VIRGINIA J. HUNTER

# Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides

PRINCETON LEGACY LIBRARY

# Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides

# Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides

VIRGINIA HUNTER

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Published by Princeton University Press, 41 William Street,
Princeton, New Jersey
In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, Guildford, Surrey



*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data* will be
found on the last printed page of this book

Publication of this book has been aided by a grant from
the Paul Mellon Fund of Princeton University Press

This book has been composed in Linotron Bembo

Clothbound editions of Princeton University Press books
are printed on acid-free paper, and binding materials are
chosen for strength and durability

Printed in the United States of America by Princeton
University Press, Princeton, New Jersey

Princeton Legacy Library edition 2017
Paperback ISBN: 978-0-691-61452-6
Hardcover ISBN: 978-0-691-62942-1

To Rodger

*On Rigor in Science*

. . . In that Empire, the Art of Cartography reached such Perfection that the map of one Province alone took up the whole of a City, and the map of the empire, the whole of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps did not satisfy and the Colleges of Cartographers set up a Map of the Empire which had the size of the Empire itself and coincided with it point by point. Less Addicted to the Study of Cartography, Succeeding Generations understood that this Widespread Map was Useless and not without Impiety they abandoned it to the Inclemencies of the Sun and of the Winters. In the deserts of the West some mangled Ruins of the Map lasted on, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in the whole Country there are no other relics of the Disciplines of Geography.

J. L. BORGES

# Contents

# PREFACE

MORE THAN one critic, in commenting on the manuscript of the present work, noted some special quality to the concluding chapter. For there, suddenly, was an array of ideas, welcome to be sure, but unsuspected, ideas to which, nonetheless, the preceding chapters had been leading. Tone, style, whatever it includes, I myself attribute the perceived quality chiefly to intellectual development undergone in the years of writing this work. For in truth, when I began my researches into Herodotus and Thucydides in the spring of 1976, I had no idea that Braudel or Foucault would afford me the formulations required to set the two historians in a new perspective, and thereby to make those researches fully fruitful.

The writing of *Past and Process* was not continuous, but fell into three distinct periods. I completed my preliminary researches and wrote three of its six chapters during 1976-1977, when I was on sabbatical leave from York University. At that time I was the holder of a Canada Council Leave Fellowship, for which I am most grateful. Thanks to the Canada Council, I acquired the excellent assistance of Mark Golden, hitherto a personal friend and at that time a graduate student at the University of Toronto. Work with Mark was always a joy, for he has the kind of effervescence and good humor which are contagious. Together we read and summarized a whole mountain of articles and books, the number of which is in no wise represented by the select bibliography that accompanies this study. Here I should like to thank Mark for reading my early chapters and for encouraging me to continue at a point in 1977 when the bibliography seemed overwhelming.

Anyone who has returned to teaching with half a manuscript must experience feelings, in turn, of relief and distress. In actual fact, the time with students, when the manuscript

lies concealed in a file cabinet—if that time be suitably attenuated—allows foundations to settle, structure to solidify, and plans for a larger, more imposing edifice to emerge. In my case, I had the good fortune to be invited to Vassar College for a semester in the winter of 1978 and given the unforgettable title, The Blegen Distinguished Visiting Research Professor of Classics. In surroundings that were warm, friendly, and always encouraging, it was not difficult to pick up the strands of my work and attain a new assurance. With affection I remember Walter Moskalew, Bob Pounder, and Lily Beck for their hospitality, their solicitous efforts to make everything perfect for me, and their friendship; James Day for his high spirits, his great love of the two historians, and his grand eloquence; and finally, Christine and Eric Havelock, Christine for becoming a friend, and Eric for being irascible and provocative. I was sorry to leave these people and all my other kind friends at Vassar College. I hope this book will meet their expectations of me. Had it not been for the leisure and the freedom from mundane pursuits the Blegen professorship afforded me, the book would never have been completed.

Finally, I should say a few words about York University and my colleagues. The York history department is unusual, perhaps unique, in Canada at any rate, in requiring its honor students to take a course entitled "History as an Intellectual Discipline" (History 200). Rather reluctantly in the spring of 1979, my manuscript completed and sent away for scrutiny, I became course director of History 200. My task was to collaborate with other instructors in the course to make it a solid introduction to historical methodology. In the end, three of us, Juan Maiguashca, Gerald Ginsburg, and myself, thrashed out a sequence of lectures centering mainly on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Work with Juan and Gerry, whether planning lectures and syllabus or actually lecturing in that course, was extremely helpful. For me, frankly an autodidact in contemporary methodology, it meant replacing a certain excess of zeal by greater confi-

dence. I discovered that I had indeed been on the right track, but now there was a milieu in which to express ideas and concerns. I am thus most grateful to all my colleagues in History 200 in 1979-1980 and to those who participated in the historical methodology group, which, during that same year, became a center of discussion for members of the department of history interested in contemporary historical practice. Here has been the very best intellectual collaboration I have experienced as an academic. It has aided me immensely to restructure, to revise, and to reformulate parts of my manuscript for Princeton University Press this past summer.

During this same summer I was again fortunate to acquire the help of another excellent assistant, John Healy, one of my students at York University. John's care in searching out new bibliography, his meticulous summaries, and his boundless curiosity bespeak a fine intellect, which, it is to be hoped, will, even in these mean times, ultimately find some outlet in the scholarly world. His assistance has been invaluable.

Here perhaps some comments are in order about the format of this volume. As I underwent an intellectual evolution, it began to seem essential to revise the work in such a way as to make it accessible to a readership wider than those whose speciality is classics or ancient history, and who can read Greek. In particular, I wished to ensure that any historian who has an interest in methodology be able to read this work without difficulty. Consequently, with the nonspecialist in mind, whether historian, philosopher perhaps, or even educated layman, I have adopted the following expedients. All Greek in the text itself has been translated into English. Unless otherwise indicated, the translations are my own. (I have also translated into English passages of French cited in the text. In footnotes and appendixes I have left citations—whether Greek, French, or German—in the original.) However, certain key words used by both Herodotus and Thucydides very often do not have an exact English equivalent,

or, in some cases, an equivalent that does not distort the original by a host of modern associations. Examples are *polis* and *arche*. The word city can never capture all that is implied in the Greek *polis*, a unique social and political structure. *Arche* is similarly badly served by the single word, empire, which suggests a kind of solidity and control unknown in the fifth century B.C. Such key terms I have therefore merely transliterated. Their number is not excessive, and they do recur. Again to aid the nonspecialist, I have appended a glossary of key words, giving their approximate English equivalents, the word or words I might choose, were I to attempt an English translation of the historians.

Here too let the nonspecialist and specialist alike be warned of a certain capriciousness, always present in the spelling of Greek proper names. My preference is for transliteration, hence Attika, Boiotia, Hippokrates, and Nikias. On the other hand, I do not like Thoukydides, and have become accustomed to Thucydides, as well as Herodotus and even Pericles. Let me excuse myself in this inconsistency in Latinizing certain proper names, by pleading that the ones I have chosen do represent usages widely familiar outside classical studies. I trust readers will also excuse my choices.

Again with the nonspecialist in mind, I have contrived to remove from the text many distracting discussions and debates, and much rarefied bibliography, which might hinder the flow of the argument. This material I have comprised in a series of appendixes, which are, for the most part, bibliographic essays. I refer specialists to these appendixes to read of matters with which they will no doubt be familiar. Others too may find them interesting for the scholarly background, not to speak of arcana, they contain. Chapter One illustrates the kinds of changes I have made to the text. In its original version it appeared as "Thucydides and the Uses of the Past" in *Klio* 52 (1980), 191-218. In revising that chapter, I believe I have made it more taut, more readable, and somewhat more sophisticated in its formulations. (Here let me take the opportunity to thank the editors of *Klio* for permitting me

to reprint "Thucydides and the Uses of the Past" in its present altered version.)

In a word, the book in its present form should interest specialist and nonspecialist alike, and be readable to the latter with the aid only of an English translation of Herodotus and Thucydides. For the former, I prefer George Rawlinson, and for the latter, Richard Crawley, a predilection which goes back to my undergraduate days.

Finally, I wish to record a particular debt of gratitude to the following individuals: Gerald Ginsburg and Brayton Polka (York University), James Day and Robert Pounder (Vassar College), Eric Havelock (Yale University), and Margaret Visser (University of Toronto), who each read some part of the manuscript and offered advice, criticism, or, just as important, encouragement; Joanna Hitchcock, Executive Editor of Princeton University Press, who has more than upheld the press's reputation for concerned and kindly dealings with its prospective authors and who was acute enough to perceive at once where revisions were needed, and innovative enough to encourage a rather hesitant author to make the radical changes in format required to produce the present volume; Daniel Tompkins of Temple University, at the outset one of Princeton's anonymous referees, but ultimately a valued counsellor, whose close scrutiny of argument, explications of texts of the two historians, bibliography, and even style represent an act of unprecedented generosity and whose meticulous criticisms have saved me from many an error or an awkward formulation, helping to render the final version more cogent and more readable (as he will be the first to perceive, in at least two areas where we disagree I have remained stubborn in my views, though I hope not perversely so); Juan Maiguashca of York University, something of a rarity today, a polymath, certainly in the area of historical methodology, but perhaps too in philosophy, who was kind enough to read the entire revised manuscript, giving me confidence where I required it, and assisting with the more philosophic aspects of the work, and some of whose perceptions

have been profound enough to require a period of reflection and will thus emerge mainly in further studies of the two historians that I am contemplating.

*Toronto, Canada*
*October, 1980*

# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| *AHR* | *The American Historical Review* |
| *AJP* | *American Journal of Philology* |
| *Annales* | *Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations* |
| *BICS* | *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* |
| *CJ* | *The Classical Journal* |
| *C&M* | *Classica et Mediaevalia* |
| *CP* | *Classical Philology* |
| *CQ* | *The Classical Quarterly* |
| *CW* | *The Classical World* |
| *DK* | Diels, H. and Kranz, W. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (sixth edition), Vol. 2, Berlin, 1952. |
| *FGrH* | Jacoby, F. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin and Leiden, 1923-1958. |
| *G&R* | *Greece and Rome* |
| *HSCP* | *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* |
| *JHS* | *Journal of Hellenic Studies* |
| *LSJ* | Liddell, Scott, Jones, McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (ninth edition), Oxford, 1940. |
| *NLR* | *New Left Review* |
| *QS* | *Quaderni di Storia* |
| *RE* | *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, edited by G. Wissowa *et al.*, Stuttgart, 1884- |
| *REG* | *Revue des études grecques* |
| *RM* | *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* |
| *SCI* | *Scripta Classica Israelica* |
| *TAPA* | *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* |
| *UCPCP* | *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *WS* | *Wiener Studien* |
| *YCS* | *Yale Classical Studies* |
| *ZDMG* | *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* |

# Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides

# INTRODUCTION

EVERY WORK must have a context, and the present study is no exception. It was begun and completed in a period when interest in the discipline of history and concern about its methodological foundations have never been more intense. Consider, for example, the following titles: *The Territory of the Historian; Faire de l'histoire: nouvelles approches*; and *Main Trends in History*. The authors are, respectively, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Jacques Le Goff, and Geoffrey Barraclough, all eminent practicing historians.[1] The significance of their works is that they reveal historians, on the basis of their own practice, submitting the discipline to critical examination.

It is reasonable, then, that as contemporary historians become more conscious of their methodology, one might, in the same spirit, begin to consider the analogous intellectual and critical tools of the first historians. *Past and Process in Herodotus and Thucydides* is a contribution to such a project. This is not to deny that others have submitted the procedures of the two historians to examination. Quite the contrary. One need only consult Arnaldo Momigliano's recent article, "Greek Historiography," to be made aware of the extent of that examination.[2] Studies of what the nineteenth century termed "method" are manifold. Moreover, in the past score of years structural studies of the two historians have been extremely popular, and just as fruitful.[3] In other words, in-

[1] Le Roy Ladurie, trans. B. and S. Reynolds (Hassocks, 1979); ed. Le Goff and P. Nora (Paris, 1974); Barraclough (New York, 1978). See too G. G. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography* (Middletown, Conn., 1975). The list could be extended to include many other titles, some of them in Spanish, the works of Latin-American historians.

[2] *History and Theory* 17 (1978), 1-28. See especially his bibliographic appendixes, pp. 23-28.

[3] *Inter alia*, see H. R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland, 1966).

terest in the concepts and methodology of Herodotus and Thucydides is not new, a fact to which a truly awesome list of titles attests. Such a list notwithstanding, interest has perhaps never been greater than at the present moment. New studies abound, many of them *au courant*, and all, surely, reflective of the more general interest in historiography.[4]

Within this context the present study makes two claims to uniqueness. To begin, it is the first systematic attempt to compare Herodotus and Thucydides as contemporaries, that is, as pre-Socratic thinkers who employed rather similar concepts and intellectual tools.[5] Curious as it may seem to those outside the field, there is in fact no work that considers the two together, as historians working within the same theoretical framework or space: none, that is, that seeks, on that basis, to abstract their methodological principles. *Past and Process* is also unique in a second way: it brings to the study of the ancient historians widely accepted and recognizable concepts derived from contemporary historiography and the methodology of the social sciences.

Another aspect of the present study also deserves comment. It began as a reading, in the original Greek and in their

[4] In Italy one thinks especially of L. Canfora and the many articles he has published in recent years, following his book, *Totalità e selezione nella storiografia classica* (Bari, 1972). Especially interesting are the contributions of Canfora and others to the journal *Quaderni di Storia*. Belgium too has more than its share of new studies, the work of scholars like H. Verdin, "L'importance des recherches sur la méthode critique des historiens grecs et latins," *Studia Hellenistica* 16 (1968), 289-308; and G. Schepens, "Some Aspects of Source Theory in Greek Historiography," *Ancient Society* 6 (1975), 257-274 and "L'Idéal de l'information complète chez les historiens grecs," *REG* 88 (1975), 81-93.

[5] Pre-Socratic is not meant to imply a chronological but an intellectual distinction. For clearly Herodotus (c. 484-425) and Thucydides (c. 460-396) were contemporaries of Socrates (470-399). But so were Anaxagoras and Protagoras, whose mode of thought was also pre-Socratic. (Pre-Platonic, if the term were widely used, would probably better describe all the above. But that opens up the "Socratic Question," a problem better avoided here.)

entirety, of the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides.[6] Such a reading inspired in turn a dialogue between past and present, as the author was led to consider writings in diverse fields beyond traditional classical scholarship. In the early stages of the work François Châtelet's essay on historical time and the evolution of the historian's function had real heuristic value, suggesting possible lines of approach. Particularly fruitful was his proposition: "A concrete history of historiography should unite the history of the various types of 'historical narrative' with the history of theories of time and with that of critical techniques."[7] Critical techniques, or more broadly, methodological procedures, the peculiarities of ancient narrative, and the classical Greek concept of time, all are the concern of this study, for it attempts to demonstrate that historical narrative, time, and methodology are indeed closely connected. In so doing, it considers and compares the following: in Part I, The Past: Enquiry and Interpretation, logic, reasoning, and use of evidence; reconstruction and interpretation, as used by the two historians in their approach to the past, as well as the generalizations, even theories, on which the interpretations are based; and finally their attitude to myth and level of rationalism: in Part II, The

[6] Though a reading, this is not a structural study of the kind advocated by Roland Barthes in "Historical Discourse," English translation in *Structuralism: a Reader*, ed. M. Lane, trans. P. Wexler (London, 1970), pp. 145-155. For the latter approach, see M. Rosellini and S. Saïd, "Usages de femmes et autres *nomoi* chez les 'sauvages' d'Hérodote. Essai de lecture structurale," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 8 (1978), 949-1005. See too J. Vansina, "Once Upon a Time: Oral Traditions as History in Africa" in *Historical Studies Today*, ed. F. Gilbert and S. R. Graubard (New York, 1971), pp. 413-439. In respect of oral tradition, Vansina discusses three structures of discourse and three levels of meaning: literal, intended, and symbolic. The present study is concerned with Vansina's first two levels of meaning. For the most part, it seeks out the conscious, reflective, or at least deliberate procedures of the historian. What is meant here by a reading will become clear in Chapter Six, in the section entitled Problematic.

[7] "Le temps de l'histoire et l'évolution de la fonction historienne," *Journal de psychologie* 53 (1956), 356-357.

Process of History, historical explanation, process, and the dynamic of process; event, cause, chronology, and time in relation to process; and the use of analogy and extent of conceptual and cognitive development.

Part I concerns, for the most part, what the nineteenth century called "the critical method." A prominent handbook, written during that era to explain this method and entitled *Introduction to the Study of History*, distinguished the search for documents, or heuristic, from analytical operations, or external and internal criticism, and these in turn from the most difficult undertaking, synthetic operations. The three procedures were seen as separate from one another.[8] In the present study the terms heuristic, source criticism, and synthesis, and the procedures implied by them, have been rejected in the light of twentieth-century practice and writings on that practice. The terms have been replaced by the logic of enquiry, meaning the techniques of authentication and verification employed by Herodotus and Thucydides. From beginning to end, however, it has been emphasized that these purely investigative procedures cannot be separated from the historians' interpretative procedures. The present study has thus avoided the rather mechanistic distinction made in the nineteenth century between analytical and synthetic operations.[9] Part I then is concerned with both

[8] C. V. Langlois and C. Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*, trans. G. G. Berry (London, 1898).

[9] For an early criticism, made in 1911, see H. Berr, *La synthèse en histoire. Son rapport avec la synthèse générale*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1953). In discussing the notion of hypothesis, Berr points out, p. 40: "En définitive, le problème capital, dans la synthèse historique, c'est de trouver le biais grâce auquel les généralisations hypothétiques pourront être triées, confirmées, coordonnées, les lois secondaires consolidées, groupées, rattachées aux principes d'explication plus généraux." See, too, T. C. Cochran, "The Social Sciences and the Problem of Historical Synthesis" in *The Varieties of History: From Voltaire to the Present*, ed. F. Stern, rev. ed. (New York, 1972), pp. 348-359, and Iggers, *New Directions*, p. 11, who states:

> The historians of the twentieth century have remained committed to the critical use of evidence upon which the nineteenth-century "scien-

interpretation and synthesis in relation to investigation or the logic of enquiry. Hence, here one might very fruitfully employ the philosophical term "moment," and speak of the investigative moment and the interpretative moment. This at least has the virtue of suggesting integrated intellectual activity.

Part II moves directly into the twentieth century and its concerns, for its subject is historical explanation. What it seeks to discover is the nature of the generalizations or, in some instances, the concepts used by Herodotus and Thucydides to explain events. This study has disclosed in both histories a series of generalizations and concepts that have a logic and a coherence, and that thus form a configuration. This configuration I have designated a process. Process represents the motion of those societies that not only aspire to, but actually do, control others. In other words, process involves *arche*, empire, or better, hegemony, its achievement, consolidation, or unity and growth, maintenance, and finally crisis, or breakdown and decline. Furthermore, because process has a temporal dimension, it affects the attitude of the two historians to the event, to chronology, and to cause.

Cause, event, and chronology—such categories are fundamental to the historian's craft. But so is time itself.[10] In

tific" school insisted; yet at the same time they have recognized that the documents do not tell their own story and that the historians of the nineteenth century in letting the past speak for itself were generally insufficiently aware of the presuppositions which enabled them to establish threads of historical development. The result has been a strengthened recognition of the role which theories, hypotheses, and conceptualizations occupy in historical analysis and narration.

As to even earlier procedures, see, for the eighteenth century, E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. F. Koelln and J. Pettegrove (Princeton, 1951), Chapter 5, "The Conquest of the Historical World." Especially interesting are Cassirer's remarks about the differing emphases of Voltaire and Bayle. Compare A. D. Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian" in *Studies in Historiography* (New York, 1966), pp. 1-39. Momigliano also discusses the nineteenth century.

[10] See F. Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences," English translation in *Economy and Society in Early Modern Europe. Essays from Annales*, ed.

turn, time involves change, for history is diachronic as well as synchronic, and the historian must take account of the dynamic as well as the static. In the words of Marc Bloch, "it is change which the historian is seeking to grasp."[11] Bloch also believed that continuity and discontinuity are at the very center of the historian's concerns. In identifying process in the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, this work has attempted to isolate their particular way of perceiving change or the dynamic, and with it their mode of explanation. They are, it will be seen, very much concerned with continuity and discontinuity.

Explanation, time, and change are abiding concerns of the historian, whether ancient or modern. But what about the particular set of problems or questions that historians must address in the fifth century B.C., and the intellectual tools available to them to solve such problems or answer such questions? These tools include views of human nature and human behavior, ideas about chance and inevitability, and theories about civilization's past.[12] Like the concept of time, the notion of the event, and concern for chronology, ideas and theories of this kind were specific to the fifth century, part of a theoretical framework. What constituted that framework, paradigm, or, as I ultimately term it, problematic? Given a distinct intellectual terrain, what kinds of problems was it possible to pose? What concepts did the historians have ready to hand? Upon what bodies of knowledge could they draw? Conversely, what problems or ideas could not emerge? If one works with the notion of paradigm or theoretical framework, can one discern any fundamental difference in the procedures or concepts used by Herodotus and

P. Burke (New York, 1972), p. 35: "In fact the historian can never get away from historical time: time adheres to his thought like earth to the gardener's spade."

[11] M. Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, trans. P. Putnam (New York, 1953), p. 46.

[12] See Berr, *La synthèse*, pt. 2: he discusses causality, contingency, and necessity.

Thucydides, a break or rupture between them, and so a reorganization of basic principles? Or do the two historians work on the same intellectual terrain? These are the questions to which this study ultimately led and that Part II attempts to answer.

In the end, however, it proved impossible to understand the nature of paradigm, to discuss cognitive development, or even to define notions like rationalism and rationality, without turning to the works of scholars in fields such as anthropology or philosophy of science. In particular, the question of literacy and its effect on conceptual and cognitive development has taken on significance. In many ways writing, or better the communicative mode, holds a key to the differences others have perceived between the two historians. Under close examination many of these differences turn out to be superficial. Here the work of Eric Havelock has been most helpful.[13]

In studying works in other fields, one is struck by the paucity of references to the ancient historians and their methodology. Consider, for example, Marx Wartofsky's *Conceptual Foundations of Scientific Thought*, an introduction to the philosophy of science.[14] In a chapter on the Greeks entitled "From Common Sense to Science," Wartofsky discusses rationalism, rational criticism, and theoretical frameworks. In the end he argues that there is a continuity between Greek and contemporary science in the role of "dominating concepts": "Contemporary science still operates within the conceptual frameworks of matter and form, of structure and function, of laws of change and development. Like the

[13] In particular, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963). See too J. R. Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 150: "Writing puts a distance between a man and his verbal acts. He can now examine what he says in a more objective manner. He can stand aside, comment upon, even correct his own creation—his style as well as his syntax. Hence the attitude to writing differs from that towards oral performance."

[14] Subtitled *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (New York, 1968).

Greeks, we postulate theoretical entities to explain the phenomena, and like theirs, our science has a deep sense of the underlying mathematical structures of the physical world."[15] Wartofsky's conclusions are based on a study of Greek philosophers from the pre-Socratics to Aristotle. He makes no reference to Herodotus or Thucydides. And yet the strength of his argument would be enhanced by a knowledge of the procedures of the two historians, whose works allow one unprecedented insights into early rationality, criticism, conceptual formulations, and theoretical constructs. Rich as they are, they remain a source untapped. The absence of a work or works explicating their methodological principles and procedures, in effect, leaves their histories inaccessible to writers like Wartofsky. Thus is the sharp distinction between disciplines, characteristic of the modern era, imposed on the ancients: history remains a body of knowledge apart.[16] It is in no sense apparent that such distinctions were made in the ancient world. In fact, the historians are perhaps the single greatest source of applied pre-Socratic philosophy and of early rational thought. The present study, in viewing the historians together and seeking to abstract their methodological procedures, has the explicit aim of making those procedures accessible to scholars in other disciplines. Just as in recent years anthropologists have brought new life to the study of the Greeks,[17] so it is fitting that the Greek historians in turn open up new areas of reflection to anthropologists, as well as to other social scientists and to philosophers.

To return, in Herodotean fashion, to the beginning, to Part I, the following are some terms that have permitted a

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[16] Even within the discipline of classics itself the historians remain apart. In *Preface to Plato*, for example, Havelock makes but scant reference to Herodotus and Thucydides. Similarly, G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy. Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Cambridge, 1966), is quite cursory in his treatment of the historians.

[17] See especially S. C. Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London, 1978).

systematic approach to the two ancient historians. Synthesis, as used here, has much in common with the idea as it was employed by Berr and his followers. And while the concept of hypothesis would be anachronistic as applied to the method of Herodotus and Thucydides, the notion of generalization is not. Synthesis, then, represents the generalizations that each brought with him to his research and that, at times, in the course of his research and writing, underwent modification on the basis of the sources he discovered and his evaluation of them. Synthesis thus involves both investigative and interpretative procedures. By the former, the logic of enquiry, are meant not just techniques of authentication and verification but also the kind of argumentation, "critical reflection," and "internal criteria of truth"[18] employed by Herodotus and Thucydides in structuring their narrative. As for their interpretative procedures, this study has linked them to the historians' principles of selection. In fact, it analyzes very closely the details the historians selected for narration, convinced that the criteria implied in their choice hold one key to these procedures, a key, that is, to the generalizations, at times even theories—preconceptions of all kinds, informing their narrative and so producing a synthesis. Again these procedures represent different moments of integrated intellectual activity.

To return, in yet another sense, to the beginning, the subject of Part I is ancient history as the two historians reconstructed it. In Thucydides' case, the choice of a passage to analyze was not difficult. For he begins his work with an excursus, traditionally named the Archaeology (1.1-19), wherein he sets forth a history of civilization from its beginnings. Included in this brief excursus are a number of chapters dealing with Mycenaean civilization and the Greek expedition to Troy, based mainly on Homer's *Iliad*. As for

[18] The words are those of H. R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought*, p. 5. His very interesting note 11, pp. 5-6, concerning the terminology used by Herodotus in comparing variant accounts and in forming judgments suggests that the "whole complex of methods needs further investigation."

Herodotus, major portions of his *Histories* deal with the distant past. But the passages chosen for comparison with the Archaeology, all from Book 2, the Egyptian *Logos*, form a kind of unit. Here Herodotus not only reconstructs certain events at Troy, but, in addition, he uses Egyptian records to extend the time that preceded the Trojan War back more than ten thousand years to the beginnings of man's history.

In Part II, The Process of History, the parallel passages chosen for analysis are Brasidas' expedition against Thrace, Book 4.78-135 of Thucydides' *History*, and Dareios' expedition against Scythia, Book 4.83-142 of Herodotus' work. Both are examples of classic historical narrative, reconstructing as they do military exploits and problems. By "classic" I mean further that these passages are, at least on the surface, concerned with the event and with chronologically narrated historical action. The present study analyzes them with a view to discovering the historians' modes of explanation.

Finally, why does the work begin with Thucydides and proceed to Herodotus? While it is true that the two were contemporaries, Herodotus was the earlier historian and, according to one ancient tradition, read in the presence of his successor.[19] In the first instance, Thucydides represented a natural starting-point, being the subject of considerable previous research and writing on the part of the author. Ultimately, however, it came to seem not just natural, but correct, to begin with the later historian, whom posterity has judged the more "advanced," "sophisticated," or even "modern." In moving back to his predecessor, one became aware of what Thucydides chose to retain, what he discarded, and what he altered in subject matter, narrative techniques, and especially methodology. It remains to be seen if the general judgment of posterity as to his superiority to Herodotus is a correct one.

In sum, the procedures consciously adopted in this work are different from those of the linear approach, common in

[19] The *Suda* s.v. Thucydides, 413.

intellectual history. For the most part, studies of Greek historical thought proceed either from Homer or from scant fragments of early prose-writers like the geographer Hekataios. Such studies begin with the kind of implicit assumption about origins which Marc Bloch described, and criticized, thus: "In popular usage, an origin is a beginning which explains. Worse still, a beginning which is a complete explanation."[20] The present study will proceed in the opposite manner, moving from the later to the earlier historian, and making as few prejudgments as possible about origins and evolution. In considering the two historians together, it will attempt to set forth the features of historical methodology as they existed in the late fifth century.

[20] Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, p. 30.

# Part I

# The Past: Enquiry and Interpretation

Coin from Thurii showing Athena and a bull. British Museum
From C. Seltman, *Masterpieces of Greek Coinage* (Oxford, 1949), pp 66, 69.

# One Mankind's Progress to Civilization in Greece: Thucydides' Archaeology and the Problems of Power

The Archaeology, (Book 1.1-19), with which Thucydides begins his *History*, is in some ways an unexpected excursus. In his statement of methodology (1.20.1) Thucydides stresses his difficulty in finding trustworthy evidence for "ancient history" (τὰ παλαιά), since mankind is universally uncritical in the transmission of traditions (τὰς ἀκοάς), even as it is careless about the pursuit of truth in matters not obscured by the passage of time. His specific remarks about ancient history are, of course, an echo of his opening statement (1.1.3), where he poses for the first time the difficulties one encounters in recording the history of events preceding the Peloponnesian War, and *a fortiori* those events that lie in the even more distant past: the passage of time has obscured them. Having acknowledged his difficulties, Thucydides then embarks on a history of civilization from its veritable beginnings, fully aware of the paucity and unreliability of his sources. Surely he had something extremely important to communicate in attempting such a daring reconstruction.

Significant for the present study, the Archaeology allows one to see what is all too rare elsewhere in the *History*—the historian selecting data, submitting them to logical analysis, and ultimately reconstructing the events of a period far in the past to which he was not witness and about which he could have no firsthand evidence. The passage begs to be compared in its methodology with major portions of Herodotus' *Histories*, where the latter too delves into the distant and far distant past without the support of firsthand evidence. While no definitive comparison of the two historians has been undertaken, this aspect of the Archaeology has not

gone unnoticed. T. S. Brown's comments might be considered typical: "Herodotus was a pioneer in Homeric 'higher criticism,' the purpose of which was to rationalize the epic in order to make it acceptable workaday history. Each historian can then use the legendary materials to suit his own needs. Herodotus sacrificed the good name of Menelaus in order to combat the prevailing Greek view that the old Egyptians were brutal in their treatment of foreigners; Thucydides manipulates the epics to show that the Trojan War was not a really first class war—like the war Thucydides was describing."[1] "Manipulation" may be strong, but certainly "rationalization" is a word widely employed to describe both historians' use of epic poetry.[2] Curiously enough, if a full comparison were made, one might be forced to admit that Herodotus was more critical than his successor, since he not merely rationalized but actually challenged Homer's account of Helen's presence at Troy.[3]

In other ways too Thucydides appears to adopt a slightly different perspective from which to view tradition. Herodotus, for example, goes out of his way to stress that Poly-

[1] "The Greek Sense of Time in History as Suggested by their Accounts of Egypt," *Historia* 11 (1962), 262-263. See too H. Erbse, "Zur Geschichtsbetrachtung des Thukydides," *Antike und Abendland* 10 (1961), 19-34, for a comparison of some aspects of Thucydides' methodology in the Archaeology with that of Herodotus in Book 2.112-120. K. von Fritz, *Die Griechische Geschichtsschreibung* (Berlin, 1967), vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 575, notes that "hier ein unmittelbarer Vergleich mit den Vorgängern, vor allem mit Herodot, möglich ist."

[2] See, for example, F. Jacoby, *Atthis. The Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens* (Oxford, 1949), pp. 358-359, n. 26; A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. 1, corr. rpt. ed. (Oxford, 1950), p. 114; and L. Pearson, *The Local Historians of Attica*, rpt. ed. (Westport, 1972), p. 30.

[3] Her. 2.118-20. W. W. How and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 2 vols., corr. rpt. ed. (Oxford, 1928), 1:224, consider the skepticism of 120.3 "unlike Herodotus," but then term the whole chapter "an instance of Greek rationalizing criticism." Gomme, *Commentary*, p. 110, expressly notes Herodotus' "great scepticism about events of the 'mythical' period," though he believes his "scepticism is less of the epic tradition than of the reconstructions of it by his immediate predecessors."

krates of Samos was "the first of the Greeks of whom we have knowledge [τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν] to form the design of mastering the sea" (3.122.2). And while he acknowledges Minos' claim to priority, he draws a firm line between myth and history, by insisting that Polykrates was the first in human history.[4] Thucydides, on the other hand, gives Minos priority, thus rejecting the line drawn by Herodotus between human history and myth, for unlike Herodotus he is willing to accept the tradition about Minos' priority (1.4, ὧν ἀκοῇ ἴσμεν). And yet Thucydides certainly had no new factual evidence about Minos, but worked with the same traditions as his predecessor.

Interpretation is perhaps the key to an understanding of the different use to which Herodotus and Thucydides put the same evidence. Thucydides' interpretation of tradition differs from that of Herodotus in that it is based on a "preconceived theory," derived from the world around him and applied to

[4] In actual fact, the Greek states that Polykrates was the "first of the generation of men." (Rawlinson construes it "the first of mere human birth.") Compare Ph.-E. Legrand, *Hérodote: Introduction* (Paris, 1932), p. 39: "Les générations 'que l'on appelle humaines' s'opposent aux générations mythiques; les événements 'humaines' (ἐξ ἀνθρώπων), aux événements fabuleux." What in fact I am trying to capture is the spirit of the expression *le temps des hommes*, which, though it does not mention history, has come to mean human history, as opposed to myth, in a number of important French works. See, for example, J. de Romilly, *Histoire et raison* (Paris, 1956), p. 275, and P. Vidal-Naquet, "Temps des dieux et temps des hommes," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 157 (1960), 55-80. Vidal-Naquet's theme is the separation of human from mythic time. History and the historians are naturally important in this division and he expressly selects the above passage of Herodotus as a reference to "le temps des hommes," where human history "s'oppose ainsi à la mythologie" (p. 67). One of the seminal works on the subject is F. Châtelet's "Le temps de l'histoire et l'évolution de la fonction historienne," *Journal de psychologie* 53 (1956), 355-378. See too M. I. Finley, "Myth, Memory and History" in *The Use and Abuse of History* (New York, 1975), pp. 11-33 (also in *History and Theory* 4 [1965], 281-302). Finley interprets Her. 3.122.2 as expressing "historical, as distinct from mythical, times" (p. 18). We shall return in Chapter Two to this question of the beginnings of human history, as opposed to myth, in Herodotus' *Histories*.

the past for purposes of his own.[5] In a sense, John Finley alludes to this, when he states that "the formative ideas of the *History*" are first expressed here.[6] Even more explicit is the view that the purpose of Thucydides' Archaeology is "to state and develop his theory of history and thereby to justify his exclusive concern with the Peloponnesian War."[7] If, then, the Archaeology is not merely an example but a statement of Thucydides' theory of history, and this is its purpose, it is certainly germane to the question of synthesis, and more particularly to the broader generalizations that produce a synthesis, whether in the Archaeology or in the *History* as a whole. Before we turn to those generalizations, however, we shall first consider selection, the details Thucydides chose for narration, in order to establish precisely what he was attempting to communicate in this reconstruction of the past.[8]

It is scarcely novel to note that in chapter 2 Thucydides reaches back to the beginning of civilization, to man, if not "in a state of nature,"[9] at least in a nomadic stage of existence. He lists the indices of a civilized state to show all that is lacking in that early era. First and foremost is a settled way of life (βεβαίως οἰκουμένη), which inhibits migration and resists invasion. This kind of security rests in turn on commerce (ἐμπορίας), free communications, a surplus of resources (περιουσίαν χρημάτων), and the systematic cultivation of land. On the one hand, Thucydides implies, such a combination of indices results in the building of walls capable of resisting invaders, while at the same time, by inducing permanence, it inhibits individuals from migrating in search of basic necessities. Without a settled way of life, and

[5] De Romilly, *Histoire et raison*, pp. 261-262.

[6] *Thucydides* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), p. 87.

[7] A. Parry, "Thucydides' Historical Perspective," *YCS* 22 (1972), 51.

[8] As others have perceived, the Archaeology holds a key to the understanding of the rest of the *History*. Therefore, I have made an effort to present a full, though not exhaustive, analysis of it in the pages that follow on selection.

[9] Parry, "Thucydides' Historical Perspective," p. 53.

all it implies, however, man cannot advance beyond the nomadic to a higher stage of civilization, characterized by the strength (ἴσχυον) that comes from large cities and other forms of material resources (παρασκευῇ). Thucydides devotes a major portion of this chapter to a seeming paradox, explaining how the very poverty of Attika's soil led to her achieving a security of existence (βέβαιον ὄν) that invited not invaders but refugees, the basis of a populous city. At this point we shall not follow Thucydides as he leaps ahead to the Ionian migrations, but note for the first time the word αὐξηθῆναι (2.6), which admits of no single translation but implies prosperity, development of every kind, flourishing resources, and power. Such a peak of civilization is difficult to achieve.[10]

Having established his indices of civilization, Thucydides then proceeds to rearrange his concepts positively, so as to develop one of the high points of civilization, the Creto-Mycenaean era. He first notes that one result of the weakness described in chapter 2 was the lack of collective achievement before the Trojan War (3.1, οὐδὲν φαίνεται πρότερον κοινῇ ἐργασαμένη ἡ Ἑλλάς). For this statement he offers his own kind of proof, defining collective achievement (repeated at 3.4, ἀθρόοι ἔπραξαν) as an expedition, *strateia*, and stating that it was only made possible by the increased adherence to the sea that preceded it. Moving backward in time, he then develops his statement about seafaring by the

[10] The second chapter of the Archaeology has provoked considerable controversy. Gomme, *Commentary*, p. 94, points out the difficulties in 2.6 (as well as suggested emendations). See too G. V. Sumner, "A Note on Thucydides 1.2.6," *CP* 54 (1959), 116-119, H. W. Stubbs, "Thucydides 1.2.6," *CQ* 22 (1972), 74-77, and M.H.B. Marshall, "Urban Settlement in the Second Chapter of Thucydides," *CQ* 25 (1975), 26-40. I accept Stubbs' interpretation of this passage, *ibid.*, p. 76: "Τὰ ἄλλα are the precise respects in which, as he says, Mycenaean Attica did not 'increase,' though the μετοικίαι *might have been expected to make her do so.*" Thus "instead of becoming a panhellenic power like Oedipus' Thebes or Agamemnon's Mycenae, Attica could not support its surplus population, and had to export it to the colonies" (p. 77).