *Classical World* (102/4: 2009).

<sup>6</sup> For some of the consequences of this theory for our notion of the development of Greek historiography, see Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 46–83. (Bold type indicates contributions included in this collection, although in a series of citations in the same context only the first one will appear in bold).

theory, namely that ethnography provided the initial impulse for Herodotus' work, is still considered plausible, as far as it goes.<sup>7</sup> But the idea of an evolution or, with implicit evaluation, of progress, from ethnographer to historian is reductive. It is also ethnocentric, because it makes Herodotus' emergence as a historian coincide with the part of his narrative that has left barbarian nations behind, to focus mainly on the Greeks. Almost all the chapters in this collection have been written out of a more integrated understanding of the text. Most scholars now believe that in the *Histories* as we have them Herodotus has deliberately joined two modes of discourse and that the researcher of past events is at the same time an observer of customs.

In Herodotus, historiography and ethnography/geography are mutually complementary and intertwined, unified, among other things, by the same concern for reliability and historical method. Thus, many of the articles in the second volume include discussions of Herodotus' narrative, even as they pay special attention to his synchronic representation of different lands, societies, cultures, subcultures, cross-cultures (e.g. women), and cross-cultural manifestations of 'Culture', such as religion.

## 2. A LIFE OF HERODOTUS?

### 2.1

Before summarizing the contents of Volume I of the present collection (see §3), I will survey the available evidence for the historical Herodotus. The quick sketch given of Herodotus the traveller (§1.3) is commonplace but imaginary, based on our perception of the engaging presence of the narrator in the text. This narrator lets us observe the process of his research and narration, which he presents as a metaphorical rambling journey through different times and places; he names numerous collective informants all over the world ('the Persians say', 'the Corinthians say', and so on), tells us that he has seen certain things and heard others, announces at every turn what topic he is going to cover next, makes comments, gives explanations, and talks and nods to his readers as if they were a live audience. Of course, the narrator within the text, whom some scholars have called 'the *histôr*',<sup>8</sup> is himself a constructed character

<sup>7</sup> For a modern view of Herodotus' intellectual development, see Fornara (1971b) Chapter 1: 'Unitarians, Separatists, and Book II'.

<sup>8</sup> Dewald (1987). The term may simply indicate a practiser of *historiê*, 'research' (see §§3.2.1-2) but it also denotes a judge who arbitrates in a legal dispute after hearing both

whose relation to the historical Herodotus is hard to document. Moreover, the intimacy that his interventions create is somewhat illusory, since they report very little factual information about the author's life.

## 2.2 Herodotus the traveller

2.2.1 The most conspicuous exceptions to the narrator's biographical reticence are his frequent references or allusions to foreign travels in the literal sense. He visited the Black Sea region and Scythia (4.81.2), perhaps Babylon (1.183.3, 1.193.4), Phoenicia (2.44), Palestine (2.106.1), and especially Egypt, where he sailed up the Nile to Elephantine (2.29), inspected sites, and interviewed local guides or temple priests (e.g. 2.112–13, 2.125; cf. 2.143).<sup>9</sup> Because these statements of autopsy sometimes accompany outlandish or erroneous reports of wonders, they have given rise to accusations of mendacity since ancient times.<sup>10</sup> The scepticism has lasted into modern days, with considerable consequences for the interpretation of Herodotus' text by the minority of scholars arguing that Herodotus never went to the various sites he claims to have seen.<sup>11</sup>

2.2.2 Within the Greek world Herodotus only explicitly says that he went to Thasos (2.44), Dodona (2.55), Zacynthus (4.195), Thebes (5.59), and Thessaly (5.59),<sup>12</sup> but he also shows special familiarity with and affection for Samos,<sup>13</sup> collected information at Delphi,<sup>14</sup> and seems thoroughly

sides, as the *ἄνωπος* in Homer, *Iliad* 18.497–508. Herodotus never uses the word, but see Nagy (1990) 215–49 and Connor (1993a) for its origin and the suitability of applying it to the Herodotus-narrator, both in its scientific and in its juridical sense.

<sup>9</sup> The exact extent and relative chronology of these travels has however proven hard to reconstruct. See esp. Jacoby (1913) 247–67; Legrand (1932–54) I: 24–29; Fornara (1971b) 24. For Egypt, see Sourdille (1910) and Lloyd (1975–88) I: 61–76. For the special quality of the narrator's interventions in Book 2 on Egypt, see Marincola (1987).

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Aristotle's corrections in the *Generation of Animals* 736a10–14 and 756b 4–8. See Momigliano (1966) I Chapter 1; §3.2.1; and note 42.

<sup>11</sup> See §3.2.4 and nn.

<sup>12</sup> For this list, see West (2007) 27.

<sup>13</sup> On the tradition of Herodotus' stay in Samos, see §2.4.1. The evidence from the text is examined by Mitchell (1975). See also Strasburger (1955) I Chapter 10, 319, Stadter (1992) I Chapter 12, 354–5; but see Irwin (2009), for whom Herodotus' motives for devoting considerable attention to Samos are political, not biographical.

<sup>14</sup> On Herodotus and Delphi, see Flower (1991) I Chapter 5.

versed in traditions he could only have learned in Athens.<sup>15</sup> We can reasonably assume, in fact, that he visited most of the places he mentions in Greece. Metanarrative remarks stating that certain objects or monuments 'were still there in my time' suggest autopsy at different sites.<sup>16</sup> Other passages seem addressed to specific audiences, allowing us to follow some of Herodotus' movements at the time of narration.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3 Between East and West

2.3.1 Herodotus was a native of Halicarnassus, on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor, and he became a citizen of Thurii, in southern Italy, later in his life. Proof of both facts lies in the first sentence of the *Histories*, which in all the manuscripts announces that the work is 'the exposition of the research of Herodotus of Halicarnassus', but is quoted by Aristotle with the variant 'Herodotus of Thurii'.<sup>18</sup> It is not unlikely that both versions were in circulation in the fourth century BCE.

2.3.2 These two bookends of Herodotus' life, at the extreme east and west respectively of the Greek world, identify him as a Greek of the

<sup>15</sup> A sojourn of Herodotus in Athens is not documented with any certainty; see Podlecki (1977). Most scholars, however, tend to accept it; for the available evidence, see Jacoby (1913) 226–42. Ostwald (1991); Strasburger (1955) I Chapter 10, 296.

<sup>16</sup> e.g. 1.50.3, 1.52, 1.66.4, 1.92.1, 1.93.3, 5.77.2.

<sup>17</sup> e.g. 1.98.5, 1.192.3, 2.7.1 point to Athens; 4.99.4 indicates both Attica and Southern Italy; see §2.6.

<sup>18</sup> Halicarnassus and Thurii recur insistently in the biographical tradition concerning Herodotus. Douris is unique in apparently claiming Herodotus and the epic poet Panyassis, a relative of Herodotus, for his own city of Samos (in *Suda* s.v. Πανύσσις = *FGrHist* 76 F 64, but the text is corrupt). Julian the Apostate calls Herodotus simply Θούριος λογοποιός (*Ep.* 52 Bidez). Plutarch (*de malignitate Herodoti* 35 = *Mor.* 868A) says that although Herodotus was considered Thurian by other people, he was really connected to the Halicarnassians (Θούριον μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων νομιζόμενον αὐτὸν δὲ Ἀλικαρνασέων περροχόμενον). Cf. the same Plutarch in *de exilio* 13 (= *Mor.* 604 F): 'many alter "this is the exposition of the research of Herodotus of Halicarnassus" with "of Thurii"; for he moved to Thurii and participated in this colony' (τὸ δὲ "Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνασέως ἱστορίας ἀποδείξις ἦδ' ἐ" πολλοὶ μεταγράφουσι "Θουρίου": μετέθηκε γὰρ εἰς Θουρίου καὶ τῆς ἀποικίης ἐκείνης μετέσχε). Legrand (1932–54) II: 13–14 thinks it more likely that 'Herodotus of Thurii' was the original reading of the first sentence, before Hellenistic Halicarnassus reclaimed the famous author. See also Jacoby (1913) 205. Two 2nd-c. BCE inscriptions celebrate both Herodotus and his relative Panyassis as distinguished natives of Halicarnassus. One is *IG* XII 1, 145, now SEG 36 n. 975; see Ebert (1986). The other is SEG 48 no. 1330, the new inscription from Salmakis published by Isager (1998). On Herodotus' adoption of Thurii, see also *Suda* s.v. Ἡρόδοτος, cf. §2.4.2. Among other writers from Halicarnassus, Strabo (14.2.16) mentions Herodotus 'whom they later called Thurian on account of his having taken part in the colonization of Thurii' (ὃν ὕστερον Θούριον



periphery and help to explain his unbiased and pluralistic outlook as a historian.<sup>19</sup> Halicarnassus was a multi-ethnic city, home of Dorians, Ionians, and Carians, and other local non-Greek populations including Persians and Lydians living in the area. The dynasty that, for three generations, ruled supported by Persia, included Carian names (Pisindelis) as well as Greek (Artemisia); intermarriage must have been frequent.<sup>20</sup> Thurii, for its part, was a Panhellenic colony; although sponsored initially by Athens, it included Ionians, Dorians, and Achaeans, all from different parts of the Greek world.<sup>21</sup>

2.3.3 The foundation of Thurii in 444/443 BCE provides one of the chronological linchpins of Herodotus' life.<sup>22</sup> His arrival there, probably with the first or second wave of colonists, is almost the last event recorded about him by the biographical tradition. Some ancient authors conjectured that he was then in his *acmē*, i.e. forty years old, thereby assigning his birth to c.484 BCE.<sup>23</sup> This rounded up figure may be off by a few years, but it represents a reasonable approximation. Herodotus would have been a child when Xerxes waged war against Greece in the campaign described in Books 7–9 of the *Histories*. At the time Halicarnassus, like the other Greek cities on the coast of Asia Minor, was subject to the Great King and fought on the Persian side against the mainland Greeks. The city contributed to the expedition five ships commanded by the queen, Artemisia, one of the most extraordinary characters in Herodotus' work.<sup>24</sup>

ἐκάλεσαν διὰ τὸ κοινωτῆσαι τῆς εἰς Θουρίους ἀποικίας); cf. Pliny *NH* 12.18, although the text is uncertain. The geographic epithet 'Thurian' is also attributed to Herodotus by the *Chronicle of Lindos* 29; Avienus *Ora Maritima* 49.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Thomas (2001a) II Chapter 14, 341.

<sup>20</sup> On the archaeological and epigraphic evidence for the early history of Halicarnassus, see Hornblower (1982) 14–18.

<sup>21</sup> The most important source for the history of the foundation of Thurii is Diodorus Siculus 12.9–11; Meiggs and Lewis (1969) no. 10 (550?–525?).

<sup>22</sup> Other evidence is provided by internal references in the text; see §§2.6.1–2. Cf. also the testimony of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Thuc.* 5.1–5) who says that Herodotus was born shortly before the Persian Wars (of 480 BCE) and lived until the beginning of the Peloponnesian War (431 BCE). This passage is quoted and discussed by Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 47–56.

<sup>23</sup> Aulus Gellius (15.23) quotes Pamphyla, a scholar of Neronian times, as saying that Herodotus was 53 years old at the time of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (431 BCE). Dionysius of Halicarnassus is more vague and places Herodotus' birth a little before τὰ Περσικὰ, meaning Xerxes' campaign; cf. Diodorus Siculus 2.2, who says that Herodotus was born in the reign of Xerxes (who became king in 485 BCE).

<sup>24</sup> See Dewald (1981) II Chapter 6, 169–70; Munson (1988).

## 2.4 A politically active Herodotus?

2.4.1 If we keep close to the evidence from Herodotus' text, this is pretty much as far as we can go. The external biographical tradition, handed down by late sources, adds other information concerning his background and whereabouts in Greece (although it says nothing of his travels abroad). Besides scattered references by various authors, the only continuous narrative we have is the entry *Ἡρόδοτος* in the Byzantine lexicon *Suda*, which tells us that he came from a distinguished family, his parents were named Lyxus and Dryo (interesting names, suggesting a possible mixed Greek/Carian stock), and that he had a brother named Theodorus.<sup>25</sup> The entry goes on to report that Herodotus left his native city for Samos on account of the tyrant of Halicarnassus, Lygdamis, who was the grandson and a successor of Artemisia; subsequently he 'returned to Halicarnassus and drove out the tyrant'. A separate entry in the same *Suda*, dedicated to the esteemed epic poet Panyassis (s.v. *Πανύσσις*) also claims that Herodotus' family was active against the tyrants of Halicarnassus: it informs us that Panyassis was Herodotus' nephew or uncle, and that he lost his life at the hands of Lygdamis.

2.4.2 The *Suda* s.v. *Ἡρόδοτος* also tells us that he left Halicarnassus again after the change of regime, this time for good. He moved to Thurii, 'which was being colonized by the Athenians'. The reason given for this second exile is that in Halicarnassus 'he saw that he was the object of envy by the citizens (*φθονοῦμενον ὑπὸ τῶν πολιτῶν*)'. This information, if we could take it as fact, would provide an interesting glimpse into the historical Herodotus' position in the contemporary political landscape of his time. After the end of the Persian Wars (479 BCE), Halicarnassus with other former Greek cities of Asia, became free of Persian subjection and presumably at some point joined the Delian League under the leadership of Athens. This happened before 454/3 BCE, when we find Halicarnassus inscribed in the first Athenian Tribute Quota List. It appears that at first the kind Athenians allowed the local tyrannical family, which had been in good terms with Persia, to stay in power, but eventually they must have promoted the fall of Lygdamis with the help of native elements such as Herodotus and his kin. The unpopularity

<sup>25</sup> Another entry of the *Suda* (s.v. *Πανύσσις*) cites an alternate tradition that gives not Dryo but Rhoio ('pomegranate') as the name of Herodotus' mother. Both are Greek names.

which, according to the *Suda*, forced Herodotus to leave could be related to these political struggles between pro- and anti-Athenian factions and may have been a result of many Halicarnassians' resentment of Athens and of her supporters in the city.

2.4.3 Unfortunately, however, we cannot entirely trust the *Suda* or any other part of the external biographical tradition. Intriguing as it is, the note that Herodotus was the object of the 'envy' of his fellow citizens brings into relief the methodological problems we face in our attempt to reconstruct Herodotus' whole life. *Φθόνος* is a recurrent term in classical Greek authors' descriptions of the political life of Greek city-states. In the *Histories* it denotes the suspicion with which individuals of some influence regard one another (7.236-7; 8.124.1); once it even refers to the resentment of audiences towards the narrator himself when he expresses an opinion favourable to Athens, which they will regard as *ἐπιφθόνος* ('hateful', 7.139.1). However little we know about Herodotus' political activities, this particular passage and the testimony of the late sources reveal at least that he was a politically controversial as an *author*, both in his own day and later on. He was not merely considered unreliable in his fabulous descriptions of foreign lands (see §§2.2.1, 3.2.1), but was also blamed for his fascination with all things foreign and for writing a deceptive account of the Persian Wars that besmirched the reputation of the Greeks.

This is the general substance of the accusations levelled by Plutarch in a treatise usually called *On the Viciousness of Herodotus (de malignitate Herodoti)*.<sup>26</sup> Plutarch wrote about five centuries after Herodotus (first-second centuries CE), but he and others describe the public's ambivalence towards the historian during his life when he lectured from his work in various cities of Greece, meeting with indignant censure as well as extravagant rewards.<sup>27</sup> Once again, it is unclear whether this is reliable information or part of a biographical legend by which ancient readers projected their own offended sensibilities on to the contemporaries of Herodotus. Similarly, it is possible that the creators of the second exile tradition we find in the *Suda* simply imagined that Herodotus' fellow-Halicarnassians abhorred his political activities in the same way as some Greek audiences or readers of different cities and periods seem

<sup>26</sup> See Marincola (1994). For other anti-Herodotean literature, see Momigliano (1966) I Chapter 1, 31-7.

<sup>27</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea (*Chron. Ol.* 83.3) reports that in 446/5 or 445/4 BCE, the council at Athens awarded him a prize for this service. The 3rd-c. BCE historian Diyllus, cited by Plutarch (*de malign.* 26 = *Mor.* 862A-B = *FGrH* 73 F 3), reported that on the decree of a certain Anytus the Athenians paid him ten talents. Aristophanes the Boeotian, still according to Plutarch (*de malign.* 31 = *Mor.* 864D), said that the Thebans refused to hire Herodotus as a speaker and prevented him from talking to the city's young men.

to have objected to the political implications of his historical work. Regardless of how we approach the information we have, our argument is bound to remain circular.

## 2.5

2.5.1 If the ancient readers of Herodotus constructed biographical 'facts' on the basis of their inferences from his writings, the impulse to magnify a popular author also played a role in the creation of legends, some of which are demonstrably wrong, while others, although more plausible and attractive, are still not immune from suspicion.<sup>28</sup> Herodotus' kinship with Panyassis in the *Suda* s.v. Πανύσσις, for example, may have been invented in order connect him to another prominent Halicarnassian, to epic poetry and to literary historical writing.<sup>29</sup> His opposition to Lygdamis might be a fiction inspired by the anti-despotic ideology that pervades the *Histories* (see §§3.4, 3.6.4)—and so on.<sup>30</sup>

2.5.2 Nevertheless, the testimony of ancient readers has produced a portrayal of Herodotus that we would not want to renounce entirely. The reason why we long for a biographical framework is that the *Histories* are history, and their meaning would be enhanced if we knew the external contexts that shaped their author's view of the past. It does not matter to us that Hesiod may not have experienced an epiphany on Helicon, but our position with regard to some of the facts of Herodotus' life—particularly those which (by a method not radically different from that of ancient readers) we deduce from the text—at once

<sup>28</sup> The assertion of the *Suda* s.v. Ἡρόδοτος that Herodotus learned Ionian Greek in Samos is false: inscriptions show that Halicarnassus, although a Dorian colony, was an Ionian-speaking city. The fee of ten talents mentioned by Diylus (see n. 27) is much too high. Also not credible is the alternative idiosyncratic tradition that Herodotus died at Pella rather than Thurii. This can be explained as a deduction from Herodotus' apologetic account of the Macedonian king's medizing behaviour and the representation of Macedonian hospitality at 5.17–21, or as part of a late 5th-c. and 4th-c. representation of the Macedonian kings as patrons of the arts; see Badian (1994); Fearn (2007); Legrand (1932–54) I: 18 and n. 3. It is also impossible for Herodotus to have been buried in the agora of Thurii; the information comes from Stephanus of Byzantium, who quotes an epigram supposedly from Herodotus' tomb (Meinecke p. 315.18).

<sup>29</sup> For Herodotus' poetic antecedents, see §3.2.2 and n. 45.

<sup>30</sup> Some even consider the tradition of Herodotus' participation in the pan-Hellenic colony of Thurii as 'too good to be true'; see Marincola (2001) 20–21.

both depends on our approach to the work and influences our understanding of its expressed principles, purpose, and message. If we do not accept as true that the historical author Herodotus visited the places he said he visited, we are bound to judge the investigatory principles endorsed in the *Histories* in a different way than if we take the narrator at face value (see §3.2.4). If we do not accept that he travelled widely delivering speeches, we must think that the immediacy and 'oral' character we experience in his prose style is entirely artificial.<sup>31</sup>

If we can accept that tradition, moreover, we will be more sensitive to indications in different parts of the text that the narrator, for example, is addressing a contemporary Athenian audience—or, at other times, probably *not* an Athenian audience, as at 7.139.1—or that is he is delivering his narrative from a specific geographical location, whose landmark he mentions in a comparison.<sup>32</sup> Finally, if the text suggests to us that Herodotus perceived himself not only as a remembrancer of the past but as a 'warner' to his contemporaries (see §§3.6.3–4), we will need to go outside the text to inquire about how recent events might have affected his narrative and, conversely, perhaps speculate how the views that emerge from his narrative—say, on Athenian and Spartan policy on the eve of the Peloponnesian War—may have determined his movements and his career choices.

## 2.6 Herodotus' original audiences: when, who, where?

2.6.1 The biographical tradition concerning Herodotus' lectures also influences our conjectures on the dating of the *Histories*. Although it possesses its own integrity of structure, the complete work as we now

<sup>31</sup> Aside from the cities mentioned by the sources in n. 28, see Marcellinus *Life of Thucydides* 54, who says that Thucydides wept at one of Herodotus' lectures; also Photius *Bibl. cod.* 60, p. 59 and Lucian *Herodotus* or *Aëtion* 1–2, who name Olympia as a setting of Herodotus' lectures. Johnson (1994) rejects these testimonies as well as the modern belief that Herodotus' work is based on lectures. For a conciliation of different views, see S. Evans (2008). Dorati (2000) 17–53 argues for the oral dissemination of the work from his analysis of the Herodotus' representation of non-Greeks in the ethnographic descriptions and in the historical narrative. Cf. Momigliano (1978) for evidence that public recitations were normal for ancient historians in general throughout antiquity. For oral features in Herodotus' style see e.g. de Jong (1999) I Chapter 9, 258–9; Munson (1993a); Stadter (1997); Slings (2002); Brock (2003). On the basis of the first sentence, Nagy (1990) 220 calls the *Histories* 'not a public oral performance as such' but 'a public demonstration of an oral performance, by way of writing'. The question of Herodotus' oral performance is distinct from the discussion of the *Histories* as a written text based on traditions that were disseminated orally (see §3.3), but often overlaps with it.

<sup>32</sup> See n. 17.

have it may also have represented a record of past performances and a repository of potential ones. It was composed, combined, and revised over a long period, and was probably shared piecemeal with Greek audiences in different cities. Even as a written product it may not have appeared all at once. References in the text to events that occurred during Herodotus' life identify points in time when he was writing, although they do not yield a date for when he published his complete work. Some external evidence for dating comes from echoes of the *Histories* in tragedies and comedies indicating that at least parts of them were known or remembered by the Athenian public in the second part of the fifth century.<sup>33</sup>

2.6.2 The historical narrative of the *Histories* ends in the year 479 BCE, after the defeat of the Persians and their withdrawal from Greece. Beyond Herodotus' chronological range are the foundation of the Delian League (478), its transformation into the Athenian Empire, and the break-up in 460 of the fragile coalition of the states that had fought against the Persians. After that date, relations between the Peloponnesians and Athens became increasingly hostile even while Athenian operations against Persia went on until c.449. The uneasy 'Thirty Years Peace' between Athens and Sparta (446) only lasted fifteen years.

Herodotus' explicit references to events after 479 are remarkably rare for an author who in general likes to go backwards and forward in time for the purpose of explaining or following up on facts of his narrative.<sup>34</sup> Since the latest event he mentions belongs to 430 BCE,<sup>35</sup> we are at least certain that Herodotus lived to see the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (431). Whether he was still writing after the plague had claimed many Athenian lives, including that of Pericles (429), or after the Athenian capture of Pylos (425), or even the end of the Archidamian War (421) largely depends on how we interpret different passages in the *Histories* where the narrative of the past appears to allude to much later circumstances. The mainstream position among

<sup>33</sup> See especially Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (68–93), produced in 424 BCE and *Birds* (1124–64), produced in 415 BCE, and cf. Fornara (1971a) and (1981), and Cobet (1977). In Sophocles' *Antigone*, produced in 442 BCE, lines 904–24 echo Hdt. 3.119.3–6, for which see Murnaghan (1986), and Dewald and Kitzinger (2006); this last correspondence dovetails nicely with the note by Plutarch (*de malign.* 31 = *Mor.* 785B), that at about the same time Sophocles composed a song and an epigram for Herodotus, suggesting that the two were friends. Cf. also *Electra* 417–27 (produced in the 420s) and Hdt. 1.108.1–2; *Oedipus at Colonus* 337–41 (produced in 401 BCE) and Hdt. 2.35.2–4.

<sup>34</sup> More on this in §3.6.2.

<sup>35</sup> 7.137, the capture of Spartan heralds by the Athenians in the second year of the Peloponnesian War (Thuc. 2.67).

scholars is that the *Histories* as a complete whole became available to the public between 430 and 424 BCE, but some favour a date as late as 415 BCE.<sup>36</sup>

2.6.3 A large portion of Herodotus' composition of the *Histories* may have been done at Thurii (see §2.3). The narrator never mentions Thurii and does not refer to travels in the West, but several passages reveal familiarity with that part of the world or appear to address listeners for whom Southern Italy was home.<sup>37</sup> In the atmosphere of détente after the Thirty Years Peace of 446 BCE, Athens sponsored its Panhellenic colony to enhance both Athenian influence in Italy and the overall image of Athens as the leading city in Greece. But the project also constituted a utopian experiment in the building of a new state that was free, harmonious, and at the same time deliberately diverse. The founders invited the participation of Greek individuals from cities unfriendly to each other, as well as a number of intellectuals with widely different views of the world. The soothsayer Lampon led the expedition, but the progressive and religiously agnostic sophist Protagoras of Abdera was charged with writing the city's laws. Hippodamus of Miletus, the architect of Piraeus and a political theorist, designed the grid-like urban plan.<sup>38</sup> We do not know under which circumstances Herodotus joined this company or his motives for doing so,<sup>39</sup> how long he lived there, whether he ever returned or stayed to experience, in that Panhellenic microcosm, the civil struggle that was embroiling the whole of Greece.<sup>40</sup> His fellow-citizens of Thurii, at any rate, may be the ultimate implied audience of the *Histories*, with whom Herodotus attempted to share the lessons of the past and his experience of the larger world.

<sup>36</sup> For the traditional date, see Jacoby (1913) 229–32. For the later date, see esp. Fornara (1981), which discusses Hdt. 6.98.2, 7.235.2–3; contra Cobet (1977). A complete list of Herodotean references to events after 479 BCE is given by Cobet (1971) 59–71; see also Pelling (1997c) II Chapter 15, 371–2.

<sup>37</sup> See esp. 5.44–45; cf. 6.21; 1.145; 4.99. Raviola (1986). Munson (2006).

<sup>38</sup> Diod. 12.10.7. For Hippodamus, see Arist. *Pol.* 1267B 22.

<sup>39</sup> On this, see the speculations of Strasburger (1955) I Chapter 10, 319–20.

<sup>40</sup> Internal discords at Thurii between the Athenian element and the other groups seem to have started c.434 BCE; they finally led to the predominance of the philo-Peloponnesian faction after the failure of the Athenian expedition to Sicily (413). See Diod. 12.35.1–3; Thuc. 8.35.1, 61.2, 84.2–3.

## 3. APPROACHES AND CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

## 3.1

The essays in this collection span a time from 1955 to 2009 and confront a wide range of issues, some of which have already emerged in §§1–2 in our attempt to view Herodotus as an author operating in a specific political and cultural context. These are, among others, the question of Herodotus' 'sources'—in the broad sense of where he acquired the information he transmits—with the attendant evaluation of his declared commitment to accuracy; his literary antecedents; the style by which he communicates with his audiences or readers; his view of how historical events connect with one another and point to future developments; his attitude towards the policy of the Greek city-states both past and present; and (especially in Volume II) the contribution that the study of different societies brings to his overarching message. In the next few pages it is my purpose to contextualize the articles in this volume, relate them to one another, and use them as a sort of warp on which to weave a (necessarily simplified) narrative of recent developments in Herodotean scholarship. Each of the contributions in this volume provides additional references to important works which I have not been able to cite in this introduction.

3.2 Antecedents, sources, credibility, and *historiē*

3.2.1 The first three chapters in this volume pay special attention to older views and evaluate the extent to which modern students of Herodotus still regard them as fundamental or distance themselves from them. In Chapter 1 Momigliano (1966) surveys Herodotus' reception from antiquity to the Renaissance and almost paradoxically finds that the legend of Herodotus as 'Father of Lies' (see §2.2.1)—rather than his constant parallel reputation as a stylistically accomplished storyteller—is what explains why he is the 'Father of History', even from a modern standpoint. He undertook to do something that his readers, beginning with his younger contemporary Thucydides, believed could not possibly yield trustworthy results:<sup>41</sup> he used direct inquiry, *historiē*, as the basis

<sup>41</sup> Thucydides never mentions Herodotus, but many think that his polemic against those who engage in 'a contest for a momentary oral performance' (Thuc. 1.22.4) is directed against him; see Fornara (1971b) I Chapter 11, 321–2; for a different view, cf. Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 67–8. Thucydides' commitment to contemporary historiography narrowly focused on Greece is, at any rate, the ideological opposite of Herodotus.



for a reconstruction of the past (for the most part, a two-century old past) and of realities in foreign lands. In Momigliano's formulation he put together an account of 'events he was too young to have witnessed and of countries whose languages he did not understand'. It was not until the age of modern explorers, anthropologists, and oral historians that people began to recognize that such risks were worth taking.<sup>42</sup>

3.2.2 The main instrument of Herodotus' *historiē*, aside from sightseeing (*ὄψις*), is hearing what people have to say (*ἀκοή*), people whose data are interpreted by the historian's reasoning or *γνώμη*.<sup>43</sup> That Herodotus relied especially on oral sources and collected oral traditions is a generally accepted principle, which was already recognized before Momigliano, especially by Felix Jacoby and Wolf Aly, and which Oswyn Murray has considered anew in a recent influential article.<sup>44</sup> But if the use of information derived from written sources was at best secondary for Herodotus, he did not compose his history in a literary vacuum. From the point of view of narrative art Herodotus' most important antecedents are arguably poetic: first and foremost the Homeric tradition, with its broad historical sweep, but also elegiac and lyric poets, many of whom treated recent historical events.<sup>45</sup> Contemporary Athenian drama, which debated political and moral issues through the language of myth, also exercised a powerful influence.<sup>46</sup> Less commonly discussed is the fact that Herodotus operated in a relatively crowded landscape of early prose authors who have come down to us only in fragmentary form. The best known of these is Hecataeus of Miletus (end

<sup>42</sup> For Herodotus' reception, see also Evans (1968); Marincola (1994); Hornblower (2006); Grafton, Most, and Settis (2010) 434–35.

<sup>43</sup> See esp. Hdt. 2.99.1. See also II Intr. §2.2.1.

<sup>44</sup> Jacoby (1913) 392–419; Aly (1921), Murray (1987); Luraghi (2005) I Chapter 3. See §3.3.1.

<sup>45</sup> Marincola (2006) examines the areas in which Herodotus is indebted to the poets while distancing himself from them. For Herodotus and lyric poetry, see Nagy (1990); II Intr. §1.3. For Herodotus and elegiac and iambic poetry, see Bowie (2001). Interest in this subject has been revived by the publication in 1992 of a new fragment of Simonides' elegy on the Battle of Plataea (*POxy* 3965); see esp. Boedeker (2001) and Hornblower (2001). For Herodotus and Homer, see Huber (1965); Strasburger (1972); Boedeker (2002) and (2003); Pelling (2006b); also de Jong (1999) I Chapter 9 and §3.5.3; Boedeker (1988) I Chapter 13; Marincola (2007) II Chapter 4 and see II Intr. §§2.3.1–2.

<sup>46</sup> For Herodotus and tragedy, see Chiasson (1982) and (2003); Saïd (2002), including a comparison with Aeschylus' *Persians*; Griffin (2006). See also Fornara (1971b) I Chapter 11, 325–6.

of sixth century BCE), who rationalized and systematized Greek mythical traditions in his *Genealogies* and authored a geographic-ethnographic treatise named *Periegēsis* or *Periodos Gēs* ('Circuit of the Earth'). Hecataeus is the only historiographic writer Herodotus mentions by name—once as a character (5.125), once as a source (6.137), and once as an earlier researcher (2.143)—but he is also an unacknowledged source for other passages (although no consensus has been reached as to the extent).<sup>47</sup> Besides Hecataeus, we know about a number of other fifth-century *logopoi* who composed works in various historiographic genres, including Greek and foreign histories.<sup>48</sup> These authors are surveyed in Chapter 2 by Fowler (1996) who, unlike Jacoby and many others (including Momigliano), dates several of them early enough for Herodotus to have known their books.<sup>49</sup> This is not to say that Herodotus used them as sources of information. It rather means that we do not need to believe that the Father of History was the inventor of all the techniques and methods in his arsenal, and that he is likely to have benefited from the circulation of ideas in an already rich literary milieu.

3.2.3 Fowler examines the discourse of the *Histories* and of other available texts using the method of narratology (see §3.5). He concludes that what makes Herodotus' 'voice' distinctive in comparison to other prose writers of his times is the frequency with which he refers to other voices, problematizes the disagreements of his sources, and evaluates the credibility of the *logoi* with the rhetorical and scientific tools of his times.<sup>50</sup> His purpose is to report the different (and often diverging) narratives of which history is made, exposing their bias, testing them, if necessary refuting them, and if possible identifying and privileging the 'logos that is'. In an article included in the second part of this collection (II, Chapter 3), Darbo-Peschanski (2007) analyses this expression (*ὁ εἰὼν λόγος*) in the light of archaic Greek philosophical thought and argues that for Herodotus it is not simply equivalent to 'the truthful logos' or, as many interpreters understand it, 'the truth'. Absolute truth, as opposed to an 'opinion of truth', has indeed a very limited role in Herodotus' claims.<sup>51</sup> When it comes to events in the past, the 'logos that is' rather represents the narrative that a sensible collective majority agrees

<sup>47</sup> On Hecataeus, see Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 51–2, 57–66, *et passim*; Romm (1992) II Chapter I, 30–3. Moyer (2002) II Chapter 12 discusses 2.143.

<sup>48</sup> For historiographic genres before Herodotus, see Fornara (1983).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. the book-length study by Drews (1973) on the authors of *Persika*.

<sup>50</sup> For Herodotus' methods of argumentation in relation to 5th-c. sophistic, rhetorical, and medical literature, see Thomas (2000).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 164–88.

upon, and as such it does not completely exclude other reports. The *histōr* (and Darbo-Peschanski uses the term in the sense of judge/witness/arbitrator)<sup>52</sup> makes a first judgement on the validity of the *logoi* in the very act of selecting them for inclusion in his work and (sometimes) in the way in which he presents them. It is however a provisional judgement, because all the *logoi* in the *Histories* are always subject to a second one, which is in the hands of readers or audience. Although this article makes for somewhat challenging reading, it provides an important insight into Herodotus' participation in the larger world of Greek philosophical concerns.

3.2.4 Of course, as Fowler observes, the examination of Herodotus' view of the relative trustworthiness of the *logoi* ceases to make sense if we reject the narrator's contract stipulating that he is reporting what different groups of people in different places say.<sup>53</sup> The most controversial representative of this position is Detlev Fehling who, arguing from the internal evidence of the text, maintains that the *Histories* contain in effect no *logoi* from other people, only stories that Herodotus himself has more or less invented and fictitiously attributed to Persians, Egyptians, and so on—not so much with fraudulent intentions as in a sort of literary manoeuvre his audiences would have understood as conventional.<sup>54</sup> This position has elicited sensible refutations (including Fowler's own) as well as fuming indignation.<sup>55</sup> Its most lasting effects, however, have not been entirely negative since it has obliged us to consider more deeply the difficulties we face in reconstructing the details of how Herodotus acquired knowledge on any given issue.<sup>56</sup> Markers of the type 'the Persians say that', which in any case occur in an irregular

<sup>52</sup> See §2.1.

<sup>53</sup> See §§2.2.1, 3.3.

<sup>54</sup> Fehling (1989), although he never explains the literary or cultural context of that supposed convention. Sceptics as regards Herodotus' credibility on specific facts include especially Armayor (1978a, b), (1980), (1985), and West (1985) who, unlike Fehling, reach their conclusions by comparing information Herodotus reports with archaeological or epigraphic evidence.

<sup>55</sup> Pritchett (1993) defends Herodotus' factual accuracy against Fehling and others belonging to what he calls the 'liar school of Herodotus', including S. West and F. Hartog (for the latter, see II Intr. §2.6.1.2). Counter-arguments to Fehling on the basis of the discourse include G. S. Shrimpton and K. M. Gillis in Shrimpton (1997) 229–65 with statistical analysis of Herodotus' source citations; Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 72–81 with bibliography in note 125. Also Corcella (1984) II Chapter 2, 52–3; Erbse (1991); Moggi (2005) esp. 201–13. For a more sympathetic view, see Marincola (2007) II Chapter 4, 120–5.

<sup>56</sup> See Shrimpton (1997) 109–28; Luraghi (2001c), (2006); Hornblower (2002).

way, are maddeningly vague, and are likely to disguise a number of different operations, ranging from personal contact with a Persian informant who purports to represent the views of the community to the indirect acceptance by the *histôr* of what other sources (including Greek sources, and possibly written ones) report as local knowledge.<sup>57</sup>

### 3.3 Herodotus and oral tradition

3.3.1 The appearance of Fehling's claim that the *Histories* are largely the product of their author's invention has coincided with a renewal of the opposite conviction that the work floats on a *mare magnum*, a huge sea, of local traditions from different times and places that existed independently of what Herodotus ends up doing with them. Largely thanks to the article by O. Murray (see §3.2.2) several scholars have turned to exploring the depth of this material, gaining access to the traditions in their original form, decoding their ideological *raison d'être*, and studying the transformations and 'deformations' they have undergone on the way to their being incorporated in the *Histories*.<sup>58</sup> One of the most recent achievements in this area is the Italian collection edited by M. Giangiulio, from which comes Luraghi (2005), the introductory piece of this part of Volume I (Chapter 3). Luraghi explains how attempts to recuperate piece by piece the oral traditions out of which Herodotus has fashioned his *Histories*—not merely individual items of information gained from oral sources, but complete narratives—ultimately go back to Wolf Aly's discovery in Herodotus' work of traces of a Greek oral genre of popular storytelling mixed with the scientific prose of *historiê* (1921). It was not until the 1970s, however, that Aly found his successors, after the anthropologist Jan Vansina and other members of the *Annales* school studying historical memory in pre-colonial African cultures gave Murray and other classicists a blueprint for understanding the mechanisms of oral transmission. An early product of this approach, Evans (1980), Chapter 4, defines the principles of the Africanist school and specifies how they are useful for understanding the nature of Herodotus' sources of information.<sup>59</sup> In Chapter 5, Flower (1991) applies Vansina's method to the tradition of the Delphic oracles to Croesus in the first book of the *Histories*. Other specific Herodotean passages that

<sup>57</sup> See Fowler (1996) I Chapter 2, 78–81.

<sup>58</sup> See also Thomas (1989) esp. 238–82; Cobet (1988).

<sup>59</sup> See also Evans (1991b) Chapter 3; Stadter (1997) looks for parallels closer to (his) home.

scholars have interpreted from the point of view of the underlying oral traditions are discussed in the second part of Luraghi's essay.

3.3.2 We should also bring attention at this point to two books on cultural history by Leslie Kurke that examine a broad range of Greek authors, but contain large sections on Herodotus. Kurke (1999) explores the competing aristocratic and popular ideologies concerning money that emerge from Herodotus' account of kings and tyrants, and Kurke (2011) 'excavates' the traditions surrounding the figure of Aesop that are embedded in different genres of prose texts. These studies share with those we have mentioned in the preceding section the purpose of retrieving the traditions behind Herodotus' narrative rather than understanding Herodotus *per se*. Kurke however defines 'tradition' more broadly to include not only narratives but also shared notions and symbols. She does not, moreover, lay particular emphasis on the oral origin of the material incorporated in the *Histories*, rather examining the intersection between Herodotus and a wide range of literary texts.<sup>60</sup>

### 3.4 Causation, patterning, and the meaning of history

3.4.1 The articles in the first two parts of Volume I are studies of Herodotus' method and style of *historiē*, discuss in general the relation of his narrative to the events it reports, or use Herodotus' text for access to the traditions about these events. The largest area of Herodotean scholarship, however, focuses on Herodotus' thought and his presentation of the way the world works. As it is already clear from the first sentence of the *Histories*, Herodotus' practice of *historiē* is first and foremost an inquiry into the causes of events. Scholars who have collected data on the multiple reasons why, according to Herodotus, people act and things happen have encountered a system of explanation that is remarkably coherent. The *Histories*, as we have already established, are a collection of disparate traditions and semi-autonomous *logoi* (§§1.5, 2.6.1), and mix different narrative and expository genres. But in spite of the apparent disorder of the work, scholarly analyses of

<sup>60</sup> In this sense, Kurke's work has much in common with the study of Nagy (1990), who also draws connection between Herodotus, Aesop, and lyric poetry although with a different purpose; see II Intr. §1.3.

causation tend to bring out its underlying conceptual unity. This is true of Karl-August Pagel's early study arguing that revenge constitutes the central motive and cause in the *Histories*, and of the more far-ranging article by Immerwahr (1956), reproduced here as Chapter 6.<sup>61</sup> In what still constitutes the most complete and authoritative discussion on the subject, Immerwahr examines a range of different types of causes that often operate concomitantly at different levels, especially expansionism and vengeance (the second both human and divine).

3.4.2 The predictable recurrence of certain historical causes creates what Immerwahr calls a 'pattern of causation'. But Immerwahr's work on patterning has extended far beyond the issue of causes. His seminal book *Form and Thought in Herodotus* proceeds from the old debate between those who, under the influence of Jacoby, emphasize the composite character of the *Histories* and those who see the work as a unified whole, especially Max Pohlenz.<sup>62</sup> Although much influenced by Pohlenz, Immerwahr is not interested in following his (impossibly radical) unitarian view that the plan of the *Histories* sprang from Herodotus' head fully formed before any of its parts. Leaving aside the problem of how the work came into being, Immerwahr rather examines its internal principles, showing how Herodotus' diverse narratives are linked together at long or short range by a set of intersecting and permanently recurring themes. The major pattern Immerwahr identifies (although certainly not the only one) is that of the 'rise and fall of the ruler', which conspicuously shapes what we could call the supporting scaffold of the *Histories*, the narrative of Eastern kings from Croesus to Xerxes.

3.4.3 The work of Immerwahr has made a permanent mark because it has shown how, implicitly or explicitly, Herodotus encourages his readers to compare the evidence from different historical contexts for

<sup>61</sup> Pagel (1927). Other studies on aspects of causation in Herodotus include de Romilly (1971) on vengeance; Gould (1989) 63–85 and (1991) on reciprocity; Munson (2001a) on necessity; van Wees (2002), on multiple levels of causation. For human motivation in the *Histories*, see the excellent analysis of Baragwanath (2008).

<sup>62</sup> Immerwahr (1966). Pohlenz (1937). Pohlenz's analysis of certain unifying textual features are expanded on by de Jong (1999) I Chapter 9, 267–73.

the purpose of evaluating its meaning.<sup>63</sup> This approach was not uncontested, however: some scholars thought that it attributed to Herodotus preconceived moralistic schemata, and thereby demeaned his objectivity as a historian. In a general sense those objections have become less compelling with our growing post-modern awareness that *all* historians give meaning to their raw data by 'emplotting' them in an interpretive narrative, and that all use methods akin to those by which imaginative writers construct their fictional works.<sup>64</sup> In the particular case of Herodotus, Lateiner (1984) in Chapter 7 demonstrates the validity of the notion of patterning by examining one of the few theoretical discussions in the *Histories*, the so-called 'Constitutional Debate' in Book 3 (a sort of philosophical dialogue among Persian nobles). This scene describes, among other things, a generalized representation of the typical monarch which, as Lateiner shows, is embodied with variations in Herodotus' portrayals of individual historical rulers throughout the narrative of the *Histories*. Lateiner's analysis also goes a long way to illuminating Herodotus' views on the implications of monarchy and democracy, thereby anticipating some of the topics we will survey in the section devoted to Herodotus' political thought (§3.6).<sup>65</sup>

3.4.4 By studying the use of analogy in the *Histories*, scholars have discovered an ever-growing number of concentric or intersecting patterns large and small that run throughout the work.<sup>66</sup> Many of them belong within the already mentioned 'rise and fall of the ruler' or, at any rate, testify to Herodotus' overall exploration of monarchy as a (mostly negative) paradigm for leadership and exercise of power in the broader sense: the crossing of geographical boundaries for the purpose of conquest as a symbol of moral transgression;<sup>67</sup> the expedition of a wealthy

<sup>63</sup> For comparison and analogy in Herodotus' synchronic descriptions see II §2.2.1 and Corcella (1984) II Chapter 2.

<sup>64</sup> See esp. H. White (1973) and (1978). For the consequences of White's thesis, and the interface between historiography and fiction in Herodotus, see de Jong (1999) I Chapter 9, 255–6.

<sup>65</sup> The origin and significance of the Constitutional Debate have been the object of much study. See e.g. Lasserre (1976a); Pelling (2002b).

<sup>66</sup> Analogy, as defined by G. E. R. Lloyd (1966) 175, is 'any mode of reasoning in which an object or complex of objects is likened or assimilated to another'.

<sup>67</sup> See Immerwahr (1954) 9–28; (1966) 325; Konstan (1983); Lateiner (1989) 126–44; Stadter (1992), I Chapter 12, 337–45; Payen (1997) 138–45; Darbo-Peschanski (2007) II Chapter 3, 99. Greenwood (2007) reverses the metaphor and discusses the narrator's benevolent practice of bridging different *logoi* for the benefit of his readers in his journey through the text.

superpower against a tough and poor nation, the so-called 'primitive opponent';<sup>68</sup> the wise adviser or 'tragic warner', mostly unheeded by the powerful recipient of the advice who rushes to his ruin;<sup>69</sup> the exile who seeks refuge at the king's court making trouble for his fellow-citizens back home.<sup>70</sup> A particularly interesting pattern is that described by Christ (1994), Chapter 8: the king-inquirer, a figure of meta-historical significance who by analogy or opposition illuminates the purposes and methods of the *histōr* of the *Histories*. In the acquisition of knowledge, too, autocrats tend to emerge as a negative model: they have exceptional opportunities for conducting research on a large scale, but in their hands *historiē* is likely to be misdirected or abused.<sup>71</sup>

### 3.5 Narratology

3.5.1 Christ bases his argument that king-*histōres* are self-referential figures on the comparison between the report of these characters' actions and the narrator's representation of his own activities. This self-representation, as we have noticed (see especially §§2.1-2.2), is a pervasive feature of Herodotus' text. Before the advent of narratology, Immerwahr in his study of *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (1966) had already paid special attention to statements by which Herodotus introduces and concludes individual narratives. These belong to a different level of discourse than the narrative of facts; they rather serve as the metanarrative glue that connects one section of the *Histories* to the other. They are 'framing sentences' that clarify the structure of the work, which is what Immerwahr is especially interested in. But at the same time as they bring out the narrator in his function of editor and organizer of his *logos*, they also constitute the most conspicuous repositories of other information about this narrator: his attitude towards his

<sup>68</sup> See Hellman (1934) 77-98, developed by Cobet (1971) esp. 172-6; Flory (1987) 81-118.

<sup>69</sup> This figure was identified long ago: Bischoff (1932); Lattimore (1939b). See also Dewald (1985). Related to it is the pattern of unheeded or misunderstood dreams and oracles; see Corcella (1984) 160.

<sup>70</sup> Boedeker (1987b).

<sup>71</sup> The logical consequence of seeing in the researcher Herodotus the counterpart of the king/*histōr* is to argue that Herodotus replaces the desire for acquisition with an impulse towards knowledge that unifies the world in an 'empire of the mind' while respecting the diversity and autonomy of its parts. This is the thesis of Ward (2008) esp. 168-71, although she does not cite Christ. Christ's work on intradiegetic researchers in Herodotus' *Histories* has inspired several followers. See esp. Branscombe (2010).



sources and characters, his conception of truth and untruth, his ethical positions, what he praises or blames, or the way he interprets events.

3.5.2 Metanarrative signs, of course, are to be found throughout any given narrative, not just in complete sentences at the beginning and end. Even the small particle *πov* ('no doubt') within a statement of fact represents a comment on that statement and signals the intervention of someone who is telling the story.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, narrative that jumps back or forward in time, or changes setting, as frequently happens in Herodotean digressions, reveals a narrator who performs these manoeuvres. Distinguishing between different levels of discourse, thereby identifying the narrator and all the other voices present in the text, is one task that now falls within the special competence of narratology, which has become an important instrument for interpreting Herodotus. Studies that have fruitfully followed this approach include especially Dewald's description of the many roles of the narrator (1987), and Fowler, I Chapter 2, which, as we have mentioned, uses narratology for the purposes of determining what makes Herodotus' voice distinctive in relation to other historiographical authors of his age (see §3.2.3).<sup>73</sup>

3.5.3 A more comprehensive and systematic study is the one by de Jong (1999) Chapter 9, which defines the field of narratology and its terms, then explains its origin and heritage, and justifies its application to historiographic (rather than just fictional) texts. De Jong concentrates on three different narratological aspects of the *Histories*. One is the figure of the Herodotus narrator who, as she argues, identifies with the Homeric narrator while also distancing himself from that model. The second aspect is 'anachrony', namely the way in which the narrator's discourse alters the natural chronology of events in the story. This conspicuous peculiarity contributes to our perception that Herodotus'

<sup>72</sup> See the wonderful illustration given by Fowler (1996) I: 58.

<sup>73</sup> Studies of different narratological aspects of Herodotus also include e.g. Hartog (1980), Lang (1984a); Beltrametti (1986); Marincola (1987); de Jong (2002), (2004); Dewald (1999), (2002); Darbo-Peschanski (1987); Munson (1993a), (2001b), (2005); Slings (2002); Bakker (2002), (2006); Rood (2007); Scardino (2007); Dorati (2008); Baragwanath (2008).

text is a somewhat disorderly conglomerate of *logoi*, but de Jong shows how it can rather function as a unifying device. The same can be said of the third phenomenon, foreshadowing, which consists in a set of techniques by which the narrator announces or suggests what will happen later or how a story will end. The analysis of all these aspects shows the extent to which Herodotus is indebted to the narrative art of Homer, even as he also embraces the epideictic or 'scientific' discourse of fifth-century *historiē*.

### 3.6 The uses of history

3.6.1 The last part of Volume I explores Herodotus' political and religious thought, especially as it emerges from his historical narrative (as opposed to ethnographic description, which will be examined more closely in Volume II). The idea that Herodotus' reconstruction of the past and his views on the causes of events is heavily influenced by contemporary political circumstances is not new. Scattered references in the *Histories* reveal Herodotus' awareness that while he was writing his history of the Greek resistance against Persia, the Greeks were internally engaged in an ugly war against each other (see §2.6.2). At the time, some Greeks looked back with nostalgia to their heroic recent past, when Panhellenic solidarity, albeit fragile and incomplete, had allowed them to achieve an almost unthinkable success.

There is some justification for reading also the *Histories* as a celebration of this sort.<sup>74</sup> The wonder of the Persian Wars, no doubt, provided a major impulse to the beginning of Greek historiography, including the work of Herodotus himself.<sup>75</sup> For some scholars of the old school, however, the view that Herodotus' main goal was to preserve the memory of the old Greek victory against the barbarians and therefore also praise the role of Athens as the leader of the Greek coalition was joined to a conviction of Herodotus' allegiance to the Athens of his day.<sup>76</sup> Not all quite agree with this picture, however, and in a seminal article Strasburger (1955) Chapter 10 has shown most effectively that Herodotus' judgement of Athenian actions throughout their history is more complicated than was commonly thought. The *Histories* contain in particular unmistakable signs of their author's disapproval of Pericles'

<sup>74</sup> See e.g. Pohlenz (1937) 165–77.

<sup>75</sup> A point eloquently argued by Drews (1973). Herodotus calls Xerxes' expedition the greatest in history (7.20.2–21).

<sup>76</sup> An attenuated version of this view is also part of the developmental theory of Jacoby (1913); see §1.5.

hard-line policy towards the Athenian allies, especially Samos, to whom Herodotus perhaps had a special connection (see §2.2.2 and note 13). Opposition to that policy, which had turned the liberator of Hellas into the 'tyrant city' of Greece<sup>77</sup> might also help to explain, as Strasburger adds with an interesting speculative leap, Herodotus' move to Thurii (see §§2.3, 2.6.3). Scholarship since Strasburger has become more attuned to the degree of blame, mixed with praise, directed not only at Athens, but also at the Ionians, Sparta, Corinth, Corcyra, Argos—not to mention Thebes—and practically every other group of Greeks in the *Histories*. This change of direction has coincided with a partial revalorization of Herodotus' ancient reader Plutarch, who certainly never mistook the *Histories* for a patriotic tract (see §2.4.3).

3.6.2 Strasburger's argument is based on several passages where Herodotus' narrative of the past appears modelled on, or silently evokes, specific events that occurred much closer to the time of narration, in the Pentecontaetia or during the first part of the Peloponnesian War. The analysis of these 'hidden hints', as Strasburger calls them, are expanded and refined in Chapter 11 by Charles Fornara (1971b), who maintains that we cannot understand the last three books of the *Histories* unless we read them ironically. While Thucydides writes for posterity, Herodotus often seems to address a Greek fifth-century public, who in the 430s would have been more preoccupied with the incipient inter-Greek war than with the shared exploit of the past. Herodotus, it is true, makes few explicit references to what happened after 479, but that is intentional, according to Fornara.<sup>78</sup> He capitalizes on his audiences' knowledge of circumstances of their own time, so that numerous episodes in the *Histories* would inevitably lead them to think of the continuation of the story or of similarities between now and then.<sup>79</sup> The chapter of Fornara's book included here as Chapter 11, illustrates the allusive nature of Herodotus' narrative by examining his portrayals of Themistocles and Pausanias in Books 7–9, and shows the extent to which these

<sup>77</sup> See Raaflaub (1979b).

<sup>78</sup> Cf. §2.6.2 and note 36. For the significance of the references in Book 9, see Pelling (1997) II Chapter 15, 371–2.

<sup>79</sup> This point is also effectively argued in Fornara (1981), where the author discusses the issue of dating. For Herodotus as a 'sounding-board for contemporary views', see also Fowler (2003) esp. 318.

portrayals tacitly point to the famous scandals that ended the brilliant political career of both these men.

3.6.3 If Immerwahr is the father of patterning, Fornara is the father of our political reading of the *Histories*. The two approaches come together if we use analogy to discover Herodotus' allusions to present realities: to begin with, at the time of narration Athens threatens the liberty of the Greeks, just as Persia does in Herodotus' narrative of the past. Indeed, Fornara's method has subsequently been applied perhaps far more broadly than this scholar intended. Above all, the lesson Herodotus communicates is now felt to pervade the whole historical narrative of the *Histories*, not only the last three books, to which Fornara limits his argument.<sup>80</sup> Herodotus' entire history of the expansion of the Persian Empire is—*pace* Fornara (1971b) 31—a history of Persian imperialism, directed to audiences for whom comparing Athens now to Persia then, and contrasting good Athens then with bad Athens now had become commonplace. Thus Herodotus' portrait of monarchs and tyrants starting with Croesus (see above, §3.4.2) is not simply an exploration of an Eastern or Archaic-Greek political phenomenon, distant in space or time; it rather appears related on the one hand to the problems caused by (non-monarchical) individuals in positions of leadership within the Greek city-state<sup>81</sup> and, on the other hand, to the perceived abuses of power on the part of an entire collectivity—the tyrant city—towards other Greeks.<sup>82</sup> As he develops the last point, Stadter (1992) Chapter 12 argues that Herodotus' Eastern narrative emphasizes three main themes—violation of natural boundaries (see §3.4.4), imposition of tribute, and enslavement—and that it does so in a way specifically designed to evoke parallels with Athenian policies in the post-Persian Wars period.

3.6.4 According to Stadter, a model for reading the *Histories* as a whole is the speech of Socles on the evils of tyranny in Book 5: both Herodotus and this Corinthian character use narrative to convey a moral and political warning. This comparison suggests another difference from the position of Fornara. The latter regards Herodotus' message as more descriptive than prescriptive, aimed at teaching what is and always

<sup>80</sup> See e.g. Raaflaub (1987).

<sup>81</sup> See e.g. Munson (2001b) 52–66.

<sup>82</sup> For the 'tyrant city', see esp. Thuc. 1.122.3, 1.124.4, 2.63.2, 3.37.2. Raaflaub (1979b).

will be by historical necessity.<sup>83</sup> Stadter and others, by contrast, are more inclined to embrace the notion of a world-changing Herodotus, one who communicates to his fellow-Greeks a lesson about policies and behaviours they should (and presumably could) avoid.<sup>84</sup> It is consistent with the characterization of many warning figures in the *Histories* that Herodotus was not heeded, as subsequent history shows, either in the microcosm of Thurii or in the larger Greek world.

### 3.7 Look at his end

3.7.1 In a famous passage, the Herodotean Solon tells Croesus that 'we must look to the end of every matter to see how it will turn out' (1.32.9; cf. 32.5). Through the prism of a political reading, we acquire a better understanding of the ending of the *Histories*, which has been traditionally regarded as puzzling or not a real ending at all. It is unlikely that Herodotus' work was interrupted by external circumstances, as some have thought. We may rather speculate that his story had an ending he could not write, where the definitive cessation of hostilities between the Greeks and Persia (perhaps marked by the Peace of Callias of 449) overlapped inextricably with disturbing developments within the Greek world. He chose, at any rate, to close his work in a provisional way, which confirms the overall character of the *Histories* as an *opera aperta*. The Greeks have severed Xerxes' bridges on the Hellespont re-establishing the rightful separation between Europe and Asia. The victorious Athenians, however, remain on the borders of the King's territory, poised between a defensive and an aggressive war. Here Herodotus looks forward to the extra-textual reality of his own time while also echoing a range of themes from the preceding parts of his work. Two articles help us follow Solon's advice in order to understand the meaning of Herodotus' story. Both address the diverse and polyvalent

<sup>83</sup> See Fornara (1971b) 75–91, esp. 80: '...in his opinion Athens had been caught in a sad and inevitable process bringing disaster to all of Greece, and it needed to be understood'.

<sup>84</sup> Raaflaub (1987); Moles (1996); Munson (2001b) 217–30; Forsdyke (2006); Stadter (2006). See however Pelling (1997) II Chapter 15 and II Intr. §2.7.4. Irwin (2009) rather thinks that Herodotus is correcting Athenian historical distortions.

character of Herodotus' final chapters and illustrate several approaches to the study of Herodotus we have surveyed.

3.7.2 Boedeker (1988) I, Chapter 13 focuses on the narrative of the punishment of Artayctes, the Persian governor in the Chersonese, whom the Athenians crucify near the head of Xerxes' bridge on the Hellespont for his violation of the sanctuary of the hero Protesilaos at Elaeus. Through the mysterious figure of Protesilaos Herodotus ties the end of the defensive stage of the Persian Wars to the remote origin of the East-West conflict in the Trojan War, which he has evoked at the beginning of the *Histories*, and provides a smaller copy of the divine retribution for Xerxes' imperialistic transgressions. Boedeker emphasizes the meaning of Protesilaos for the economy of the whole work, especially in relation to Herodotus' Homeric antecedents (cf. §3.2.2 and note 45), his use of different oral traditions (§3.3), his belief in a transcendent element in the causality of historical events (§3.4.1), and the importance Herodotus attributes to local cults as channels for a supra-cultural divine principle (see II §2.5.2). In the last chapter of this volume, Dewald (1997) analyses the last part of the *Histories* more broadly, as consisting of four separate *logoi*. Her discussion raises issues such as composition based on digressions (§3.5.2) and Herodotus' 'political' or didactic aim towards his contemporary audiences (§3.6.4). The very last of these *logoi*, with the surprise reappearance of Cyrus giving advice about habitat and culture, brings us back to the description-rich first books of the *Histories* and encourages us to reflect on the link in Herodotus' work between historiography and ethnography.