

Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus



Lisa Irene Hau

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Preface

The idea for this book began life long ago when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Aarhus and formed a reading group with two fellow-students to read the third book of Polybius' *Histories* in Greek. It has come a long way since then: through a Masters thesis on moral values in Polybius, a PhD thesis on the changeability of fortune as a moral *topos* in Greek historiography, and much teaching, thinking and writing, to the larger and more fundamental topic of Greek historiography as a moral-didactic genre. Along the way I have incurred many debts, and this is the place to acknowledge them.

Firstly, I must thank the man without whom none of this would have happened: my Greek teacher at Odense Katedralskole, Henrik Nisbeth, who showed me the beauty of Greek and the joy of studying Classics. Secondly, my surrogate family for seven years of studying at the University of Aarhus, the students of Classical Philology from 1995 to 2002, and especially the members of my Polybius reading group, Jesper Thomsen Lemke and Thomas Hemming Larsen. From those same years, I am grateful to my teachers Erik Ostenfeld, who hired me as editorial assistant and introduced me to the world of academic publishing, and Marianne Pade, who didn't laugh when I said I wanted to study for a PhD, and who supported my decision to do so abroad. I must also thank Mogens Herman Hansen, who, although he had never taught me, helped me make contact with a potential PhD supervisor in Britain and supported my application.

During my PhD years at Royal Holloway, University of London, I was magnificently supported on an academic and a personal level both by my supervisor, Lene Rubinstein, and by her husband, Jonathan Powell. My PhD examiners, Tim Cornell and Tim Rood, encouraged me to think I could take the topic further.

As for the present book itself, I am immensely grateful to those scholars and friends who read through the manuscript or parts of it and commented

on it at various stages: Emily Baragwanath, Alexander Meeus, Chris Pelling, Ian Ruffell, Catherine Steel and Kathryn Tempest. The result is infinitely better because of them, and any imperfections it contains are, of course, entirely my own responsibility. I also owe a debt of gratitude to colleagues at the University of Glasgow and elsewhere who have helped me clarify my thoughts on various aspects of the argument and suggested new ways of looking at it, especially Christopher Burden-Strevens, Art Eckstein, John Marincola, John Moles and Jan Stenger.

Finally, I want to end the list of acknowledgements as it began: with a man without whom the book would never have happened – my husband, Morten. Without his love, patience, equal sharing of parenting responsibilities, and more than equal sense of humour, I would not have been able to write a single chapter.

Introduction

τοῖς δ' ἱστορικοῖς διὰ πολλὰ ἀνάγκη τὸν πολιτικὸν ἄνδρα μετὰ σπουδῆς ἐντυγχάνειν, ὅτι καὶ ἄνευ τῶν λόγων τὸ ἔμπειρον εἶναι πράξεων καὶ εὐτυχιῶν καὶ δυστυχιῶν οὐ κατὰ λόγον μόνον, ἀλλὰ ἐνίοτε καὶ παρὰ λόγον ἀνδράσι τε καὶ πόλεσι συμβαινουσῶν σφόδρα ἀναγκαῖον πολιτικῶ ἀνδρὶ καὶ τὰ κοινὰ πράττειν προαιρουμένῳ. ὁ γὰρ πλεῖστα ἐτέροις συμβάντα ἐπιστάμενος ἄριστα οἷς αὐτὸς ἐγχείρει διαπράζεται καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐνότων ἀσφαλῶς, καὶ οὔτε εὖ πράττων παρὰ μέτρον ἐπαρθήσεται, δυσπραγίαν τε πᾶσαν οἴσει γενναίως διὰ τὸ μηδ' ἐν οἷς εὖ ἔπραττεν ἀεννόητος εἶναι τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ ἐναντίον μεταβολῆς.

But as for the historians, for many reasons the statesman must read them attentively, because, even apart from the speeches they contain, it is most essential that the statesman, the man who chooses to conduct public affairs, should be experienced in events and successes and failures, which happen not only in accordance with reasonable expectation, but also at times contrary to it, to both men and states. For it is the man with the widest knowledge of what has happened to others who will carry out his own undertakings in the best way and as safely as possible in the circumstances, and who will both avoid becoming unduly arrogant in his good fortune and bear every misfortune nobly because he remains aware even in his good fortune that his situation might well change to the opposite. (Dio Chrysostom 18.9; translation modified from Cohoon)

In this way Dio of Prusa, writing in the first century AD and nicknamed Chrysostom, 'golden-tongued', for his eloquence, encourages men of politics to read history. Dio explicitly intends the history-reading statesman to learn from the narratives of the past. More precisely, he assumes that the reader will become better at handling state affairs from reading about 'successes and failures' that have happened in the past to 'both men and states'. He also expects that reading history will teach the statesman to avoid arrogance in times of success and undignified behaviour in times of misfortune because the historical narratives will show him that such situations are often quickly reversed. Those are strikingly concrete results to

expect from reading a text. The idea that you can learn how to behave and how to think about your life from reading history also assumes a number of things which seem far from given to a modern reader of historiography; for instance, that human beings and their situations are sufficiently alike in the past and the present for the past to be instructive, and that it is actually practically possible to learn from the experiences of others.

The idea is commonplace in ancient literature. Wherever we look, we find historiographers referring to the didactic usefulness of their works and readers of historiography expecting to learn something from them. For instance, when Cicero writes to his brother Quintus advising him about how to be a good provincial governor and takes it upon himself to tell Quintus which of his *legati* he should trust the most, he singles out one named Tubero because he is a writer of history and so ‘could select from his own Annals many whom he would both like to and be able to imitate’ (*multos ex suis annalibus posse deligere quos velit et posit imitari*, Cic. *Q Fr.* I.I.3). In a more theoretical vein, Lucian, the second-century AD satirist and literary critic, spends an entire essay on *How to Write History* admonishing the would-be historiographer to write for the utility rather than the pleasure of his readers, implying that standards have slipped somewhat in this respect in recent years. The most famous expression of this idea of historiography as a didactic genre is no doubt Cicero’s designation of history as *magistra vitae*, the teacher of life.¹

The usefulness these consumers of historiography had in mind was partly practical and political: Dio Chrysostom says that a statesmen will manage affairs more ‘safely’ if he reads history, and Cicero wants Tubero to be of practical use to Quintus in his governorship. But it is also partly moral: Dio’s statesman will learn to avoid arrogance and to bear changes to his fortunes ‘nobly’, and Tubero can be relied upon, Cicero implies, to treat the provincials with respect and keep his hands off their property. For a reader like Plutarch, who has much to say about the proper way to write history in his essay *The Malice of Herodotus*, good historiography is characterised by providing appropriate and positive examples for emulation, rather than, say, by its analysis of historical causes and motives.

Such a view of historiography as a genre concerned with the moral edification of its readers has, in fact, been the norm for much of the genre’s

1 The famous epithet forms part of a rhetorical question, aimed more at glorifying the orator than history: *Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis, qua voce alia nisi oratoris immortalitati commendatur?* (‘And history, the witness of passing times, the light of truth, the life of remembrance, the teacher of life, the message-bearer of antiquity – whose voice if not an orator’s could entrust her to immortality?’, Cic. *Orat.* 2.36). It became the watchword of history writing in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (see Landfester 1972, Spiegel 2002 and Findlen 2002).

history. In the Middle Ages, Gregory of Tours filled his *History of the Franks* with examples of good and bad behaviour as a corrective for his readers in the violent times of Merovingian France, and the Venerable Bede composed a didactic history which showed how the sinful Britons had been overcome by the pious Anglo-Saxons.² In the Renaissance, Machiavelli fused moral and political edification in a manner similar to that of the ancient historiographers when he assumed in his preface to *The History of Florence* that the purpose of historiography is to ‘delight and teach’ and be ‘useful to citizens who govern republics’.³ During the same years, Guicciardini began his *History of Italy* with a preface about the usefulness of politico-moral *exempla* which closely imitates ancient models:

From a knowledge of such occurrences, so varied and so grave, everyone may derive many precedents salutary both for himself and for the public weal. Thus numerous examples will make it plainly evident how mutable are human affairs, not unlike a sea whipped by winds; and how pernicious, almost always to themselves but always to the people, are those ill-advised measure of rulers who act solely in terms of what is in front of their eyes; either foolish errors or shortsighted greed. (Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, prologue)⁴

Even in the Enlightenment, which is often considered the seedbed of the modern discipline of history, some of the greatest works of historiography were written with the didactic aim of producing useful models for behavior, moral and political.⁵

None of these historiographers, however – ancient, medieval, Renaissance or Enlightenment – conceived of their works as in any sense ‘untrue’. They all believed that they were uncovering the truth about the past and serving

2 Spiegel (2002), Hanning (1966: 44–62), Burrow (2009: 197–226).

3 ‘These two causes (with all respect to them) appear to me wholly unworthy of great men, because if anything in history delights or teaches, it is what is presented in full detail. If any reading is useful to citizens who govern republics, it is that which shows the causes of the hatreds and factional struggles within the city, in order that such citizens having grown wise through the sufferings of others, can keep themselves united’ (Machiavelli 1989: 1031; translation by A. Gilbert).

4 On the moral didacticism of Renaissance historiography see also Landfester (1972), Hampton (1990), Koselleck (2004) and Burke (2011).

5 See e.g. the preface to Voltaire’s *History of Charles XII*, which explicitly frames the work as a guide to rulers (1957: 55). His essay ‘Nouvelles Considérations sur l’Histoire’ is a satiric attack on ‘useless’ antiquarian historiography and concludes with stating that ancient history may be morally useful, but only a ‘political and philosophical’ history of recent times which investigates the ‘basic vice and dominant virtue of a nation’ can be practically useful (1957: 46–9). For a discussion of Voltaire as a historian concerned partly with moral didacticism (although she does not use this phrase) of a neo-Classical kind see O’Brien (1997: 21–55). For a good overview of Enlightenment historiography, with a useful bibliography, see Wright (2002).

a didactic purpose at the same time.⁶ This began to change only with the rise of historicism in the late eighteenth century. Historians now began to stress the uniqueness of the events and situations they were describing and, by extension, their uselessness as examples and models for the future.⁷ Didactic historiography was further discredited by the spread of positivism from the sciences to the increasingly professionalised discipline of history in the nineteenth century, when historians began not only to think of their task as conducting ‘scientific’ research and presenting its results in the clearest, least prejudiced, least adorned and least moralising way possible, but also to insist that this was the only way to produce a truthful account of the past. The most famous formulation of this, which came to be seen as a prescription for history writing, is Leopold von Ranke’s falsely modest ‘To history has been given the function of judging the past, of instructing men for the profit of future years. The present attempt does not aspire to such a lofty undertaking. It merely wants to show how, essentially, things happened (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*).’⁸ This ideal of historical ‘objectivity’ spread like wildfire from Germany to the rest of Europe and America and came to hold sway over the discipline of history for almost 150 years.⁹ Under the influence of this scientificising of history several generations of readers and writers of history have now grown up to consider it the goal of historiography to present things ‘as they really happened’ and ‘let the facts speak for themselves’ with no didactic agenda. In Classics, this has made scholars place Thucydides (and, to a lesser extent, Polybius) on a pedestal unreachable by any other ancient historiographers. It has also turned ‘moralising’ into a dirty word used only of historians whose works have been perceived to be substandard, such as Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus,

6 See e.g. Polyb. 1.14.6–8 and Machiavelli’s defence of his truthfulness in his dedication of *The History of Florence* to Pope Clement VII (1989: 1029–30).

7 The foundational work is Herder, ‘Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte’ (2002 [1774]), but it was only turned into an ‘ism’ in retrospect; see Meinecke (1972 [1959]: 1v–lvi). Koselleck (2004 [1967]) offers a now classic analysis of the move away from the idea of history as teacher, arguing that it was replaced with ‘the discovery of the uniqueness of historical processes and the possibility of progress’ (p. 36) brought on by the French Revolution.

8 Von Ranke (1973), preface to the 1824 edition of *Histories of the Latin and Germanic Nations 1494–1535*. For the translation of *eigentlich* as ‘essentially’ see Iggers’ ‘Introduction’ to von Ranke (1973: xix–xx). For the adoption of a misunderstood version of the Rankean ideal in Britain and America see Iggers’ ‘Introduction’ and Novick (1988: 24–31).

9 For its British incarnation see the inaugural lecture of J. B. Bury (1903) in Bury (1930), e.g. ‘this view, which ascribed to [history] at best the function of teaching statesmen by analogy, at worst the duty of moral edification, prevailed generally till the last century’ (pp. 8–9) and ‘Girded with new strength [history] has definitely come out from among her old associates, moral philosophy and rhetoric; she has come out into a place of liberty; and has begun to enter into closer relations with the sciences which deal objectively with the facts of the universe’ (p. 11). For a lucid account of how the idea of objectivity spread in the USA, see Novick (1988: 1–108).

or of a particular branch of Hellenistic historiography originating with the influence of the rhetorician Isocrates over his historiographer pupils Theopompus and Ephorus.¹⁰

A change has happened in the discipline of history over the last few decades. The possibility of complete objectivity has been questioned since the 1930s, but the rise of postmodernism in the 1970s gave the questioning increased seriousness and sophistication. Today, after four decades of postmodern philosophy of history, most writers of history accept that such an ideal is impossible to reach, but argue that it should still be aimed for.¹¹ Some even accept Hayden White's argument that the chaotic events of real life only become historical narrative through a process of invention and emplotment, and that the historian needs to be explicit about his or her narrativisation of events.¹² Classicists have been a lot happier to accept this approach to historiography than have historians, and a wave of scholarship using sophisticated narratological tools to analyse works of ancient historiography has appeared.¹³ So far, however, none has faced the issue of the pervasive moralising of the ancient historiographers head on.

This needs to change. If we are going to understand ancient historiography, as a literary genre and as a collection of invaluable historical sources, we need to begin to take its claims to moral-didactic value seriously. Taking my cue from Hayden White's provocative statement that historical narratives are 'verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much *invented as found*' (1978: 82, his emphasis) and his insistence that narrative shape is given to the past only through a process of emplotment necessarily driven

10 For Xenophon as moralising and therefore inferior see Westlake (1966–7) and Grayson (1975); for Diodorus see e.g. Drews (1962), Hornblower (1981) and Stylianou (1998). For the moralising, rhetorical and inferior nature of Hellenistic historiography generally see e.g. Usher (1969), Walbank (1990), Meister (1990: esp. 80–1), Luce (1997: 108), Gehrke (2001: 299). Even Pownall (2004), whose study is dedicated to uncovering 'the moral use of history in fourth-century prose', considers such moralising suspect, presenting her project as 'an examination of the tendency of certain Greek historians of the fourth century B.C. to sacrifice accuracy, relevance, and impartiality to the presentation of moral exempla' (p. v). For all of ancient historiography blemished by moralising see Grant (1995).

11 The argument between the postmodernists and those who believe in more or less radical versions of historical objectivity is still ongoing and bitter. Classic works are Carr (2001 [1961]) and Elton (1967) (both before the postmodern turn), White (1973, 1978, 1987) and Evans (1997, 2014). Some more recent contributions: Jenkins (2003, 2009), Zagorin (2009 [2000]), Coleman (2009 [2002]), Ankersmit (2012).

12 White (1973, 1978, 1980, 1987). An acceptance of this premise has led some twenty-first-century historians to experiment with a deliberate mixture of traditional historical narrative and creative writing; see the five special issues of *Rethinking History* (2010–14).

13 E.g. on Herodotus: Dewald (1987), Marincola (1987) and Baragwanath (2008); on Thucydides: Hornblower (1994) and Rood (1998); on Xenophon: Gray (1989, 2007); on Polybius: Miltisios (2013); on Diodorus: Hau (forthcoming). See also more generally de Jong et al. (2004), de Jong and Nunlist (2007).

by a ‘moralising impulse’,¹⁴ I argue that the moral-didactic agenda of the ancient works of history does not diminish their worth as history any more than the worth of twentieth-century works of history is impaired by their various agendas and emplotments – Marxist, feminist, *longue durée* or otherwise. At least most of the ancient historiographers are explicit about their moral agenda. Once we have studied the moral-didactic practice of the ancient historiographers in detail, in the Conclusion we shall turn to considering whether there may even be lessons that twenty-first-century writers of history could take from it.

CHOICE OF MATERIAL

This study discusses the *Histories* of Herodotus, the *History* of Thucydides, the *Hellenica* of Xenophon, the *Histories* of Polybius, the *Bibliothèque Historique* of Diodorus Siculus, and a selection of fragmentary works of history from the Classical and Hellenistic period. The reasoning behind this choice of material is as follows: Herodotus and Thucydides are essential for any discussion of a Greek historiographical tradition. Polybius and Diodorus are the only two reasonably well-preserved historiographies from the Hellenistic period, before the Greek and Roman traditions become irrevocably entangled in Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The choice to include Xenophon’s *Hellenica*, but not his *Anabasis* (apart from a few comparative remarks at the end of Chapter 6), rests on their belonging to different subgenres (by modern definition) of historiography: the *Anabasis* follows a single group of people through their travels and experiences and is (primarily) focalised through a single participant, which makes it a very different reading experience from the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius and Diodorus, and indeed from Xenophon’s *Hellenica*, all of which shift their focus and focalisation from people to people and from one political leader or faction to another as they narrate their stories of international war and politics. Similar considerations have guided my choice of what fragmentary historiographies to include: the Alexander historians, who continued the tradition of the *Anabasis*, have been left out of the investigation, and so have works of local history and monographs on single wars. In practice, this means that the focus of this study, after Herodotus and Thucydides, remains on what has recently been termed ‘continuous history’, namely international history with a Greek (or Greek

¹⁴ For the theory of emplotment see White (1973, 1978); for the ‘moralising impulse’ see White (1980). Throughout this study I use the word ‘emplotment’ in the weak sense of ‘endowing historical events with a plot’, as an almost-synonym of ‘narrativisation’, without committing to White’s argument that there are only four types of plot in works of historiography, i.e. comedy, tragedy, satire and farce.

Sicilian) focus which picks up where a predecessor has left off and expects to be picked up and continued in its turn, and to a certain degree on ‘universal history’, that is, world history.¹⁵ The investigation ends at Diodorus Siculus because he stands on the threshold between the Greek and Roman historiographical traditions, which then start to conflate.

It is perhaps also necessary to explain the persistent use throughout this study of the word ‘historiographer’ instead of ‘historian’ to refer to the ancient authors that are our subjects of investigation. The intention is not to denigrate the ancient works of history or to deny that their authors did historical research, but to emphasise that this is a study of the literary representations of the results of that research. The moral didacticism is, after all, a part neither of the historical events that form the topic of the ancient historiographers’ research nor of that research itself (although a tendency to think about historical questions in moralistic terms may affect the sorts of questions the historian asks of his or her material), but of the literary form in which it was presented, and much of this study is devoted to analysing how it manifests itself by means of literary techniques. The choice of ‘historiographers’ over ‘historians’ also helps to avoid confusion with modern historians working on the ancient past, who are also commonly termed ‘ancient historians’. Finally, it neatly sidesteps the question of whether one can legitimately call a ‘compiler’ like Diodorus Siculus a historian; a historiographer he definitely was.

MORAL DIDACTICISM AND TECHNIQUES OF MORALISING

This book examines the earliest works of European historiography from the point of view of moral didacticism. In no way does it wish to deny that an important purpose of these works was to explain what had happened in the past; rather, it argues that the two purposes, moral didacticism and historical explanation, are not mutually exclusive.

Throughout this book, moral didacticism is to be understood in a broad sense, as a strategy employed by an author to teach the reader something about the ethical implications of various human actions and behaviours.

¹⁵ This is not to imply that these are terms of fixed genres; they are simply useful short-hands for modern-day scholars to use when thinking about the traditions in which the ancient historiographers saw themselves, and what predecessors they imitated. For ‘continuous histories’ see Tuplin (2011). These works were often titled *Hellenica*, sometimes (in the case of Duris of Samos and perhaps Hieronymus of Cardia) *Macedonica* or *Sicelica*. The genre of *Sicelica* was regarded by its authors not as local history, but as a parallel to *Hellenica* (cf. Jacoby 1955: 480–1, 535–6, and Walbank 1989–90: 44); the same was certainly true of *Macedonica*. For the fluid concept of ‘universal history’ see Alonso-Núñez (1990), Liddel and Fear (2010) and Marincola (2011).

Such strategies can be action-directing, that is, aiming to influence a reader's actions or behaviour, or thought-directing, that is, aiming to influence the way a reader thinks about the world and the way of behaving in it. Often it is both. Cognitive linguistics has now confirmed what Classicists have always known, that a reader's understanding of a text is established on a number of different levels, from the choice and position of individual words and syntactical constructions to the structure and phrasing of narrative episodes.¹⁶ This makes it imperative to study moral didacticism not just as a phenomenon that happens in the explicit representation of historical characters as *exempla* (Latin) or *paradeigmata* (Greek), examples for emulation or avoidance, but as a large number of different strategies employed by authors at every level of the text with different degrees of explicitness. Throughout this book, the term 'moral didacticism' will be used to cover the overall purpose and practice of teaching something of moral significance, while the term 'moralising' will be reserved for the way in which the moral didacticism is pursued.

As the Dio Chrysostom passage with which we began illustrates, moral didacticism was intimately bound up with political didacticism in ancient thought. Political views and moral views necessarily go hand in hand for any person in any age, but this was perhaps even more true in antiquity: if anyone had asked Plato whether he was writing political philosophy or ethics, he would have been shocked that they could think of dividing the two. The close relationship between politics and ethics is also demonstrated by Aristotle's confident statement in his introduction to the *Nicomachean Ethics* that politics is a science concerned with morality and justice (τὰ δὲ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια, περὶ ὧν ἡ πολιτικὴ σκοπεῖται: *Eth. Nic.* 1094a18). It seems clear that neither the writers nor the readers of historiography generally distinguished between political philosophy and ethics. In the chapters that follow we shall sometimes try to make the distinction in order to understand the thought behind the moralising fully, but equally often we shall accept that they are two sides of the same coin and resist an artificial separation.

It will be useful to set out a basic typology of moralising techniques as a starting point for analysing and discussing the moral-didactic strategies of a given text. By doing this I do not mean to suggest that moralising is carried out in a schematic way by the Classical and Hellenistic historiographers, or that all instances of moralising will fit neatly into one type; the terminology is simply a baseline, which provides a useful starting point for examining the variations of moralising displayed across a range of material and for comparing different approaches.

¹⁶ See e.g. Fludernik (1993, 2003), Herman (2002, 2003) and Dancygier (2011).

Firstly, moralising takes place on a spectrum from more to less explicit and can be prescriptive or descriptive. Explicitly prescriptive moralising which sets up specific rules, such as ‘this example teaches us never to act arrogantly in good fortune’, is found at one end of the spectrum. Next to it is found equally explicit descriptive moralising, which is just as clear about the moral lesson it is trying to teach, but lets the reader draw his own conclusion about how to apply it in his own life, such as ‘thus his wicked ways led to a fitting death’. Further down the spectrum are found types of moralising that are a lot less explicit about their lessons. Few would dispute, for instance, that the story of Solon and Croesus in Herodotus book 1 teaches some kind of moral lesson, but it is difficult to draw a clear message about how to behave from it. Rather, the reader is supposed to take away a general lesson about happiness, arrogance, the ephemeral nature of wealth and power, and the ultimate powerlessness of human beings. This type of moralising is implicit, descriptive and thought-directing – exploratory, we could say, rather than expository¹⁷ – and a large part of the present book will be concerned with analysing how exactly such passages impact on a reader. In practice, only a fraction of the moralising found in Greek historiography is explicit and an even smaller portion is prescriptive.

For that reason, a more useful way to define moralising techniques in our material is to distinguish between **moralising that takes place in pauses in the narrative** (which is most often explicit) and **moralising that takes place in the course of the narrative of events** itself (which is most often implicit). Here it is necessary first to define ‘narrative of events’. It is now commonplace to distinguish between a text’s story and its discourse, that is, between the events narrated and the narration.¹⁸ This distinction works well for both fictional and historical narratives. Thus, we can talk of Thucydides’ ‘story’ of the fall of Plataea without implying that any part of that story is fictitious; it is simply a way of referring to the events that according to Thucydides took place during and leading up to Plataea’s fall. However, in historiography much more than in (most) fiction, there is a third element, namely the running commentary provided by the historian-narrator. This commentary is technically part of the discourse and takes place in narrative pauses, that is, when the narrator pauses the story in order to provide analysis, evaluation, background information or the

17 The terms ‘expository’ and ‘exploratory’ moralising have been used by Pelling (1995) in a study which explores Plutarch’s moralising spectrum and stresses the blurred line between descriptive and prescriptive (or ‘protreptic’) moralising.

18 This distinction is formalist in origin and is the basic tool of narratology. ‘Story’ and ‘discourse’ are also called ‘fabula’ and ‘sjuzet’. De Jong and her followers operate with a tripartite structure of ‘fabula’, ‘story’ and ‘discourse/text’.

like.¹⁹ Because of the frequency of such pauses in ancient historiography and their frequent use for purposes of moral didacticism, this study will regularly make use of the terms ‘narrative of events’ and ‘narrative pauses’ to distinguish these two parts of the discourse.

Most explicit moralising, then, takes place in narrative pauses. It is useful to distinguish between moralising digressions and guiding moralising. **Moralising digressions** come in many different styles, but common to most of them is that they are connected with a specific episode of the narrative at their beginning and end, but stray far away from it in the middle. Here they often generalise about human behaviour or certain types of events, or discuss earlier or later episodes of history brought to the narrator’s mind by the events just narrated. Digressions in the Classical and Hellenistic historiographers seem broadly to be triggered by five different motivating factors: a desire to evaluate morally actions or events in the narrative, a desire to explain actions or events (e.g. by providing a background story or motivation), a desire to philosophise about human behaviour or the course of history on the basis of narrated events, a desire to polemicise against others who have got certain facts wrong, and a purely associative desire to tell a story brought to mind by the events narrated. All of these five types of digressions can contain moralising. **Guiding moralising** takes the form of moralising introductions and conclusions to narrative episodes, or occasionally a moralising comment in the middle of an episode, which we can call ‘concomitant moralising’. It may range in length from a sentence or two telling the reader how to interpret an episode,²⁰ to a much longer stretch of text,²¹ and the borderline between these and moralising

19 The distinction between historiography and fiction has been much discussed (see e.g. Barthes 1986 [1967], White 1978, 1980, Cohn 1990, 1999, Doležel 1999, Lippert 2009) and is too complex to enter into here, except to note that this ‘commentary track’ seems to me to be an important part of any formal distinction. Vercruyse (1990), in an analysis of programmatic passages in Polybius, calls the two modes *discours narratif* and *discours commentatif*.

20 E.g. ‘And so these men died meeting a fitting end to life, and especially because of their unlawful behaviour towards Aratus’ (οὗτοι μὲν οὖν τῆς ἀρμειζούσης τυχόντες καταστροφῆς ἐξέλιπον τὸν βίον, καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὴν εἰς Ἄρατον γενομένην ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀσέλγειαν: Polyb. 5.28.9).

21 E.g. ‘fortune, as if on purpose, demonstrating its power to other human beings by what had happened to these men. For the things which they themselves had been expecting imminently to suffer at the hands of their enemies she granted them to do themselves to those enemies a very short time later. And the Aetolians, in suffering this unexpected disaster, taught everyone never to deliberate about the future as if it has already happened and never firmly to expect things which may yet possibly turn out otherwise, but to allot a portion to the unexpected in all matters since we are human, and especially in war’ (τῆς τύχης ὥσπερ ἐπιτηδεις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ἐπὶ τῶν ἐκείνοις συμβαινόντων ἐνδεικνυμένης τὴν αὐτῆς δύναμιν. ἃ γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν αὐτοὶ προσεδόκων ὅσον ἤδη πείσεσθαι, ταῦτα πράττειν αὐτοῖς ἐκείνοις παρέδωκεν ἐν πάννυ βραχεῖ χρόνῳ κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων. Αἰτωλοὶ δὲ τῇ παραδόξῳ χρησάμενοι συμφορᾷ πάντας ἐδίδαξαν μηδέποτε βουλευέσθαι περὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος ὡς ἦδη

digressions is fluid. The basic difference is that guiding moralising stays focused on a particular episode and guides the reader's interpretation of that episode, whereas moralising digressions use the episode as a springboard to moralise on wider or more general issues.

However, much of the moralising of the Greek historiographers takes place not in narrative pauses, but in the course of the narrative of events itself. Such moralising is largely implicit and takes a variety of different forms, which will not be described in any detail here; rather the practice of each historiographer will be fully discussed in the relevant chapters. The following overview is simply meant to provide a sense of the variety in the means of moralising employed by the Classical and Hellenistic historiographers, and to introduce the basic terminology which will be used in the analysis.

The simplest form of moralising is the use of **evaluative phrasing** to colour a reader's moral interpretation of an episode. Closely related to this technique and often used in tandem with it is moralising by **internal evaluation**, that is, when the reader is told what certain characters in the story think about an incident or behaviour. The degree to which a reader takes such an evaluation as a model for how to respond is affected by the extent to which the character(s) in question has or have been set up by the narrator as a moral authority. Strong internal authorities may be characters who are frequently or emphatically praised by the narrator, characters who are closely connected with the action evaluated or the character committing it, or a character who is supposed to be the author's younger self (such as 'Polybius' in the last books of Polybius' *Histories*).

An extension of the internal evaluation is moralising in **speeches** delivered by characters. A reader is, of course, not justified in assuming that the views expressed by a character in any literary work, historical or fictional, are those of the author, and so speeches in such a work can never be straightforwardly moral-didactic. Rather, the reader's perception of the moral message depends on a number of factors including the moral authority of the speaker, the reception of the speech by its internal audience,²² and the degree to which it corresponds to other moralising in the work. Closely related to, and sometimes incorporating, speeches, the **moral vignette** is an exploratory way of presenting the reader with situations that call for a moral response. Moral vignettes are scenes played out in 'real time', often described with visual details, and almost always featuring direct speech

γεγονότος, μηδὲ προκατελπίζειν βεβαιουμένους ὑπὲρ ὧν ἀκμὴν ἐνδεχόμενον ἔστιν ἄλλως γενέσθαι, νέμειν δὲ μερίδα τῷ παραδόξῳ πανταχῇ μὲν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας, μάλιστα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς: Polyb. 2.4.3–5).

²² The importance of the internal reception of the speech for the reader's response to it is well noted by Foster (2012).

by one or more characters. The utterance can be a single sentence, often witty or punchy, or a speech of varying length. The moral of the vignette is usually left unexpressed; it is picked up by the reader from the moral authority of the characters involved and from the correspondence between the vignette and the surrounding narrative. Sometimes the lesson is deliberately multifaceted or ambiguous.

Another set of moralising techniques gain effect by encouraging the reader to see connections between different parts of the text. Thus, **juxtaposition** of information can be an effective way of making a moral point,²³ as can deliberate **contrasts** between behaviours.²⁴ Finally, the **correlation between action and result**, that is, the way the narrative shows some types of behaviour leading to success and some to failure, is a powerful tool of moralising because it is intimately bound up with each historiographer's representation both of historical causation and, more generally, of how the world works.

A third type of moral didacticism takes place neither in the course of the narrative of events nor in narrative pauses, but on the overarching, structural level of a work. When reading a literary work such as an ancient work of history from cover to cover, **patterns and repetitions** become obvious and demonstrate to the reader how the world of this story works. Such patterns and repetitions are what mainly contribute to the emplotment of a series of events into a story, and they very often carry moral lessons.²⁵

It may well be asked in what way moralising as subtle as what has just been described can be didactic. I would suggest that we think of the moralising in narrative pauses as lecturing, and of moralising in the narrative of events as conditioning. While the moralising digressions, and on a smaller scale the guiding moralising, discuss moral topics and explain to the reader why he should consciously consider some behaviours right and others wrong, narratives using more implicit techniques condition the reader unconsciously to respond positively or negatively to certain kinds of behaviour. Such conditioning is most effective when the framework is already in place, that is, when the evaluative vocabulary reinforces the moral didacticism expressed explicitly elsewhere in the work. The effectiveness is further enhanced when the moral stance taken by the narrator is

23 E.g. 'During the seven days that Eurymedon stayed there with his sixty ships, the Corcyraeans continued to slaughter those of their own citizens whom they considered to be their enemies' (ἡμέρας τε ἐπτά, ἅς ἀφικόμενος ὁ Εὐρυμέδων ταῖς ἐξήκοντα ναυσὶ παρέμεινε, Κερκυραῖοι σφῶν αὐτῶν τοὺς ἐχθροὺς δοκοῦντας εἶναι ἐφόνευον: Thuc. 3.81).

24 E.g. the contrast between the loyal-unto-death Phliasiens and the fickle Euphron in Xen. *Hell.* 7.2–3.

25 The selection and structuring of events are what White (1980) says are necessarily driven by a 'moralising impulse'.

traditional and dominant (or at least theoretically dominant) in the reader's own society. Such correspondence with popular/traditional morality also works to build a bond between narrator and narratee and bolster the narrator's authority. Indeed we shall see that the Hellenistic historiographers generally use moralising in the narrative of events only to reinforce traditional and widely held moral attitudes and discuss more controversial moral issues in moralising digressions. The Classical historiographers, however, regularly offer moral dilemmas in the narrative of events.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

In order to understand the moral didacticism of the works under scrutiny we need to ask who it is intended for. Thucydides says that he is writing for 'those who want to understand clearly the events of the past and the future', implying that a clear understanding of past events will help the reader to understand events in his own present.²⁶ (Here it is probably necessary to explain my use of the pronoun 'he'. By using 'he' to refer to ancient readers, I intend to reflect the incontrovertible fact that the ideal or intended readers of ancient historiographers were male. It is not meant as a statement about who actually read the works in question, although I would assume that the majority of real ancient readers of historiography were, in fact, male. Today, the readership of ancient historiography is obviously very different from its intended one.)

Thucydides says nothing about how far his future readers are expected to be involved in politics, but his politico-military focus and the citizen-run democracy in which he lived make it likely that he imagined his readership to be primarily those whose actions could make a difference on the political and/or military scene. Polybius, more explicitly, says that he is writing for statesmen and generals, and he seems to imagine these as partly Greeks living in a reality dominated by Rome, partly Romans finding themselves underprepared masters of a world steeped in Greek traditions.²⁷ Diodorus is the first of our authors explicitly to aim his work not just at political and military leaders, but at a broader part of the population: in his preface, he declares that historiography makes 'private citizens worthy of leadership' and 'prepares soldiers to face danger more readily', showing – or pretending? – that he expected even such lowly individuals to read his work (Diod. Sic. 1.1.5).

Even Thucydides and Polybius must have known, however, that in

²⁶ ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὐθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὀφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἔξει (Thuc. 1.22.4).

²⁷ See e.g. Polyb. 1.1.5, 1.3.7–10, 6.11.3–8.

reality not all their readers would be the prime movers and shakers of the world, and their didacticism is not aimed exclusively at these. Their moralising is based on the belief that it is possible not just to learn from the past, but to learn from the past experiences of others in different life-situations from one's own.²⁸ When Polybius moralises on the actions of kings such as Eumenes of Cardia and Perseus of Macedon, he is not writing exclusively for an intended readership of kings; rather he is expecting his non-royal readers to learn from larger-than-life *paradeigmata*. The same is certainly true of Herodotus' moral-didactic use of the Persian kings and most probably also of Thucydides' narrow focus on a handful of Athenian and Spartan statesmen rather than the much larger number who were actually active during the Peloponnesian War. In this respect the moral didacticism of historiography resembles that of Classical Athenian tragedy.

Another pertinent question is why readers should follow the moral recommendations. What will they get out of it? This might seem like the wrong question to ask: after the influence of two thousand years of Christianity we are conditioned to think that morally good actions are only truly good if they are performed for no other reason than because it is 'the right thing to do'. But although such moral behaviour with no pay-off is sometimes praised or recommended by the ancient historiographers, most of them do in fact make an effort to show that those who behave morally tend to be rewarded, if not by outright practical success, then by obtaining a good reputation among their contemporaries or, if nothing else, by posthumously earning the immortal praise of history and possibly divine approval, a heroic type of reward celebrated by Homer. The fact that there are significant differences between the historiographers in terms of the rewards envisioned, and the degree of certainty with which rewards can be expected, is an indication of their profoundly different ways of viewing the world. This will be a theme of later chapters; for now, it is important to note that the fact that morally correct behavior is rewarded, and that people sometimes engage in it with an eye to those rewards, does not in the eyes of the ancient historiographers take anything away from the praiseworthiness of the actions.

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND OTHER GENRES

Historiography was, of course, not the only genre with moral-didactic impact in Classical and Hellenistic Greece. The practice of offering moral instruction through story-telling goes back, like everything else in Greek

²⁸ The slippage in intended readership can be seen in Polybius' second preface at 3.4.

literature, to Homer, although his moral lessons are always implicit. Herodotus says that the Greeks learned their ideas of religion from Homer and Hesiod (Hdt. 2.53), and even in the fourth century BC a man could still be deemed morally proficient on the basis of having memorised the Homeric poems (Xen. *Symp.* 3.5–6).²⁹ From these epics people could learn that strength and courage in battle would be rewarded with immortal glory, that human beings are at the mercy of the gods and must show them respect, and that forgiveness is ultimately better than revenge. However, other lessons were less apt for a civilised society, and it was certainly not expected that anyone would imitate Odysseus in either his deceit of friends or his killing of the suitors. In fact, many of the moral codes followed (or broken) by Homeric heroes are so different from those governing the actions of characters in historiography and the lives of its readers that any lessons absorbed may well have been inapplicable or counterproductive in practice.³⁰

Explicitly didactic poetry survives in its earliest form in Hesiod, but his collection of pious and practical advice is still very different from what we later see in historiography. The moralising of historiography, however, has strong affinities with three other genres: elegiac poetry, epinician poetry and Athenian tragedy.

Elegiac poetry comes the closest to historiography in that its moralising is often explicit, supposedly relates to the real world, and is concerned with similar virtues and vices to its historiographical counterpart.³¹ Like historiography, it also blends moral and political didacticism to a degree where it becomes meaningless to try to distinguish the two. However, three features set it apart (beyond the obvious fact that elegiac moralising is cast in poetic language and written in metre). Firstly, where (universal, continuous) historiography is characterised by a multiplicity of theatres of action and offers moralising in the context of the behaviour of people of a variety of nationalities in many geographically different locations, the moralising of elegy is securely embedded in its own civic context, bound by a distinct *polis* and a unique political context. It moralises on the condition of ‘the city’ and the behaviour of factions within it (Solon, Theognis),

²⁹ Even if Xenophon’s portrayal of Niceratus is ironic and meant to show that his ‘wisdom’ is pure pomposity (Hobden 2005, Hau 2012), the exchange still demonstrates the role that the Homeric poems played in popular thought and morality.

³⁰ Adkins (1960, 2011) still seems to me to be generally right about this even if studies such as Zanker (1994) show that there are lessons of cooperation as well.

³¹ Explicitly moral-didactic: τὰ πάντα διδάξαι θυμὸς Ἀθηναίων με κελεύει: Solon F 4.30–2. Similar lessons to historiographical moralising: Archil. 114W (the good commander), 128W (moderation in both good and bad fortune); Callinus 1W and Tyrtaeus 10W (courage on the battlefield); Thgn. 39–52 (greed and injustice), 129–30 and 133–42 (the changeability of fortune), 143–4 and 151–2 (divine justice).

on the actions of a named tyrant (Alcaeus) or the condition of its fighting citizens (Callinus, Tyrtaeus), and the events, the moralising, the narrator and the narratee all belong to the single community of a single city.³² Correspondingly, the range of actions moralised on is limited to those of personal or national importance and does not include the kind of actions associated with interstate warfare, such as diplomatic negotiations and the treatment of captives and the defeated, which loom large in the moral didacticism of the historiographers. Secondly, the narrator of most elegiac poetry is a much more present and personality-infused ‘I’ than the covert narrator of post-Herodotean historiography.³³ Thirdly, the moralising of elegiac poetry is usually generalised, often in the form of *gnomai*, which is only one of the registers of historiographical moralising, and not a dominant one.

Gnomai are also characteristic of the other type of lyric poetry that engages with moral didacticism in a way similar to that of historiography, namely epinician poetry. In epinicia, the *gnomai* often function as the moral to a lengthy narrative of events, in a manner parallel to some of the explicit moralising seen in Hellenistic historiography, although the relationship between narrative and moral is usually rather less obvious in praise poetry.³⁴ With equal frequency, the moral of epinician narratives is left unstated, however, and is for the reader to extract from the juxtaposition of mythological stories or of myth and contemporary events. Such moralising by juxtaposition and patterning is a characteristic of early historiography, especially Herodotus, but also Thucydides, as we shall see in later chapters. A further intriguing parallel between epinician poetry and historiography is that both deal with real, historical people, and often with those who are still living. This lays epinician poetry open to criticism for flattery or personal enmity, as contemporary historiography was, and indeed we see Pindar (but not Bacchylides) laying claim to objectivity and truthfulness in his application of praise and blame just like some of the historiographers, most explicitly Polybius.³⁵ Importantly, however, the epinician narrators never use a living person as a negative *paradeigma*. For that purpose they use mythological characters and, in the case of Pindar, generalised entities such as ‘envious people’ or ‘the greedy’.³⁶ Overall, it is naturally the case that epinician poetry – commissioned by wealthy clients

32 For the connection between moralising and community-building in lyric poetry see Griffith (2009).

33 The ‘I’ of elegiac poetry has attracted much scholarship in recent years; see e.g. Carey (1986), Irwin (2006), Stehle (2006).

34 For *gnomai* in epinician poetry see Stenger (2004), Boeke (2007).

35 For claims to truth and objectivity in Pindar see Pratt (1993: 115–30).

36 For Pindar on ‘envious people’ see Boeke (2007: 87–90).

desiring that their *kleos* be sustained -- is less interested in negative than positive *paradeigmata*.³⁷

Athenian tragedy is less obviously moralising than either elegiac or epinician poetry, but most twenty-first-century scholars would agree that the plays are in some way didactic.³⁸ The lessons taught by tragic plays are generally more complex, multilayered and obscure than those found in historiography. In Sophocles' *Antigone*, for instance, there are lessons to learn about the unfathomable power of the gods versus the limited power of human beings, but also about family, gender roles, the cost of rebelling against autocratic power, the hard choices a leader must make, and the process of healing a community after civil war. The lessons are thought-directing rather than action-directing, and some may resist calling them lessons at all and prefer to talk about the 'meaning' or 'impact' of the play. In its multilayeredness and lack of prescriptions for behaviour the moral didacticism of such tragedies resembles that of Herodotus, and to a lesser extent Thucydides and Xenophon – not coincidentally, the historiographers contemporary with the surviving tragedies – as we shall see in the relevant chapters. What distinguishes the moral didacticism of Classical historiography from that of tragedy is above all its setting in the supposedly real and mostly contemporary or near-contemporary world, which makes the moralising more immediately applicable for the reader, even if it does not explicitly tell him what action to take.³⁹ Aristotle famously said that tragedy deals more with universal concerns and historiography more with particular instances of behaviour.⁴⁰ However, this distinction only holds true up to a point, as Aristotle's 'more' (μᾶλλον) indicates: extrapolation from the particular situations moralised on by historiographers to more universal observations about human nature and behaviour is sometimes explicitly encouraged;⁴¹ at other times the specific events are explicitly offered by the historiographical narrator as instances illustrating generalising moral maxims.⁴² This interplay between the specific and the universal is also a

37 See Pratt (1993: 128–9).

38 The earliest surviving expression of the idea of tragedy as didactic is Aristophanes' *Frogs*. The question of what it is that tragedy teaches has played a large part in scholarly analyses of both individual tragedies and tragedy as a genre since the 1980s, but the fact that it is didactic is now more or less the *communis opinio*. It has more recently been succinctly restated by Griffith (2011: 2).

39 For tragedy as fiction or make-believe see Zeitlin (1980) and Ruffell (forthcoming).

40 ἄλλὰ τούτῳ διαφέρει, τῷ τὸν μὲν τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, τὸν δὲ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο. διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποιήσις ἱστορίας ἐστίν· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποιήσις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει (Arist. *Poet.* 1451b). For tragedy as dealing with universals see also Taplin (1986).

41 E.g. Thuc. 1.22.4, 3.82.2; Polyb. 1.35, 2.4.3–5.

42 E.g. Diod. Sic. 14.1–2

feature of the moral didacticism in elegy and, more prominently, epinician poetry.

Interestingly, the moral didactic themes are similar across genres: the changeability of fortune and powerlessness of human beings are common themes of lyric poetry and tragedy as well as historiography (Herodotus and lyric poetry are particularly similar in their moral themes, perhaps unsurprisingly considering their close proximity in time); courage, moderation and piety are virtues in all genres, and greed, brutality and impiety are equally universal vices. Even some standard metaphors such as the winds of fortune and the ship of state are repeated across genres. Moralising in historiography was not an isolated genre feature, then, but was part of what connected historiography with its society, a way of creating a fellow-feeling between author and reader by placing them in a common world of well-known and generally accepted values.⁴³

STRUCTURE

One of the central arguments of this book is that moral didacticism was not an add-on to ancient historiography invented by rhetorically degenerate Hellenistic authors,⁴⁴ but an integral feature of the genre from its very inception. In order to show this effectively, the investigation begins with an analysis of the moralising of Polybius and Diodorus in the Hellenistic period, which is for a large part explicit and obvious (although often ignored by scholars who find it an embarrassing blemish on Polybius and an indication of inferior worth in Diodorus).⁴⁵ This analysis will allow us to get a detailed impression of a vast range of moralising techniques, tropes and themes, against the background of which we can more easily examine the more subtle moralising of the Classical historiographers. In this way we shall see that while there were change and development in the moral didacticism of the genre over time, there were also continuity and shared values, both on a moral and on a literary level.

Chapters 1–2 and 4–6 are thus author chapters: Polybius, Diodorus,

43 In this sense, the moralising works like the moralising in oratory, but oratory is generally not didactic; i.e. it does not aim seriously to educate its audience, only to persuade them; hence its absence from the preceding discussion. A partial exception is the funeral speech, which can combine memorialisation with exhortation to follow the example of the fallen in a way similar to some of the explicit moralising found in Diodorus.

44 The idea that Hellenistic historiography is ‘rhetorical’ and therefore inferior to Classical historiography is remarkably hard to kill despite the growing acceptance of the importance of narrative, and thereby ‘rhetoric’, in historiography generally. See e.g. such otherwise insightful studies as Gehrke (2001), Pownall (2004) and Bleckmann (2005), nicely counter-argued by Parmeggiani (2011).

45 See e.g. Walbank (1938, 1957: 19) and Hornblower (1981).

Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon. Each chapter discusses first the approach to moral didacticism announced in the work's preface and programmatic statements, then the techniques by which moralising is carried out, and thirdly the moral lessons the reader is meant to take away. Within this structure there is room for variation: Chapter 2 contains a discussion of Diodorus' handling of sources, and Chapter 6 compares the moral didacticism of the *Hellenica* with that of Xenophon's other works in order to draw some conclusions on the nature of specifically historiographical moral didacticism. Throughout the chapters there will be an emphasis on comparing the practice of the different historiographers and drawing out what can be said to be the essential features of moral didacticism in Classical and Hellenistic historiography.

Chapters 3 and 7 examine the possible remnants of moralising in the fragments of some of the most well-known but less well-preserved ancient historiographers. Chapter 3 covers the Hellenistic works of Timaeus of Tauromenium, Duris of Samos, Phylarchus (of Athens?), Agatharchides of Cnidus and Posidonius of Apamea. Chapter 7 deals with the Classical works of the so-called Oxyrhynchus Historian, Ephorus of Cyme and Theopompus of Chios. The selection is based on the number and nature of references to these historiographers in their successors and in other authors, which it is hoped reflect their importance for the development of the genre of historiography. The discussion of each historiographer begins with an overview of the nature of preserved 'fragments' and then proceeds to investigate what we can plausibly tell about the presence or absence of moral didacticism in the work, its moral lessons, and the moralising techniques used. Although it is impossible to draw firm conclusions about what the original text of these works looked like, the analysis indicates a genre that had an important moral-didactic dimension throughout the period under investigation. Chapter 7 on fragmentary Classical historiographers also considers the change in moralising techniques which took place between the Classical and Hellenistic periods and discusses how this came about.

The book as a whole aims to show how the 'moralising impulse' identified as essential for the narrativising of history by Hayden White has shaped the narrative at every level of the best-known works of Greek historiography, making moral didacticism an integral part of each work without which it could not exist. In the Conclusion, I shall turn to the larger question of what good historiography is, and argue that the strong moral-didactic strain is a strength of Greek historiography rather than a weakness.

PART I: HELLENISTIC
HISTORIOGRAPHY

I. Polybius

Polybius is our starting point because he is obviously, explicitly and unashamedly a moral-didactic historian. He repeatedly stresses that the purpose of studying the past is to learn lessons that will be of use in the present. This is recognised by most Polybius scholars, but there is a widespread tendency to think of these lessons as purely practical rather than moral: Pédech, in his monumental *La Méthode Historique de Polybe*, devotes chapters to Polybius' notions of psychology and his rhetorical method of comparison, but only touches on his moral didacticism in passing; Walbank says that Polybius saw history as 'a way to attain practical ends by learning lessons'; Sacks in his monograph on Polybius' views on historiography argues that his practical didacticism so far outweighs his moral didacticism that the latter 'ought to be considered random digressions without historiographical import'; and even two otherwise excellent – and very different – more recent monographs on Polybius, by McGing and Maier, largely ignore the moralising aspect.¹ In this way the moralist Polybius has been played down in favour of the image of the practical, pragmatic and often rather cynical Polybius, who wrote a 'handbook for statesmen' with digressions on such amoral topics as fire-signalling and how to calculate the needed length of scaling ladders.

This image, with which the present study wants to take serious issue, is often coupled with the equally dubious idea that Polybius wrote his work partly to justify his 'collaboration' with Rome and only used moral outrage to cloak his partisanship.² There is no denying that Polybius shows political bias: he is obviously sympathetic to Achaëa and scornful of the Aetolians,

¹ Pédech (1964); Walbank *passim*, e.g. (1965, 1972: 58 and *passim*, 1977); Sacks (1980: 136); McGing (2010); Maier (2012). Also Petzold (1969), despite recognising the moral tenor of some of Polybius' didactic digressions, focuses on the practical didacticism.

² E.g. Aymard (1940), Walbank (1965, 1974), Dubuisson (1990), Ferrary (1988: 265–348), Green (1990: 269–85).

and also often sides with Rome against its opponents. However, his bias is commonly exaggerated: Polybius is not simply a blind approver of everything Roman.³ Furthermore, as already argued in the Introduction, moral views and political views do not exist in separate spheres, but feed off each other. Polybius supported the Achaean League because he had been born into its leading circles, but also because he believed that the League's laws were the most morally just of any political organisation he knew (2.38). When he wrote his work, he did not distinguish between his moral and political views, as surely most of us do not in our day-to-day lives.⁴ He aimed to instruct his readers in the right way to think and act in the world, and this included practical, political and moral instruction. The significant exception to the trend of disregarding Polybius' moralising is Eckstein, who has devoted a lively and well-argued monograph to arguing against the view of Polybius as a hypocritical moralist.⁵ Eckstein demonstrates conclusively that Polybius was not a 'Machiavellian' historian who judged historical people only on the basis of their success or his own political bias, but the polemical focus of Eckstein's book means that he does not provide a rounded picture of moral messages in the *Histories*. The present study aims to arrive at such a full picture, and then to compare this picture with the moral didacticism of other surviving texts of Greek historiography.

This chapter will therefore examine Polybius' moralising techniques and messages with one eye fixed on his text and the other on the texts of the historiographical tradition with which we shall be comparing his *Histories*. Polybius holds pride of place in this study because his moralising lessons and techniques cover almost the full range displayed across the genre. For this reason, his *Histories* works well both as an introduction to the subject and our approach and as a benchmark against which to compare his predecessors and successors in the genre. The chapter begins with an examination of Polybius' prefaces and programmatic statements in order to determine the role that he ascribes to moral didacticism in his narratorial voice; then we shall turn to Polybius' narrative and examine his moralising techniques, using and expanding the terminology established in the Introduction. This will be followed by an overview of Polybius' moral lessons and some preliminary thoughts on the typicality and distinctiveness of these in comparison with other Hellenistic and Classical historiographers.

3 Eckstein (1995). Erskine (2000) and Champion (2004) have shown that Polybius to a certain extent regarded the Romans as barbarians.

4 In a good, more recent paper on the rhetorical nature of the *Histories* Thornton (2013) consistently talks about Polybius wanting to teach 'political' lessons to his readers, in the process labelling 'political' several messages which I would call 'moral'.

5 Eckstein (1995).

PREFACES AND PROGRAMMATIC STATEMENTS

Characteristically of Polybius' elaborate and at times long-winded style, the work begins with a lengthy *paraleipsis* (i.e. a statement that one will not talk about something, which at the same time talks about it):

Εἰ μὲν τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν ἀναγράφουσι τὰς πράξεις παραλελειφθαι συνέβαινε τὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς τῆς ἱστορίας ἔπαινον, ἴσως ἀναγκαῖον ἦν τὸ προτρέπεσθαι πάντας πρὸς τὴν αἴρεσιν καὶ παραδοχὴν τῶν τοιούτων ὑπομνημάτων διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ἐτοιμοτέραν εἶναι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις διόρθωσιν τῆς τῶν προγεγενημένων πράξεων ἐπιστήμης. ἔπει δ' οὐ τινὲς οὐδ' ἐπὶ ποσόν, ἀλλὰ πάντες ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν ἀρχῆ καὶ τέλει κέχρηται τούτῳ, φάσκοντες ἀληθινωτάτην μὲν εἶναι παιδείαν καὶ γυμνασίαν πρὸς τὰς πολιτικὰς πράξεις τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἱστορίας μάθησιν, ἐναργεστάτην δὲ καὶ μόνην διδάσκαλον τοῦ δύνασθαι τὰς τῆς τύχης μεταβολὰς γενναίως ὑποφέρειν τὴν τῶν ἀλλοτρίων περιπετειῶν ὑπόμνησιν, δῆλον ὡς οὐδενὶ μὲν ἂν δόξαι καθήκειν περὶ τῶν καλῶς καὶ πολλοῖς εἰρημένων ταυτολογεῖν, ἥκιστα δ' ἡμῖν. αὐτὸ γὰρ τὸ παράδοξον τῶν πράξεων, ὑπὲρ ὧν προηγήμεθα γράφειν, ἱκανόν ἐστι προκαλέσασθαι καὶ παρορμηῆσαι πάντα καὶ νέον καὶ πρεσβύτερον πρὸς τὴν ἔντευξιν τῆς πραγματείας.

If it was the case that praise of the practice of history had been passed over by those who before me have written about events, it would perhaps be necessary to urge everyone to study and approve of such records because there is no readier correction for human beings than knowledge of the actions of the past. But when not just some writers to a certain extent, but so to speak every single one of them,⁶ have made use of this argument, insisting that the truest education and training for civic engagement is learning derived from history, and that the most vivid and indeed only teacher of how to bear the vicissitudes of fortune with dignity is being reminded of the suddenly changed circumstances of others, then clearly no one, least of all I, would think it appropriate to repeat what has been said well and by many. The unexpected nature of the events which I have chosen to write about will be sufficient to encourage and exhort everyone, young and old alike, to engage with their study. (Polyb. 1.1.1–4)⁷

This is a self-conscious narrator's elaborate way of saying that he intends to follow in the footsteps of his generic predecessors: what is traditionally

6 I adopt Parmeggiani's (2014) reading of πάντες ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν ἀρχῆ καὶ τέλει as a unit, meaning 'all of them from beginning to end so to speak', i.e. 'so to speak every single one of them'. I do not, however, agree with his interpretation of what Polybius says about his predecessor's practice of praising historiography as being critical or exasperated: note that Polybius says they have said it 'well' (καλῶς: 1.1.3), and that he says it would be necessary for him to say it if they had not already done so (1.1.1). The phrase is a rhetorical *paraleipsis*. Polybius is setting up his own project not in contrast with that of his predecessors, but in continuation of it: the 'unexpected nature' (τὸ παράδοξον: 1.1.3) of his topic will captivate his readers' interest, thus making his moral lessons go down more easily.

7 All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

the purpose of historiography is the purpose of his *Histories* too. That purpose is didacticism by exemplar, or *paradeigmata*, a word often used by Polybius, although not in this passage. Instead Polybius here calls the study of history the ‘education’ (παιδείαν) and ‘training’ (γυμνασίαν) for civic engagement (τὰς πολιτικὰς πράξεις) and then more specifically identifies the knowledge of the *peripeteiai*, or sudden reversals of fortunes, of historical characters as the ‘teacher’ in the art of bearing such vicissitudes with dignity (γενναίως). The idea of history as teacher dominates the passage. The teaching seems to have two subjects: some unspecified content that will be useful for civic life, and the *peripeteiai* of historical characters, which has the moralistic purpose of teaching readers to act with dignity even when struck by such unforeseen reversals. It is worth emphasising that Polybius takes this (moral-)didactic purpose entirely for granted; for him, this is what historiography does. This is important, because it shows that moral didacticism was the norm of the genre in the second century BC. We shall return to this in later chapters.

The preface is followed by two introductory books offering a relatively brief narrative of the First Punic War, intended as background knowledge (προκατασκευή) for the more detailed treatment of the Second Punic War in books 3–15. At the end of the background narrative, Polybius offers a ‘second preface’. Here he sets out his purpose in continuing the work beyond his originally intended end-date of 167 BC:

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν κατορθωμάτων ἢ καὶ τῶν ἐλαττωμάτων ἰκανὴν ἐνεδέχεται ποιήσασθαι τὴν διάληψιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ψεκτῶν ἢ τοῦναντίον ἐπαινετῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ πολιτευμάτων, ἐνθάδε που λήγειν ἂν ἡμᾶς ἔδει καὶ καταστρέφειν ἅμα τὴν διήγησιν καὶ τὴν πραγματείαν ἐπὶ τὰς τελευταίας ῥηθείσας πράξεις κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς πρόθεσιν. [. . .] ἐπεὶ δ’ οὐκ αὐτοτελεῖς εἰσιν οὔτε περὶ τῶν κρατησάντων <οὔτε περὶ τῶν> ἐλαττωθέντων αἱ ψιλῶς ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀγωνισμάτων διαλήψεις, διὰ τὸ πολλοῖς μὲν τὰ μέγιστα δοκοῦντ’ εἶναι τῶν κατορθωμάτων, ὅταν μὴ δεόντως αὐτοῖς χρήσωνται, τὰς μεγίστας ἐπενηνοχέειν συμφοράς, οὐκ ὀλίγοις δὲ τὰς ἐκπληκτικωτάτας περιπετείας, ὅταν εὐγενῶς αὐτὰς ἀναδέξωνται, πολλάκις εἰς τὴν τοῦ συμφέροντος περιπετωκέναι μερίδα, προσθετέον ἂν εἴη ταῖς προειρημέναις πράξεσι τὴν τε τῶν κρατούντων αἴρεσιν, ποία τις ἦν μετὰ ταῦτα καὶ πῶς προεστιάται τῶν ὄλων, τὰς τε τῶν ἄλλων ἀποδοχὰς καὶ διαλήψεις.

If, therefore, it was possible to judge adequately from the very successes and failures of people and states whether they should be criticised or, on the contrary, praised, then I should stop and should end my narrative and my project here at the last-mentioned events as was my original intention . . . But as the judgements formed about both the victors and the defeated solely on the basis of their actions during the conflicts themselves are incomplete – because, for many people, what seems to be the greatest victories, when they

are not handled properly, have turned into the greatest disasters, and, for a few, the most stunning catastrophes, when they are borne with dignity, have often turned into some kind of advantage – I must add to the aforementioned events what was the attitude of the conquerors and how they ruled the world, as well as the reactions and attitudes of the rest. (Polyb. 3.4.1–6)

Thus, the second preface, to an even greater degree than the first, is about not just didacticism, but moral didacticism. The purpose of historiography is to help the readers form an opinion of historical characters and to deal out ‘praise and blame’ to them – not just for the sake of the people praised or criticised – who are, indeed, most often long dead – but for the sake of the readers.⁸ In that way, the historiographer offers the historical characters as moral examples, *paradeigmata*, which, with his help, his readers can use as guidance for how to behave in the world.⁹ It is characteristic of Polybius’ moral judgements that they have a practical dimension: judgements on victors and the defeated are incomplete because the way victory and defeat are handled can turn even the former into a disaster (συμφοράς) and the latter into an advantage (τοῦ συμφέροντος). From this passage it is impossible to see whether the ‘disaster’ and ‘advantage’ are meant in literal, practical terms or in a figurative, moral sense, and we shall see below that the two most often go hand in hand in Polybius’ *Histories*. The intertwining of the moral and the practical becomes more pronounced in the rest of the second preface. Here the usefulness of the *Histories* (τὸ ὠφέλιμον: 3.4.8) is said to consist in providing the information needed for contemporary readers to decide whether Roman rule is to be shunned or accepted (φευκτὴν ἢ τοῦναντίον αἰρετὴν: 3.4.7), and for future readers in order to decide whether it is praiseworthy and worth emulating or blameworthy (ἐπαινετὴν καὶ ζηλωτὴν ἢ ψεκτὴν: 3.4.7). The implication is that the *Histories* will allow both contemporary and future readers to pass moral judgement on Rome, but that contemporary readers might be able to translate that judgement into practical action.¹⁰

8 Many passages in Polybius assume that posthumous fame in the pages of history will be pleasing to the people who attain it although they are long dead: 2.7, 2.58–9, 3.22–32, 4.20–1, 7.13.2–14.6, 8.35–6, 10.2–5, 15.21.

9 It has been argued (Walbank 1972: 157–83) that the judgement on Rome’s use of power and the subjects’ response to it is just an excuse for Polybius to add material he had collected while watching historical events from the sidelines in Rome. I would argue that the fragmentary state of his last ten books makes it impossible for us to judge to what extent Polybius did or did not deliver on his promise of helping the reader to make this judgement, and I see no reason to doubt that the purpose he presents in his second preface is sincere. Even if it is not, it shows that such a purpose was a valid and probably not uncommon one for a work of history.

10 The narrative of Rome’s rise to power offered in the *Histories* suggests – as far as we can judge considering the depressingly fragmented state of the crucial last ten books – that Roman rule is in fact at the time of writing an irreversible fact, so that ‘shunning’ it can only

Polybius' *Histories* has more pauses in the narrative of events than any other preserved Classical or Hellenistic work of history. In these narrative pauses, the narrator communicates directly with the narratee, providing a much fuller commentary on the events than is offered by any other historiographical narrator of the period. A relatively large number of these passages deal with the practice and purpose of writing history, and they provide us with a unique insight into the plan behind the work.¹¹ What is strikingly obvious from these purpose passages is the repeated insistence on the usefulness of the *Histories* to its readers.¹² It has been common for Polybian scholars to stress the practical nature of this usefulness,¹³ and it is true that some of the programmatic passages spring from didactic digressions with a practical bent.¹⁴ However, other passages focus on the intellectual benefit derived from studying history,¹⁵ and a significant proportion focus exclusively on the moral benefit of reading the *Histories*, such as 1.35, which extols the wisdom one can acquire from the vicarious experience of reading about the misfortunes of others. Significantly, most programmatic passages in Polybius give the impression that the practical and the moral benefit are inseparable. An example is 1.65.6–9, where Polybius gives as his reasons for recounting the Mercenary War that (1) it is the perfect example of a 'truceless war' (intellectual benefit), (2) it shows the dangers of employing mercenaries and demonstrates what precautions

lead to disaster while 'accepting' it can be fruitful if one strives to keep as much autonomy as possible. Eckstein (1995: 194–236) offers an excellent analysis of Polybius' message about this balancing act for political leaders of Greek states. Ferrary (1988: 139–43) and Baronowski (2011: 159–62) take a less nuanced view of Polybius' judgement on Roman rule (that it was overall benevolent and hence to be chosen/accepted) and hence of this passage. Ferrary has a good discussion of the moral implications of αἰρετήν (1988: 341–2).

11 E.g. 1.1, 1.2.8, 1.4.11, 1.13.11–13, 1.14, 1.35, 1.57.3, 1.65.7–9, 2.14.1, 2.35, 2.38.1, 2.56–8, 2.61, 3.1.5, 3.4, 3.31, 3.32.6, 3.47–8, 3.57–9, 3.118.10–12, 4.40.1–2, 5.75.1–6, 6.2.5–6, 9.2.5, 10.21.8, 11.1a, all of book 12, 16.12, 16.20, 16.28. Polybius' programmatic passages have been discussed by Sacks (1980) with a focus on historiographical theory and practical didacticism.

12 Polyb. 1.2.8, 1.4.11, 1.13.6, 1.57.3, 1.65.7–9, 2.14.1, 2.35, 2.38.1, 2.56.11–12, 3.1.5, 3.31, 3.118.10–12, 6.2.8, 11.19a, 12.25b.2, 39.8.7. Polybius' insistence on the usefulness of learning (see also 3.4.1–12 and 11.20.6) has been connected with Stoic influence, especially by von Scala (1890: 201–3), but the distinction between the pleasure and utility in literature goes back much further than Stoicism and is seen in, among others, Gorgias, Plato and Aristotle. See Walbank (1990) with references to previous scholarship.

13 See note 1, this chapter.

14 Such as 2.35, which justifies the detailed treatment of the history of the Celts by its usefulness for teaching readers not to fear barbarians too much, and 3.31, which justifies the lengthy discussion of the responsibility for the Second Punic War by its usefulness as material for political speeches in the reader's present.

15 Such as 1.4.11, which extols the unique ability of universal history to give readers a complete understanding of the world, and 2.14.1, which justifies an ethnographic digression with its necessity for understanding the march of Hannibal.

should be taken (practical benefit), (3) it demonstrates the great difference in character between barbarians and civilised men (moral benefit), and (4) it provides the causal background to the Second Punic War (explanatory reason). Similarly, when 10.21 discusses the importance of including biographical sketches in historiography because such characterisations encourage readers to emulate famous men, it is clear that the emulation is meant to encompass both practical actions and moral characteristics. Polybius did not draw a distinction between the different types of benefit he was offering, and he would most probably have been surprised and shocked to find that his modern readers have attempted to divorce his practical lessons from any sense of morality.

What is abundantly clear from the programmatic passages is the intended usefulness of the *Histories*, and not just or even primarily as a repository of facts and knowledge, but as a learning tool for the improvement (διόρθωσις: 1.1.1 and frequently) of human life. If we ignore this aspect of his work, we seriously misread it. It is equally clear that this improvement is supposed to be both practical and moral, with no real distinction between the two.

A CHARACTERISATION OF POLYBIUS' MORALISING

This section examines and describes Polybius' moral-didactic techniques for the purpose of comparison with those of other Hellenistic and Classical historiographers in later chapters. The description also aims to give a reader unfamiliar with Polybius or unused to looking at his work from this angle an impression of his moralising. For this reason passages are frequently quoted (and translated). We shall begin with a quick overview of the distribution of moralising in the *Histories* and then continue with an analysis of the moralising techniques using the terminology established in the Introduction.

Distribution

The *Histories* was once a magnificent forty-volume work; it now survives only in a fragmentary state. Books 1–5 are completely extant, as is a good chunk of book 6 and substantial parts of 7–18. Then it becomes more patchy. There is less moralising in the first two books of the *Histories* than in the following complete and partially preserved ones. This is no doubt due to the summary nature of their narrative, which suits their function as background material for the main narrative. In the extremely fragmentary books 19–40 moralising is a dominant feature, to the extent that some stretches of fragments are purely moralising with very little narrative of events in between. This is due to the nature of two of the six

Constantinian epitomes in which the ‘fragments’ are preserved: one is about ‘virtues and vices’ (*De Virtutibus et Vitiis*) and the other contains ‘sayings’ (*De Sententiis*), which also often have a moral bearing.¹⁶ Although these moralising passages will have been less dominating in the original work, where they functioned merely as a running commentary on the narrative of events, the fact that they were there at all is revealing of Polybius’ method and intention. There is no reason to believe that his moralising practice in the now fragmentary books differed from his practice in the non-prefatory and more substantially preserved books 3–18.

Moralising in Narrative Pauses

Much of Polybius’ moralising is explicit and takes place in pauses in his narrative of events. As we saw in the Introduction, moralising in such pauses can be divided into moralising digressions, which use the narrative as a starting point for making more general moralising observations, and guiding moralising, which introduces, concludes or accompanies narrative episodes in order to tell the reader how to interpret them in moral terms. Polybius uses both frequently.

Polybius’ **moralising digressions** can be long (e.g. 4.20–1, 3.22–32, all of book 6) or quite short (e.g. 4.81.12–14, 8.12.6–8). Their narrative functions fall into three categories: explanatory, offering extra information and discussion to explain the narrative, including introducing a character new to the story, explaining motives, and providing background stories for events; evaluative, that is, passing judgement, entirely or partly moral, either on a character or on actions or events; and philosophical, treating the story of events as a springboard for musing about bigger questions.¹⁷ In all of these he often includes a polemical element and argues against his predecessors on points of detail or interpretation. Polybius does not use associative digressions, as far as can be seen from his extant text. Most often the digression’s connection with the surrounding narrative is clear at the beginning, then the middle part strays far away from the immediate story situation before returning to the situation at hand again at the end. A return to the narrative of events is often signalled by means of the particle *πλήν*, or the combination *πλήν τότε*. Some evaluative digressions are extended obituaries, that is, moral discussions of a historical individual’s

¹⁶ Equally, there is a preponderance of passages concerning embassies to the Senate and various Greek cities because a third epitome was a collection of passages on embassies. For the Constantian excerpts see Moore (1965: 126–70) and Walbank (1979: 1–62).

¹⁷ When the text is fragmented and the moralising digression survives in isolation, which is often the case in books 7ff., it is often not possible to determine its original connection with its context with certainty.

character and/or actions, placed at the point of his death in the narrative (e.g. Philopoemen, 23.12; Hannibal, 23.13; and Scipio Africanus the Elder, 23.14). These tend to stay more tightly on topic than other moral-didactic digressions as they focus on their protagonist throughout and rarely spend time on extended comparisons or generalisations.¹⁸

A typical example of a moralising digression in Polybius' *Histories* is 1.81.5–11, provoked by the brutal way in which the mercenaries of the Mercenary War treated their captives:¹⁹

διόπερ εἰς ταῦτα βλέπων οὐκ ἂν τις εἰπεῖν ὀκνήσειεν ὡς οὐ μόνον τὰ σώματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τινα τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς γεννωμένων ἐλκῶν καὶ φυμάτων ἀποθηριοῦσθαι συμβαίνει καὶ τελέως ἀβοήθητα γίνεσθαι, πολὺ δὲ μάλιστα τὰς ψυχάς. ἐπὶ τε γὰρ τῶν ἐλκῶν, ἐὰν μὲν θεραπείαν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις προσάγῃ τις, ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐνίοτε ταύτης ἐρεθιζόμενα θάττον ποιεῖται τὴν νομῆν· ἐὰν δὲ πάλιν ἀφῆ, κατὰ τὴν ἐξ αὐτῶν φύσιν φθείροντα τὸ συνεχὲς οὐκ ἴσχει παῦλαν, ἕως ἂν ἀφανίσῃ τὸ ὑποκείμενον· ταῖς τε ψυχαῖς παραπλησίως τοιαῦτα πολλακίς ἐπιφύονται μελανία καὶ σηπεδόνες ὥστε μηδὲν ἀσεβέστερον ἀνθρώπου μηδ' ὀμότερον ἀποτελεῖσθαι τῶν ζώων. οἷς ἐὰν μὲν συγγνώμην τινὰ προσάγῃς καὶ φιланθρωπίαν, ἐπιβουλήν καὶ παραλογισμόν ἡγούμενοι τὸ συμβαῖνον ἀπιστότεροι καὶ δυσμενέστεροι γίνονται πρὸς τοὺς φιλανθρωπούντας· ἐὰν δ' ἀντιτιμωρῆ, διαμιλλώμενοι τοῖς θυμοῖς οὐκ ἔστι τι τῶν ἀπειρημένων ἢ δεινῶν ὁποῖον οὐκ ἀναδέχονται, σὺν καλῷ τιθέμενοι τὴν τοιαύτην τόλμαν· τέλος δ' ἀποθηριοθέντες ἐξέστησαν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως. τῆς δὲ διαθέσεως ἀρχηγὸν μὲν καὶ μεγίστην μερίδα νομιστέον ἔθῃ μοχθηρὰ καὶ τροφὴν ἐκ παίδων κακῆν, συνεργὰ δὲ καὶ πλείω, μέγιστα δὲ τῶν συνεργῶν τὰς ἀεὶ τῶν προεστῶτων ὕβρεις καὶ πλεονεξίας. ἃ δὴ τότε συνέβαινε καὶ περὶ μὲν τὸ σύστημα τῶν μισθοφόρων, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον περὶ τοὺς ἡγεμόνας αὐτῶν ὑπάρχειν.

Therefore, considering these events one would not hesitate to say that it is not only the bodies of human beings and some of the ulcers and tumours that have come about in them which can become aggravated and ultimately beyond healing, but also, and much more, their souls. For, in the case of ulcers, if one applies treatment to such diseases, they are sometimes irritated by this very thing and spread more quickly; but if, on the other hand, one leaves them alone, on the basis of their own nature they continue their destruction unremittingly without cessation until they do away with their victim. Likewise in the case of men's souls, such black spots and putrefactions grow on them that in the end no animal is more impious and more cruel than man. If one applies some forgiveness and kindness to such persons, they believe what has happened to be a plot and a deception and become more suspicious and hostile towards those who are exercising kindness; but if one retaliates, in their passionate rivalry there is no unspeakable atrocity they will not commit, considering such daring to be in the category of what is honourable. In the end, they turn into beasts and discard human nature. This condition must be believed to originate in most part from bad

18 Pomeroy (1989) offers a good analysis of Polybius' 'death notices', short and long.

19 Underlined phrases are discussed in the text following extracts.

habits and bad upbringing from childhood, but there are many contributory causes, and the most important of them is the constant abusiveness and greed of their leaders. That was what happened at that time to the community of mercenaries, and to an even larger degree to their commanders. (Polyb. 1.81.5–11)

The function of this moralising digression is explanatory: it attempts to explain the inhuman behaviour of the rebellious mercenaries. Typically for Polybian moral-didactic digressions it is connected to its surrounding narrative by thin bridges at the beginning (εἰς ταῦτα βλέπων) and end (τότε), but in between it generalises about larger moral themes. In this case the moral content is psychological: Polybius is generalising about human nature and behaviour. In this particular passage it is interesting to note the extended medical comparison between tumours in the body and diseases of the mind or soul; such medical similes are one of Polybius' favourite ways of explaining the human psyche.²⁰ It is also worth noting the causal relationship Polybius describes: the mercenaries have been made inhumanly brutal by three factors: bad habits (ἔθη μοχθηρά), bad education from childhood (τροφήν ἐκ παίδων κακήν), and the abuse and unjust treatment they have suffered at the hands of their greedy Carthaginian superiors (τῶν προεστώτων ὕβρεις καὶ πλεονεξίας). While the two first causes are interesting in the light of modern psychological and pedagogical thinking, the third cause, and the one that Polybius identifies as the most important one of the three (μέγιστα δὲ τῶν συνεργῶν), foreshadows a moral theme with great political and military consequences that will be important throughout the *Histories*, namely the correlation between the way a leader – be he a ruler of a city or country or a military commander – treats his subjects/soldiers and the way they come to behave. This will be discussed further below. At no point is the digression prescriptively didactic, but it is not hard to make the jump: if brutal treatment renders soldiers brutal, anyone in command should strive to treat his men humanely. Moreover, this cause-and-effect link is likely also to be true in other relationships in life, which a reader might want to recall when thinking about how to treat his slaves or educate his children.

Like this digression, most moral-didactic digressions in the *Histories* are descriptively didactic. However, in about a fourth of the digressions prescriptive advice is given to the reader, often at the end. Often, this advice is combined with a justification of why the narrator has taken the liberty to digress, or to digress at such length. The cases for inclusion are often practically didactic: 2.7 is included in order to teach people never to admit

²⁰ See e.g. 13.2.2, where greed is compared to dropsy. Such medical comparisons are common in both Plato and the Stoics; see Walbank (1957: *ad loc.*).

a garrison stronger than themselves into their city; 4.20–1 should teach the Arcadians not to ignore the civilising factor of music. Equally often, the digressions are intellectually didactic, most often in the sense that they aim to provide readers with a just view of a difficult issue: 4.20–1 also aims to give readers a true picture of Arcadia that does not blame the region for the crimes of one city; the famous digression on the Roman–Carthaginian treaties, 3.22–32, is allegedly there to make sure everyone knows the truth about the causes of the war in order to provide background knowledge for political actions in the present (3.31); and the digressions on the characters of the two Scipios (the Elder at 10.2–5 and the Younger at 31.25–30) are justified by the desire to make the reader credit these men with their own successes rather than ascribing those to fortune. However, coming at the end of complex moral discussions – or heated moral rants – these purpose statements often seem reductionist: 2.7 is surely there not only to teach a practical lesson about rejecting offers of barbarian garrisons, but also to teach the reader about the importance of taking moral responsibility for one’s actions and not blaming fortune for one’s own mistakes; and 3.22–3.32 does not just provide some idea of the characters of the Carthaginians and Romans that a reader can draw on for knowledge of how to deal with these two peoples in his own present, but offers a full and complex discussion of the legal and moral responsibility for the Second Punic War. Likewise, the digressions on the characters of the two Scipios are meant to have a practical and moral influence on the reader’s life as models for emulation.

Common to all the moral-didactic digressions of Polybius, regardless of their topic, are colourful, emotional language, heated rhetorical questions and expressions of *aporia*, expressions of wonder or exhortations to wonder, similes, generalisations, and analogies, often with medical conditions or animals.²¹ In other words, they are designed to persuade and use all the rhetorical tools available to a well-educated Hellenistic Greek.

The shorter form of moralising in narrative pauses, **guiding moralising**, also occurs with great frequency in the *Histories*, in the form of introductory, concluding and concomitant remarks steering a reader’s interpretation of specific episodes. Sometimes this guiding moralising contains proleptic remarks about how a character’s future fate is a consequence of his moral or immoral behaviour. The shortest version is a sentence or two;²² such brief conclusions often follow upon the death of a character

21 E.g. brutality compared with tumours at 1.81 quoted above, greed compared with dropsy at 13.2.2, Philip V and Antiochus III compared with predatory fish at 15.20.

22 E.g. 1.84.10 (concomitant), 2.9.6, 3.19.9–11 (concluding/proleptic), 3.116.9, 4.34.2 (concomitant), 4.67.2–4, 4.80.4, 4.81.5, 5.39.6, 5.56.13, 5.76.11 (all concluding), 6.58.1 (introductory), 11.39.15–16 (concluding), 14.5.15 (concluding), 15.21.1 (introductory), 15.33.10 (concomitant), 27.2.10 (concluding), 27.16.1 (introductory).

and function as miniature obituaries commenting on the deservedness of the death or on the qualities of the dead character.²³ Some slightly longer passages of guiding moralising are simply more explanatory,²⁴ but some use generalising remarks about human behaviour to make their points about specific instances of the historical narrative, such as this introduction to an episode of Aetolian political infighting:²⁵

μήποτε γὰρ οὐδὲν διαφέρει τὰ κατ' ἰδίαν ἀδικήματα τῶν κοινῶν, ἀλλὰ πλήθει μόνον καὶ μεγέθει τῶν συμβαινόντων. καὶ γὰρ κατ' ἰδίαν τὸ τῶν ῥαδιουργῶν καὶ κλεπτῶν φύλον τοῦτ' ἄλλιστ' αὖ τῷ τρόπῳ σφάλλεται, τῷ μὴ ποιεῖν ἀλλήλοισι τὰ δίκαια, καὶ συλλήβδην διὰ τὰς εἰς αὐτοὺς ἀθεσίας. ὁ καὶ τότε συνέβη γενέσθαι περὶ τοὺς Αἰτωλοὺς.

For public crimes differ from private ones only in the extent and quantity of their results. For also in the private sphere the most common cause of the downfall of the whole tribe of criminals and thieves is the fact that they do not treat each other with justice, and, in short, their faithlessness towards each other. This was what happened also to the Aetolians at that point. (Polyb. 4.29.4)

Most of these passages of guiding moralising are descriptive and do nothing more than tell the reader what to think about the events narrated. Some, however, become prescriptive and draw out an explicit moral lesson for the reader.²⁶ A few briefly recap events narrated earlier and then introduce their continuation.²⁷ Despite their differences, all of these passages are still essentially guides to the narrative, which ensure that the reader does not go astray in the understanding of the text, but comes away from his reading with the correct moral evaluation of every character and event and, consequently, with a strong sense of how to live his own life according to a moral compass. This forceful and frequent guidance is one of the main ways in which Polybius tries to fulfil his promise of writing a work useful for the moral improvement of his readers.

²³ Typical examples are 3.116.9, 5.39.6 and 5.56.13. For a good discussion see Pomeroy (1989).

²⁴ E.g. 1.64.5–6 (concluding), 2.57.8 (concluding), 3.105.8–10 (concomitant), 4.17.1–2 (concomitant), 4.35.4 (concomitant), 8.12.6–8 (concluding), 15.25.1 (introductory?), 15.33.6 (concomitant), 16.23.3–4 (concomitant), 16.30.2–3 (introductory), 18.53.1–4 (introductory?), 18.54.8–12 (concluding), 20.11.9–10 (concluding/proleptic), 27.8.9–10 (concomitant), 28.14.1–2 (introductory), 29.22.2 (concomitant), 30.12 (introductory?).

²⁵ Other generalising examples are 1.17.11–12 (concomitant), 1.62.4–6 (introductory), 1.67.4–6 (concomitant), 4.87.3–4 (concomitant), 5.26.12–13 (concomitant), 13.5.4–6 (introductory), 15.17.1–2 (introductory), 18.33.4–7 (introductory).

²⁶ E.g. 1.35.1–3 (concluding), 2.4.3–5 (concluding, quoted on p. 51), 4.35.14–15 (proleptic), 8.21.10–11 (concluding).

²⁷ E.g. 16.13 picking up the narrative of Nabis, tyrant of Sparta.

Moralising in the Narrative of Events

Beside the explicit moralising in digressions and guiding passages, Polybius employs a number of more subtle types of moralising integrated into his narrative of events.

Evaluative phrasing is ubiquitous in the *Histories*, but is more pervasive in some passages than in others. A typical example is the narrative of the beginning of the revolt of Achaeus against Seleucus III:

Σέλευκος γὰρ ὁ νέος ὡς θᾶπτον παρέλαβε τὴν βασιλείαν, πυνθανόμενος Ἄτταλον πᾶσαν ἤδη τὴν ἐπὶ τὰδε τοῦ Ταύρου δυναστείαν ὑφ' αὐτὸν πεποιῆσθαι, παρωμήθη βοηθεῖν τοῖς σφετέροις πράγμασιν. ὑπερβαλὼν δὲ μεγάλη δυνάμει τὸν Ταῦρον, καὶ δολοφονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τ' Ἀπατουρίου τοῦ Γαλάτου καὶ Νικάνορος, μετήλλαξε τὸν βίον. Ἀχαιὸς δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἀναγκαϊότητα τὸν φόνον αὐτοῦ μετήλθε παραχρῆμα, τοὺς περὶ τὸν Νικάνορα καὶ τὸν Ἀπατούριον ἀποκτείνας, τῶν τε δυνάμεων καὶ τῶν ὄλων πραγμάτων φρονίμως καὶ μεγαλοψύχως προέστη. τῶν γὰρ καιρῶν παρόντων αὐτῷ, καὶ τῆς τῶν ὄλων ὀρμῆς συνεργούσης εἰς τὸ διάδημα περιθέσθαι, τοῦτο μὲν οὐ προεῖλετο ποιῆσαι, τηρῶν δὲ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀντιόχῳ τῷ νεωτέρῳ τῶν υἱῶν, ἐνεργῶς ἐπιπορευόμενος ἀνεκτάτο τὴν ἐπὶ τὰδε τοῦ Ταύρου πᾶσαν. τῶν δὲ πραγμάτων αὐτῷ παραδόξως εὐροούντων, ἐπεὶ τὸν μὲν Ἄτταλον εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ Πέργαμον συνέκλεισε, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν πάντων ἦν ἐγκρατής, ἐπαρθεὶς τοῖς εὐτυχίμασι παρὰ πόδας ἐξώκειλε. καὶ διάδημα περιθέμενος καὶ βασιλέα προσαγορεύσας αὐτὸν βαρύτερος ἦν τότε καὶ φοβερώτατος τῶν ἐπὶ τὰδε τοῦ Ταύρου βασιλέων καὶ δυναστῶν· ὧ καὶ μάλιστα τότε Βυζάντιοι πιστεύσαντες ἀνεδέξαντο τὸν πρὸς τοὺς Ῥοδίους καὶ Προυσίαν πόλεμον.

As soon as the young Seleucus had succeeded to the kingship, he learned that Attalus had already brought all the land on this side of the Taurus under his rule, and so he was eager to assert his own claim. He crossed the Taurus with a large army, but was treacherously murdered by Apaturius the Galatian and Nicanor. Achaeus immediately avenged his murder because of their kinship, and when he had killed Nicanor, Apaturius and their accomplices, he commanded the army and ruled the country intelligently and high-mindedly. Indeed, when he had the chance and the impulse of the mob was making it easy for him to assume the diadem, he chose not to do this, but to guard the kingdom for Antiochus, the younger of the sons. With speed and efficiency he marched upon the land this side of Taurus and regained it. But when his campaign had been unexpectedly successful, as he had shut up Attalus in Pergamum itself and had become master of the rest of the country, he became elated by his good fortune and ran aground head over heels. Having assumed the diadem and proclaimed himself king, he was the most oppressive and terrifying of the kings and rulers this side of the Taurus. This was the man in whom the Byzantines especially trusted at that point when they undertook the war against the Rhodians and Prusias. (Polyb. 4.48.7–13)

This is a straight narrative of events with no explicit moralising attached. Nevertheless, at the end of the passage, the reader knows very well that Achaëus is a good man corrupted by success, that his initial refusal of the royal title is the right way to behave, and that it was wrong of him to change his mind later. This impression is created by Polybius' use of morally evaluative phrasing. Firstly, the adverbs φρονίμως and μεγαλοψύχως tell the reader that Achaëus' conduct before his great successes is admirable, both on intellectual (φρονίμως) and on moral (μεγαλοψύχως) grounds. Then, when his success is growing and his troops urge him to assume the diadem, the designation of those troops as τῶν ὄχλων ensures that the reader cannot sympathise with them.²⁸ Moreover, the action of egging on Achaëus to rebel is ascribed not to the mob of soldiers, but to their emotional impulse, τῆς τῶν ὄχλων ὀρμῆς, placing their efforts in the category of the irrational and dangerous. There is thus no doubt that Achaëus' refusal is the only right response. When he goes on to conduct the campaign ἐνεργῶς, the reader can only be impressed: ἐνεργῶς is not a moral word, but belongs to the category of words expressing military efficiency, something always admired by Polybius; and the fact that Achaëus pursues the war of his king 'with speed and efficiency' just after having refused the opportunity to replace this king marks him out as a stout and loyal soldier. Finally, when Achaëus changes his mind and adopts the royal title anyway, the decision is explained by his being 'elated by his good fortune' (ἐπαρθεὶς τοῖς εὐτυχίμασι), putting him in the same irrational and dangerous category as the soldier-mob, and with a striking ship-metaphor he is said to have run 'aground head over heels' (παρὰ πόδας ἐξώκειλε). The moralising is entirely implicit, but the reader is left in no doubt about how to evaluate the episode.

Closely connected with evaluative phrasing and often employed in tandem with it is **internal evaluation** of the actions of a historical character through the eyes of his contemporaries. This usually takes the form of a brief concluding statement, often in the shape of a participial phrase such as 'being thought to have handled matters in a generous and kingly manner' (δόξας μεγαλοψύχως καὶ βασιλικῶς τοῖς πράγμασις κεχρηῆσθαι: 8.23.5) or 'seeming to have given wise and timely advice' (φανέντος δὲ φρονίμως αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς καιροῖς οἰκείως συμβουλευεῖν: 15.19.8). We are not told to whom the protagonists of the two passages seemed kingly and wise respectively, but the evaluation is not contradicted, and so the reader is left to deduce that the thoughts of the unspecified contemporaries were, in fact, sound. In other cases the narrator is explicit about whose evalua-

²⁸ Walbank (1957: *ad loc.*) is surely right that the derogatory phrase here refers to Achaëus' soldiers, not the common people.

tion he is passing on, whether it is that of the ‘moderate men’ or ‘the many’ (33.18.10–11), and the intended reader, who belongs to the same social class as Polybius, is certainly not supposed to agree with ‘the many’. Often such internal evaluations particularly blur the moral and the practical as the approval of the internal audience in turn bolsters the position of the leader who behaved so well.

A complex use of this technique can be seen at 36.9, where Polybius reports four different contemporary views about the justice or injustice of the Roman destruction of Carthage and leaves the reader free to think through the details of each view and then make up his own mind about which one to agree with. Such open-ended moral didacticism is unique in (the extant part of) the *Histories*, and it is most probably partly due to Polybius’ personal circumstances: Carthage had been destroyed by his friend and benefactor Scipio the Younger, and had he agreed with it, he would no doubt have said so and have turned the action into a moral *paradeigma* as he did with so many of Scipio’s other actions. As it stands, the lack of narratorial conclusion is most easily explained by Polybius disapproving of the destruction of the city, but being too loyal a friend to state that in so many words. At the same time, by giving the reader four different views, all based on sound arguments, Polybius is demonstrating how complicated it can be to evaluate morally the actions of historical and contemporary people: it all depends on what criteria you use and what you think is fair. By not taking sides, Polybius is both leaving it up to the reader to decide whom he agrees with, and inviting him to think about and evaluate his own criteria for moral evaluation.²⁹ This passage gives a glimpse of the delicate tightrope Polybius must have walked as the friend and adviser of the increasingly powerful Scipio, but it also shows how important the moral-didactic dimension of the *Histories* was to him and how conscious he was of the different techniques available to fulfil it.

An extended version of internal evaluation is **speeches** delivered by characters in the work. Polybius employs this type of moralising less than the Classical historiographers, as we shall see in Part II, but even for him speeches are an important vehicle for demonstrating how moral principles can apply to specific situations. Speeches in the *Histories* are invariably political. They take place in Assemblies of Greek cities or city-leagues (such as the Achaean League), at peace conferences and before the Roman

29 The lack of narratorial conclusion has led to fierce scholarly debate over Polybius’ own standpoint. The debate is still live, as demonstrated by the fact that the two anonymous readers of this chapter for Edinburgh University Press both offered their own, mutually contradictory, interpretations of the passage. One of these interpretations is partly adopted here. See Hau (2006: 84–7) for a summary of the debate and a more detailed discussion of the passage.

Senate.³⁰ Only four speeches in the extant text are given completely in direct discourse (5.104, 9.28–31, 9.32–9, 11.4–6); many more are offered in a combination of direct and indirect discourse.³¹ The task of figuring out whether or not to agree with a speech is rarely difficult in the *Histories*. Most often the speech or the speaker is endorsed by the narrator either before the speech begins (5.103.9, 30.31.2) or at its end (11.10.1); or we are told that the audience at the Assembly or Senate thought well of it or him, which should lead the reader to do so too (18.3.1, 21.31.6, 30.31.18). Some speakers are portrayed so positively throughout the *Histories* that explicit narratorial endorsement of their speech is unnecessary. For instance, when Philopoemen, who is praised in no fewer than four evaluative digressions,³² speaks about the dishonour of offering and taking bribes at 20.12, the reader needs no narratorial steer in order to understand that his words are meant to carry moral authority.³³ Furthermore, this and some other speeches echo moral attitudes explicitly expressed by the narrator elsewhere (on bribes see 4.35.14–15 and 18.35), which makes it natural to read them as reinforcing the moral didacticism, even when there is no explicit endorsement of the speech by narrator or listeners. This is the case, for example, of the speech by Scipio the Elder to Carthaginian ambassadors after the Battle of Zama where he explains that he will treat them mildly, not for their sake, but for the sake of his own and Rome's honour (corresponding to guiding moralising at 27.8.9–10), and also of the fragment of a speech by Aemilius Paullus on the importance of staying humble even in great success at 29.20 (corresponding to guiding moralising at 8.21.10–11 and 29.22.2, and a moralising digression at 29.21; the two latter passages were probably closely connected with the speech in the unfragmented original text).

The most effective type of moralising integrated into the narrative of the *Histories*, however, is **correlation between action and result**. This type of moralising is displayed when the Achaean League is uniquely successful in uniting the Peloponnese because they act on the basis of *ισηγορία*,

30 The preponderance of ambassadors' speeches is due to the fact that many of the fragments of the last books of the *Histories* have been handed down in an epitome on embassies; the amount of space they take up compared with the rest of Polybius' narrative would look less disproportionate if we had more of those books.

31 For discussions of Polybius' speeches see Pédech (1964: 254–302), Wooten (1974), Champion (1997), Thornton (2013). Discussions tend to focus on the issue of sources and authenticity and usually take their point of departure from Polybius' statement about the duty of the historiographer to report speeches truthfully (Polyb. 36.1.7).

32 At 10.21–4, 11.10, 21.32c and 23.12.

33 Likewise the speeches of Scipio the Elder and Aemilius Paullus, mentioned in this same paragraph, and the speech of Flamininus about the principle of treating the defeated enemy with mildness at 18.37. An interesting case is the speech of Polybius as a character in his own work at 28.7, which should presumably also be understood as authoritative.

παρρησία, ισότης and φιλανθρωπία (2.38.6 and 9) rather than for their own gain (2.37.9), and when Philip V is the ‘darling of Greece’ (κοινός τις οἶον ἐρώμενος ἐγένετο τῶν Ἑλλήνων: 7.11.8) as long as he behaves with moderation and integrity, but as his behaviour changes for the worse, he loses the loyalty of the Greeks and is ultimately defeated by Rome (4.77, 7.11.10–12, 7.13). In other words, those who behave according to the moral code propounded by the narrator are successful whereas those who behave immorally come to grief. This type of moralising runs as a thread through the *Histories*. Thus, just as Scipio Africanus the Elder easily wins over the Spanish allies of the Carthaginians by treating them with respect (10.17–19, 10.35–6, 10.38), a host of kings and commanders treat various people well (their own troops/subjects or their defeated opponents) and are rewarded with honours and loyalty (e.g. Hiero, 1.8–9; Antigonus Gonatas, 2.70; Hannibal, 3.13.8). The principle is made clear in a couple of moralising digressions: 7.11 on how Philip’s fortunes changed when he changed his behaviour for the worse, and 10.36 on how the Carthaginians have alienated their Iberian allies by only treating them well until they had them under their control, and then changing their conduct.³⁴

The force of this moral didacticism comes especially from the fact that the principle underlies much of the narrative of the *Histories* even when it is not explicitly expressed, and it has much wider implications than a ruler or commander’s treatment of his inferiors. Sometimes it is easy for Polybius to show that those he considers the morally better people also come off better in the course of history: the moral Romans are victorious over the lawless Illyrians (2.2–12), the despicable courtier Apelles is finally foiled in his schemes and executed (4.76–5.28), Philip V is victorious as long as he follows a moral code (4.77, 4.82, 7.11), and Greece not only deserved to be conquered by Rome, but was actually saved by it from a morass of immorality (38.18). Likewise, on the macro-level, the main theme of the work is the causes of Rome’s rise to world domination, and Polybius shows that such power came to Rome primarily because it deserved it: Rome’s admirable constitution, the courage, self-discipline and high-mindedness of Rome’s leaders, and the simple fact that everyone else was much less morally deserving all make Rome’s achievement practically explicable as well as morally just. Sometimes, however, it is harder to demonstrate that the world works in such a satisfying fashion: in order to make his father, Lycortas, get his own back from the Achaean politicians who defeated him in politics and got his son deported, Polybius has to tell a story about how the statues of the hated politicians were put into storage and the statues of Lycortas carried out into the light by the people at the end of the Achaean

34 I have discussed this latter passage and the principle it embodies in detail in Hau (2006).

War, long after the death of Lycortas himself (36.13). And, more pronounced, when the supremely moral Philopoemen is executed by poison in captivity, the narrator goes out of his way in his obituary to argue that his downfall was due not to any defect in virtue, but to unforeseeable fortune, *tyche* (23.12).

In these situations this principle that ‘the good win and the bad lose’ is close to the surface of the *Histories*; at other times it disappears. There is no sense of a moral victor or the immoral defeated in the narratives of either the First or the Second Punic War,³⁵ and the narrative of the last ten books seems to show Rome increasing its strength by a string of political decisions which are collectively labelled immoral (31.10.7) and are sometimes individually presented as such (30.18.7, 31.21.6–8).³⁶ Nevertheless, the overall impression a reader gets of the world of the *Histories* is that, by and large, moral behaviour leads to political and military success. This moralising technique is, in contrast with the other techniques outlined above, based on the contents of the story rather than on the form of the discourse. Thus it can be said to be both a moralising technique and a moral lesson, and for that reason we shall reserve more detailed discussion until the analysis of Polybius’ moral messages below.

Moral-Didactic Techniques Working Together

A typology of moral-didactic techniques is useful for investigating and explaining exactly how Polybius fulfils the moral-didactic purpose of his work. At the same time, however, it runs the risk of presenting moral didacticism in Polybius as piecemeal and fragmented. That would be far from the truth. In any section of the *Histories* the different techniques work together to create a coherent historical narrative with a strong moral bent and clear moral lessons. An example is the narrative of Philip V’s siege of Abydus (16.29–34).

The episode begins with a non-moralising digression on the geographical position of Abydus and Sestus (16.29). Then the beginning of the siege is narrated in one sentence (16.30.1) before the next sentence tells the reader

³⁵ End of First Punic War: 1.62–4, where the Carthaginians are defeated in practice, but not in spirit (1.62.1) and their general is praised (1.62.4–6). End of Second Punic War: 15.16–19; Hannibal is praised at 15.16.5–6, and his defeat explained as due to ‘random chance’ (τυγχόντων) which made him face an opponent ‘stronger’ (κρείττονος) than himself.

³⁶ Polybius’ attitude to Roman foreign policy in the years 167–145 BC, while he was on the one hand living in the city against his will (only really true until 149) and on the other became ever closer friends with Scipio the Younger and his friends and family, has been much discussed. The most important contributions are Walbank (1965, 1972: 157–83, 1974, 1977), Musti (1978), Ferrary (1988: 276–318), Eckstein (1995: 194–236), Champion (2004), McGing (2010: 129–68) and Baronowski (2011).

what to look out for in the narrative to follow: not the siege engines or siege works, but the dignity (τὴν γενναιότητα) and remarkable courage (τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς εὐψυχίας) of the besieged (16.30.2–4). This is introductory moralising. The next two chapters tell the story of the siege, marking the increasingly desperate resistance of the Abydenes with occasional evaluative terms in order to remind the reader where his sympathies are supposed to lie (‘stoutly’, ἐρρωμένως: 16.30.4; ‘bravely’, εὐψύχως: 16.30.5). The Abydenian decision, when Philip refuses to come to terms, to entrust some of their elders with killing the women and children and burning the ships and valuables, while they themselves fight to the death, could easily have been presented as a monstrous resolution. Here, however, it is cast in a heroic light with the decision being made ‘unanimously’ (ὁμοθυμαδόν: 16.31.4) and sanctified with sacrifices (16.31.6–7). It is rounded off with a conclusion (16.31.8) that stresses the foresight and authority of the Abydene citizens, their willingness to fight to the death and the destruction wrought by the Macedonians, and the unjust violence of their attackers.³⁷ Then the action is paused for a moralising digression (16.32), which praises the courage of the Abydenes, compares it favourably with the desperate courage shown by other peoples in similar situations (16.32.1–4), and criticises fortune (τῆ τύχῃ) for letting those other peoples be victorious, but allowing not only the Abydenes to be defeated, but also their women and children to fall into the hands of Philip despite the men’s efforts to prevent this (16.32.5–6).³⁸ After the digression the narrative is taken up again, now with more evaluative vocabulary as the Abydenes fight so desperately that Philip is forced to withdraw his troops at nightfall (16.33.1), but are then betrayed by two of the elders in charge of the women and children, who ‘sacrificed what was honourable and admirable about the citizens’ resolution for the sake of their own ambition’ (κατέβαλον τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ θαυμάσιον τῆς τῶν πολιτῶν προαιρέσεως διὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐλπίδας: 16.33.4) and handed over their charges to Philip. The focus then moves first to King Attalus of Pergamum and then to the Romans, who both send ambassadors to tell Philip to desist from the siege (16.34.1–7). After this interlude to show how Philip’s actions are condemned by the outside world – or at least by the part of the outside world which has been set up by Polybius

37 ‘Having ratified this [i.e. the decision to kill the women and children] they stopped counter-mining against the enemy and came to such a decision that whenever the cross-wall fell, they would fight till the end on its ruins against their attackers and die there’ (ταῦτα δ’ ἐπικυρώσαντες τοῦ μὲν ἀντιμεταλλεύειν τοῖς πολεμίοις ἀπέστησαν, ἐπὶ δὲ τοιαύτην γνώμην κατέστησαν ὥστ’ ἐπειδὴν πέση τὸ διατείχισμα, τότε ἐπὶ τοῦ πτώματος διαμάχεσθαι καὶ διαποθῆσκειν πρὸς τοὺς βιαζομένους: Polyb. 16.31.8).

38 I have discussed Polybius’ view of *tyche* elsewhere (Hau 2011) and would here maintain that the reader is not supposed to take the criticism literally, but simply to see the expression as an outcry against the occasional injustice of historical events.

as moral authorities – the taking of the city is skipped over in a participial phrase (ὁ δὲ Φίλιππος κυριεύσας τῆς πόλεως). The narrative then focuses on the suicides taking place all over the fallen city, which move Philip to grant the citizens three days to end their own lives, and concludes with a passage that again stresses the courage and resolve of the Abydenes.³⁹ In this way the different moralising techniques work together to highlight the courage and uprightness of the Abydenes (and, by contrast, the villainy of Philip) and turn it into an *exemplum* for the reader to admire and, if necessary, emulate.

The moralising techniques are tools for Polybius to use in his moral-didactic mission. He uses them skilfully, sometimes individually, sometimes in forceful combinations. There are very few pages of the *Histories* that do not contain some form of moralising. We might say that moral didacticism is the framework that gives shape to the historical narrative as well as the lens through which the events are presented.

MORAL LESSONS OF POLYBIUS

Having analysed the means by which Polybius attempted to educate his readers morally, we now turn to the content of his moral lessons. For the sake of clarity we shall consider these under five headings: combining the morally right with the practically advantageous; the ability to handle the vicissitudes of fortune; the good commander; the good king; and the good man. Under the last three headings are discussed messages concerning the virtues and vices most associated with the three categories of historical characters. Such a division is to a certain extent artificial, as the lessons often overlap and reinforce each other in practice, and I shall attempt to make the main points of contact between them clear as the discussion progresses.

Combining the Morally Right with the Practically Advantageous

A characteristic feature of much of Polybius' moral didacticism is the way in which the morally right tends to go hand in hand with the practically advantageous. The use of the concepts of 'the good' (τὸ καλόν/τὸ δίκαιον)

³⁹ οἱ δ' Ἀβυδηνοί, προδιειληφότες ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς στάσιν, καὶ νομίζοντες οἷον εἰ προδόται γίνεσθαι τῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος ἡγωνισμένων καὶ τεθνεώτων, οὐδαμῶς ὑπέμενον τὸ ζῆν . . . οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ πάντες ὄρμων ἀμελλήτως κατὰ συγγενείας ἐπὶ τὸν θάνατον ('The Abydenes, having decided beforehand for their own sake to carry out their original decree and believing themselves to be like traitors to those who had fought and died for their country, were in no way trying to remain alive . . . All the rest were hurrying to bring about their own deaths without delay, family by family': 16.34.11–12).

and ‘the advantageous’ (τὸ συμφέρον/τὸ ὠφέλιμον) in some passages of the *Histories* has been used to connect Polybius with Stoicism, but what is striking about the *Histories* is exactly that the two are so rarely contrasted and are much more often seen to work together.⁴⁰ This stress on the practical advantages of morally correct behaviour is part of what has earned him a reputation as a cynical pragmatist, but this view only sees half the picture. For Polybius, practical advantage should not be sought at the expense of morality, but naturally results from moral behaviour, thus providing another reason for pursuing such behaviour. This does not make him a cynical pragmatist, but a material moralist.

An extended example of a didactic *paradeigma* in the *Histories* which intertwines practical and moral arguments is 5.9–12, the passage where Polybius most extensively discusses the ‘laws of war’.⁴¹ The moralising is provoked by Philip V’s sacking of the Aetolian city of Thermus. Polybius first narrates the Macedonian troops’ severe ravaging of the surrounding countryside and looting of extremely wealthy city houses, culminating in their burning of all the valuables they cannot carry with them (5.8). This narrative is remarkable for its entirely neutral vocabulary and complete lack of narratorial criticism. But when Polybius then goes on to describe the looting of the temples and destruction of sacred objects, he introduces this narrative with the statement:

Καὶ ἕως μὲν τούτου πάντα κατὰ τοὺς τοῦ πολέμου νόμους καλῶς καὶ δικαίως ἐπράττετο· τὰ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα πῶς γρηὶ λέγειν οὐκ οἶδα.

And until now everything had been done justly and honourably according to the laws of war; but as for what happened afterwards, I do not know how to relate it. (Polyb. 5.9.1)

There follows a narrative of the Macedonian destruction of temples and votive offerings, carried out because Philip and his associates were beside themselves with rage (*παράστασις*) over the Aetolian sacking of Dium and believed that they were only taking just revenge (ὡς δικαίως ταῦτα πρᾶττοντας καὶ καθηκόντως: 5.9.6). This is rounded off with a moralising

⁴⁰ Connection with Stoicism: Hirzel (1882), von Scala (1890: 201–3), Walbank (1957 *ad* 3.4.10). As Walbank recognises, the contrast is much older than the Stoics; it is a *topos* in Thucydides’ speeches and extant Athenian oratory. In Polybius, τὸ καλόν and τὸ συμφέρον are contrasted in speeches at 8.11.7 and 24.12.2 and in the fragments 21.32c (which may well also be from a speech) and 15.24.6. Passages in Polybius where the good and the advantageous are parallel or said to work in unison: 3.4.10, 3.107.8, 7.3.4 (speech), 9.32.11 (speech), 31.30.1.

⁴¹ For Polybius’ rules of war see also 23.15. Von Scala’s opinion (1890: 321–4) that Polybius was inspired by the Peripatetic Demetrius of Phalerum in these views may well be right.

conclusion which becomes at the same time the introduction to a lengthy evaluative digression:

ἔμοι δὲ τάναντία δοκεῖ τούτων. εἰ δ' ὀρθὸς ὁ λόγος, σκοπεῖν ἐν μέσῳ πάρεστι, χρωμένους οὐχ ἑτέροις τισίν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς οἰκίας ταύτης παραδείγμασιν.

I am of the opposite opinion from them. And it is possible to examine objectively whether my argument is right by using no other examples than those from this very house. (Polyb. 5.9.6–7)

The message, although so far unexpressed, must be that it is acceptable to ravage the enemy's land and cities, but unacceptable to destroy temples.

A comparison with Antigonos Doseon, Philip II and Alexander the Great follows (5.9.8–10.8). In a – moral – mental skip from impiety to brutality, Polybius first employs the two former individuals as examples of conquerors who treated the defeated with mildness and magnanimity (ἐπιεικείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας: 5.10.1; τῆ δ' εὐγνωμοσύνη καὶ μετριότητι: 5.10.2; τῆς αὐτοῦ πραότητος καὶ καλοκαγαθίας: 5.10.3; τῆ μεγαλοψυχία: 5.10.4). Antigonos is said to have been honoured for his restrained behaviour not just in Sparta, but throughout Greece even after his death (5.9.10) – not exactly a practical result perhaps, but a pleasing reward for moral behaviour, and one which often accrues to those Polybian victors who avoid abusing the defeated (more about this below). In the case of Philip II, his magnanimity after the Battle of Chaeronea is explicitly said to have led to a practical advantage: by this behaviour he won over the Athenians more effectively than he could have done by force and thus 'by a small expense through his political shrewdness achieved his greatest success' (μικρᾷ δαπάνῃ διὰ τὴν ἀγχίνουσαν τὴν μεγίστην πρᾶξιν κατεργάσατο: 5.10.4). The topic of destruction of sacred buildings is reintroduced by the mention of Alexander the Great, who is praised for leaving the temples of Thebes and Persia untouched and only destroying non-sacred buildings (5.10.6–8). We are not told what practical results he achieved by this; the example is left to reflect badly on Philip V on purely moral grounds.

Polybius then makes the comparison explicit (5.10.9–11) and states that Philip V should have emulated his predecessors in their magnanimity. However,

τοιγαροῦν τάναντία τοῖς προειρημένοις ἀνδράσιν ἐπιτηδεύων τῆς ἐναντίας ἔτυχε παρὰ πᾶσι δόξης.

Therefore, as he practised the opposite behaviour to the aforementioned kings, he met with the opposite reputation from everybody. (Polyb. 5.10.11)

As with Antigonos Doston, the reputation is thought of as a natural result of a man's actions, and it is considered sufficiently important to be mentioned as a desirable or non-desirable result depending on the type of reputation. This is true throughout the *Histories*,⁴² and Polybius always assumes that a reputation is an accurate reflection of a man's actions and nature. Thus, here, he is clearly not suggesting that it would be acceptable to burn down temples as long as one could do it in secret; rather, in his world, being thought to be something or having a reputation for being something is the same as being it.⁴³

In 5.11.3, the discussion moves from the particular to the universal, and Polybius gives his 'law of war':

τὸ μὲν γὰρ παραιρεῖσθαι τῶν πολεμίων καὶ καταφθεῖρειν φρούρια, λιμένας, πόλεις, ἄνδρας, ναῦς, καρπούς, ἄλλα τὰ τούτοις παραπλήσια, δι' ὧν τοὺς μὲν ὑπεναντίους ἀσθενεστέρους ἂν τις ποιήσαι, τὰ δὲ σφέτερα πράγματα καὶ τὰς ἐπιβολὰς δυναμικωτέρας, ταῦτα μὲν ἀναγκάζουσιν οἱ τοῦ πολέμου νόμοι καὶ τὰ τούτου δίκαια δρᾶν· τὸ δὲ μήτε τοῖς ἰδίοις πράγμασιν ἐπικουρίαν μέλλοντα μὴδ' ἠντιοῦν παρασκευάζειν μήτε τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἐλάττωσιν πρὸς γε τὸν ἐνεστῶτα πόλεμον ἐκ περιττοῦ καὶ ναοὺς, ἅμα δὲ τούτοις ἀνδριάντας καὶ πᾶσαν δὴ τὴν τοιαύτην κατασκευὴν λυμαίνεσθαι, πῶς οὐκ ἂν εἴποι τις εἶναι τρόπου καὶ θυμοῦ λυττῶντος ἔργον; οὐ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀπωλεία δεῖ καὶ ἀφανισμῷ τοῖς ἀγνοήσασι πολεμεῖν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ διορθώσει καὶ μεταθέσει τῶν ἡμαρτημένων, οὐδὲ συναναιρεῖν τὰ μὴδὲν ἀδικοῦντα τοῖς ἡδίκηκόσιν, ἀλλὰ συσσωζέειν μᾶλλον καὶ συνεξαίρεισθαι τοῖς ἀναίτιοις τοὺς δοκοῦντας ἀδικεῖν. τυράννου μὲν γὰρ ἔργον ἐστὶ τὸ κακῶς ποιοῦντα τῷ φόβῳ δεσπόζειν ἀκουσίῳ, μισούμενον καὶ μισοῦντα τοὺς ὑποταττομένους· βασιλέως δὲ τὸ πάντας εὖ ποιοῦντα, διὰ τὴν εὐεργεσίαν καὶ φιλάνθρωπίαν ἀγαπώμενον, ἐκόντων ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ προστατεῖν.

To take away from the enemy and to destroy his forts, harbours, cities, men, ships, crops, and all other similar things through the removal of which one might make the enemy weaker and strengthen one's own situation and campaign plans, these actions are forced upon us by the laws and justice of war. But to vandalise uselessly temples as well as statues and all such items without thereby aiding one's own affairs in the slightest and without weakening the enemy in the relevant war – how can one not say that this is the action of a raving mad character? Good men should wage war on the ignorant not to destroy them utterly, but to change their behaviour and correct their errors, and they should not destroy the innocent along with the guilty, but rather save those who seem to have done wrong along with the innocent. For a tyrant does evil and rules his subjects through fear, hated by and

42 See e.g. 15.22.2–3, 22.14.1–4 and 31.23–30.

43 See Eckstein (1995: 149–50). I frequently walk past a hairdresser's window that proudly proclaims 'A Reputation For Excellence Since 1956'. In the twenty-first century too, we are sometimes supposed to understand that a reputation for excellence is the same as true excellence.

hating his subjects, but a king does good to everyone, is loved because of his benefactions and kindness, and rules as a leader over the willing. (Polyb. 5.11.3–6)

We are now explicitly told that destroying the land and practically useful buildings of the enemy is not only allowed but, in fact, necessary according to the ‘laws of war’ and also quite acceptable (*ἀναγκάζουσιν οἱ τοῦ πολέμου νόμοι καὶ τὰ τούτου δίκαια*). If the victor destroys sacred buildings and objects, however, this is the sign of a sick mind. This neatly illustrates the close connection between the practically advantageous and the morally right in the *Histories*: it is fine to push one’s own advantage by destroying the land, buildings and men of the enemy, but one should not destroy anything just for the sake of destroying it. Presumably there is also a religious reason for avoiding the destruction of sacred property, but that is not spelled out (and we shall return to Polybius’ lessons on piety below). It is worth noting that Polybius’ ‘rules of war’ pose a very different distinction from the rules of the Geneva Convention, which stresses the difference between military personnel and equipment, which are legitimate targets, and the civilian population and their homes, which are not. Polybius, living in an age where many soldiers were still citizen soldiers and an army had to live off the land, considers civilian homes and fields acceptable targets, and only religious buildings out of bounds.

Even more interesting, however, is the way in which Polybius slides from talking in concrete terms about allowed and off-limit targets to (in 5.11.5–6) expressing much more general sentiments, which seem only tangentially related to his first point. The prescriptively moralising statement that good men should wage war not to destroy their enemies, but to ‘*correct their errors*’ seems slightly out of kilter with the apparently religiously motivated rules of war just laid out. How much less is an enemy destroyed if one razes every building to the ground except his temples? Even more confusingly, the second part of the prescription, that rather than destroying the innocent along with the guilty, the guilty should be spared so as not to harm the innocent, seems much closer to the Geneva Convention than to the Hellenistic laws of war Polybius has just propounded. It seems that, as in the paradigmatic section about Antigonos Doseon, Philip II and Alexander the Great, Polybius slides easily and unconsciously between a discussion of the destruction of buildings and crops to a discussion of general brutality on the part of the victor.

The slippage becomes obvious in the final sentence of the quoted passage, which states the time-honoured maxim that a tyrant rules through wicked deeds and fear and is hated whereas a king rules through benefactions and kindness and is loved. We have now evidently moved from the immediate

actions of a victor when overrunning a country to the long-term behaviour of a conqueror who intends to keep and rule his conquest. Considering the age of Roman conquest in which Polybius wrote, it is not surprising that the two situations were closely connected in his mind, but it reveals the close connection between the practical and the moral good in the *Histories*: although the initial, concrete lecturing on the laws of war, which was directly provoked by an incident in the narrative, condemns the destruction of religious buildings on the basis that this does not bring any concrete advantage, and thus seems to prioritise practical benefit over morality in a hierarchy of virtues, this hierarchy changes as the digression moves further and further away from the narrative of the incident that sparked it. No practical advantage is mentioned as attaching to the maxim that one should not aim to destroy one's enemies, and the practical advantage of the good king (being loved by his subjects, who will then not revolt) is just a pleasant by-product of his morally good behaviour, which is an end in itself.

In the last paragraph of the digression (5.11.7–12.4), Polybius returns to Philip V and imagines counterfactually what would have been the reaction of the Aetolians if Philip had refrained from destroying their temples:⁴⁴ they would have condemned themselves, but admired Philip (αὐτῶν μὲν καταγινώσκειν, τὸν δὲ Φίλιππον ἀποδέχεσθαι καὶ θαυμάζειν) for his kingliness and nobility (βασιλικῶς καὶ μεγαλοψύχως: 5.12.1) and have yielded to him. This may seem a slightly naive assumption to a cynical reader, but it shows how ingrained the idea that morally good conduct leads to practically good results is in the moral framework of the *Histories*.

Polybius concludes, in a rhetorically balanced passage that beautifully combines the practical with the moral:

καὶ μὴν τό γε νικῆσαι τοὺς πολεμίους καλοκαγαθία καὶ τοῖς δικαίοις οὐκ ἐλάττω, μείζω δὲ παρέχεται χρεῖαν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις κατορθωμάτων. οἷς μὲν γὰρ δι' ἀνάγκην, οἷς δὲ κατὰ προαίρεσιν εἰκOUSιν οἱ λειφθέντες· καὶ τὰ μὲν μετὰ μεγάλων ἐλαττωμάτων ποεῖται τὴν διόρθωσιν, τὰ δὲ χωρὶς βλάβης πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον μετατίθησι τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας.

Surely, to conquer one's enemies by honourable and lawful behaviour is more, not less, useful than victories won by use of arms. For in the one case, the survivors yield from necessity, in the other from choice; and in the one case the correction of behaviour is achieved alongside great disadvantages, in the other the behaviour of the wrongdoers is changed to the better without harm. (Polyb. 5.12.2–3)

Conquering without the use of arms is easier and cheaper, but also more honourable. The practical and the moral purpose are so closely

44 On the role of such counterfactuals in Polybius see Maier (2013).

intertwined that it is impossible to see where one ends and the other begins. Such combining of the moral and the practical is a distinctive feature of Polybius' writing. Many of the characters who earn the highest praise in the *Histories* are men who, in the eyes of Polybius, acted morally and thereby won advantages for themselves (e.g. Scipio the Elder acting as the moderate victor at New Carthage at 10.17–19, and Scipio the Younger training for political life at 31.25–30), and some of the most famous passages of the work are lengthy didactic digressions which combine the two aspects: 3.22–32 on the legal and moral responsibility for the Second Punic War, and all of book 6 on the moral and practical excellence of the Roman constitution.

In moral-didactic terms, that means that the reader of the *Histories* is taught that it usually pays to be good. It also means that moral advice and practical advice are often intermingled in prescriptive passages, particularly those that deal with how to be a good military commander (see below).

The Ability to Handle the Vicissitudes of Fortune

In the preface to the *Histories*, quoted above, Polybius states that the study of history is both 'the truest education and training for civic engagement' and 'the most vivid and indeed only teacher of how to bear the vicissitudes of fortune with dignity'. This is an announcement of a twofold didactic purpose: partly to offer practical and moral advice specifically for the politician, partly to provide moral examples to follow and avoid for the private person who finds himself a victim of shifting fortunes. In scholarship on Polybius it is the first purpose that has received by far the most attention. However, it is surely of no little interest that the – at first glance rather more limited and entirely moral – lesson of how to bear the ups and downs of life with dignity occupies as important a place in Polybius' purpose statement as the broader lesson, both practical and moral, of how to engage in political life.

The theme is also prominent in the second preface, where the narrator, as we have seen above (p. 26), explains that he cannot end his work in 167 BC as originally envisioned because the reader would be unable to 'form a considered opinion' (ποιήσασθαι τὴν διάληψιν) about people and states on the basis of their successes (τῶν κατορθωμάτων) and failures (τῶν ἐλαττωμάτων) alone. Such an opinion can only be formed on the basis of the manner in which the two parties handled their respective success and misfortune. It is clear from the use of the nouns *κατόρθωμα* and *ἐλάττωμα* that Polybius here thinks of success and failure primarily in military terms, as victory and defeat. More specifically, the last ten books

of the *Histories* are supposed to offer the reader a sound basis for ‘forming a considered opinion’ about how Rome handled the good fortune that was world dominance, and how the conquered states handled their corresponding misfortune.

The fact that the theme of human ability to cope with good and bad fortune is central to both of Polybius’ prefaces shows that it was at the heart of what he wanted to do with his *Histories*. No other ancient historiographer puts this theme front and centre to the same degree. Throughout the *Histories* the theme permeates the work at every level. It also figures in programmatic statements outside of the prefaces (1.35), and it lies at the heart of Polybius’ fascination with the Roman constitution, which shows its worth in that it prevents the state from growing overconfident in good fortune (Polyb. 6.18.5–6). It is a frequent topic in speeches delivered by characters (e.g. the speeches of Scipio and Hannibal to each other after the Battle of Zama, 15.6.4–8.14), and it is the most common topic for explicit moralising in the work as a whole.⁴⁵ Perhaps surprisingly when seen from the point of view of modern readers, the focus is more often on the ability to bear success than to bear misfortune. In the world of the *Histories* the temptation to overstep the boundaries when successful is quite simply the one thing that most often leads human beings astray from the path of morality.⁴⁶ The mistake is so common that success, especially political or military success, becomes a sort of test, which most men fail by becoming arrogant and abusive, and only a few pass by staying humble and humane.

The first explicit moralising on a character’s handling of changeable fortunes is 1.35. This is the conclusion to the story of how the Roman consul M. Atilius Regulus first defeats the Carthaginians in battle and arrogantly offers them such harsh conditions that they decide to fight on, whereupon he himself is defeated in battle and taken captive by the Carthaginians:

Ἐν ᾧ καιρῷ πολλά τις ἂν ὀρθῶς ἐπισημαινόμενος εὔροι πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίου συντελεσθέντα. καὶ γὰρ τὸ διαπιστεῖν τῇ τύχῃ, καὶ μάλιστα κατὰ τὰς εὐπραγίας, ἐναργέστατον ἐφάνη πᾶσιν τότε διὰ τῶν Μάρκου συμπτωμάτων· ὁ γὰρ μικρῷ πρότερον οὐ δίδους ἔλεον οὐδὲ συγγνώμην τοῖς πταίουσιν παρὰ πόδας αὐτὸς ἦγετο δεησόμενος τούτων περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ σωτηρίας.

45 Passages moralising explicitly on how to handle good and bad fortune: 1.35.1–3, 2.2–4, 3.31.2–4, 4.48.5–13, 5.46.6–7, 6.2.5–6, 6.10, 6.18.5–6, 6.44, 8.20.8–12, 8.21.10–11, 9.42.5–8, 10.17.6–19, 10.40, 11.2, 15.6.3–8.14, 15.17.4, 18.33.4–7, 18.37, 25.3.9–10, 27.8.8–9, 29.20, 30.6–9, 36.4.9–5.5.

46 The importance of bearing good fortune with moderation is propounded so often in the *Histories* that Walbank (1957: 19) terms it ‘the same trite homily’ repeated with ‘monotonous regularity’.

If one distinguishes correctly, it is possible to find in this situation much to contribute to the correction of human life. Because of what happened to Marcus, everyone at the time saw clearly that fortune should be distrusted, especially in times of success. For he who only a little before had not offered pity or mercy to the defeated was almost immediately himself led away to beg for his own life from these same people. (Polyb. 1.35.1–3)

This prescriptively moralising conclusion makes the narrative of Regulus a didactic *paradeigma* and an interpretative template for the many similar stories that follow.⁴⁷ The passage links back to the implicitly moralising narrative of Regulus' earlier treatment of the ambassadors from the defeated Carthaginians (1.31). Here, Regulus was said to make 'harsh demands' (τὸ βάρος τῶν ἐπιταγμάτων: 1.31.6; τῆ βαρύτητι τοῦ Μάρκου: 1.31.7) because he believed that he had already won the final victory (ὡς ἤδη κεκρατηκῶς τῶν ὄλων: 1.31.6). In this he was clearly mistaken, and his mistake leads to his own undoing, demonstrating that, in typical Polybian fashion, it would have been more advantageous to have behaved with moderation and humility. Despite the fact that Regulus' situation was quite different from that of the men he had previously humiliated – they were ambassadors negotiating on behalf of their threatened city; Regulus is a captive, but his city is not under direct threat – the narrator makes it sound as if he has swapped places with the men he previously humiliated: 'he who only a little before . . . was almost immediately himself led away to beg for his own life from these same people'. The result is an emphasis on the striking, paradoxical or ironic in the change in Regulus' circumstances, which gives it an air of a dramatic *peripeteia*.

Regulus thus fails the test of good fortune. So does the rebel Achaeus, whose adoption of the royal title was used as an example of moralising by means of evaluative vocabulary above (pp. 35–6). His capture and execution by Antiochus III later earn a moralising conclusion admonishing the reader to trust no one easily (μηδενὶ πιστεύειν ῥαδίως) and not to be boastful in success (μὴ μεγαλαυχεῖν ἐν ταῖς εὐπραγίαις) because, 'being human', we need always to be prepared for everything (πάν δὲ προσδοκᾶν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας: 8.21.11). Similarly, the Aetolians are turned into a negative *paradeigma* in 2.2–4. Here they lay siege to the city of Medium, and when the city is on the verge of giving in just before the annual election of the Aetolian *strategos*, the retiring *strategos* claims his right before the Aetolian Assembly to a part of the spoils when the city falls. The Assembly decides that both the retiring and the new *strategos* will have their part,

⁴⁷ It seems that the laudatory Regulus legend of the Roman tradition, seen most famously in Hor. *Carm.* 3.5 and Cic. *Off.* 3.99, had not yet taken root at the time of Polybius; see Leach (2014).

and that both names will be inscribed on the victory dedication. Shortly afterwards the Medionians receive help from the Illyrians, who overwhelm the Aetolian lines and liberate the city. The Medionians celebrate and dedicate the captured arms to the gods with a mocking inscription mentioning both the retired and the new Aetolian *strategos*. The narrator concludes:

τῆς τύχης ὡσπερ ἐπίτηδες καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ἐπὶ τῶν ἐκείνοις συμβαινόντων ἐνδεικνυμένης τὴν αὐτῆς δύναμιν. ἃ γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῖ προσεδόκων ὅσον ἤδη πείσεσθαι, ταῦτα πράττειν αὐτοῖς ἐκείνοις παρέδωκεν ἐν πάνυ βραχεῖ χρόνῳ κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων. Αἰτωλοὶ δὲ τῇ παραδόξῳ χρησάμενοι συμφορᾷ πάντας ἐδίδαξαν μηδέποτε βουλευέσθαι περὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος ὡς ἤδη γεγονότος, μηδὲ προκατελπίζειν βεβαιουμένους ὑπὲρ ὧν ἀκμὴν ἐνδεχόμενόν ἐστιν ἄλλως γενέσθαι, νέμειν δὲ μερίδα τῷ παραδόξῳ πανταχῇ μὲν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας, μάλιστα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς.

Fortune, as if on purpose, demonstrating its power to other human beings by what had happened to these men. For the things which they themselves had been expecting imminently to suffer at the hands of their enemies she granted them to do themselves to those enemies a very short time later. And the Aetolians, in suffering this unexpected disaster, taught everyone never to deliberate about the future as if it has already happened and never to expect firmly things which may yet possibly turn out otherwise, but to allot a portion to the unexpected in all matters since we are human, and especially in war. (Polyb. 2.4.3–5)

Again we see the sudden change in circumstances attributed to fortune (*tyche*), and again we have a reminder that we are only human and thus cannot know the future. As in the Regulus passage, there is also a deliberate mirroring of previous success with present misfortune (the inscription on the shields mocking the decree of the Aetolians), and it is hinted that an abusive or overconfident victor is brought low exactly because of his abusiveness or overconfidence. These features are all typical of Polybius' moralising on the topic of the changeability of fortune and human ability to cope with it. It is important to point out, however, that Polybius – in contrast with Diodorus, as we shall see in the next chapter – never explicitly says that such actions or attitudes are punished by *tyche* or the divine; the closest he gets is saying that it 'looked as if' *tyche* had punished the overconfident (2.4.3, 1.86.7, 20.7.2).⁴⁸ Nonetheless it is a fact, and a very didactic one, that characters in the *Histories* who do not know how to handle good fortune with moderation usually come to sticky ends.⁴⁹

While most characters in the *Histories* fall into the trap of becoming overconfident in good fortune, there are a heroic few who avoid the pitfall.

48 *Contra* Roveri (1982: 322), who uses 2.4.3–5 as an example of *tyche* acting as punisher. For a discussion of the concept of *tyche* in Polybius see Hau (2011).

49 See e.g. 1.35.1–3, 2.2–4, 4.48.5–13 with 8.20, 5.46.6–7 with 5.48, 25.3.9–10.

The first conspicuous example (in the extant text) is Scipio Africanus the Elder. After his victories over the Carthaginians in Iberia the former allies of the Carthaginians come over to his side in droves, and they address him as ‘king’. Scipio is here in a situation similar to that of Achaëus, but he handles the situation rather better, and tells the Iberians that ‘he wanted to be called kingly by everyone and to truly live up to that, but that he did not want to be king or to be called king by anyone’.⁵⁰ The narrator then launches into an evaluative digression in praise of this action, stating that it proves Scipio’s ‘greatness of soul’ (μεγαλοψυχία) that he did not accept what *tyche* offered him (10.40.6). It is even more impressive, the narrator says, that Scipio rejected the temptation later in life when he was the conqueror of the entire world and was hailed as king everywhere, and this truly shows to what degree ‘Scipio surpassed other men in greatness of soul’.⁵¹

The two other characters who conspicuously avoid the trap are Aemilius Paullus and his adopted son, grandson of Scipio the Elder, Scipio Africanus the Younger. Both of these express the Polybian message in a speech delivered to fellow-Romans using a defeated enemy as an example of the changeability of fortune: Scipio the Younger points to the surrendered Carthaginian statesman Hasdrubal and declares that this demonstrates the power of *tyche* and teaches that human beings should not become overconfident (μηδέποτε λέγειν μηδὲ πράττειν μηδὲν υπερήφανον ἄνθρωπον ὄντα: 38.20); Aemilius Paullus expresses the doctrine in more detail when presenting the captured Perseus to the Senate (in an example of a speech that gains its didactic authority from corresponding to narratorial moralising elsewhere in the work, 29.20). Both of these examples spring from the type of situation that most often sparks Polybian moralising on the right way to handle good fortune, namely scenes of the victorious general. In these situations the question of how to behave in great success becomes a question of how to treat the defeated and/or captives, and the challenge – which most victors fail – is to show mildness and magnanimity because of a realisation that we are all human beings and subjects of unstable fortune.⁵² A corollary of such an awareness of one’s humanity, with its limited control and its solidarity with other human beings, is that the victor treats the defeated mildly, not because they deserve it, but because this is the way to preserve his own honour and enhance his own glory (see especially 15.17.4). This then becomes a way of breaking the circle of revenge dictated by traditional Greek morality.⁵³

50 βούλεσθαι καὶ λέγεσθαι παρὰ πᾶσι καὶ ταῖς ἀληθείαις ὑπάρχειν, βασιλεὺς γε μὴν οὐτ’ εἶναι θέλειν οὔτε λέγεσθαι παρ’ οὐδενί: 10.40.5.

51 τοσοῦτον ὑπερέθετο μεγαλοψυχία τοῦς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους: 10.40.9.

52 Examples are: 9.42–5–8, 10.17–19, 15.4.6–12, 15.17.4, 22.16.

53 Such ‘victor-after-the-victory scenes’ have been discussed in detail as a type-scene in Greek historiography more generally in Hau (2008).

An interesting variation on the *paradeigma* of the good, moderate victor is the crying general. The most famous example is Scipio the Younger at the burning of Carthage. In a short fragment found in the Constantinian excerpts Scipio and Polybius, as a character in his own work, are watching the flames together, and Scipio exclaims ‘Polybius, this is a glorious moment, but somehow I fear and foresee that some day someone else will give this same order with regard to my country.’⁵⁴ The quotation is followed by an enthusiastic endorsement by the narrator, who labels the ability to keep in mind, at the moment of victory, the instability of human fortune and the possibility that it may be turned around in the future ‘a characteristic of a great man and one worthy of remembrance’ (μεγάλου καὶ τελείου καὶ συλλήβδην ἀξίου μνήμης: 38.21.3). From the later historian Appian⁵⁵ we have testimony about what the rest of the scene looked like. In a passage which professes to be a summary of Polybius, Scipio cries for his enemy (δακρῦσαι καὶ φανερός γενέσθαι κλαίων ὑπὲρ πολεμίων) and quotes the *Iliad* 6.448-9, which predicts the fall of Troy, as an allegory for the future fall of Rome. It is probably safe to assume that the narratorial endorsement in the original *Histories* encompassed both the Homeric quotation and the tears beside the first exclamation.⁵⁶ Earlier in the *Histories*, Antiochus III bursts into tears when looking at the captured rebel Achaeus (8.20.9-10), who has been threatening his rule for years. The narrator comments: ‘This happened to him, I think, because he saw how unexpected and impossible to guard against events caused by *tyche* can be.’⁵⁷ Thirdly, in Diodorus 27.6.1, which almost certainly used Polybius as a source, Scipio the Elder cries at the sight of the captured Syphax.⁵⁸

It seems that tears at the sight of a defeated enemy are an appropriate response in Polybius. The tears must be provoked by pity for the vanquished, but the pity seems closely bound up with an intellectual and emotional realisation that fortunes are changeable and that the same fate may at some time in the future strike the victor himself (or his country). This is a different sort of pity from the one encouraged by Christianity, which does not rely on any sense that a similar fate may strike the pitier, and is strongly connected with compassion; but it is closely related to the Aristotelian description of pity as an emotion felt for someone

54 ὦ Πολύβιε, ἔφη ‘καλὸν μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἐγὼ δέδια καὶ προορώμαι μὴ ποτέ τις ἄλλος τοῦτο τὸ παράγγελμα δώσει περὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πατρίδος: 38.21.1.

55 App. *Pun.* 132, included in the Loeb edition of Polybius as 38.22.

56 For a cogent argument about which one of the three versions of this passage to accept as Polybius’ original see Walbank (1979: *ad loc.*).

57 τοῦτο δ’ ἔπαθεν ὄρων, ὡς ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, τὸ δυσφύλακτον καὶ παράλογον τῶν ἐκ τῆς τύχης συμβαινόντων: 8.20.10.

58 The tears of Scipio are briefly discussed by Brink and Walbank (1954: 104), who argue that this response marks him out in the *Histories* as a ‘sensitive Hellenist’.

similar to oneself suffering something that might conceivably happen to oneself.⁵⁹

We may wonder whether the crying victor is perhaps a way for the historiographer to make otherwise criticisable behaviour towards the defeated (such as burning their city) or the captured (such as executing them, perhaps after parading them in a triumph) into something that can be praised and used as a positive moral *paradeigma*, but Polybius may not have thought about it in such cynical terms. He may have considered the execution of enemy leaders such as Perseus and Syphax, and perhaps even the burning of Carthage (although see above, p. 37), a military necessity to ensure the safety of the victor's own city, much as the burning of farmland and the killing of the inhabitants were considered acceptable in the 'rules of war' passage discussed above. In that case, the difference between a humble and an overconfident victor becomes the perpetrating or avoidance of extra, unnecessary harm to the captives, and the state of mind in which the burning of the city was executed. That is, if Scipio the Elder had tortured and humiliated Syphax, or if Scipio the Younger had laughed and joked while burning Carthage, they would have been made into negative *paradeigmata*.⁶⁰ As it is, the tears and the expressed awareness of the changeability of fortune make them positive ones.

Considering the emphasis in the *Histories* on the changeability of fortune and the right way to handle success, we might expect an equally codified system for how to cope with misfortune. In fact, moralising on the ability or inability to handle misfortune and defeat is significantly less frequent. The most explicit *paradeigma* is Philip V after his defeat at Cynoscephalae. In an evaluative digression the narrator expresses his surprise that someone who did not know how to behave in success could handle defeat so well (18.33.1–4). Three specific actions of Philip are praised: that he has done everything he could to win the battle, that he makes an effort to gather the survivors, and that he burns the royal correspondence in order not to implicate anyone else in his downfall. What is admired is Philip's ability to show forethought even in this extreme situation by exercising some degree of damage control instead of fleeing in panic. In other words, Philip is praised for keeping his head in misfortune and for not taking others with him in his fall.

Such cool-headed, rational behaviour in defeat is generally admired in the *Histories*. Various peoples are praised for not panicking and for stand-

59 Arist. *Rh.* 2.8 1385b. For a lucid discussion of this view of pity see Pelling (2012).

60 In practice, considering Polybius' friendship with the younger Scipio and his Roman readership, this might have been difficult. If Polybius had wanted to criticise either Scipio's behaviour as victor, he would have had to do it subtly, in a similar way to his questioning of the justice of destroying Carthage in 36.9 (see above, p. 37).

ing by their principles even in defeat. Thus, after their defeat by Regulus, the Carthaginians refuse his unreasonable conditions *γενναίως* (1.31.8); after Cannae the Roman Senate prevents the populace from panicking and considers their options *ἀνδρωδῶς* (3.118.7); and after a defeat in the Social War the Achaeans keep standing by their allies and bear the disaster *γενναίως* (4.15.5): each situation functions as a *paradeigma* contributing to the purpose Polybius declared for his work in his preface. Similarly, but more dramatically, individuals are usually praised for their ability to accept when they are beaten and for their courage in facing the consequences, be they forced negotiations (Hamilcar Barca, 1.62.3–6), compliance with harsh demands (Hannibal, 15.19.8; Mago the Bruttian, 36.4.9–5.5) or even death (Cleomenes, 5.38–9; Hasdrubal, 11.2). A fragment from *De Virtutibus et Vitiis* is a lengthy evaluative digression contrasting good and bad behaviour in extreme political misfortune (30.6–9). It discusses the actions of the Greek statesmen who had opposed Rome and were faced with the consequences after the Battle of Pydna. Some committed suicide and are elaborately praised by the narrator (30.7.1–4). Others, who had never been openly on the side of Perseus, faced charges and resourcefully defended themselves in court. They are also praised, if a little less enthusiastically (30.7.5–8). A third category, however, panicked, accused others in order to save themselves, and fled from one corner of the Greek world to the other, thereby bringing other people into danger by asking for protection, until they were finally apprehended and executed. This category is turned into a detailed and scornful negative *paradeigma* (30.8–9). They are criticised not for being on the wrong side or for failing in their political endeavours (as argued by Walbank 1965), but for not having the courage to take responsibility for their own actions and face the consequences.⁶¹

The overall message is that human beings cannot control the world, that we may all be brought to the extremes of good and bad fortune in our lives, but that we can control our own reactions to such events and that we must bear either with equal dignity (the *γενναίως* of the preface). In success this means staying humble and humane; in disaster it means keeping a clear

⁶¹ This passage is lucidly discussed by Eckstein (1995: 40–3), whose excellent book offers a discussion of many aspects of Polybius' moralising and connects it with biographical details of Polybius' life. He concludes that Polybius' moral stance is that of the traditional Greek elite, and that his main message is an exhortation to his fellow-aristocrats, Greek and Roman, to combine this ethos with the courage to take significant action and live with its consequences. It will become clear from the analysis offered below that I largely agree with Eckstein on the traditional nature of Polybius' views, although I believe that there are two significant exceptions to it. Likewise I agree that courage to take action and live with its consequences was one of Polybius' moral messages, but taking this as his only message is too narrow a view of a long and complex text. The passage is also well discussed by Petzold (1969: 59–60).

head and carrying on if possible, or facing the consequences unflinchingly if there is no other way out.

Courage, Reason and the Good Commander

Apart from the ability to handle success, the two virtues most often praised in the *Histories* are courage and reason. Let us begin with the more traditional virtue, namely courage.

The courage to face defeat which has been discussed above fits into a larger Polybian didactic message about taking responsibility for one's actions. Into this category fall several passages which blame a people for its own disaster, such as the digression castigating the Epirotes for allowing a garrison stronger than their own city and made up of barbarians (2.7.5–12), and the famous digression on why the Greek catastrophe of 145 BC was worse than the Carthaginian one of 146 BC (answer: because they could not blame it on fortune, but only on their own folly, 38.1–3). Passages such as these show that Eckstein is right to take the courage to face the consequences of one's actions as one of the major moral lessons a reader is supposed to draw from the *Histories*.⁶²

More traditional, physical courage of the type shown on the battlefield is equally prominent in the didactic programme of the *Histories*. The nouns τόλμα, ἀνδρεία, εὐψυχία and γενναϊότης as well as their adjective and adverb cognates, proliferate in battle descriptions and are clearly meant to be worthy of imitation (see e.g. 3.116–117). The repeated instances of such characteristics making the difference between victory and defeat,⁶³ or between a city's being lost or saved,⁶⁴ amount to implicit moralising by the correlation between behaviour and result. The fierce but futile resistance against Philip V by the citizens of Abydus discussed above (pp. 40–2 is the exception that proves the rule: in the moralising digression that precedes the treachery of the elders and thereby the fall of the city and the mass suicide of the citizens, the narrator states that:

διὸ καὶ μάλιστα ἄν τις ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀβυδηῶν περιπετείας μέμψαιτο τῇ τύχῃ, διότι τὰς μὲν τῶν προειρημένων συμφορὰς οἷον ἐλεήσασα παραυτίκα διωρθώσατο, περιθείσα τὴν νίκην ἅμα καὶ τὴν σωτηρίαν τοῖς ἀηλιπισμένοις, περὶ δ' Ἀβυδηῶν τὴν ἐναντίαν εἶχε διάληψιν.

Therefore one might well blame fortune for the dramatic change in the Abydenes' situation because she, as if in pity, immediately set right the fates of the aforementioned peoples and brought about victory and salvation for

62 Eckstein (1995: *passim*, esp. 210–25, 272–83).

63 See e.g. 1.53.13, 2.33.7 with 2.32.9–10, 5.4.6–13.

64 See e.g. 1.36.7, 2.9.1–6, 4.57.2–58, 5.76.11.

those who had lost all hope, but for the Abydenes she held the opposite judgement. (Polyb. 16.32.5)

Polybius clearly thinks that the Abydenes should have been saved by their bravery, and the fact that they were not is so inexplicable that it can only be put down to the work of fortune.⁶⁵ Usually in the *Histories*, courage is one of the main qualities needed for success, not only in individual battles, but also in the long term. Thus, one of the main benefits of the Roman constitution is that it instils courage into its citizens (6.52–5), and it is this constitution that has won Rome world supremacy (6.2.8–10).

On an individual level, courage is displayed conspicuously by the major heroes of the *Histories* (Philopoemen. 2.67–9; Scipio the Younger, 31.29' 35.4), and is a stock characteristic of any good man, listed along with other qualities such as – typically – good birth, generosity, moderation and intelligence.⁶⁶ At the opposite end of the spectrum, cowardice is one of the vices typically listed for any bad character in the *Histories*, along with other undesirable qualities such as laziness, greed and effeminacy (e.g. Agathocles, 15.34; Prusias, 36.15). Some major villains, however, are brave, but morally corrupt: Antiochus III displays bravery at 11.39.15–16, but turns into a villain at 15.20; Philip V is described as courageous at 4.77–8 and turns bad at 7.11. The Celtic barbarians are inherently brave,⁶⁷ but are ultimately ineffective because their bravery is not tempered with reason (2.35.2–3). A good man in the *Histories* needs a combination of courage and reason, steered by a moral compass.

Likewise, a good military commander in the *Histories* needs to be brave, but to hold his courage in check with reason. Reason is particularly emphasised in two of the work's longest digressions, one offering general thoughts about the qualities that make a good commander (9.12–20; the context is lost) and one focusing particularly on the qualities of Scipio Africanus the Elder (10.2–5). The digression on the generic good commander is obviously didactic, but less obviously moralising. The digression begins with the statement that success is possible in every military endeavour if one acts with reason (σὺν νῶϊ: 9.12.1) and that fewer things are achieved in war 'in the open and with force' (προδήλως καὶ μετὰ βίας) than 'with trickery and good timing' (μετὰ δόλου καὶ σὺν καιρῶ: 9.12.2). It continues to state that most mistakes are due to a commander's ignorance (ἀγνοίας) and

⁶⁵ A possibly parallel case is 16.22a, a fragment extolling the courage of the inhabitants of Gaza, according to the epitomiser in connection with the narrative of Antiochus III's sacking of the city. It is, however, impossible to see whether the narrator in the original text had anything to say about the futility of the bravery displayed here.

⁶⁶ See e.g. 21.9, 22.22, 31.11–14.

⁶⁷ See e.g. 1.78.1–9, 2.30.7, 22.21.

carelessness/inactivity (ῥαθυμίας), with no mention of courage or cowardice (9.12.4). Then the advice gets more specific: a commander must be secretive (9.13.1–5), must know how to calculate the length and time of marches (9.13.6), how to choose the right time for the execution of his plans (9.13.7) and how to select suitable signals and countersignals as well as accomplices (9.13.9). He needs first- and second-hand knowledge of the terrain (9.14.1–4) and theoretical knowledge of astronomy and geometry (9.14.5–15 and 20). There are plenty of things that cannot be foreseen – the examples given are all instances of extreme weather – so the commander has a duty to foresee at least the ones that can be (9.16.4). Examples are then given of military stratagems which have failed through a lack of foresight or the incompetence of the commander (9.17–19). The failures are labelled with moral terms (αἰσχρῶς: 9.18.3; μετ’ αἰσχύνης: 9.18.9), which demonstrates once again the extent to which the moral and the practical converge in Polybius’ didacticism.

At the end of the digression, a reader is left with the impression that the good commander in Polybius’ *Histories* is a creature entirely of the mind, with no room for emotion or morality. This impression is strengthened by a digression in the following book which serves to introduce Scipio Africanus the Elder into the narrative. This digression begins on a polemical note with the statement that people are bound to get the wrong impression about this great man because existing accounts of his life are very wide of the mark (10.2.1–3). The problem, it turns out, is that people generally ascribe Scipio’s successes partly to divine influence or good fortune, whereas they were really due to his own intelligence (10.2.4–13). Polybius goes on to argue this case by narrating two incidents from Scipio’s youth. The second incident is the notorious case where Scipio makes a rational calculation (λογιζόμενος: 10.4.3) of his brother’s best chances of gaining the aedileship and then lies to his mother and pretends to have received a divine dream, which she proceeds to help him fulfil (10.4.1–5.8).⁶⁸ The first incident, however, is interesting for what it shows about the interplay between courage and reason in the ideal Polybian commander: here, Scipio, on his very first military campaign as a 17-year old, sees his father in danger on the battlefield and charges his attackers alone ‘with reckless daring’ (παρὰβόλως καὶ τολμηρῶς: 10.3.5). He saves his father and thereby gains a reputation for bravery, but then in subsequent years, when the fate of Rome depends on him, only rarely (σπανίως: 10.3.7)⁶⁹ exposes himself to danger. ‘This’, concludes the narrator, ‘is the characteristic of a com-

⁶⁸ This has grated on the sensibilities of many modern scholars; see e.g. Pédech (1964: 222–3) and Walbank (1967: *ad loc.*).

⁶⁹ σπανίως is a conjecture for the πάντως of the manuscript, which would give the opposite meaning and make the sentence nonsensical. See Walbank (1967: *ad loc.*).

mander not trusting in fortune, but possessing intelligence' (ὄπερ ἰδιὸν ἐστὶν οὐ τῇ τύχῃ πιστεύοντος, ἀλλὰ νοῦν ἔχοντος ἡγεμόνος: 10.3.7).

On the basis of especially these two digressions, Pédech has argued that Polybius valued pure, rational pragmatism over moral considerations and traditional Greek values. Pédech argues that the heroes of the *Histories*, especially Hannibal, Scipio Africanus and Philopoemen, come off as very similar because they all show the qualities that Polybius admired, namely primarily cold, rational calculation. As the work progresses into events Polybius himself had experienced, these heroes become fewer and further between because the historical characters he had actually met could not so easily be fitted into this preconceived mould.⁷⁰ There is some truth in this, but it is not the whole truth, as Eckstein has clearly shown.⁷¹ Firstly, Polybius nowhere says that the commander must *never* participate in the fighting, only that he should choose his battles carefully. This is even true in the digression where he compares the Roman general Marcellus, who got himself killed in battle 'more like a fool than like a general' (ἀκακώτερον ἢ στρατηγικώτερον: 10.32.7), and Hannibal, who managed to stay alive through many years of dangerous campaigning (10.32.7–33.8): the message is that a general should participate only in major engagements where 'everything is at risk' (οἷς συμπάσχει τὰ ὅλα: 10.32.9). Secondly, Polybius often expresses great admiration for commanders who fight in the front line even when that leads to their death. Eckstein gives as prime example the narrative of how Philopoemen, after routing the mercenaries of the Spartan tyrant Machanidas, leaves the battlefield in order to hunt down the tyrant and face him in single combat (11.17–18). The story is told with much evaluating phrasing, and the reader is clearly meant to admire the victorious, heroic Philopoemen. However, such behaviour by a military commander, especially of a newly instituted and still fragile force, can hardly be called calculated or well-reasoned. As contributory evidence Eckstein adds the death in battle of Hamilcar Barca (2.1.7–8), the last battle of the Rhodian admiral Theophiliscus (16.5) and the wounding in battle of Antiochus III (10.49), all narrated with admiration and approval by the Polybian narrator.

As Eckstein observes, it is possible to reconcile these heroic narratives with the digressions that focus on a commander's rational intelligence: Polybius' message is clearly that a military commander needs to possess a combination of courage and intelligence, and that he needs the latter in order to decide when the time is right to display the former. In fact, Polybius' Hannibal and Scipio Africanus are both excellent examples of

⁷⁰ Pédech (1964: 216–29).

⁷¹ Eckstein (1995: 28–40).

commanders who successfully combine these two traits.⁷² The exception that proves the rule is Aratus the Elder, whose unique combination (τὴν ιδιότητα τῆς φύσεως: 4.7.11) of acute mental abilities and daring in stratagems with cowardice in the face of battle presents enough of a problem for Polybius to devote a special digression to its discussion (4.7.11–8).

It is surely significant, however, that calculating reason is stressed as the prime quality of a good commander in theoretical, polemical digressions of high rhetoric, whereas courage and a commander's presence on the battlefield remain important in the narrative of events and short praise passages. It seems that Polybius was prepared to argue the case for pure reason in strong tones where he felt it was polemically important, that is, as part of a debate about the nature of Scipio's successes (unfortunately we do not have the context of the digression on the good commander, so we do not know what sparked it), but that he was equally happy to present the heroic actions of commanders in the battle line as positive *paradeigmata* when not contesting a specific point.⁷³ It may be going too far to say that Polybius advocated one type of behaviour with his head and another with his heart, but it is a fact that the moral lessons of his *Histories* had room for both.

A few further qualities round off the good commander. These are perhaps best seen through their opposites, in a digression on the importance for a commander of knowing the moral weaknesses of his opponent (3.81). The potential weaknesses are: carelessness (ῥαθυμίαν) and lack of initiative (ἀργίαν), drunkenness (τὴν πρὸς τὸν οἶνον ἐπιθυμίαν), addiction to sex (τὰς τῶν ἀφροδισίων ὁρμάς) and – singled out as the most dangerous vices for a commander – cowardice and stupidity (δειλία καὶ βλακεία). Then, as most useful for the enemy and most risky for the commander's own side, there is added the group of rashness (προπέτεια), over-boldness (θρασύτης) and unthinking passion (θυμὸς ἄλογος) along with vanity and delusion (κενοδοξία καὶ τῦφος). In the narrative of events, most of these play a part: carelessness and lack of initiative are the main flaws of Hanno (νωθρῶς: 1.74.2 and 13), rashness that of the much-maligned Minucius (τόλμαν: 3.104.8–9) and unthinking passion that of Flaminius (θυμοῦ πλήρης: 3.82.2), who occasioned the digression. No one in the extant text gets killed as a direct result of his vanity, but several generals are castigated for being all show and no substance (e.g. Aristocrates of Rhodes, 33.4).⁷⁴

⁷² Hannibal, 3.17, 3.69.12–14, 3.78.5–79; Scipio Africanus, 10.2–5 (as discussed above) and 10.13–14.

⁷³ This is parallel to his use of *tyche*, which is treated as a force of no account in comparison with human reason in polemical passages, as a predestining force in rhetorical passages and as a figure of speech in the narrative of events. See Hau (2011).

⁷⁴ Other good generals are: Fabius, 3.89.2–3 (intelligently cautious); Aemilius Paullus, 3.106.11 (courageous and intelligent) and 3.116.9–11 (dutiful and brave); Diophanes of

Drunkness and an addiction to sexual pleasures are never (in the extant text) shown to affect a battle, but are typical characteristics of the bad ruler, as we shall see below. On the positive side, Hannibal is repeatedly praised for taking good care of his soldiers with the result that they remain unfailingly loyal to him even under extreme circumstances,⁷⁵ but otherwise the relationship between the commander and his men is not one that receives a lot of attention, a fact which distinguishes Polybius significantly from the other soldier-historian of this study, Xenophon.

The Good King: Benefactions, Non-Violence and Moderate Living

Just like military commanders, kings play a large part in Polybius' *Histories* and are often turned into moral *paradeigmata*.⁷⁶ Hellenistic kings were, of course, also military commanders, and for this reason they are regularly praised for having or criticised for lacking both courage and intelligence. They did, however, need many more qualities besides, and Polybius is pleasingly consistent in which ones to recommend to his readers.

This can be seen from a comparison of three evaluative digressions praising good kings: Hiero II of Syracuse (7.8.1–8), Eumenes II of Pergamum (32.8) and Massinissa of Numidia (36.16). To begin with Hiero: he won power entirely by his own talents (7.8.1) and without harming any of his citizens (7.8.2) and maintained it in the same way (7.8.3), which the narrator labels 'the most unexpected thing of all' (ὁ πάντων παραδοξότατον: 7.8.3). Indeed there were no plots against him throughout his fifty-four-year-long rule (7.8.4). This is posited as the reason why Hiero could rule without killing or exiling citizens (γάρ: 7.8.4), but in the didactic world of the *Histories* it is fair to assume that causation also works the other way: he treated his citizens well, and they rewarded him with loyalty. The tyrant is then praised for having done great benefactions to the Greeks in an attempt to win a great reputation (εὐεργετικώτατος καὶ φιλοδοξότατος γενόμενος εἰς τοὺς Ἕλληνας: 7.8.6) and thereby won great fame for himself and goodwill towards his city (μεγάλην μὲν αὐτῷ δόξαν, οὐ μικρὰν δὲ Συρακοσίοις

Megalopolis, 21.9 (physical strength and bravery); Opimius, 33.10.4–11 (intelligence). Other bad generals are: Tiberius, 3.70.7 (ambitious and overconfident); Flaminius, 3.80, 3.81.12–82.8, 3.83.6–84.15 (overconfident and incompetent); Antiochus III at Raphia; 5.85.11–13 (young and inexperienced).

⁷⁵ See e.g. 3.14.2–4, 3.60.1–7, 11.19.4.

⁷⁶ As discussed in the Introduction to this study, that does not mean that only kings could learn from their examples. It is entirely possible to adapt the positive characteristics of Polybian kings to fit the private circumstances of any reader, and the main lesson – that good kings win praise and fame in the pages of history while bad ones are blackened forever – is a salutary one.

εὖνοιαν: 7.8.6). Finally, although he lived amidst luxury, he managed to stay moderate (σώφρονος: 7.8.8) and thereby kept mentally and physically fit into old age.⁷⁷

Eumenes and Massinissa do not quite map on to this template because they were both born to power, but their achievements are nevertheless similar, both to those of Hiero and to those of each other. In all cases, the king's greatest achievement is said to be increasing the wealth of his country, for Eumenes by adding territory (32.8.3–4), in the case of Massinissa by turning desert into farmland (36.16.7–9). The second of Eumenes' great deeds is his benefactions towards the Greeks, which he, like Hiero, performed φιλοδοξίατος (32.8.5). The fact that Eumenes and Hiero carried out their benefactions with an eye to their resulting fame is portrayed as a positive, not a negative. As with Antigonos Doson and Philip V (see above, pp. 44–5), the reputation is assumed to reflect reality, and there is nothing wrong with gaining a practical advantage from performing morally good deeds; in fact, if the world works as it should, the good deeds should automatically result in such an advantage. The third is the fact that Eumenes kept his three brothers loyal throughout his reign, a parallel to Massinissa and his family enjoying mutual εὖνοια (36.16.6), and perhaps to the loyalty Hiero enjoyed from his subjects. To an even greater degree than Hiero, Massinissa is praised for preserving his bodily strength into old age (36.16.1–5) while Eumenes' loss of physical strength is made up for by stressing his continued brilliance of mind (32.8.1). On the basis of these praise passages a pattern emerges: the good Polybian ruler has great physical and mental ability and keeps them into old age by moderate living. He uses no violence against his subjects, and does not need to because of their loyalty. Likewise, his conduct means that his family stays loyal, and so his reign is free of plots and scandals. He benefits his own country, but also the Greek city-states, and acquires goodwill and fame throughout the Greek world.

One characteristic is missing from this list, but occurs often in praise of other kings: social skills. Likeability and charm play a large part in the characterisations of Cleomenes (πρὸς τὰς ὁμιλίας ἐπιδέξιος: 5.39.6) and the young Philip V before he turns to the dark side (χάρις διαφέρουσα: 4.77.1–4), and Ptolemaeus Philopator is criticised for being unapproachable (δυσέντευκτον: 5.34.4).⁷⁸

The list of virtues is confirmed when we look at some examples of bad kings. Prusias of Bithynia has one of the fullest obituaries of the *Histories*

⁷⁷ Hiero is also praised explicitly at 1.8.3–5.

⁷⁸ Other good rulers are: Antigonos Doson, 2.70; Gelon of Syracuse, 7.8.9; Antiochus III; 11.39.14–16 (where being a good general makes him a good king); Perseus in the early years; 25.3.5–8; Cotys of Thrace, 27.12.

(36.15). The narrator begins by admitting that he possessed ‘some intelligence’ (ἐκ συλλογισμοῦ βελτίων: 36.15.1), but then lists only negative traits: he was ugly (36.15.1), looking like only ‘half a man’ (36.15.2), cowardly in warfare (36.15.2), unable to suffer hardship and effeminate in body and soul (32.15.3). He also lacked self-discipline and was prone to give in to his bodily desires (36.15.4). Finally, he was uneducated and ignorant and had no idea what morality is (τοῦ καλοῦ τί ποτ’ ἔστιν οὐδ’ ἔννοιαν εἶχε: 36.15.5). For these reasons (τοιγαροῦν) his subjects grasped at any opportunity to overthrow and take vengeance on him (36.15.7). In other words, Prusias had an unimposing physique in contrast with the impressive bodily strength of Massinissa and, to a lesser degree, Hiero; he was cowardly rather than brave and lacked the ability to withstand hardship, both fatal flaws in a military commander; and, in contrast with the three good kings just discussed, he gave in to the luxury surrounding him and did not live moderately. The result was predictable: instead of the loyalty of family and subjects, the latter were ready to jump at any chance of revolt.⁷⁹

An additional vice of the bad king is harshness towards his subjects. This is a standard trait of the stereotypical tyrant, which makes it so much more remarkable that Hiero avoided it. Other rulers suffer from it (Nabis, 4.81.13; Hermeias, 5.41.4; Hieronymus, 7.7.2; Philip V, 7.13.8, 7.14.3; Cleomenes, 9.23.3), but Polybius does not explore in detail what it means, and it is never the focus of a moralising digression. We shall return to this peculiar absence below. He does, however, make sure that the correlation between behaviour and result is completely consistent for his rulers: those who treat their subjects well have love, loyalty and support; those who treat them harshly are rebelled against. This dynamic is posited as one of the basic mechanisms by which constitutions change (and have changed since pre-civilised times) at 6.7.

The principle also holds true for the relationship between an imperial power and its subject-allies. Thus, in 1.72, the Libyan rebellion against Carthage is explained by the harsh way in which the Carthaginians had ruled Libya. The theory is expounded in a digression explaining how the Romans won Iberia from the Carthaginians, due in large part to the ready defection of the natives to the Roman cause. The conclusion to the digression reads:

⁷⁹ Other bad rulers are: Ptolemaeus Philopator, 5.34; Hieronymus of Syracuse, 7.4–5; Philip V, 7.11, 10.26, 15.22–4; Nabis of Sparta, 13.6, 16.13; Agathocles of Egypt, 15.25.20–2, 15.34–5; Tlepolemus of Egypt, 16.21; Moagetes of Cibyra, 21.34.1–2; Antiochus IV, 16.1; Charops of Epirus, 30.12, 32.5; Hasdrubal (Carthaginian general during Third Punic War), 38.7–8; Achaean leaders, 38.12–14.

καίτοι γε προφανοῦς ὄντος καὶ ἐπὶ πολλῶν ἤδη τεθεωρημένου διότι κτῶνται μὲν ἄνθρωποι τὰς εὐκαιρίας εὖ ποιῶντες καὶ προτεινόμενοι τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐλπίδα τοῖς πέλας, ἐπειδὴν δὲ τῶν ἐπιθυμουμένων τυχόντες κακῶς ποιῶσι καὶ δεσποτικῶς ἄρχωσι τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων, εἰκότως ἅμα ταῖς τῶν προεστώτων μεταβολαῖς συμεταπίπτουσι καὶ τῶν ὑποταττομένων αἱ προαιρέσεις. ὃ καὶ τότε συνέβη τοῖς Καρχηδονίοις.

And yet it is obvious and has often been observed that people obtain prosperity by doing good and holding out good expectations to their neighbours; but when, having achieved what they desired, they do evil and rule tyrannically over their subjects, then, as one would expect, the attitudes of the subjects change along with the changes in their rulers. This was what happened to the Carthaginians at that time. (Polyb. 10.36.6–7)

As so often in the *Histories*, the morally right behaviour is also the one that leads to the greatest advantage: it is right to treat the subjects with mildness and fairness, and this is also the way to keep them loyal.⁸⁰ As in this case, the principle generally works to the Romans' advantage in the *Histories*, but there is a clear warning by example to Roman readers to keep up this fair treatment of their subjects. An interesting passage which may well show that Polybius thought this warning might be needed is 24.10.3–6. Here, the Achaean Callicrates advises the Romans to increase the power of those Greek politicians who support their decrees and bring low those who do not (in the process making Polybius' father, Lycortas, and childhood hero Philopoemen suspect to the Romans), and when they follow his advice, they end up with 'many flatterers, but few true friends'. The reader is left to wonder whether the next step in the relationship might be the Romans treating their Greek subject-allies with arrogant disdain and having a revolt on their hands.

The Good Man: Courage, Moderation and Lack of Greed

A few characters in the *Histories* are more than just good commanders or good kings, they are thoroughly good men. In order to explore what this means, we need first to decide who they are.

The most developed characters in the surviving parts of the *Histories* are Hamilcar Barca, Hannibal Barca, Philip V of Macedon, Scipio Africanus the Elder, Philopoemen and Scipio Africanus the Younger. Of these, Hamilcar is portrayed as a good commander, but we do not get many glimpses of the rest of his personality. Hannibal is a paragon of good generalship and is defended by Polybius against the charge of cruelty (9.23–4 and

⁸⁰ Polybius' views on how to exercise imperial power have been discussed in more detail by Hau (2006) and Baronowski (2011).

26), but falls short of the ideal because of his greed (9.25). Philip changes from good to bad in the course of the story (7.11). Scipio the Elder seems to have been treated very fully in the original, unfragmented *Histories*; however, it is difficult to gain a full picture of his character now because the extant parts of the *Histories* that describe or illustrate it are focused on using him as a *paradeigma* of two things: the power of human intelligence contrasted with the mumbo-jumbo of supernatural explanations (10.2 and 5, discussed above, p. 58) and the nobility and practical advantages of staying humble in good fortune (10.17–19 and 40, discussed above, p. 52). This leaves us with two candidates, both of whom Polybius knew personally: Philopoemen, *strategos* of the Achaean League in Polybius' childhood, and Scipio the Younger, Polybius' friend and benefactor for a large part of his adult life.

The part of the *Histories* dealing with the deeds of Philopoemen is unfortunately very fragmented. Usefully, however, the character sketch that introduces him into the story is preserved (10.22.4–5). The character sketch (which references an encomium already published by Polybius) lists four good qualities: endurance and courage (κακοπαθείας καὶ τόλμας: 10.22.4), both recognisable as key qualities of the good commander, a moderate lifestyle (περὶ τὸν βίον ἐπιμελής, opposed to πολυτελέστερον ζῆ: 10.22.5) and unostentatiousness (λιτὸς κατὰ τὴν περικοπήν: 10.22.5). It leads into a detailed account of how he turned the neglected Achaean cavalry into a crack fighting force (10.23–4).

Scipio Africanus the Younger receives a rather longer introduction (31.23–30). Interestingly, this does not describe his character, but demonstrates it to the reader by means of a detailed scene with dialogue between the young Scipio and Polybius-as-a-character (31.23–4), followed by a blow-by-blow narrative of how Scipio, with Polybius' guidance, trains himself to become a good man and wins a reputation for it.⁸¹ The three qualities that are practised and acquired are σωφροσύνη, μεγαλοψυχία and ἀνδρεία: temperance, generosity and courage. Courage has been explored above and shown to be of major importance for the characters who constitute positive *paradeigmata* in the *Histories*. Temperance, or moderation, has also been shown above to be a key virtue of Polybian commanders and kings, and was seen to be prominent in the character sketch of Philopoemen.

81 These chapters have sometimes been represented as a coldly calculated plan of action in order to gain Scipio political influence (e.g. Walbank 1979: *ad loc.*), and it is certainly true that this is part of the purpose of Scipio's behaviour. However, such an interpretation only sees half the picture: Polybius is very clear that Scipio did not just gain a reputation for temperance, generosity and courage, but actually became temperate, generous and brave. This corresponds to Polybius' use of reputation generally as a reliable barometer for a man's character. See Eckstein (1995: 149–50).

It is also worth noting that it is the change from a moderate to an extravagant lifestyle that eventually turns democracy into ochlocracy in Polybius' cycle of constitutions, the *anakyklōsis* (ἀλαζονεία καὶ πολυτέλεια: 6.57.6). Generosity, however, has so far been left unexplored, and it is necessary to look a little further into it.

Actual generosity is demonstrated most conspicuously in the *Histories* by Scipio the Younger in the passage mentioned above. Otherwise, it is mainly a trait displayed by military commanders who thereby win the loyalty of their troops (Hannibal, 3.13.5–8; C. Cornelius Scipio, 3.76.13) or a king who thus wins the goodwill of his people (Ortiagon the Galatian, 22.21), and it does not seem very high in the didactic hierarchy of virtues worth emulating. The μεγαλοψυχία that is praised enthusiastically in several passages of the *Histories* and figures as a key quality of the Polybian good man is not active generosity, but a more passive lack of greed and an ability to withstand the temptation of getting rich. This temptation typically comes from access to the wealth of a subject state or conquered territory or from the offer of a bribe. Such lack of greed is the subject of an explanatory digression discussing Roman integrity in money matters (18.35). The Romans, the narrator states, used to be unbribable, but these days that is only true of some of them, most notably Aemilius Paullus, who died poor despite having become master of all the wealth of the Macedonian kings, and Scipio the Younger, who did not take any of the Carthaginian wealth for himself. The unavaricious character of Aemilius Paullus is praised extravagantly again in his obituary, where it is said to be the 'greatest evidence of his excellence' (ὁ μέγιστον εἶποι τις ἂν ὑπάρχειν τεκμήριον ἀρετῆς: 31.22.2). Similarly, an Egyptian governor of Cyprus, Polycrates, is praised for keeping his hands off the island's wealth (18.55.5–7). In the area of bribes, both Philopoemen's rejection of a Spartan offer of gifts (20.12) and the rejection of a gift from King Eumenes by the Achaean League are portrayed very positively (22.7–8). On the negative side, the narrator castigates the Romans (in general, no names are mentioned) for plundering the wealth of Syracuse when they take the city during the Second Punic War, and suggests that, had they left it where they found it, they would have 'made their own country famous not for paintings and reliefs, but for dignity and lack of greed' (σεμνότητι καὶ μεγαλοψυχία) (9.19.12).

If lack of greed is a prominent virtue in the *Histories*, greed itself is an even more prominent vice. It is termed variously πλεονεξία, φιλαργυρία and τὸ πλεῖον ἐπιθυμία, and it is a stock characteristic of the bad man. It is displayed by demagogues (Molpagoras of Chios, 15.21.1–2; Scopas of Aetolia, 18.55.1–2; Deinon and Polyaratus of Rhodes, 27.7.1–13) and tyrants (wife of Nabis, 18.17). Polybius feels so strongly about the evil

of this character trait that he refuses to join in the general praise of the courage of Alexander the Aetolian, who, although the wealthiest man of his time, refuses to pay his kidnappers and is then fortuitously set free by the intervention of Rome. Instead, Polybius declares that ‘in this case chance supported his greed so that his idiocy met with universal praise and approval’ (τότε ταυτόματον συνήργησεν πρὸς τὴν φιλαργυρίαν, ὥστε παρὰ πᾶσιν ἐπαίνου καὶ συγκαταθέσεως τυχεῖν τὴν ἀλογιστίαν: 21.26.16). This is presented as an exception (τότε); elsewhere in the work, in accordance with the didactic programme of showing how immoral behaviour leads to negative results, greed regularly has disastrous outcomes for the greedy: it is a major reason for Perseus’ failure (see 28.9, 29.8, and the long digression of 29.9) and leads to the death of the tyrant Orophernes of Cappadocia (9.11), and for armies too focused on plunder, defeat is certain (e.g. Aetolians, 4.57.2–58.12).

The reason why Polybius so detests greed is perhaps that it so often leads people to commit unjust acts. In the *Histories*, greed leads to wars of aggression (e.g. 2.45.1–4, 4.3, 4.6.7–12), betrayal of trust (e.g. 8.16.4–12) and fighting among friends (9.11). In the *anakyklosis*, it is the flaw that leads to the fall of first oligarchy (6.8.3–6), then democracy (6.9.4–9). Greed is clearly a very common flaw in human beings in Polybius’ world, and thus it is one of the things that need to be countered by the good constitution. In this respect the Cretan constitution fails spectacularly (6. 46.11–47.6), but the Roman constitution succeeds (6.56.1–5), making it also in this regard superior to all others.

The good man in the *Histories*, then, is brave and intelligent, lives a moderate life, and displays no signs of greed. He is also a good commander, who knows how to combine courage with intelligence, and he never falls into the trap of becoming arrogant in the delusion that good fortune will last. This is the ideal that a reader of Polybius must aspire to.

Peculiar Absences: Piety and Cruelty

Before we draw this chapter to a close, it is worth pausing to note two interesting absences, or near-absences, from Polybius’ templates for good and bad behaviour respectively: piety and cruelty. These two character traits play a large part in most of the other Greek works of historiography, as we shall see in later chapters, but not in Polybius’ *Histories*. Let us begin with piety.

Polybius is notorious for his pragmatic approach to religion. On the basis of passages such as the one stressing Scipio the Elder’s own responsibility for his successes and the one praising him for lying to his mother about having had a divinely inspired dream (10.2 and 10.5, both discussed

above), it is common to claim that Polybius did not value traditional piety.⁸² On one level this is clearly true: when in an intellectual, polemical mode Polybius regularly argues against traditional religious belief in favour of a rational approach to the world. However, it is also important to note that he does admit of some situations – mainly weather-related – where it is reasonable (εἰκότως, an intellectual word) to try to appease the gods with prayers and sacrifices (36.17.2–3, including himself in the first-person verb πέμπομεν), and that he seems to have ended his work with a pious prayer for his prosperity to last (39.8.1–2).

In tune with his polemical expressions of rationality, Polybius offers no moral *exempla* of such traditional paradigms of piety as the sacrificing general or the king consulting an oracle. But piety does figure somewhere on his list of moral virtues: we saw above that destruction of sacred buildings is always portrayed as wrong,⁸³ and the noun ἄσεβεια (‘impiety’) and its cognates are used no fewer than fifty-five times in the *Histories*. These words do not, however, always cover such obviously impious actions as temple-destruction. They can be used to cover a range of immoral actions from the religiously charged breaking of an oath-sworn alliance (8.8, 15.22) over the betrayal of one’s city (5.76.11) to general tyrannical behaviour (7.7, 38.12–13) and military atrocities (2.1.3). In these latter contexts, ἄσεβεια is often paired with ‘lawlessness’, παρανομία, which seems to indicate that Polybius used the term as often in a normative sense as in a religious one. This demonstrates where his didactic interest lies: in the political and military world of inter-human relationships, not in the relationship between human beings and the metaphysical. For that reason, piety plays a very small part in his moral didacticism.

On this note, we turn to the other peculiar absence from Polybius’ negative *paradeigmata*: cruelty. It is clear from the portrayal of good kings and commanders in the *Histories* that Polybius does not condone cruel treatment either by a ruler of his subjects or by the victorious of the defeated or the captured. From the obituaries of Hiero, Eumenes and Massinissa we are also, no doubt, meant to understand that these good kings did not engage in cruelty in the manner of the stereotypical tyrant. Indeed, this is the tenor of the statement in the Hiero passage praising the tyrant for having gained and maintained power without murdering or exiling any of his fellow-citizens. However, it is interesting that this is not spelled out in any of these or other passages praising good kings, and that no adjective

⁸² Walbank (1967: *ad loc.*); Pédech (1966) has the most nuanced discussion. Other key passages for this argument are 6.56 and 16.12.9, where Polybius seems to say that religion is only useful for keeping the common people in check.

⁸³ See also 4.18.10–12, 4.62, 4.67, 7.13–14, 11.7, 31.9, 32.15. Killing in a temple is also condemned (4.35.1–5).

for ‘cruel’, ‘brutal’ or ‘violent’ is used. Cruelty, in fact, seems to be a moral topic of relatively little interest to Polybius.

In the *Histories*, the adjective ὀμός, the standard word for ‘cruel’ in Diodorus (and used copiously by him, as we shall see in the next chapter), and its cognates are used twenty-seven times. Interestingly, eleven of these are representations of the words of others: three occur in speeches in direct or indirect discourse, four in summaries of the statements of other historiographers, and a further four in polemical refutations of Hannibal’s alleged cruelty, where the word seems to have been taken over from the tradition. Two more seem to be paraphrases of Polybius by the Constantinian excerptor. Three are used to describe uncivilised peoples, and two are used of the barbarians fighting in the Mercenary War and the war itself, meaning ‘savage’ rather than ‘cruel’.⁸⁴ Only seven of the remaining nine are used to describe individuals or specific acts of individuals: the despicable Hermeias (5.41.1 and 3), the wife of the Spartan tyrant Nabis (18.17.4), the hated Charops of Epirus (32.5), and three instances of Philip V attacking places nominally among his allies.⁸⁵ The final two instances describe specific wars.⁸⁶

A pattern emerges from this overview. Firstly, ὀμός was not a favourite word of Polybius’. Its repeated presence in passages where he engages polemically with other historians gives us a clue to why: it seems to have been a favourite expression of the kind of historians Polybius worked hard to distinguish himself from, such as Phylarchus (2.56–8) and the Roman historians who accused Hannibal of cruelty (9.23–6). These historians most probably described the cruel acts of their arch-villains in some detail, and Polybius’ arguments to the effect that the acts of alleged cruelty can, in fact, be either justified or at least explained by circumstances are part of how he profiles himself as a more pragmatic and down-to-earth historian.

Secondly, Polybius prefers to use ὀμός in its sense of ‘savage’ or ‘barbaric’ rather than more generically ‘cruel’. In this sense he uses it of the barbarian mercenaries of the Carthaginians and the war they fought with their former masters, and of three particularly uncivilised peoples.

Thirdly, Polybius does occasionally use the word of individuals and their actions, but not lightly. Hermeias, Nabis and his wife, and Charops are particularly despicable characters who commit crimes beyond those of the average historical villain. Importantly, when the word is used about

84 Direct discourse: 9.30.2, 11.5.6; indirect discourse: 24.15.3. Paraphrasing the opinions of others: 2.56.6, 2.58.14, 7.7.2, 9.22.8. Tradition of Hannibal’s cruelty: 9.23.2, 9.24.8, 9.26.8, 9.26.11. Paraphrases by the excerptor: 21.34.1, 29.13. Uncivilised peoples: the Cynaethans, 4.20.3; the Egyptians, 15.33.10; the Cretans, 24.3.1. The Mercenary War: 1.81.7, 1.88.8.

85 Philip the V attacks allies: 15.20.4 (with Antiochus III), 15.22.3, 15.23.3.

86 Civil war in Sparta, 4. 35.1–5; the Coele-Syrian War, 14.12.4.

Philip V, it is not used to describe his character, although Polybius devotes no fewer than three digressions to this at different points in the work (7.11, 10.26, 23.10). Instead it is used to describe those attacks which he committed in breach of sworn treaties against peoples who were supposed to be his allies. That is the kind of behaviour Polybius calls ‘savage’, not Hannibal’s killings of civilians (9.23–6) or the revenge exacted on the Mantineans for their oath-breaking by the Macedonians and Achaeans (2.56–8).

This tells us something important about Polybius as a moralist. We saw above that he offers clear guidelines for what kind of buildings an invading army should and should not destroy, but also that these guidelines are governed by the idea that the invader has the right to destroy everything that will help him win the war, including civilian buildings and bodies, and should only desist from unnecessary vandalism. A similarly unsentimental idea seems to lie behind Polybius’ guidelines for the use of violence more generally: as long as the brutality has a particular military purpose (as with Hannibal’s atrocities), or the suffering is deserved (because of past crimes, particularly oath-breaking), it can be excused. Thus, some horrific acts of deliberate violence are condoned as ‘natural’ in warfare, as we have seen above, and Scipio the Elder’s burning of the Carthaginian camps near Utica is described in gruesome detail (14.5.10–15) only for the narrator to conclude that ‘of all the many brilliant achievements of Scipio this seems to me to have been the most glorious and daring of his deeds’.⁸⁷ Likewise, the torturing to death of a tyrant (2.59–60) or of an ‘impious and lawless’ man is only right (δικὴν καθήκουσαν: 18.54). There is an unresolved tension here between the repeated and explicit didactic emphasis on the importance of staying humble in success and treating the defeated humanely, and the occasional narratorial expression of satisfaction with a graphically executed revenge. Wars can become too savage, however, as happened with the Mercenary War (1.88.8) and the Coele-Syrian War (14.12.4), and revenge can go too far, as happened when the Egyptian mob literally tore apart Agathocles and his family, labelled as ‘terrible savagery’ by the Polybian narrator (δεινὴ ἢ ὠμότης: 15.33.10).

When Polybius uses evaluative vocabulary to describe acts that could be called cruel, such as murders, tortures, exilings and deportations, he prefers the adjectives ‘impious’ (ἄσεβής, fifty-five instances), ‘lawless’ (παράνομος, sixty instances) and ‘unjust’ (ἄδικος/οὐ δίκαιος, 122 instances) and their cognates. This semantic group foregrounds not, like ὠμός and its cognates, the unnatural savagery of the action or its emotional impact,

⁸⁷ ἢ καὶ πολλῶν καὶ καλῶν διεργασμένων Σκιπίωνι κάλλιστον εἶναι μοι δοκεῖ τοῦτο τοῦργον καὶ παραβολώτατον τῶν ἐκείνῳ πεπραγμένων: 14.5.15. See also the same Scipio’s brutal quelling of a mutiny at 9.29.5 and the praise of Roman military punishments at 6.37–8.

but the breaking of norms. Thus, when the narrator offers a rhetorical definition of a tyrant, he says that ‘the very word denotes the height of impiety and every injustice and lawlessness towards human beings’ (αὐτὸ γὰρ τοῦνομα περιέχει τὴν ἀσεβεστάτην ἔμφρασιν καὶ πάσας περιείληφε τὰς ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀδικίας καὶ παρανομίας: 2.59.6).⁸⁸ Another favourite word for such transgressions is ἀσέλγεια, which emphasises the perpetrator’s lack of self-control (e.g. 7.2, 8.12, 29.13). This choice of focus and vocabulary sets Polybius off from other, more sensationalising, Hellenistic moralising historiographers such as Diodorus, Timaeus and Phylarchus, as we shall see in subsequent chapters.

CONCLUSION

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that moral didacticism is an integral part of Polybius' *Histories*. If we were to cut out the explicitly moralising passages, about a fourth of what remains of the work would be discarded. Such an exercise would involve not just leaving to one side a large number of passionate digressions on moral issues, but also cutting out bits of introductory, conclusive and concomitant moralising from the narrative of events. Even after such a serious bit of surgery, much of the narrative of events would still carry a moral message by means of its evaluative vocabulary and the way that morally good behaviour tends to lead to practically good results. Moral didacticism suffuses the *Histories* at every level.

Polybius wanted to write a historical work with a moral purpose, that is, a work that presented history in a moral light. Throughout the work he is careful to tell the reader what to think about every character, every event, and why this is the right response. Some episodes are included or developed in detail purely because of their moral-didactic impact. This is the case of the lengthy and detailed narrative of Scipio the Elder after his conquest of New Carthage (10.16–20), which has been repeatedly referred to above. In (the modern understanding of) strictly historical terms, the important thing is that Scipio the Elder conquered New Carthage, switched its loyalty to Rome and thereby brought an end to Carthaginian ambitions in Iberia. However, Polybius spends five chapters after the narrative of the conquest giving detailed information about Scipio's distribution of booty, treatment of the captives and other locals, and self-control in the face of sexual temptation. These details are only important from a didactic standpoint, and not a purely practical one. The same is obviously true of the eight chapters on Scipio the Younger's training (31.23–30). Other, less famous, episodes

⁸⁸ See also 23.10 on the crimes of Philip V.

fall into the same category, such as the detailed narrative of how Achaeus attempted to escape from Antiochus III with the help of two accomplices, who ultimately betrayed him out of greed, proving both the instability of human life and the fact that villainous acts such as usurpation generally end in disaster (8.16.4–20.7).

Moral didacticism was one of Polybius' reasons for writing the *Histories*. If we refuse to take his moralising seriously, we misread the work. What he wrote was, of course, a history of war and politics, but he did it from a moral angle. The fact that Polybius was interested in similar subjects to those that interested many historians of the nineteenth and twentieth century has made many modern readers ignore or denigrate the part of the *Histories* that does not fit with their interests, namely its strong moral tone. What Polybius wrote was moral history, a narrative of historical events that presents them in a moral light and aims to draw moral lessons from them. In the next chapter we turn to a late Hellenistic historiographer who was much inspired by Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, to see to what extent he followed this creed.

2. *Diodorus Siculus*

Diodorus may seem an odd choice of focus for an entire chapter. He is widely known for having taken over long stretches of text from his sources, paraphrasing and summarising, but not adding anything new in terms of historical analysis or interpretation. I have argued my point of view on Diodorus' source usage in detail elsewhere, but it is necessary to restate my case briefly here before embarking on an analysis of Diodorus' moralising.¹ It is clear from the sections of Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* for which the sources are extant that Diodorus generally stayed close to the text of the source, that is, he rephrased and abbreviated rather than create a new narrative from scratch. This explains why, although Diodorus' language is similar throughout his work,² his narrative style is uneven, being characterised by detached summary in some books in contrast with an emotionally involved mixture of summary and scenes in others: it seems that he often took over the style and tone as well as the content from his sources.³ In this chapter,

¹ The scholarship on this 'Diodoran question' is vast. It mainly falls into two camps: the traditionalists who argue that Diodorus more or less 'copied' his sources, only changing the wording (e.g. Stylianou 1998), and the revisionists who argue that Diodorus did have a vision of history which he followed by imbuing his work with certain themes and structures not found in his sources (the seminal work is Sacks 1990). My own view falls somewhere in between and has been argued in Hau (2009), which also gives a detailed bibliography of the scholarship. See also the Introduction to Hau et al. (forthcoming).

² This has been shown by Palm (1955).

³ E.g. Diod. Sic. 3.2–55 compared with Phot. *Bibl.* codex 250 summarising Agatharchides of Cnidus, and Diod. Sic. books 22–32.26 compared with what remains of Polybius' *Histories*. Both of these comparisons are less than straightforward, however: the former because the work of Agatharchides itself is lost and can only be accessed through Photius' summary (see Chapter 3), and the latter because all of Diodorus 22–32.26 and much of Polybius only survive in excerpts collected by epitomisers with other interests at heart than the preservation of the original text. Nonetheless, wherever it is possible to compare a section of Diodorus closely with its source, such as Diod. Sic. 31.15 with Polyb. 30.18, as I have done elsewhere (Hau 2006), both Diodorus' strong dependence and sporadic changes are obvious.

we shall examine moralising in the *Bibliothēke* comprehensively and see that Diodorus seems to have followed this working method also in terms of moralising: he took over moralising passages from his sources, in some cases changing the point slightly, but he does not seem to have written new moralising passages from scratch.⁴ However, we shall also see that there is nevertheless a high degree of consistency in the moral lessons offered by the *Bibliothēke* as a whole. The possible reasons for this surprising finding will be discussed in the conclusion to the chapter.

It has been a favourite sport of scholars to try to surmise which source(s) Diodorus used for each stretch of his narrative. Without entering into the finer points of such *Quellenforschung*, it will be useful here to give a brief overview of some of the more certain sources used by Diodorus in different parts of the *Bibliothēke*, as we shall be referring to them time and again throughout this chapter, and return to some of them in Chapters 3 and 7. The sources used by Diodorus in the early books of the *Bibliothēke* are still much discussed, but something approaching a *communis opinio* exists for some of the middle and later books. Most scholars agree that he probably used Timaeus of Tauromenium for the Sicilian narrative of books 13–14 and 19–21; Ephorus of Cyme for the Greek narrative of books 11 or 12 to 16.14; an Alexander historian, perhaps Clitarchus, for book 17; possibly Hieronymus of Cardia for the narrative of the Successor Wars in books 18–20; Polybius for at least books 27–32.26; and possibly Posidonius of Apamea, the Stoic philosopher, for books 32.27–38.⁵ His sources for books 7–10, 16 and 39–40 are too uncertain to be considered here.

That Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* is a moralising text no one would deny. The work is frequently held up as symptomatic for the kind of Hellenistic historiography deemed less worthy and serious than its Classical counterpart, partly because of its moralistic tendency.⁶ Many have observed that moral didacticism seems to have been one of Diodorus' main purposes with his work, but few have taken his moral didacticism seriously enough to try to uncover its moral lessons in any detail.⁷ The most successful treatment is

4 This conclusion goes contrary to the arguments of most other scholars who have taken Diodorus' moralising seriously: Sacks (1990), Camacho Rojo (1994), Lens Tuero (1994), de Morais Mota (2010). None of these face the fact that the moralising is not equally distributed in the *Bibliothēke*.

5 For a longer discussion of source units and sources in the *Bibliothēke*, with bibliography, see Hau (2009: 174–6). A good overview of sources mentioned by name in the various books is Chamoux (1993: xxiii–xxv).

6 E.g. Schwartz (1903), Kunz (1935), Drews (1962), Hornblower (1981), Stylianou (1998).

7 Drews (1962) argues that moral didacticism was the main purpose of Diodorus' work and influenced his choice of sources, but does not discuss its contents or techniques. Sacks (1990: 24–36) discusses Diodorus' moralising with the main purpose of arguing that Diodorus did not take over every moralising passage from Ephorus. Vial (1977: xiv–xix) and

the overview of moralising themes in the *Bibliothēke* offered by Ambaglio, which ends with an eloquent expression of moral didacticism as Diodorus' 'philosophy of history' (his inverted commas), intimately connected with his project of writing universal history.⁸ The analysis offered in this chapter agrees with most of his findings, but goes significantly further.

As in the preceding chapter on Polybius, we shall begin with examining Diodorus' preface and programmatic passages in order to get an idea of his theoretical approach to moral didacticism. Then we shall proceed to an analysis of his moralising techniques before finally considering his moral messages. Throughout, the emphasis will be on Diodorus' moral didacticism in comparison with that of Polybius and with their predecessors and contemporaries (to be examined in subsequent chapters) rather than on Diodorus as an isolated phenomenon. For that reason Diodorus' relationship with his sources is not a problem: if the moralising of the *Bibliothēke* is of his own crafting, it is worth analysing in its own right; if it has been taken over from his varied sources, it is evidence that moral didacticism was ubiquitous in late Classical and Hellenistic historiography. Both alternatives will be kept in mind in the discussion, and we shall return to the implications of our findings in the conclusion to the chapter.

PREFACES AND PROGRAMMATIC PASSAGES

Diodorus' preface is far longer than any other preserved preface of Classical or Hellenistic historiography, and most scholars would now agree that he wrote it himself even if its ideas are not original.⁹ It is largely focused on moral didacticism.¹⁰ The Diodoran narrator begins by stating that we owe a debt of gratitude to writers of (universal) history, because they benefit human society (τὸν κοινὸν βίον: I.I.I). Historiography provides 'a lesson without danger in the advantageous' (ἀκίνδυνον διδασκαλίαν τοῦ συμφέροντος: I.I.I) and thereby gives its readers the 'best experience' (καλλίστην ἐμπειρίαν: I.I.I). It does this, he continues, by letting them

Chamoux (1993: lvi–lx) mention moral didacticism as a main purpose. Wirth (1993: 26–9) and Camacho Rojo (1994) give examples of moral themes in Diodorus, but do not discuss them in any detail. Alganza Roldán (1994) discusses some moralising aspects of Diodorus' battle narratives. De Morais Mota (2010) is mainly a summary of selected passages of Diodorus.

⁸ Ambaglio (1995: 109–18). Something similar is argued by Wiater (2006), although he focuses on the role of compilation rather than original composition in Diodorus' ideal of universal history.

⁹ Burton (1972), Sacks (1990), Chamoux (1993), Ambaglio (1995), Stylianos (1998: 3–4).

¹⁰ For discussions of the preface that focus on Diodorus' self-representation see Wiater (2006) and Hau (forthcoming).

learn from the experiences of others (1.1.2). Thus, the success or failure of others are examples for correction or improvement (πρὸς διόρθωσιν παραδείγμασι: 1.1.4), particularly in the varied vicissitudes of life (πρὸς τὰ συγκυροῦντα ποικίλως κατὰ τὸν βίον: 1.1.4). A number of parallels with Polybius are present in these first four chapters of the *Bibliothēke*: the benefit of history, both practical and moral; the value of vicarious experience; the use of *paradeigmata* for the ‘correction’ (διόρθωσις) of the reader’s life; and the idea that such moral instruction is particularly valuable when one is faced with the vicissitudes of fortune.

So far Diodorus has been talking about learning by *exempla*, but now he turns to another way in which historiography can teach morality: by its commemoration of good and bad deeds, history makes leaders and soldiers strive for honour, and in general makes bad men ‘turn away from the impulse of wickedness’ (1.1.5). This striving to create a good reputation for oneself in the pages of history is elaborated upon in the next few paragraphs, and finally the praise of good men by history is said to be the only monument that does not perish over time (1.2.5). This is why history is useful and beneficial (χρήσιμα: 2.7). This emphasis on the fame gained in written history is again recognisable from Polybius, but in the *Bibliothēke* we see a complete intermingling of the ideas of history as memorial and history as teacher. A reader is thought to be willing to learn from history precisely because of its function as memorial; only by learning from the people history commemorates can a reader ensure his own commemoration by later historians.¹¹ Thus, like Polybius, Diodorus expresses his purpose in purely didactic terms. There is no mention of preserving the memory of the past for its own sake; rather, the memory of the past seems to be good for one thing only, namely the emulation to which it spurs contemporary readers. Interestingly, more than Polybius, Diodorus connects the didactic usefulness of his work intimately with the fact that it is a work of universal history rather than a monograph or a work about a particular time period. In 1.3 he states that ‘the benefit for readers lies in being able to take the greatest number of and most varied circumstances’ (κειμένης γὰρ τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσι τῆς ὠφελείας ἐν τῷ πλείστας καὶ ποικιλωτάτας περιστάσεις λαμβάνειν) and that ‘from this work it will be possible for each reader to take with ease what is useful in his own situation, just as if drawing from a large spring’ (ἐξέσται γὰρ ἐκ ταύτης ἕκαστον πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν ἐτοιμῶς λαμβάνειν τὸ χρήσιμον, ὥσπερ ἐκ μεγάλης ἀρυόμενον πηγῆς).¹²

¹¹ Cf. Sacks (1990: 81).

¹² Throughout the chapter the utility and benefit of this genre of historiography are repeatedly stressed: τὸ συμφέρον: 1.3.1, τῆς ὠφελείας: 1.3.2; ὠφελήσαι: 1.3.5; εὐχρηστοτάτην: 1.3.6; χρησιμώτερον: 1.3.8. The connection between utility and universal history in the preface has been pointed out also by Wiater (2006). Some scholars have wanted to see Stoic

For Diodorus, the didactic worth of his work lies exactly in the fact that it encompasses all times and places and can therefore show the reader examples of how to act in the greatest variety of situations. Although he does not say so explicitly, the wide scope also enables him to show the reader what types of actions and behaviour are morally good across space and time, and how these generally lead to success.¹³

Outside of the preface, Diodorus has only a few programmatic statements. Some of these come in the prefaces to individual books; sixteen such book-prefaces are extant, but these *prooemia* are notoriously inconsistent, and there is disagreement over whether Diodorus wrote them himself or copied them from sources.¹⁴ The prefaces to books 2 and 3 are mere tables of contents. The preface to book 13 is a sort of anti-preface, which justifies the absence of prefaces to some books in a long work, and the preface to book 37 focuses on arguing that the war narrated in that book, the Italian Social War, was the greatest war of all time.

The prefaces to books 12, 14, 18, 19, 26 and 32 are all moralising: each offers a generalising statement or moral *gnome* and argues that it will be proved by the events of the following book. Thus, book 12 begins with the statement that ‘One may justly be perplexed when thinking about the inconstancy of human life’; book 14 with the observation that ‘It is perhaps reasonable to hear bad things said about oneself reluctantly; for even those whose moral wickedness is completely obvious so that it cannot be denied nevertheless are upset when they encounter criticism and try to defend themselves against accusations.’¹⁵ Regardless of the fact that it would be a very reductionist reading that saw the narrative of a given book of the *Bibliothēke* as merely an attempt to teach the lesson propounded by the generalising of its preface, the preponderance of this technique shows both the importance moral didacticism held for Diodorus every time he wanted

thought behind Diodorus’ universalism, even going so far as to attribute his main preface wholesale to Posidonius (Schwartz 1903, Canfora 1990).

13 This is what Ambaglio (1995: 118) calls Diodorus’ ‘philosophy of history’.

14 Prefaces are extant for books 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 32 and 37. Kunz (1935) offers a detailed analysis of every preface in the *Bibliothēke*, which is still useful, even if her assumption that this can be used to determine from which exact source Diodorus ‘copied’ each preface is grounded in a ruthlessly optimistic *Quellenforschung* which is now outdated. She includes in her discussion the prefaces to books 21 and 25, which I ignore because of the impossibility of knowing whether the brief fragments sometimes assigned to these prefaces do in fact come from the proems or from later passages of the books. The prefaces are also discussed by Sacks (1990: 9–22), who argues that Diodorus composed all of them from scratch.

15 Δικαίως ἂν τις ἀπορήσειε τὸν νοῦν ἐπιστήσας τῇ κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον ἀνωμαλία· 12.1.1. Πάντας μὲν ἴσως εἰκός ἐστι προσάντως ἀκοεῖν τὰς καθ’ ἑαυτῶν βλασφημίας· καὶ γὰρ οἱ κατὰ πᾶν ἐκδηλον ἔχοντες τὴν ἑαυτῶν κακίαν ὥστε μὴδ’ ἐξαρνεῖσθαι, ὁμως ψόγου τυγχάνοντες διαγανακτοῦσι καὶ λόγους εἰσφέρειν πειρῶνται πρὸς τὴν κατηγορίαν· 14.1.1.

to express the purpose of his work, and the degree to which he considered this moralising part of a tradition, whether he wrote the prefaces himself or decided to take them over from others: *gnomai* were a traditional way of expressing ethical wisdom used in both poetry and prose since Homer, Hesiod and Herodotus. The *gnomai* in the prefaces were probably not composed by Diodorus, but were taken over from this tradition, not necessarily from any one historiographical predecessor, but perhaps from an Alexandrian collection of proverbs, or simply from his own mental stock of such sayings collected through extensive reading. It is important for our understanding of the purpose of the *Bibliothēke* that the prefaces do not claim that the work will break new philosophical ground, but that the narrative of the *Bibliothēke* exemplifies time-honoured truths expressed (or at least expressible) in proverbial maxims.

Only the prefaces to books 4, 5, 15, 16, 17 and 20 are programmatic in the sense that they discuss historiographical issues and the way these are resolved in the *Bibliothēke*. Of these, the prefaces to books 5, 16 and 17 concern the best way of structuring a work of universal history, again with an eye to its usefulness (πάντων μὲν τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀναγραφαῖς χρησίμων προνοητέων τούτων ἱστορίαν συνταττομένου: 5.1.1). The preface to book 20 censures historians who include too many speeches in their works, apparently on the basis that a high proportion of speeches hinders the reader's enjoyment of the work; utility is not mentioned, although a reader who is discouraged from his reading because of lack of enjoyment, as envisioned in 20.1.5, will obviously derive no benefits from the work.¹⁶ Only the prefaces to books 4 and 15 have a direct bearing on the didactic purpose of the *Bibliothēke*.

The preface to book 15 echoes the main preface by stating that:

Παρ' ὅλην τὴν πραγματείαν εἰωθότες χρῆσθαι τῇ συνήθει τῆς ἱστορίας παρρησία, καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐπὶ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων τὸν δίκαιον ἐπιλέγειν ἔπαινον, τοὺς δὲ φαύλους, ὅταν ἐξαμαρτάνωσιν, ἀξιοῦν δικαίας ἐπιτιμῆσεως, διὰ τοῦ τοιοῦτου τρόπου νομιζόμεν τοὺς μὲν εὖ πεφυκότας πρὸς ἀρετὴν τῷ διὰ τῆς δόξης ἀθανατισμῷ προτρέψεσθαι ταῖς καλλίσταις ἐγγεῖρειν πράξεις, τοὺς δὲ τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔχοντας διαθέσειν ταῖς ἀρμοτουσiais βλασφημίαις ἀποτρέπειν τῆς ἐπὶ τὴν κακίαν ὁρμῆς.

Throughout my work I have been accustomed to use the freedom of speech customary to historiography, and to praise good men justly for their good deeds while thinking it right to criticise the bad justly whenever they commit a wrong. Through such a method I believe that those who are by nature well suited for moral excellence will be propelled towards undertaking

¹⁶ For discussions of this preface and its relationship to Diodorus' practice of including speeches see Sacks (1990: 93–108), Bravo (1993), Achilli (2012), Baron (forthcoming), Pausch (forthcoming).

the noblest actions because of the possibility of obtaining immortal fame, and those who have the opposite disposition will be turned away from the impulse to wickedness by the thought of their fitting reputation. (Diod. Sic. 15.1.1)

The confident belief in the power of his writing to change the behaviour of his readers is recognisable from the main preface, but this passage is more explicit about the *paradeigmata* mechanism: praise of historical characters is meant to inspire readers to emulation, criticism is meant to scare them away from wicked deeds.¹⁷ In both cases it is the immortality accorded by historiography that is thought to be the spur to action; moralising and commemoration go hand in hand.

Commemoration is also the focus of the preface to book 4, which justifies the inclusion of mythological events in the *Bibliothēke*. Such events are included, says the narrator, because the heroes and demigods have performed great deeds (μέγιστα καὶ πλεῖστα πράξεις) and benefactions (εὐεργεσίας) for mankind and so deserve to be praised in the pages of history (ὁ τῆς ιστορίας λόγος τοῖς καθήκουσιν ἐπαίνους εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καθύμνησεν: 4.1.4). The same thought is reiterated in 4.8, which functions as a preface to a long narrative of the labours of Heracles. In other words, Diodorus' choice of material is dependent on history's function as memorial, and it is the job of historiography to bestow praise on those who deserve it. The prefaces to books 4 and 15, then, express the twin purposes of commemoration and didacticism, which we know from the main preface are two sides of the same coin.¹⁸

Interestingly, we are never told that historiography may have any other purpose. This is worth stressing because one might assume, certainly from a modern standpoint, that a historian who compiled such an enormous amount of information about such a vast time period had at least some intention of preserving knowledge of the past for its own sake. If this was part of Diodorus' motivation, he does not mention it in the preserved books. The past seems to have value for him only as a treasury¹⁹ of useful and edifying *paradeigmata*, which perpetuate the fame or notoriety of their protagonists.

17 On the *parrhesia* of historiography, see Sacks (1990: 33–5, forthcoming).

18 Outside of prefaces, this dual purpose is referred to at 10.12, 10.21.1, 11.38.6 and 11.46.1.

19 χρηματιστήριον: Diod. Sic. 1.1.3. This is an extremely unusual word, which can denote either a sanctuary or a place where business is conducted. I have chosen 'treasury' in order to cover both the idea of storage of something precious (like votive offerings in a sanctuary) and the idea of valuable transactions. The idea of transaction may well be significant: readers go there to interact or 'do business' with historical characters of the past and come away not monetarily but morally enriched.

CHARACTERISATION OF DIODORUS' MORALISING

Distribution

A large part of the *Bibliothēke* only exists as paraphrases and quotations in later works, known as 'fragments'. Out of the forty books, 6–10 and 21–40 are fragmentary. Here, moralising is ubiquitous. As with Polybius, the majority of Diodoran fragments have been preserved by excerptors who were more interested in moralising anecdotes and sound bites than in historical narrative, and the result is an overrepresentation of this material among the fragments. Such decontextualised passages can help us establish Diodoran moral themes and interests, but their lack of narrative context makes them unsuitable as the basis of analysis of his moral-didactic programme and techniques. They will therefore only be used as contributory evidence.

More interestingly, even the non-fragmentary parts of the *Bibliothēke* are an uneven read. The contents and the historical treatment of events vary widely. The first six books are ethnographical and mythological. In the ethnographical sections, there is hardly any moralising; customs are described, but not evaluated on a moral scale. In the mythological sections, moralising is also scarce; where it does occur it mostly takes the form of didactic introductions telling the reader how to interpret a story. However, a reader consuming the mythological tales from beginning to end would have found himself under the influence of a more subtle type of moralising, namely the 'correlation between behaviour and result' also found in parts of Polybius' *Histories*. We shall return to this below.

In the historical part of the work, the amount of moralising and the techniques used vary between sections, most probably dependent on what source Diodorus used. For instance, there is little moralising in the narrative of the Peloponnesian War in books 12–13, but plenty in the narrative of the Carthaginian Wars in Sicily in books 13–14.²⁰ Likewise, there is little moralising in the narrative of Alexander the Great in book 17 and the Successor Wars in books 18–20, and plenty in the narrative of the Sacred War in book 16 and of the Sicilian tyrant Agathocles in books 20–1. Such variation will be one of the areas of focus for the analysis both of moralising techniques and of moral messages.

For an explanation of the terminology used in the analysis of Diodorus' moralising techniques the reader is referred to the overview offered in the Introduction, and its exemplification in Chapter 1.

²⁰ For a close reading of a passage from each of these two sections that shows the difference clearly, see Hau (2009).

Moralising in Narrative Pauses

Much of Diodorus' moralising takes place explicitly, in narrative pauses. He is particularly fond of **guiding moralising**, which, as in Polybius, can be introductory, concomitant or concluding and sometimes proleptically comments on a character's future fate. This technique is found in all parts of the *Bibliothēke*. These short passages often contain metaphors and similes, such as 'they took the bait, so to speak, for their own destruction',²¹ or generalising *gnomai*, such as 'fortune is good at unexpectedly tripping up the arrogant and teaching them not to be too confident about the future' (15.33.3)²² and 'every act of kindness, if performed freely, bears noble fruit in the praise it receives from the beneficiaries; for even if they can't all repay it, at least one of those who have received the kindness sometimes pays it back on behalf of all' (10.16.3).²³ Such gnomic expressions are not used by Polybius and are distinctive of Diodorus' moral-didactic style.²⁴ The memorable phrases clearly impressed the Constantinian excerptors, with the result that a large number of the surviving fragments are decontextualised *sententiae*. Out of context they tell us nothing more than that such pithy expressions were ubiquitous in the *Bibliothēke*, and that many of their themes were recurrent throughout the work.

There are also some prominent and memorable **moralising digressions** in the work: the encomium of the dead at Thermopylae (11.11), the comparison of Themistocles and Gelon of Syracuse (11.23) and of Pausanias of Sparta and Aristides of Athens (11.46), the interpretation of the Carthaginian defeat at Syracuse as divine punishment (14.76), and the obituaries of Pelopidas (15.81.1–4) and Epaminondas (15.88). Diodorus' digressions are generally less well defined than the digressions of Polybius: often they are introduced with a brief justification (e.g. 'we must go back in time a little and explain everything from the beginning': 11.67.1; 'it would be unfitting to pass by the death of this man without according him the appropriate praise': 15.88.1), but the endpoint is left unclear, with the digression simply segueing into narrative (e.g. 11.67.7, 15.40.4–5).

The moral-didactic digressions cluster in certain sections of the

21 καθαπερει δέλεαρ ἔλαβον τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀπωλείας: 14.101.3.

22 ἀγαθὴ γὰρ ἡ Τύχη τοὺς μέγα φρονούντας παραδόξως σφῆλαι καὶ διδάξει μηδὲν ἄγαν κατελπίζειν: 15.33.3.

23 πᾶσα χάρις ἀμεταμέλητος οὖσα καλὸν ἔχει καρπὸν τὸν παρὰ τὸν τῶν εὐεργετουμένων ἔπαινον· καὶ γὰρ ἂν μὴ πάντες, εἰς γέ τις τῶν εὐ πεπονθότων ἐνίστε τὴν ὑπὲρ ἅπαντων ἀπέδωκε χάριτι: 10.16.3.

24 This may well have to do with the school practice of writing *progymnasmata*, often including or concluding with a moralising maxim, which seems to have developed in the second–first century BC (a thought I owe to Christopher Burden-Strevens in conversation). For the tradition of *progymnasmata* see Kennedy (2003: ix–xiii).

Bibliothēke; there are eight in book 11 and seven in book 15, against only two in book 14 and one in book 17.²⁵ This probably means that Diodorus took over these digressions from his sources and that, although he may have added to them and altered some details, he did not compose moralising digressions from scratch where he found none in his source.²⁶ His digressions can be explanatory, evaluative, philosophical, polemical or associative – in other words, he uses the entire spectrum of possibilities. None of his digressions, moralising or otherwise, are as long as Polybius' book 6. The longest digression in the *Bibliothēke* is 12.11.4–19.3, which sets out and praises the laws of Charondas, the lawgiver of Thurii.²⁷ This digression functions partly as a description of a 'marvel' (θαῦμα – as important to Diodorus as to Herodotus), partly as a praise passage of the lawgiver, partly as a piece of moral didacticism on all the different actions and vices covered by Charondas' laws. The second-longest digression is 16.61–4, which details with relish the divine punishment that befell those who had committed the grossest impieties during the Sacred War. In other words, when Diodorus does offer long digressions, they usually have a moral-didactic function.

In addition to full-blown moral digressions, Diodorus frequently uses very short digressions of one or two sentences, which can perhaps better be termed 'moralising asides'. These asides are closely tied to the narrative and add information which in a modern text might have been put in brackets or a footnote. They often outline the character of a historical person in a few words:

(οὐκ ἔχων δὲ στρατηγὸν ἀξιόχρεων, μετεπέμψατο Χαβρίαν τὸν Ἀθηναῖον.) ἄνδρα καὶ φρονήσει καὶ συνέσει στρατηγικῇ διάφορον καὶ δόξαν ἐπ' ἀρετῇ μεγάλην περιπεποιημένον.

(Not having any capable general, he sent for Chabrias the Athenian,) a man outstanding in both intelligence and strategic ability and with an established reputation for great and noble bravery. (Diod. Sic. 15.29.2)

or give brief background information:

καθόλου γὰρ ἐπὶ πολὺ τῇ δυνάμει προκόπτοντες οὐκέτι τοῖς συμμάχοις ὥσπερ πρότερον ἐπιεικῶς ἐχρῶντο, ἀλλὰ βιαίως καὶ ὑπερηφάνως ἤρχον. Διόπερ οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν συμμάχων τὴν βαρύτητα φέρειν ἀδυνατοῦντες ἀλλήλοις διελέγοντο περὶ ἀποστάσεως, καὶ τινες τοῦ κοινοῦ συνεδρίου καταφρονήσαντες κατ' ἰδίαν ἐτάττοντο.

25 11.11, 11.23, 11.26.4–7, 11.38.6, 11.46, 11.58.4–59.3, 11.67, 11.82.1–2, 14.1–2, 14.76, 15.1.3–5, 15.39.2, 15.44, 15.49, 15.50.2–3, 15.81.1–4, 15.88, 17.38.4–7.

26 This corresponds to my conclusion with regard to Diodorus' moralising on the changeability of fortune in Hau (2009).

27 Its companion piece is 12.20–1 on the laws of Zaleucus of Italian Locri.

For overall, now when they (the Athenians) were advancing greatly in power they no longer treated their allies as well as before, but ruled violently and arrogantly. For that reason most of their allies felt unable to bear the harshness and discussed rebellion with each other, and scorned the common Assembly and were making arrangements individually. (Diod. Sic. 11.70.3–4)

These ‘moral asides’ cannot provide the same level of analysis or moral outrage as fully fledged digressions and they do not guide the reader’s interpretation of an episode as precisely as guiding moralising. Rather, they are used to give the reader a bit of inside information on a character or situation without breaking the flow of the narrative. They are extremely common in the *Bibliothēke* and are a large part of what gives the work its moralising feel.²⁸

Moralising in the Narrative of Events

The moralising ‘feel’ of Diodorus’ text persists also in the narrative of events. One important factor in creating it is his pervasive use of evaluative phrasing. Like the narrative of Polybius, much of the narrative of Diodorus is adorned with evaluative words and phrases which guide the reader’s moral response to the events. This is true of almost all of the Sicilian narrative most probably based on Timaeus (in books 13–14 and 20), and of certain passages in all the other parts of the work. It is relatively rare in the narrative of Alexander the Great and the Successors in books 17–20, where the moralising tends to take the form of moral introductions and conclusions with a few digressions. The example below, however, is from this part of the work and has been chosen because it perfectly illustrates the characteristics of Diodorus’ use of evaluative vocabulary, which is significantly less subtle than Polybius’. This is the account of how Olympias, mother of Alexander the Great, treats her captured rival Eurydice:

[4] τοῦτον δὲ τὸν τρόπον Ὀλυμπιάς τῶν βασιλικῶν σωμάτων κυριεύσασα καὶ χωρὶς κινδύνων τὴν βασιλείαν παραλαβοῦσα τὴν εὐτυχίαν οὐκ ἤνεγκεν ἀνθρωπίνως, ἀλλὰ τὴν τ’ Εὐρυδικὴν καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα Φίλιππον τὸ μὲν πρῶτον εἰς φυλακὴν καταθεμένη κακουχεῖν ἐπεχείρησε· περιοικοδομήσασα γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐν βραχεῖ τόπῳ τὰ σώματα διὰ μιᾶς στενῆς ὑποδοχῆς ἐχορήγει τὰ ἀναγκαῖα· [5] ἐπὶ πολλὰς δ’ ἡμέρας παρανομήσασα τοὺς ἠτυχηκότας, ἐπειδὴ παρὰ τοῖς Μακεδόσιν ἠδόξει διὰ τὸν πρὸς τοὺς πάσχοντας ἔλεον, τὸν μὲν Φίλιππον προσέταξε Θραξί τισιν ἐκκεντῆσαι, βασιλέα γεγενημένον ἐξ ἔτη καὶ μῆνας τέσσαρας, τὴν δ’ Εὐρυδικὴν παρρησιαζομένην καὶ βοῶσαν αὐτῇ μᾶλλον προσήκειν ἢ περὶ Ὀλυμπιάδι τὴν βασιλείαν ἔκρινε μείζονος ἀξιώσαι τιμωρίας. [6] εἰσέπεμψεν οὖν αὐτῇ ξίφος καὶ βρόχον καὶ κώνειον καὶ

28 Other examples are 13.76.2, 15.31.3, 15.63.2, 15.64.4, 16.65.2, 16.83.2, 18.28.6.

συνέταξε τούτων ᾧ βούλοιο καταχρήσασθαι πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, οὔτε τὸ προγεγεννημένον ἀξίωμα τῆς παρανομουμένης ἐντραπεῖσα τὸ παράπαν οὔτε τῆς κοινῆς τύχης εἰς οἶκτον ἐλθοῦσα: [7] τοιγαροῦν τῆς ὁμοίας μεταβολῆς τυχοῦσα τῆς ὠμότητος ἀξίαν ἔσχε τὴν τοῦ βίου καταστροφὴν. Εὐρυδικὴ μὲν γὰρ κατευξαμένη παρόντος τοῦ κομίσαντος τῶν ὁμοίων δωρεῶν Ὀλυμπιάδα τυχεῖν τὸν μὲν ἄνδρα περιέστειλεν, ἐπιμεληθεῖσα τῶν τραυμάτων ὡς ποθ' ὁ καιρὸς συνεχώρει, ἑαυτὴν δ' ἀνακρεμάσασα τῇ ζώνῃ κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον, οὔτε δακρύσασα τὴν αὐτῆς τύχην οὔτε τῷ μεγέθει τῶν συμπτωμάτων ταπεινωθεῖσα.

(4) When Olympias in this way had got the royal persons into her power and had taken over the kingdom without danger, she did not bear her good fortune like a human being,²⁹ but she threw Eurydice and her husband, Philip, in prison and began to maltreat them. She walled them up in a small space and had their necessities ministered to them through one narrow passage. (5) When she had unlawfully abused the unfortunate persons for many days and was gaining a bad reputation among the Macedonians because of their pity for the sufferers, she ordered some Thracians to stab Philip, who had been king for six years and four months. But Eurydice, who was expressing herself freely and shouting that the kingdom belonged to her rather than to Olympias, she judged worthy of a greater punishment. (6) So she sent her a sword, a noose, and some hemlock and ordered her to use whichever of these she liked to kill herself. She did not feel any regard for the former prestige of the unlawfully treated woman at all, nor was she moved to pity by common fortune. (7) For that reason, when she met with her own similar reversal in fortunes, she ended her life in a manner worthy of her cruelty. For Eurydice laid out her husband's corpse in the presence of the attendant, praying that Olympias would meet with similar gifts. When she had taken care of his wounds as best she could in the situation, she hanged herself by her girdle and ended her life, neither crying over her own fate nor brought low by the enormity of her misfortunes. (Diod. Sic. 19.11.4-7)

The passage is introduced with a moral introduction telling the reader to consider it an instance of the abuse of good fortune (19.11.4). Negative verbs are used of the actions of Olympias (κακουχεῖν: 19.11.4, παρανομήσασα: 19.11.5), while her victims are termed 'unfortunate' (ἡτυχηκότας: 19.11.5). By telling the reader what the queen did *not* do, that is, bear her good fortune like a human being (19.11.4) and feel regard for Eurydice's former station and be moved to pity (19.11.6), the narrator implies that these were the sentiments and actions one would expect, and so draws attention to Olympias' aberrant behaviour by 'presentation through negation'.³⁰ (The

²⁹ For this expression see Hau (2009: 176-7) and below.

³⁰ 'Presentation through negation' has been identified by de Jong (1987: 61-8) as a Homeric technique of drawing the reader's attention to significant behaviour or events. It has been applied to Thucydides by Hornblower (1994: 152-8) and is common in Diodorus, as well as in Xenophon, as we shall see.

idea here of ‘common fortune’ is typical of such passages in Diodorus and will be discussed below, p. 100.) The nobility of Eurydice is stressed by the positive verb ‘expressed herself freely’ (παρρησιαζομένην: 19.11.5), which in the *Bibliothēke* is regularly used of those who risk life and limb to speak the truth to autocratic rulers.³¹ In another presentation through negation, the information (19.11.7) that Eurydice did not cry or let herself be crushed by the weight of her misfortunes makes us understand that such behaviour would have been expected and understandable, but that Eurydice was too brave and dignified to engage in it. In the middle of the passage, the moralising is strengthened by internal evaluation: the Macedonians, Olympias’ own people, feel pity for the captives and think that she has gone too far (19.11.5). In addition, towards the end, we get a proleptic statement about Olympias’ own death, making it a direct result of her present behaviour (τοιγαροῦν: 19.11.7).

By the end of the passage, the reader has not so much been guided to a moral reading as been forcefully dragged to it. The narrator does not seem to trust his reader to arrive at the obvious conclusion on his own, and so the message is made abundantly clear. This is typical of much of Diodorus’ moralising and is part of what has alienated him from post-historicism readers.

The passage also shows another feature that is typical of Diodorus’ moralising: his fascination with scenes of cruelty and suffering. From such passages the reader gets the impression that the narrator paints a detailed picture of the horror partly because he enjoys provoking a strong reaction. This kind of tabloid sensationalism has often been criticised, by modern scholars and by other ancient historians: Polybius’ ridiculing of Phylarchus’ ‘tragic’ style of historiography is notorious (Polyb. 2.56–68). But considering Diodorus’ sensationalist passages as a means of moral didacticism allows us to see them in a new light. There is not just delight in the horror stories, but also a focus on pity for the sufferers and a moral lesson to be taken away.³² The elaboration of detail has a mimetic rather than a sensationalist purpose and is intended to make the readers emotionally involved in the story, thereby bringing the moral point home more strongly.³³

In the passage just quoted, the point is that Olympias has gone too far in her revenge and will end up suffering for it. The cruelty (and greed) of the perpetrator(s) is a typical message of passages that use pathos to enhance their moralising, as are the dignity and courage of the victim(s) and their

³¹ E.g. 14.65.4, 17.30.5, 17.80.4, 19.48.5, 28.14. On the theme of freedom of speech in Diodorus see Sacks (forthcoming).

³² This is recognised by Chamoux (1993: lxi–lxii).

³³ For an excellent discussion of the manipulation of readers’ emotions by ancient historiographers see Marincola (2003).

immortal fame, or, sometimes, the deservedness of the horrors inflicted. The pity of the onlookers is often mentioned and is supposed to guide the reader's emotional response.³⁴ This moralising technique, which we can call **moralising through pathos**, seems to have been common in some other Hellenistic historiographers, most notably Agatharchides of Cnidus, as we shall see in Chapter 3.

The distribution of moralising through pathos in the *Bibliothèque* is even less balanced than the distribution of digressions. This is doubtless partly because this mimetic mode of readerly engagement only works in narratives of people similar enough to the intended readers for them to feel sympathy and pity (see Arist. *Rh.* 2.8) and so would not be a viable mode for presentation of mythological material. However, even in the non-mythological books, moralising through pathos is predominantly found in the Sicilian narrative of books 13–14 and 20, which Diodorus probably based on Timaeus, and in book 17, which deals with Alexander the Great and was perhaps based on Clitarchus. This is a strong indication that Diodorus took over this type of moralising from his sources where he found it, but did not compose it from scratch.

Like Polybius, Diodorus also uses **speeches** to further his moral didacticism. As in Polybius, speeches in the *Bibliothèque* gain authority from narratorial endorsement (13.102.1–3, 14.25), from the way they are received by their internal audience (12.6–16, 14.65–70), or from correspondence between the views they express and narratorial moralising elsewhere in the work (13.19–33.1). However, full-length speeches are not very common in the *Bibliothèque*.³⁵ A more usual way for Diodorus to make the reader hear the actual words of his characters is by quoting – or paraphrasing – their most pithy remarks as part of a vividly described situation, making the episode into a **moralising vignette**. It is in the nature of such vignettes that they are individually very different, so there is no one typical format. An example is the riotous scene of Philip II celebrating his victory at Chaeronea with a drinking party, and jeering at his prisoners of war until he is reproached ‘with Attic charm’ by the captive Athenian orator Demades and changes his behaviour (16.87). Another, more subtle, instance is the detailed narrative of Alexander sitting on Darius’ throne after his capture of Persepolis and being offered a golden table for a footstool. This makes a captive eunuch burst into tears and comment on the changeability of fortune, which in turn makes Alexander worry that he

³⁴ See e.g. 14.112, 13.57–8, 14.52–3 with 14.46, 17.13, 17.35–6, 17.70, 19.7–8, 20.15.4–6 and 20.54.

³⁵ There are only four complete full-length speeches in the *Bibliothèque*: 13.20–7 and 28–32, 13.52–3, 14.65–9. Some fragments seem to come from speeches: 10.34, 27.13–18, 31.3. See Sacks (1990: 93–108) and Pausch (forthcoming).

may inadvertently have abused his good fortune, only to be reassured by Philotas that this is not the case as he meant no harm (17.66.3–7). What the vignettes have in common is a setting of the scene, a short speech or *sententia* by a character, possibly a reply, and sometimes a result or a response to the reply. Interestingly, the didactic interpretation of a vignette is most often left open, without any moralising conclusion to guide the reader. In this they differ from most other moral-didactic techniques employed by Diodorus and come close instead to the famously ambiguous dialogues of Xenophon's *Hellenica* (see Chapter 6).³⁶

A final type of moral didacticism in the *Bibliothēke* is equally implicit, but dominates by its near-ubiquity and contributes greatly to the work's overall moralising feel. This is the constant and often explicitly emphasised **correlation between behaviour and result**. This moralising technique plays an even more dominant role in the *Bibliothēke* than in Polybius' *Histories*. Throughout the historical books, good men and mild rulers are rewarded with loyalty and success (11.71.2, 15.31.1, 18.28.6) or, if all else fails, with immortal fame (14.112.5; discussed below, p. 105), while bad men suffer (13.86.1–3, 16.45.4), or at least leave behind them a deservedly evil reputation (14.1–2). In the mythological books, kings are loved and famed for their mildness and other qualities (e.g. 2.28, 2.38.5, 4.73.6, 5.78.4), and heroes and gods perform benefactions and are rewarded with loyalty and immortal honours (e.g. 1.13.4, 1.20.5, 3.58–9, 4.53.6–7, 5.71–72.1), while the cruel and impious suffer spectacular punishments (e.g. 1.64.5, 3.43.5, 4.74, 5.50.5, 6.7.2–3, 7.5.11). The overall impression is clear, even without the narrator's explicit intervention: good behaviour is rewarded, bad behaviour is punished. We shall return to this below as such a correlation teaches a moral lesson as much as it constitutes moralising technique.

MORAL LESSONS OF THE *BIBLIOTHEKE*

The aim of this section is to analyse Diodorus' moral messages and compare them with those of Polybius, in preparation for a comparison between Hellenistic and Classical moral didacticism in Part II. Before we begin, however, it is necessary to discuss the interpretative implications of the differences in narrative style between the 'mythological' (1–7) and 'historical' (8–40) books of the *Bibliothēke*. Diodorus himself was aware that he was doing something different in the early books from the later ones, as his preface to book 4 shows: his sources for them were

³⁶ Other moral-didactic vignettes are 8.18.2, 9.2.2, 9.26–8, 10.25.4, 11.6.1–2, 12.33, 12.38, 14.25, 15.11, 15.87, 15.93.2.

different, and his treatment of the myths was characterised by ‘great care’ (ἐπιμέλειαν: 4.1.4) rather than the ‘truth’ (τῆς ἀληθείας) claimed for historiography more generally in the main preface (1.2.7–8). This corresponds to a difference in moralising techniques between these two parts of the *Bibliothēke*, as we saw above. In fact, it is the entire narrative style that differs between the mythological and historical books: the mythological books are characterised by fast-paced summaries, variants of the same story, and little emotional involvement, while the historical books make copious use of scenes, speech, moralising narrative pauses, and evaluative and emotional phrasing. This makes the mythological books and the historical books very different reading experiences. These differences and Diodorus’ own awareness of them make it reasonable to distinguish between the two parts of the work when discussing individual moral messages, and this will be done frequently in the following analysis. Nonetheless, it will be seen that the moral lessons propounded by the two parts of the *Bibliothēke* largely correspond, and are always in support of each other.

Divine Justice

The main moral message of the *Bibliothēke* seems to be that you get what you deserve: the good are rewarded and the bad punished. This correlation between behaviour and result has been described above as a moralising technique. Here we shall focus on the moral lessons propounded by this model of causation, as well as by a large number of passages that make the causal relationship explicit. These explicitly moralising passages fall into two categories: those that attribute the deserved result to divine influence, and passages without such an attribution.

In contrast with the *Histories* of Polybius, the overall justice of the world of the *Bibliothēke* seems to be largely due to divine influence. The fact that the first seven books of the work cover mythological times and largely concern themselves with the history of the gods means that no one who reads the work from beginning to end can be in any doubt that the reader is meant to believe in the existence of divine beings. This is worth stressing, as modern readers all too often make assumptions about the response of ancient readers on the basis of their own sharp distinction between the ‘mythological’ and the ‘historical’ part of ancient works of historiography. The distinctions Diodorus draws in the preface to book 4, which we discussed briefly above, do not justify taking the historical books more seriously in moral terms than the mythological books. The stories of the early books of the *Bibliothēke* show that divine beings take a keen interest in human beings, sometimes reward piety and good deeds and, more often,

punish impiety and cruelty.³⁷ Only after a hefty dose of this moralistic theology does the reader enter into what we today consider the historical period, conditioned to expect divine involvement in the interest of justice.

In the 'historical' books, divine punishment also figures prominently. Sometimes it works on a large scale as a historical explanation, so that falling under the control of the Thirty Tyrants is punishment of the Athenian *demos* for wrongfully executing the generals of the Battle of Arginusae (13.103.1–2), and the Carthaginians are defeated in the Second Carthaginian War because of their impiety and cruelty (14.73–6). At other times the divine punishes individuals, such as the generals responsible for the robbing of Delphi during the Sacred War (16.61–4), and the tyrant Agathocles, who has murdered a guest-friend (20.70) and robbed temples (20.101).³⁸ Explicit instances of divine vengeance cluster in certain parts of the work and are most frequent in the Sicilian narrative of books 13–14 and 20–1 (probably based on Timaeus), the narrative of the Sacred War in book 16 (probably based on Theopompus) and the fragments of books 27–31 (probably based on Polybius, an oddity which will be discussed below). Divine vengeance strikes the Carthaginians more often than anyone else,³⁹ proving that the concept is closely bound up with the author's patriotic bias. Whether we consider this author Diodorus himself or Timaeus, his likely source for these passages, hardly matters for the present purpose: they were both Sicilian, and it is not strange if they both had strong anti-Carthaginian feelings. Diodorus probably found the references to divine vengeance in Timaeus and transferred them to his own work because they suited his own attitude both to the history of his own region and to historical causation more generally.⁴⁰

An intriguing feature of many of the instances of superhuman punishment in the *Bibliothēke* is that they in some way mirror the offence. An obvious example is 19.103.4–5. Here, some Carthaginians who, during their war with the Sicilian Greeks, have captured some innocent Athenian sailors and cut off their hands are afterwards captured by the Syracusans and suffer the same fate. This is the narrative of their capture and punishment:

δοξάντων δ' αὐτῶν ὠμῶς κεκρῆσθαι μηδ' ὅτιοῦν ἀδικοῦσι ταχὺ τὸ δαιμόνιον αὐτοῖς ἐπεσήμαιεν· εὐθὺ γὰρ τοῦ στόλου τινὲς νῆες ἀποσχισθεῖσαι περὶ τὴν

37 Divine rewards in 1–6, 3.65, 4.22.5. Divine punishments in 1–6, 3.65, 4.22.4, 4.63.4, 4.68.2, 4.69.3–5, 4.71, 4.81.5, 5.3.6, 5.55.6–7, 5.71–72.1.

38 Other instances of divine punishment: 6.7.1–3, 7.7, 8.30.1, 13.86.1–3, 14.46.3–4, 14.63, 14.69.4, 15.24, 16.31.4, 16.38.6, 16.56.4, 16.56.8, 16.58.5–6, 23.12, 27.4, 27.12, 28.3, 28.7, 29.15, 29.25, 31.35, 31.45, 32.18, 32.26, 34/35.9, 38/39.6, 38/39.19.

39 In 13.86.1–3, 14.63.1–2, 14.69.4, 14.73.5, 14.74.3, 14.74.4, 14.76, 14.77.4 and 15.24.

40 For an analysis of the narratives of the First and Second Carthaginian Wars in books 13–14 that clearly shows the divine aspect see Hau (2009: 184–7).

Βρεττίαν ἐάλωσαν ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀγαθοκλέους στρατηγῶν καὶ τὸ παραπλήσιον οἱ ζωγρηθέντες τῶν Φοινίκων ἔπαθον οἷς ἔπραξαν εἰς τοὺς ἀλόντας.

The divine soon sent them a sign to show that they had seemed to treat cruelly men who had done nothing wrong: for immediately some ships of their fleet which had been scattered around Brettia were captured by Agathocles' commanders, and those of the Phoenicians who were captured alive suffered a similar fate to what they had done to their captives. (Diod. Sic. 19.103.5)

Apparently, the sign by which the divine showed the Carthaginians that they had acted unjustly is the fact not that they were caught, but that they suffered the very same fate as those they had wronged. From a non-religious standpoint it could be argued that the Syracusans knew about the Carthaginian cruelty to the Athenians, and that the similar treatment therefore was a result of their revenge rather than of divine displeasure. However, characteristically for the Diodoran narrator, he is in no doubt that the talionic punishment is a sign of divine vengeance.

A more elaborate example is 16.64.2, on the fate of two women who wore necklaces stolen from Delphi during the Sacred War:

αἱ δὲ τῶν ἐν Φωκεῦσιν ἡγεμόνων γυναῖκες περιθέμεναι τοὺς χρυσοῦς ἐκ Δελφῶν ὄρμους οἰκειάς τῆς ἀσεβείας τιμωρίας ἔτυχον· ἡ μὲν γὰρ τὸν τῆς Ἑλένης γεγεννημένον φορέσασα εἰς ἐταιρικὴν αἰσχύνην ἐνέπεσε καὶ τὸ κάλλος προέβαλε τοῖς ἐξυβρίζειν προαιρουμένοις, ἡ δὲ τὸν τῆς Ἐριφύλης περιθεμένη τῆς οἰκίας ὑπὸ τοῦ πρεσβυτάτου τῶν υἱῶν ὑπὸ μανίας ἐμπυρισθείσης μετὰ ταύτης ζῶσα κατεφλέχθη. οἱ μὲν οὖν τοῦ δαίμονι καταφρονεῖν τολμήσαντες τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν τιμωρίας ἠξιώθησαν, ὁ δὲ τῷ μαντεῖο βοηθήσας Φίλιππος ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν χρόνων αἰεὶ μᾶλλον αὐξόμενος τὸ τελευταῖον διὰ τὴν εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσέβειαν ἡγεμῶν ἀπεδείχθη τῆς Ἑλλάδος πάσης καὶ μεγίστην βασιλείαν τῶν κατὰ τὴν Εὐρώπην περιποιήσατο.

The wives of the Phocian commanders who had worn the gold necklaces from Delphi met with a punishment suitable to their impiety: for the one who had worn the necklace that had belonged to Helen sank to the shame of a courtesan and exposed her beauty to those who chose to abuse it, and the one who had worn the one that had belonged to Eriphyle had her home burned down by the eldest of her sons, who had gone mad, and was burned alive with it. And so those who had dared to despise the divine were deemed by the gods to deserve punishment in the described manner, but Philip, who had helped the oracle, from this time onwards always grew more powerful and in the end was appointed commander of all Hellas and acquired the greatest kingdom in Europe because of his piety towards the divine. (Diod. Sic. 16.64.2–3)

The fates of the women have obvious points of similarities with the legends of the mythological women whose jewellery they wear, and the οὖν ('and

so') of the last sentence shows that the reader is meant to see a causal connection between these similarities and the divine vengeance. Such talionic, mirroring or somehow ironic punishment occurs throughout the *Bibliothēke*, but is most frequent in the passages based on Timaeus.⁴¹

The final sentence of the passage is one of the most explicit statements of divine support in the *Bibliothēke*: as the temple-robbers are punished, so the pious Philip II is rewarded. Such divine support is a noteworthy feature of the *Bibliothēke* – it does not feature in Polybius' *Histories* – but it figures markedly less often than divine punishment. On the macro-level, Rome conquers Philip V and Antiochus III because of divine support earned through piety (28.3). On an individual level, some morally good characters have the support either of individual deities or, more frequently, of 'the divine' (τὸ δαίμονιον), 'the gods' (οἱ θεοί) or 'fortune' (τύχη), which seem to be interchangeable expressions. For instance, the Sicilian hero (of Corinthian origin) Timoleon is said to have the support of 'the divine' as well as of Demeter and Persephone (16.66.1–5) and to win his famous victory by a combination of courage and divine support (16.79.5). Likewise, Alexander the Great is aided by Athena (17.17.6–18.1), and fortune has a hand in his recovery from illness (17.31.6). Also, Alexander's general Ptolemy is saved from his wounds in a way which 'some' ascribe to divine providence (17.103.7–8), just after the reader has been assured of his general goodness, and later enjoys divine favour because of 'his courage and his honest treatment of all his friends'.⁴² Most instances of divine support occur in the narrative of Timoleon in book 16 and the narrative of Alexander in book 17. In book 11, Delphi escapes plundering by 'some divine foresight' (δαίμονιά τινι προνοία: 11.14.4), and the same power makes the victory of Gelon over the Carthaginians in Sicily and the honourable defeat at Thermopylae occur on the same day (11.24.1).⁴³

This unevenness in moralising on a topic as world-defining as divine involvement may be infuriating to modern scholars. However, to a reader who reads the entire *Bibliothēke* without paying attention to the difference between its parts – which is surely the way Diodorus meant it to be read – the fact that divine forces play an explicit role, even if inconsistently, in punishing the wicked and supporting a few extraordinary individuals delivers a moral message which cannot be misunderstood. (In some ways

41 Other examples: 14.76, 16.64.2–3, 20.65.2, 20.70.3–4 and 38/39.19.

42 οἱ δὲ θεοὶ διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ εἰς πάντα τοὺς φίλους ἐπιείκειαν ἐκ τῶν μεγίστων κινδύνων παραδόξως αὐτὸν διέσωσαν: 18.28.6

43 The fact that these two are the only references to divine involvement in book 11, despite the fact that it contains subjects as conducive to the concept as the Persian Wars and Gelon's war against the Carthaginians, might be a reason for conjecturing that Diodorus did not base this part of the *Bibliothēke* (primarily) on Timaeus.

this is reminiscent of the situation in Herodotus, where some wicked deeds bring about divine vengeance whereas others are left unpunished. We shall see this in Chapter 4.)

Even in the parts of the *Bibliothēke* where there are no explicit references to divine justice, the same overall message pertains. In wars, the most moral side tends to be victorious: Athens treats its allies harshly and is dominated by mob politics, and so is defeated by moderate Sparta in the Peloponnesian War (11.70.3–4, 13.102, 15.30.1); the impious temple-robbers are defeated by the benefactor of the Greeks, Philip II, in the Sacred War (e.g. 16.64.2–3); and the all-round good Ptolemy is the person to come out of the Successor Wars most successfully (e.g. 18.28.5–6, 18.33.2–5). By the same token, rulers who treat their subjects well are successful (e.g. 11.26.4–7, 12.50.1–3) while those who mistreat their subjects are rebelled against (9.23, 11.44.4–5), and tyrants ‘usually’ meet miserable ends (26.15). A step down the pecking order, traitors are often executed by their new masters (16.45.4, 19.16.4), and courtiers who plan assassinations end up suffering nasty deaths (9.18–19, 17.5.3–5). Whenever a villain meets a sticky end, the narrator likes to label it ‘deserved’ or ‘fitting’.⁴⁴ When he cannot point to any physical suffering on the part of evil-doers, the narrator often has recourse to the idea that they somehow suffer in retrospect because of the evil reputation they gain (10.16.2, 14.1–2) or that they suffer from fear of retribution (27.4.8). Likewise, when good characters suffer undeserved fates, the narrator sometimes tries to make up for it by dwelling on the fame they won by their dignity and courage (14.112).

At regular intervals, the narrator reminds us in pithy *gnomai* that this is how the world works; for example, ‘those who plot evil against others usually end up entrapped by their own designs’ (9.29)⁴⁵ and ‘divine punishment usually follows unjust deeds and brings deserved punishment to the perpetrators’ (10.16.2).⁴⁶ These are some of the sound bites that are often preserved out of context (see above).⁴⁷ However, their presence throughout the work shows that this message was high on the list of moral-didactic lessons to be learned from the *Bibliothēke*.

At this juncture it is instructive to compare Diodorus’ version of the Atilius Regulus story with that of Polybius. Both historiographers narrate the story of the Roman general who treats Carthaginian envoys haughtily

44 4.27.3, 5.11.4, 11.77.6, 16.31.4, 17.2.1, 18.8.6, 19.48.4, 20.65, 21.16.5, 22.1, 23.19, 27.4, 29.14, 32.18, 38/39.11.

45 οἱ γὰρ κατὰ τῶν ἄλλων βουλευόμενοι τι φαῦλον ὡς ἐπίπαν ταῖς ἰδίαις ἐπιθυμίαις εἰώθασιν ἀλίσκεσθαι: 9.18.

46 ταῖς ἀδίκους πράξεσιν ὡς ἐπίπαν ἀκολουθεῖ τις νέμεσις οἰκείους τιμωρίας τοῖς ἀμαρτάνουσιν ἐπιφέρουσα: 10.16.2.

47 E.g. 9.33.1, 10.16.2, 37.17.

during peace negotiations after a Roman victory in the First Punic War and then shortly afterwards suffers defeat and capture. Both take the opportunity to moralise, but their messages are subtly different. Polybius uses the episode to give the prescriptive advice that one should always distrust fortune and particularly in success (1.35; see pp. 49–50). Diodorus says that Regulus disregarded ‘divine vengeance’ (τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ νέμεσιν) and suffered ‘deserved punishment’ (ἄξια τιμωρία: 23.12).⁴⁸ The behaviour the two historiographers want to foster in their readers is clearly the same: respectful treatment of envoys and, more generally, a humble and moderate conduct even in great success. Their underlying reasons, however, are different: Polybius warns that fortune is random and always likely to change, while Diodorus predicts that divine forces will deliberately punish wrongheaded behaviour. This neatly captures the difference in worldview between the *Histories* and the *Bibliothēke*.⁴⁹

However, there is one part of the *Bibliothēke* where the message of universal justice is not strongly present,⁵⁰ and that is the narrative of the Successor Wars in books 18–20, which is, as has been noted above, overall less moralising than the rest of the work. Instead, this narrative seems committed to the idea of human life as influenced by random fortune, *tyche*.⁵¹ This is seen most clearly in a highly rhetorical digression at 18.59.4–6, which begins with the statement that ‘All wondered at the changeability and unexpected nature of fortune’ (18.59.4), asks the rhetorical question ‘who would then trust in the success enjoyed in good fortune and conceive an arrogance too big for human weakness?’ (18.59.5), then proclaims paradoxically that ‘therefore it is surprising not if one unforeseen thing happens, but if not everything that happens is unexpected’ (18.59.6), and finally makes the didactical claim that historiography is the one thing that can correct both the arrogance of the fortunate and the desperation of the unfortunate (18.59.6). It seems that Diodorus found this carefully crafted digression in his source (usually thought to be Hieronymus of Cardia),⁵² and was so seduced by the similarity with his own didactic message about

48 Polybius’ moralising occurs in a digression at the end of the narrative of Regulus’ capture; Diodorus’ at the end of the narrative of Regulus’ arrogant treatment of the envoys, proleptically predicting his fate. There may well have been a piece of concluding moralising in Diodorus as well, but that part of the narrative is lost.

49 It is intriguing that both Diodorus and Polybius choose to make a negative *paradeigma* out of Regulus, who is considered a paragon of virtue in the Roman tradition, see e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 3.5 and Cic. *Off.* 3.99. Diodorus either did not know this version of the story or chose to ignore Roman sources in favour of the Greek tradition represented by Polybius. See Leach (2014).

50 Divine justice may be at work at 18.20.1, 19.11.7 and 19.48.4.

51 See 18.8.7, 18.20.1, 18.53, 18.59.4–6, 18.67.5.

52 But see Meeus (2013), with references to earlier literature.

mistrusting good fortune and staying humble in success (see below) that he did not notice, or care, that such universal randomness would cancel out any claim to universal justice in his narrative world.⁵³

On balance, a less than straightforward picture emerges of Diodorus' source usage with regard to moral didacticism. On the one hand, he seems to have let his sources guide him in his choice of episodes to turn into moral-didactic *paradeigmata* and not to have added many (any?) moralising digressions or asides to a largely non-moralising source narrative like Hieronymus'. On the other hand, it is clear from the comparison with Polybius that he felt free to rewrite any moralising that he found in his source in order to express his own views.⁵⁴ The conclusion must be that Diodorus generally cared enough about his moral-didactic programme to make an effort in crafting passages that would convey what he considered the right message out of source material that was making a different point, but that he could also be seduced by a clever turn of phrase to keep one that was subtly different. When there was no moralising in his source, he either forgot about his moral-didactic agenda or considered writing moralising from scratch too much of an effort.⁵⁵

Overall, then, the narrative world of the *Bibliothēke* is one where good deeds pay and bad deeds are punished, often by means of divine intervention. Random fortune, however, also plays a part, and human beings must always guard against becoming arrogant in their success. Let us turn now to look at this and other lessons about the morally good life taught by the *Bibliothēke*.

The Virtues

Within the framework of universal justice, the *Bibliothēke* has plenty of advice on how to live a moral life. One thing is conspicuously missing in comparison with Polybius, however: moralising digressions on how to be a good king or a good military commander, which may well show that Diodorus did not take over every moralising passage he found in his sources.⁵⁶ In fact, Diodorus does not seem to draw much of a distinction between

53 Hadley (1996) has argued that Diodorus wrote this passage himself and added it to Hieronymus' account. For my counter-argument see Hau (2009: 180–1).

54 This is also seen in e.g. 28.3 (cf. Polyb. 15.20) and 31.15 (cf. Polyb. 30.18; see Hau 2006: 91–5), 31.35 (cf. Polyb. 32.15), 32.26 (cf. Polyb. 38.1–4, 12–13).

55 I have argued for a similar conclusion in Hau (2009), but there maintain that Diodorus wanted the moralising collected from his sources to speak for itself rather than redacting it to suit his own moral-didactic programme. I no longer agree with this. I rather think that Diodorus had his own moral-didactic programme and worked towards it when the moralising of his sources reminded him of it, but tended to forget about it when they did not.

56 Although we cannot be certain, as the part of the *Bibliothēke* that is based on Polybius is fragmentary.

the virtues needed for a good ruler, a good general and a good private person. We shall look first at the virtues he recommends, then at the vices he advises the reader to avoid.

Piety

In a world largely ruled by divine forces, the most important human virtue can be expected to be piety. That this is indeed the case is established in a passage in book 8 (8.15), which is clearly a moralising digression, but has been transmitted out of context so that we cannot know which episode provoked it. The digression begins with the pious statement that it is impossible for human beings to honour the divine (τὸ δαιμόνιον) in a worthy manner (κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν) and that the only hope we have of avoiding divine punishment for this is to show ourselves grateful (εὐχαριστεῖν: 8.15.1). It then declares that the difference between the pious and the impious is that the former can expect their own prayers to be fulfilled, the latter those of their enemies (8.15.2). Piety consists in taking the gods themselves even more seriously than one takes their altars and the oaths one swears by them (8.15.3). In fact, piety is the one virtue that distinguishes human beings from animals (8.15.4). The digression is fragmented, but the final passage extant states that piety is even more important for states than for individuals, and that states too can expect to be rewarded for piety and punished for impiety (8.15.5).⁵⁷ The reader is clearly meant to take piety seriously, and the urgency of the digression's tone perhaps shows that Diodorus did not expect this to come easily to all of his readers. Piety, however, stays at the forefront throughout most of the *Bibliothēke*.

In a remarkable passage early in the *Bibliothēke*, Diodorus signals the importance of piety programmatically when justifying his lengthy treatment of Heracles. It would be 'absurd' (ἄτοπον), he says, to 'forget' the benefactions of Heracles and 'not to maintain the pious devotion to the god passed down from our forefathers' (ἡμᾶς δὲ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν μηδὲ τὴν πατροπαράδοτον εὐσεβειαν διαφυλάττειν: 4.8.5). In other words, it is piety that dictates his decision to narrate the labours of Heracles at length despite the difficulty of doing the demigod justice (4.8.1), and despite the fact that many of his contemporaries do not believe in the truth of the account (4.8.2). The reader is also no doubt meant to remember the preface to book 4 only a few chapters earlier, where the narrator stated that many of his predecessors have avoided narrating the history of the gods and demigods because of the difficulty this entails (4.1.1–2). For

⁵⁷ Diodorus also demonstrates his own piety in 15.48.4, where he states that while some people attribute earthquakes to natural reasons, 'the pious' (οἱ δ' εὐσεβῶς διακείμενοι) point to other 'plausible reasons' (πιθανὰς τινας αἰτίας), namely divine anger at impiety.

the Diodoran narrator, the benefactions performed by the divine beings necessitate a pious response, in his case by means of commemoration in narrative.

This profession of piety is suitable for a historiographer who spends his first eight books on prehistorical times and includes the stories of not only Heracles, but also Zeus, Dionysus, Demeter, Isis and Osiris, to name only the most prominent godheads. It only fits, however, because the narrative of the gods is itself pious: although the approach is often euhemeristic, there is no sarcasm and no dwelling on divine immorality (in contrast with e.g. the treatment by Agatharchides; see p. 156). The gods act primarily out of concern for human beings and bring them civilisation and culture.⁵⁸ When they are honoured by their beneficiaries, they reward them; when they are scorned, they earn the narrator's approval for punishing the impious.⁵⁹ Imitating the gods, human beings in these books hate and rebel against the impious (4.68.2) and honour and reward the pious (7.4).

In the 'historical' books, piety (εὐσεβεία) is often mentioned as one out of several virtues of good characters.⁶⁰ When demonstrated in practice, by sparing suppliants (11.91), by showing more consideration for one's country than for oneself (13.102.3) or by refraining from taking revenge on envoys (27.12.2), it is praised by the narrator. It is also their basis in piety towards the gods that gives Zaleucus' laws their moral authority (12.20). At the opposite end of the scale, impiety tends to lead to disaster, usually brought on by the gods. Thus grave-destruction (13.86.1-3, 38.7), sacrilege (34/35.9), oath-breaking (16.48.3-6, 20.70, 31.45, 32.18) and, above all, temple-robbing (14.63.1-2, 16.38.6, 16.56.4, 16.58.5-6, 16.61-4, 20.101) are punished with divine vengeance. It is important to note, though, that impiety is never the only vice engaged in by Diodoran villains: the main perpetrators of impiety, that is, the Carthaginians in Sicily, the Phocians during the Sacred War and Agathocles of Syracuse, all combine impiety with cruelty and greed, vices which are more likely to bring them to grief at the hands of other human beings. We shall consider these vices below.

A fragment of book 35 seems to indicate a more pragmatic approach to religion akin to what we see in Polybius. It states that it is in society's best interest to maintain a certain superstitious fear of the gods (τὴν ἐκ θεῶν δεισιδαιμονίαν) because this is the only way to get people to act justly (35.9). Without its context it is impossible to ascertain the significance of

⁵⁸ The concept of the gods as culture heroes is discussed by Sacks (1990: 61-82) and Sulimani (2011).

⁵⁹ Piety rewarded: 3.65, 4.21.3, 4.24, 5.4; impiety punished: 3.65, 4.22.4, 4.63.4, 4.81.5, 5.55.6-7, 6.7.1-3, 7.7, 8.30.1.

⁶⁰ E.g. 33.5.6, 34/35.33.3, 37.8.2.

this remark. On the one hand it would not be impossible for Diodorus to propound belief in the gods both for its own sake and for the sake of societal law and order; on the other hand it might not be beyond him to copy the statement out of his source without fully subscribing to it simply because it sounds catchy and clever; and finally the statement may have been part of a speech uttered by a character and not the narrator's own words.

In short, Diodorus' concept of piety seems to be entirely traditional. What is striking, certainly in comparison with Polybius, is the extent to which it is a yardstick not just of narratorial approval, but also of success in the world of the *Bibliothēke*. Differences between parts of the work in this respect are slight: despite the fact that spectacular divine vengeance is restricted to certain parts (see above) and that the narrative of the Sacred War for obvious reasons contains more references to piety and impiety than any other historical narrative in the work, the concepts are important throughout, and εὐσεβεία and ἄσεβεία and their cognates are used frequently in every book.

Mildness, kindness and the danger of good fortune

The virtue most often extolled in the *Bibliothēke* is not piety, however. It is mildness, kindness or a generally fair way of treating the people in one's power, expressed by the noun ἐπιείκεια and its almost-synonym φιλανθρωπία.

ἐπιείκεια and its cognates occur no fewer than 123 times in the *Bibliothēke*, against only nine times in Polybius' *Histories*. In Diodorus, this word is used to describe an uneven relationship: it denotes good treatment of those in one's power, such as that which a ruler shows his subjects, or a commander his men, or a victorious general his captives; hence the common translation 'mildness'. It can also denote general approachability and sympathetic behaviour by someone in power; hence the other common translation, 'kindness'. φιλανθρωπία and its cognates occur no fewer than 167 times in the *Bibliothēke*, against an equally impressive 126 in Polybius' *Histories*. This is a wider concept than ἐπιείκεια, pertaining not just to relationships between unequal parties, but also to kindness between equals. In the *Bibliothēke*, however, it is used as a synonym of ἐπιείκεια, and the two are often employed in hendiadys.

Throughout the work, mild/kind treatment is repeatedly shown to be the way to ensure the loyalty of one's subjects and the praise of posterity.⁶¹ Conversely, harsh treatment of subjects repeatedly leads to disloyalty and

⁶¹ 2.46.2, 3.61.4, 9.24, 11.26.4-7, 11.67.2, 11.71.2, 12.50.1-3, 19.86.3-5. The mechanism is sometimes used deliberately: 11.26.4-7, 15.31.1, 15.57.1.

revolt.⁶² The maxim is set out in a *gnome* in the preface to book 14, although in slightly different words: ‘the power of rulers is maintained by goodwill and justice, but is dissolved by unjust acts and the hatred of the subjects’ (14.2.1).⁶³ Sacks has called it ‘a pattern for the rise and fall of empires’ and identified it – correctly, I think – as Diodorus’ own interpretation of history.⁶⁴ Remarkably, this moral rule holds true for every single part of the *Bibliothēke*, from Egyptian and Ethiopian kings in book 1 (1.60, 1.68.5) to the divine and heroic rulers of the mythological books (3.61.4, 4.45.3–5), to Spartan kings (11.44.4–5), Sicilian tyrants (11.67.2, 14.45.1), the Athenian and Spartan hegemonies (11.70.3–4, 15.28), the Successor kings (19.86.3–5), the Eastern kings of the second century BC (33.18.1, 34/35.3) and even Roman officials (37.5–6) and rebels (38.22a). This must mean that the message that those in power should treat the less powerful with mildness and kindness, and that this will in turn enhance and secure their power and gain them fame, was at the heart of Diodorus’ didactic programme.⁶⁵ The notion is not new, of course. We have seen that Polybius stresses the close correlation between a ruler’s or ruler-state’s treatment of his/its subjects and his/its success,⁶⁶ and we shall see in the next chapter that a similar message is found in the Classical historiographers. However, no extant work of Classical or Hellenistic Greek historiography puts as much emphasis on this moral-didactic point as Diodorus’ *Bibliothēke*.

62 1.60, 1.64.5, 4.45.3–5, 4.68.2, 9.23, 11.44.4–5, 11.68.7, 11.70.3–4, 14.47.5 and 48.1, 15.1.3–5, 15.28, 15.61.2–3, 16.40, 17.5.3, 19.89.3, 28.14, 34/35.2.34–40, 34/35.3, 38.22a.

63 αἱ γὰρ τῶν ἡγεμόνων ὑπεροχαὶ τηροῦνται μὲν εὐνοίᾳ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, καταλύονται δὲ ἀδικήμασι καὶ μίσει τῶν ὑποταγμένων: 14.2.1.

64 Sacks (1990: 6, 42–53).

65 An apparent contradiction is 32.2, which states that ‘Those who want dominion over others use courage and intelligence to get it, moderation and consideration to extend it, and paralysing terror to secure it’ (οἱ τὰς ἡγεμονίας περιποιήσασθαι βουλόμενοι κτῶνται μὲν αὐτὰς ἀνδρεία καὶ συνέσει, πρὸς αὐξήσιν δὲ μεγάλην ἄγουσιν ἐπιεικεία καὶ φιλιανθρωπία, ἀσφαλιζόνται δὲ φόβῳ καὶ καταπλήξει), and which has been used to argue that its author (usually considered to be Polybius, from whom Diodorus is then supposed to have copied the maxim) condones such rule by terror. I have argued elsewhere that the statement says nothing about its author’s attitude to this way of ruling, only about the way he sees rulers generally behaving (Hau 2006).

66 Unfortunately a direct comparison of Diodoran passages on this topic with their Polybian source passages is not possible, as the fragmentary state of both texts means that the passages on which Diodorus based his moralising on the virtue of *epieikeia* have all been lost. The closest match is between Diod. Sic. 30.23 and Polyb. 29.20, which both deal with Aemilius Paullus after his defeat and capture of Perseus. It is obvious that Diod. Sic. 30.23 is based on Polybius’ account, but of this latter only a short fragment is extant, which quotes part of Aemilius’ speech to the Senate about how to bear good fortune with moderation, whereas the Diodorus fragment has both this advice (in *oratio obliqua*) and a concluding narratorial evaluation which moralises explicitly on the *epieikeia* of Aemilius and other Romans more generally. Whether or to what extent this conclusion is based on Polybius is impossible to determine.

Closely related to the message that rulers should treat their subjects mildly is the message that victorious commanders should treat the defeated well. Again, this is not only the morally right way to behave, but also tends to lead to loyalty and fame.⁶⁷ Scenes of victorious generals abound in the *Bibliotheke*, and the narrator is always interested in how they respond to their victory.⁶⁸ In this way, the message of the desirability of mildness and the message of the general human inability to bear good fortune with moderation become closely connected. An example of this is the narrative of how Scipio Africanus the Elder receives the captive Syphax and its moralising conclusion, found in two slightly different versions in the Constantinian Excerpts (Diod. Sic. 27.6):

Ἔτι ὁ Σκιπίων παραγενηθέντων πρὸς αὐτὸν τῶν περὶ Σόφακα τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἰδὼν τὸν ἄνδρα δεδεμένον ἐδάκρυσε, λογιζόμενος τὴν πάλαι ποτὲ μακαριζομένην αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν. μετ' ὀλίγον δὲ χρόνον κρίνας ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν ἐν τοῖς εὐτυχήμασιν ἐπέταξεν αὐτὸν λῦσαι καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν σκηνὴν ἀπέδωκε καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀκολουθίαν ἔχειν συνεχώρησε· τηρῶν δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν ἐλευθέρῳ φυλακῇ φιλανθρώπως ὠμίλει καὶ πολλάκις ἐπὶ δεῖπνα παρελαμβάνετο. (Const. Exc. 2(1), pp. 267–8)

Ἔτι Σκιπίων τὸν Σόφακα τὸν βασιλέα αἰχμάλωτον λαβὼν καὶ δεδεμένον λύσας φιλανθρώπως ὠμίλει αὐτόν· ὤφειτο γὰρ δεῖν τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ πολέμου ἔχθραν μέχρι τοῦ νικᾶν φυλάττειν, εἰς δὲ τύχην αἰχμάλωτον ἀνδρὸς βασιλέως γεγονότος μηδὲν ἐξαμαρτάνειν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα· ἐφορᾷ γάρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον νέμεσις τις θεοῦ, ἢ τοὺς ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον φρονούντας ταχὺ τῆς ἰδίας ἀσθενείας ὑπομνήσκει. διὸ καὶ τὸν Σκιπίωνα τίς οὐκ ἂν ἐπαινέσειε θεωρῶν πρὸς τὸν κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων φόβον καταπληκτικὸν γενόμενον, ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ἡτυχηκότας ἐλέου τὴν ψυχὴν ἠττώμενον; ὡς ἐπὶ πολὺ γὰρ εἰώθασιν οἱ πρὸς τοὺς ἀντιταττομένους φοβεροὶ πρὸς τοὺς ὑποπεσόντας ὑπάρχειν μέτριοι. διὸ καὶ ταχὺ τοῦ Σόφακος ὁ Σκιπίων τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν ἐπιεικειᾶς ἐκομίσαστο χάριν. (Const. Exc. 4, pp. 356–7)

(That) when Syphax and those with him were brought to Scipio and he first saw the man in chains, he burst into tears, thinking about Syphax's ancient prosperity and royal state, now gone. After a little while, deciding to stay moderate like a human being in his good fortune, he ordered that Syphax should be unchained and gave him his own tent and agreed to letting him keep his retinue. Guarding him in free custody he associated with him in a friendly way and often invited him for dinner. (Const. Exc. 2(1), pp. 267–8)

(That) when Scipio had taken King Syphax prisoner, he unchained him and associated with him in a friendly manner; for he thought it right to keep his hostility against his enemy until the point of victory, but when a king

67 3.72.5–6, 14.105, 17.38.3, 17.76.1–2, 17.91.8, 19.86.3–5

68 I have discussed 'victor after the victory' scenes in Diodorus in the context of Greek historiography more generally in Hau (2008).

had had suffered the fate to become a prisoner of war, not to overstep the line, human as he was. For some divine retributive justice, it seems, watches over human life, and quickly reminds those who become too arrogant for a human being of their own weakness. For that reason, who would not praise Scipio, realising that he was a source of terror to the enemy, but that his own mind was defeated by pity for the unfortunate? For often those who are terrifying to the enemy ranged against them are moderate towards those who fall into their power. For that reason Scipio soon obtained Syphax's gratitude for his mildness. (Const. Exc. 4, pp. 356–7)

The close connection between mildness/kindness and the ability to stay moderate in good fortune is clear: Scipio's treatment of Syphax is described as φιλανθρώπως (twice in the passage above, but probably only once in the original passage, here quoted by both excerptors) and τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν ἐπιεικείας (27.6.2) and is brought about by his decision to 'stay moderate like a human being in his good fortune' (ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν ἐν τοῖς εὐτυχήμασιν: 27.6.1) and 'not to overstep the line, human as he was' (μηδὲν ἐξαμαρτάνειν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα: 27.6.2).

We recognise the idea from Polybius: good fortune, most often in the form of military victory, is a test of a man's moral integrity, and most people fail it. The quoted passage is in all likelihood based on a now lost passage of Polybius, and two features of it are typical of the *Histories* rather than of the *Bibliothēke*: the fact that Scipio cries (see p. 53), and the rhetorical question 'who could fail to praise such a man' (27.6.2). These two features were probably already in Polybius' version. We also recognise the gratitude (χάρις: 27.6.2) that is the result of staying moderate and treating the defeated with consideration; this is a *topos* in both the *Histories* and the *Bibliothēke*.

Diodorus, however, has put his own spin on the reason why human beings must strive for moderation in success. The repeated stress on Scipio's humanity (ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν: 27.6.1, ἄνθρωπον ὄντα: 27.6.2) and its inherent weakness (ἀσθενείας: 27.6.2), that is, on the fact that he is a human being and not a god and is therefore subject to the superhuman powers that rule the world, is typical for this sort of passage in the *Bibliothēke* (and we saw it in the passage about Olympias' mistreatment of Eurydice; above, pp. 83–4). The thought is expressed very clearly in the first sentence of the conclusion to the episode: 'For some divine retributive justice, it seems, watches over human life, and quickly reminds those who become too arrogant for a human being of their own weakness.' This religious idea seems to be in contrast with the didactic programme of Polybius, according to which victors should treat the defeated with moderation out of a feeling of solidarity based on their shared humanity. The moralising conclusion, then, must be an addition of Diodorus' to whatever he took over from Polybius. Likewise, the use of the verb ἐξαμαρτάνειν to express the mistake

Scipio would make in mistreating his prisoner shows that the narrator is thinking about that mistake in religious terms as a transgression against the divine, and is therefore most probably an addition of Diodorus'.⁶⁹ It is also in his work and not in Polybius' that the reference to 'human weakness' repeatedly occurs in connection with the message that one should not abuse one's good fortune.⁷⁰ The idea seems to be that all human beings are helpless in the face of divine powers (including fortune, *tyche*), and that this common helplessness should make us feel solidarity with each other and avoid mistreating those who happen to be in our power when we are successful. Rather, we should remember that we may well one day end up in a similar situation. In some Diodoran passages this idea is combined with the thought that human beings share a 'common fortune' (see e.g. the Olympias/Eurydice passage we encountered earlier, pp. 83–4), which sounds closer to the Polybian idea of moderate treatment based on a feeling of solidarity and the thought that the roles might have been reversed, but could equally well be another way of saying that all human beings are equally powerless in the face of superhuman forces.

The admonition to behave moderately towards one's defeated enemy and examples of how this leads to positive results are ubiquitous in the *Bibliothēke*.⁷¹ The message is propounded in a prescriptively moralising digression in 27.15.3, and at four different junctures the message is delivered in very similar *gnomai* stating that 'forgiveness is preferable to punishment'.⁷² Aemilius Paullus and some of his fellow-Romans are said to practise this as a deliberate policy, being tough on their opponents, but mild towards the defeated (πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ὑφισταμένους ὄντα βαρὺν ἑαυτὸν, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς κρατηθέντας ἐπιεικῆ: 30.23.2), which is why Rome's rule was not hated (at that time?).⁷³ Very often it is connected with the idea of behaving moderately in good fortune.⁷⁴

69 ἔξαμαρτάνω is used ten times in the *Bibliothēke* and only once in Polybius' *Histories*.

70 E.g. 9.33.3, 10.14.2, 17.38.6, 18.59, 19.11.6, 23.12. For wider discussion of the theme of the abuse of good fortune in Diodorus see Hau (2009).

71 3.72.5–6, 4.53.1–3, 16.20.5–6, 11.25.1–2, 11.26.1, 13.19–33.1, 14.105, 15.17.5, 16.87, 17.38.3–7, 17.59.7, 18.18.4–6, 19.11, 23.12, 27.13–18 (fragments, probably from speeches in the Roman Senate about the fate of Carthage after its defeat), 30.23, 31.3 (fragments, probably from a speech), 31.4

72 9.12.3, 21.9, 21.14.3, 31.3.

73 This echoes the prophecy in Verg. *Aen.* 8.653 that the Romans must *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*. By Polybius, the doctrine is put into the mouth of Flamininus in his speech to his Greek allies after his victory over Philip V (πολεμοῦντας γὰρ δεῖ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας βαρεῖς εἶναι καὶ θυμικούς, ἡττωμένους δὲ γενναίους καὶ μεγαλόφρονας, νικῶντάς γε μὴν μετρίους, καὶ πραεῖς καὶ φιλανθρώπους: 18.37.7). This is probably evidence that such a policy was deliberately articulated by some Senators of Republican Rome.

74 11.25.1–2, 11.26.1, 13.19–33.1, 14.105, 15.17.5, 16.87, 17.38.3–7, 17.59.7, 19.11, 23.12, 27.13–18, 30.23, 31.3, 31.4. 32.23–4.

The message that one should take care to stay humble in success is, however, also expressed in other connections, usually in the context of powerful people becoming arrogant and/or abusive and ending up suffering in return.⁷⁵ It is especially common in the context of hegemonic powers, such as Athens rejecting a Spartan peace offer during the Peloponnesian War, which provokes the narrator to a proleptic mention of the defeat of Athens (13.53), and in the narrative of the downfall of tyrants, such as Dionysius II, which earns a moralising conclusion turning the tyrant into a *paradeigma* for those who become arrogant in success (16.70.2–3). In these passages the downfall is usually not explicitly attributed to divine punishment, but the fact that such punishment figures prominently in most parts of the *Bibliothēke* (as established above), and that a downfall is unfailingly expected to follow upon abusive behaviour brought on by feeling secure in one's success, makes it natural for a reader to see an element of divine punishment of the arrogant.

I have demonstrated elsewhere that moralising on the topic of the difficulty of coping with good fortune and the dangers of letting it go to your head is inconsistent in the *Bibliothēke*: in some parts, particularly those probably based on Timaeus and Polybius, it is pervasive; in others, particularly book 17 and the Greek narrative of 18–19, it only shows up occasionally.⁷⁶ Even in these books, however, the theme of the necessity of bearing good fortune with moderation is present; just more sporadically (e.g. 17.38.4–7, 18.59.3–6, 19.11). The theme was clearly high on Diodorus' list of moral-didactic priorities, even if he did not always superimpose it on narratives in his sources that did not already display it.

Courage

As in Polybius' *Histories*, so also in Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* courage is a much-praised virtue and a mark of a good man. Unlike Polybius, however, Diodorus only rarely acknowledges that courage has to be tempered with intelligence and planning. Only three times is ill-advised courage commented on: in Thebes' and Tyre's resistance against Alexander the Great (προπετιῶς καὶ ἀβούλως: 17.10.1, and ἀνδρειότερον μᾶλλον ἢ φρονιμώτερον: 17.10.6; γενναιώτερον μᾶλλον ἢ φρονιμώτερον: 17.46.5), and in Athens' decision to rebel against Antipater (πρὸς εὐδοξίαν εὐ βεβουλευῆσθαι, τοῦ δὲ συμφέροντος διημαρτηκέν: 18.10.4–5).

Otherwise, courage in the *Bibliothēke* is usually both an admirable and a useful virtue. It wins battles (4.28.3, 11.74.4, 16.4, 31.44, 36.10.1),

⁷⁵ 4.74, 9.2.2, 9.26–8, 9.33.3, 10.13, 10.14.1, 10.23, 13.53, 14.101.3, 15.33.3, 17.46.6–47, 17.66.3–7, 18.59.5–6, 19.95.6–7, 20.13.3, 24.9.2–3, 27.1, 31.11.

⁷⁶ Hau (2009).

kingly power (4.73.6, 20.22.6)⁷⁷ and freedom from tyranny (16.9, 16.12). Moreover, Diodorus has a fascination with spectacular courage displayed on the battlefield. A rhetorically profuse encomium of the dead at Thermopylae takes up a whole chapter of book 11 (11.11), and in battle narratives heroic deaths figure prominently. A typical example of such a heroic battle episode is the last stand of the Spartan general Mindarus:

συνδραμουσῶν δὲ τῶν δυνάμεων εἰς ἓνα τόπον, ὁ μὲν Μίνδαρος οὐ κατεπλάγη τὴν ἔφοδον τῶν περὶ Θηραμένην, ἀλλὰ διελόμενος τοὺς Πελοποννησίους τοῖς μὲν ἡμίσειν ἀπίηται τοῖς ἐπιούσι, τοὺς δ' ἡμίσεις αὐτὸς ἔχων, καὶ δεόμενος ἐκάστου μὴ κατασχῶναι τὸ τῆς Σπάρτης ἀξίωμα, καὶ ταῦτα πεζομαχοῦντας, ἀντετάχθησαν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην. περὶ δὲ τῶν νεῶν ἥρωικὴν συστησάμενος μάχην, καὶ πρὸ πάντων αὐτὸς κινδυνεύων, πολλοὺς μὲν ἀνεῖλε τῶν ἀντιτεταγμένων, τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον ἀξίως τῆς πατρίδος ἀγωνισάμενος ὑπὸ τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην ἀνῆρέθη. τούτου δὲ πεπτωκότος οἱ τε Πελοποννήσιοι καὶ πάντες οἱ σύμμαχοι συνέδραμον καὶ καταπλαγέντες εἰς φυγὴν ὤρμησαν.

The forces all converged towards one point, but Mindarus was not struck with terror by the influx of Theramenes and his troops. He divided the Peloponnesians, met the attackers with one half, and then took the other half himself and ranged them against Alcibiades and his troops, exhorting each of the men not to disgrace the glory of Sparta, especially in a land-battle. He organised a heroic battle by the ships and risked his own life in the front line; he killed many of those ranged against him, but in the end he was killed by Alcibiades' troops, having fought in a manner worthy of his country. When this man had fallen, the Peloponnesians and all the allies ran together and, struck with fear, turned to flight. (Diod. Sic. 13.51.5–6)

Almost every feature of this passage is typical of the heroic battle anecdote in Diodorus. It starts off with applying a positive statement or epithet to its protagonist: here 'Mindarus was not struck with terror', but often the protagonist is said to be 'outstanding',⁷⁸ or some group of people, often his soldiers, which he surpasses, is specified.⁷⁹ If the protagonist is a Spartan or a Roman, he then thinks of upholding the honour of his fatherland (13.51.5).⁸⁰ During the battle, his fighting is extolled, usually with the adverb *λαμπρῶς* ('brilliantly') or *ἥρωικῶς* ('heroically'),⁸¹ and called 'worthy of his fatherland' (13.51.6).⁸² He kills many enemies (13.51.6),⁸³

77 Adversely, power can be lost by cowardice: 16.70.2–3.

78 12.43.2, 15.17, 15.64.3, 15.80.1, 17.45.6.

79 15.64.3, 16.16.3, 19.72.7–8; see also *καὶ πρὸ πάντων αὐτὸς κινδυνεύων*: 13.51.

80 14.83.6, 15.64.4, 19.72.7–8.

81 12.43.3, 15.87.1, 17.63.4, 17.45.6.

82 14.83.7.

83 14.83.7, 15.17.1, 15.64.5, 15.80.5.

but in the end (τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον: 13.51.6)⁸⁴ he himself is slain.⁸⁵ In many of the episodes, the protagonist is said to strive to be the one to bring about victory, even if it cost him his life,⁸⁶ and he is killed while he is ‘fighting heroically’,⁸⁷ and only after he has been wounded repeatedly.⁸⁸

In four instances (14.83.6–7 Pisander, 15.64.3–5 Ischolas, 17.45.6 Admetus, 19.72.7–8 Q. Aulius) the heroic anecdote is the only mention of the hero in the *Bibliothēke*; Diodorus apparently found the instance of the heroic death so valuable that it had to be included in his work even if it was performed by a character who had otherwise no part to play in the story. In three other instances the heroic death is the only event related from the battle: 15.33.6 (Phoebidas), where the whole battle takes up just five lines of the Loeb text; 16.7.3–4 (Chabrias), which receives six lines; and 16.16.3 (Philistus), which receives a full paragraph focused solely on Philistus’ heroic suicide. These brief scenes are composed of only three elements: (1) the general is introduced, (2) the battle is joined, and (3) the general dies heroically. In 15.33.6, the defeat of the dying general’s side is hinted at; in 16.7.3–4 and 16.16.3, he is specifically said to choose death before defeat. Other than that, in these three battle narratives the reader is not told which side was victorious or why. There is no information about deployment of troops or the course of the battle. Clearly, the *paradeigma* of the heroic death of the general held more interest for Diodorus than such military facts.

There are fifteen heroic battle episodes in Diodorus, which all follow this pattern. Thirteen of them are found in the Greek narrative of books 11–16, which he is generally believed to have based on the work of Ephorus of Cyme.⁸⁹ This makes it likely that such episodes were characteristic of Ephorus, and that Diodorus took over these passages from this author. Their similarity in structure and focus may well also go back to Ephorus,

84 τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον: twice in 13.99, 14.83.7; τέλος δὲ: 15.80.5.

85 14.83.7, 15.17, 15.64.5, 15.80.5, 17.45.6, 19.72.8.

86 ἔσπευδεν ἐπιφανέστατον ἑαυτῷ περιποιήσασθαι θάνατον: 13.99; πάντα κίνδυνον ὑπομένων: 15.55.5; σπεύδων διὰ τῆς ἰδίας ἀνδρείας κρίναι τὴν μάχην ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ὤρμησε τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον: 15.80.5.

87 ἀγωνισάμενος λαμπρῶς: 13.99.5, 14.83.7, 15.33.6; μαχόμενος ἥρωικῶς: 15.17.1, 15.17.1, 15.55.5, 17.45.6; ἀριστεύων: 15.80.5.

88 13.99, 14.7.3, 15.33.6, 15.55.5, 15.80.5, 15.87.1, 16.7.3.

89 In the narrative based on Ephorus: 12.43.2–3 Brasidas, 13.51.6 Mindarus, 13.99 Callicratidas (with 13.97.5), 14.83 Pisander, 15.17.1 Leptines, 15.33.6 Phoebidas, 15.64 Ischolas, 15.69 Chabrias, 15.79.2 and 15.87 Epaminondas, 15.80 Pelopidas, 16.7.3–4 and 16.16.3 Philistus. (The Leptines and Philistus episodes take place in the Sicilian narrative, but are nevertheless most probably based on Ephorus. Diodorus seems for some reason to have switched from using Timaeus to using Ephorus as his main source for Sicily at the end of book 14. See Schwartz 1903, Meister 1967 and Pearson 1984, 1987; *contra* Stylianou 1998: 64–78.)

although it is entirely possible that Diodorus extracted these pieces of information from fuller battle narratives and thereby created his own heroic battle *topos*. The two heroic battle episodes found outside of the ‘Ephoran’ narrative are in books 17 and 19 respectively.⁹⁰ This could either mean that they go back to Diodorus’ sources for those books, who were perhaps inspired by Ephorus, or that Diodorus chose to highlight these particular instances of heroics in the same way as he had done in the ‘Ephoran’ books although they were presented differently in his other sources. Whatever the exact relationship between Diodorus’ text and his sources in these instances, it is clear that he found heroic death by a general in battle interesting and important and that certain features of such deaths seemed to him to be particularly worthy of mention.

When we look at the typical features of these episodes, we realise that they are not retold just for cheap thrills: they are not visual, blow-by-blow descriptions of the fighting and do not wallow in pathetic details of the general’s death. Instead they highlight two things: the general’s courage and his patriotism. Courage more than fighting skill is surely what is meant when he fights *λαμπρῶς* or *ἥρωικῶς*, and courage and patriotism are combined in the general’s thoughts about Spartan/Roman honour and his desire to win the battle by his own efforts regardless of the cost. It is the repetitiveness of the episodes that makes them didactic. The reader is not told explicitly that such behaviour is good and noble, or that it benefits the general’s city; these causal connections are founding premises for all ancient (and later?) ideas of battlefield behaviour and go without saying. The episodes reinforce the standard ideal, and by their structural and semantic repetitiveness drill into the reader the nobility and moral rightness of sacrificing one’s life in battle for one’s country. In this way they fulfil the promise to make soldiers ‘more ready to face dangers’ of the preface (1.1.5).

Another type of heroic courage showcased by the *Bibliothēke* is courage under torture. These episodes are often narrated more vividly than the heroic battle deaths, giving visual details and letting the victim and/or the torturer(s) speak in direct speech. Examples are the torturing of the pre-Socratic philosopher Zeno of Elea by the tyrant Nearchus (10.18), where Zeno lures the tyrant to lean close in order to hear a promised confession and then bites off his ear, and of the Rhegian general Phyton by the tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse (14.112), where Phyton responds with defiance to the report of the killing of his son and earns the respect and sympathy of the tyrant’s soldiers for his courage. Such episodes are less frequent than the heroic battle episodes, but more memorable because of their vivid,

⁹⁰ 17.45.6 Admetus, 19.72.7–8 Q. Aulius.

pathetic style.⁹¹ The difference in style could be due to Diodorus' use of different sources: while the heroic battle deaths are primarily found in the 'Ephoran' books, the torture scenes are primarily encountered in book 10, whose sources are uncertain, and in the Timaeian, Polybian and Posidonian sections of the *Bibliothēke*. It is more likely, however, that the difference is due to the fact that the torture scenes are advocating a kind of courage less suited to shorthand moralising than the kind displayed in the brief and colourless battle episodes. The courage displayed by the torture victims is less patriotic and more individual, and it is chiefly demonstrated through their defiant speech acts, which can therefore not be ignored, and which need a detailed setting in order to make sense.⁹²

Courage at the point of death, whether in battle, under torture, by one's own hand in order to avoid capture or in any other circumstance, is always admired in the *Bibliothēke*,⁹³ even to the point where it blots out any blemishes on a character's previous moral record. Thus, Olympias dies 'without any ignoble or womanish utterance' and receives a positive (although amoral) obituary (19.51) despite the moralising account of her previous mistreatment of Eurydice and Philip, during which her unpleasant death was predicted and called 'worthy of her cruelty' (19.11.7), and rebellious slaves die 'heroically' at their own hands rather than fight in the arena (36.10.3).

Justice and Lawfulness

Throughout the *Bibliothēke*, good men are described as 'just' (δίκαιος) or 'excelling in justice' (διαφέρων δικαιοσύνη and similar expressions). Especially pervasive in the mythological books, these are labels fitted to a range of kings, heroes and gods, from Aegyptus (1.51.4) through Hesperus (3.60.2) to Priam (4.32 and 49), Minos (5.78.4) and Zeus (5.71.1).⁹⁴ Here, justice (δικαιοσύνη) is often paired with courage (ἀνδρεία),⁹⁵ mildness/kindness (ἐπιείκεια/φιλανθρωπία)⁹⁶ and, above all, piety (εὐσέβεια).⁹⁷ This places justice as the fourth and final virtue that completes Diodorus'

91 E.g. 10.17.2–3, 10.18, 14.112, 19.11.4–7, 26.14, 36.10.3.

92 An exception is the scene of the torture of Aristogeiton by Hipparchus at 10.17.2–3, which reads like a heroic battle death: Aristogeiton is more distinguished than his fellow-conspirators, and his courage is extolled without quotation of any speech. The passage is fragmentary, however, so the speech and other details may well have been lost.

93 See e.g. 17.84, 18.22, 37.27.

94 1.51.4 Aegyptus, 1.95.1 Amasis, 2.32.2 Cyaxares, 3.60.2 Hesperus, 4.18.3 'a certain king' (in Iberia), 4.32 and 4.49 Priam, 5.7.7 Aeolus, 5.8.3 sons of Aeolus, 5.66.4 Cronus, 5.71.1 Zeus, 5.78.4 and 5.79 Minos, 5.81.5 Macareus, 5.83.4 Tennes, 5.84.2 Rhadamanthus, 6.6.1 the Dioscuri, 8.30.2 Demonax.

95 5.71.1, 5.78.4, 6.6.1.

96 1.51.4, 1.95.1, 3.60.2, 5.81.5.

97 1.2.2, 1.92.5, 3.60.2, 3.64.7, 4.18.3, 5.7.7, 5.8.3, 4.49.6, 6.6.1.

picture of the good man. Interestingly, however, ‘just’ is not applied as an epithet to those gods and heroes whose stories are told at greatest length, that is, Isis and Osiris, Dionysus and Heracles. Instead, these divine protagonists demonstrate their moral goodness by their actions, specifically termed benefactions (εὐεργεσίαι).⁹⁸ This shows that ‘just’ in this part of the work is little more than shorthand, used simply as a stamp of approval on a mythological character, whose personality could not be known and whose deeds would not be explored in any great detail. The main protagonists of the mythological books have more complex personalities, which can be surmised from their deeds.

In the historical books, the appellation ‘just’ carries more weight. It is only used of characters for whom it is a defining characteristic, such as Pittacus, one of the Seven Sages (9.11), Aristides the Just (11.47.2) and Callicratidas, ‘the most just man in Sparta’ (13.76.2).⁹⁹ These men are all admired for their justice, which earns them influence and loyalty. In the preface to book 14 on the importance for hegemonic states of treating their subjects well, justice (δικαιοσύνη) is paired with benevolence (εὐνοῖα) as the qualities that preserve such power securely.

In contrast, the antonym ‘unjust’ is used in a consistent manner throughout the mythological and the historical books of the *Bibliothēke*. Rather than a catch-all term to label any character or action immoral, the adjective ἄδικος and its cognates are throughout the work primarily used for actions that are unjust in a legal sense, either in the court room or in unwritten international law,¹⁰⁰ although the verb ἄδικέω is sometimes used to mean simply ‘harm’ without a strong sense of legality.¹⁰¹ A fragment of book 25, possibly from the preface, states that ‘injustice is the metropolis of evil’ and praises Epicurus for realising this (25.1).¹⁰² There is, however, no discussion of what injustice might entail or how it brings about other evils. Such lack of reflection is characteristic of the *Bibliothēke*’s approach to both injustice and justice. No extant digression reflects on what actually

98 *Euergesiai*: Isis and Osiris 1.13.1 and 5, 1.17.2, 1.18.6, 1.22.2; Dionysus 3.64.2, 3.66.3, 3.70.8, 3.72.4; Heracles 4.8.5, 4.15.2, 4.27.4. Heracles is described as a hater and punisher of injustice and lawlessness at 4.17.5 and 5.76.1.

99 Also Cyaxares (9.20.4), Micythus of Zankle 11.66.2, Diomedon 13.102.1, Agesipolis 15.19.4, and – in the limited area of distributing booty – Viriathes the bandit captain 33.1.

100 E.g. 1.71.1, 1.75, 1.77, 1.79, 2.28.5–7, 2.42.3, 3.12.2, 3.59.3, 4.17.5, 4.43–4, 5.71.1, 5.76.1, 5.83.4, 8.25.3, 9.13.3, 10.23.1, 11.58.4, 12.56.6, 13.102.3–5, 14.37.7, 14.66.4, 14.113.5, 15.25, 15.29.6, 16.49.5, 17.30.5, 18.23.4, 18.65.5, 20.10.3, 20.70.4, 20.82.2, 25.2, 28.4.

101 2.40.4, 2.59.3, 3.18.7, 8.15.3, 11.67, 13.67.5, 17.69.9, 19.103.5. In many of these cases the harm is or can be perceived to be unjust, but the emphasis seems to be on the hurt rather than the injustice.

102 The expression ‘X is the metropolis of evils/evil-doing’ recurs about greed at 21.14a, while the main preface claims that history/historiography is the metropolis of philosophy (1.2.2). It was clearly a favourite expression of Diodorus’.

constitutes justice or how this can be determined. This presents a stark contrast to Polybius' *Histories*, where the justice of various historical acts is often discussed at length,¹⁰³ and it means that the moral message that one should act justly remains not only largely implicit in the *Bibliothēke*, but also unnuanced.

If Diodorus' approach to justice is unreflective, he seems to have thought more carefully about law, its importance for human society and how it is best constituted. In the mythological books, part of the civilising programme of many of the culture heroes consists in setting down laws (1.14.3 Isis, 2.38.5 Dionysus, 5.5.2 and 5.68.3 Demeter, 5.66.5–6 Cronus, 5.67.4 Themis, 5.71.1–3 Zeus, 5.78.3 Minos), often said to lead to greater justice (1.14.3 Isis, 5.5.2 Demeter, 5.66.5–6 Cronus, 5.71.1–3 Zeus). Lawgiving is also mentioned in the preface as one of the many great deeds human beings have undertaken under the inspiration of universal history (1.2.1).

In the historical part of the work also, lawgivers are given much space: in the fragmentary book 9, in a section apparently dedicated to the Seven Sages, the description of Solon as the perfectly virtuous man seems to be left over from a longer discussion of his lawgiving (touched on in 9.1.4, but the details are left out by the excerptor), and a laudatory anecdote about his dedication to his laws is told in 9.4 and again at 9.20 (the repetition is due to the passage being preserved with variations by two different excerptors). Likewise, Pittacus of Mytilene receives very positive treatment in 9.12, where his lawgiving is mentioned among his benefactions, and Bias is praised for his justice (9.13). In between Solon and Pittacus are discussed the Delphic maxims, according to Diodorus phrased by Chilon, which are taken as obscurely expressed laws for behaviour (9.9–11).

In book 12, the longest digression of the *Bibliothēke* recounts the laws of Charondas, praising them repeatedly for their excellence (12.11–19) and ending with an anecdote about how this lawgiver's dedication to his laws led to his death. It is followed immediately by a digression on the laws of Zaleucus, which are likewise praised, but discussed less extensively (12.20–1). In book 13, in an episode very similar to the narrative of the death of Charondas, Diocles the Sicilian lawgiver dies by his own hand to uphold his laws (13.33.2–3 and 35). The connection between law and justice is only made explicit occasionally in these lawgiver passages (12.20.3 and 13.35.4), but the repeated insistence on the excellence of the laws and of the men who made them¹⁰⁴ leads the reader to understand that they increased the justice of their respective societies.¹⁰⁵

103 See e.g. Polyb. 18.13–15 and 36.9.

104 12.11.4, 12.12.3, 12.12.4, 12.15.1, 12.16.2, 12.20.1–3, 13.35.1–2.

105 Diodorus' fascination with what constitutes just laws is also seen in 15.11, a lively anecdote in which three Persian judges explain their reasons for acquitting an alleged traitor.

These passages seemingly demonstrate a strong Diodoran interest in laws and lawgiving, but strangely the interest seems to disappear after the narrative of Diocles in book 13. If Diodorus wrote anything on the laws of Rome, this passage has been lost. Perhaps, as with the other parts of his moral-didactic programme, he took over passages on laws and lawgiving whenever he found them in his sources, but did not go in search of supplementary sources to fill the gap when he did not find such information.

Since we have spent some time on Polybius' ideas about lawful warfare, it would be interesting to compare what Diodorus has to say about the subject. Whatever he once had to say, however, is now so fragmentary that it hardly rewards study. In the late, fragmentary books, there are two mentions of the Romans pursuing only just wars (28.3.1, 32.5.1), one of them with the explicit comment that this ensures them the support of the gods (28.3.1). An example in book 8 from Rome's early history of how the Romans manipulate matters into making their wars just according to the letter, if not the spirit, of divine law does not receive narratorial comment (8.25), and had perhaps been forgotten by both author and reader by the time they reached the narrative of Rome's wars against Philip V and Numantia, in which context the enthusiastic comments about *bellum justum* are found. The expression 'unjust war' is used a few times in the work,¹⁰⁶ but the narrator never puts stress on the point and never explains what constitutes an unjust war. More intriguingly, a lacunose passage in book 30 seems to be the remnant of a digression on the 'laws of war':

πᾶς γὰρ πόλεμος ἐκβεβηκῶς τὰ νόμιμα καὶ δίκαια τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὁμῶς ἔχει τινὰς ἰδίους καταπερεὶ νόμους, οἷον ἀνοχὰς μὴ λυεῖν, κήρυκα μὴ ἀναιρεῖν, τὸν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κατισχύοντος πίστιν <παραδόντα μὴ>¹⁰⁷ τιμωρεῖσθαι.

For, although all warfare is a transgression of human laws and justice, nonetheless it has something like laws of its own, such as not to break a truce, not to kill a herald, and not to take vengeance on someone who has surrendered his person to the good faith of his conqueror. (Diod. Sic. 30.18.2)

As far as it goes, this statement follows traditional Greek ethics and is perfectly in line with Diodorus' pious moral didacticism: truces, heralds and suppliants/surrendered opponents were sacrosanct according to religious law. It is possible that the original and complete passage held more nuanced views, but the fact that it survives in the context of Antiochus III's

¹⁰⁶ 10.23.1, 13.21.2, 13.29.5, 14.113.5, 28.6.1, 30.2.1.

¹⁰⁷ The emendation is by van Herwerden and is reproduced by the Belles Lettres edition of Diodorus (*Fragments* vol. III), where the fragment is numbered 30.22b.

murder of the child-king Ptolemaeus, his nephew, makes it likely that the focus remained on the betrayal of the defenceless in one's power.

Justice in the *Bibliothēke*, then, is unfailingly a positive quality, even if the word is used in an unreflective manner. Laws and lawgiving seem to have held special interest for Diodorus, but again we see no reflection on the nature of good laws or the correct balance between punitive laws and the exercise of that all-important virtue *epieikeia*. Apart from the difference in the use of *dikaïos* and its cognates between the mythological and historical books, we see no difference in Diodorus' approach to justice between different parts of the *Bibliothēke*: the concept is important throughout, and the adjective and adverb are used to designate characters and actions in every book.

Minor Virtues: Moderation, Education and All the Others

Piety, mildness/kindness, courage and justice are the virtues that receive the most attention in the moral didacticism of the *Bibliothēke*. Beyond these, a plethora of other virtues and positive behaviours are presented positively at varying intervals.

The traditional virtue of moderation is worth spending a moment on. It is extolled explicitly in the context of the Delphic maxims (9.10) and the teachings of Pythagoras (10.3.1–3) and is often what tyrannical rulers are lacking (12.24–5, 20.104.3–4). It is also a positive characteristic of good characters such as Scipio the Younger (27.1). In the mythological sections, much like *δικαιοσύνη* ('justice'), *σωφροσύνη* ('moderation/temperance') seems to be shorthand for goodness, particularly in women and young men.¹⁰⁸ That it does not always mean simply 'chastity' is proved by 3.60.5, where the daughters of Atlas are said to excel in moderation (*σώφρονας διαφερόντως*) almost in the same breath as we are told that they slept with 'the most renowned heroes and gods' (3.60.4). The nature of the myths told means that Diodorus must necessarily employ different standards for the sexual moderation of male characters in this part of the work and in the historical parts: Zeus' and Heracles' habit of impregnating every mortal princess they come across is tacitly accepted while historical rulers are castigated for indulging their lust (e.g. 20.104.3–4, 26.15). Presumably Zeus' and Heracles' efforts to populate the world with extraordinary descendants are to be considered among their benefactions,¹⁰⁹ which cannot be said for the sexual transgressions of historical tyrants.

Like moderation, most of the other virtues of the *Bibliothēke* are tradi-

¹⁰⁸ Titaea 3.57.2, Basileia 3.57.3, Cybele 3.58.2, Marsyas 3.58.3, Athena 3.70.3, Alcmena 4.9.3, the Atlantides 4.27.2, Medea at the beginning of her marriage 4.54.2, Hippolytus 4.62.4.

¹⁰⁹ This seems to be implied by 4.14.4.

tional and expected: gratitude (20.93), dignity (4.13.3, 9.36.4, 17.118.3) and – expected from our reading of Polybius – intelligence (4.13.1–2, 5.31.5). Other virtues propounded by the *Bibliotheke* are more surprising: friendship (e.g. 10.8, 16.50.5–8), for instance, is an important virtue in Xenophon, but is largely absent from the other historiographers under consideration, and education (*παιδεία*) is not extolled by any of the earlier extant historiographers, while it is often mentioned as a quality of good characters of the *Bibliotheke* along with key virtues such as justice or courage. In the mythological books, it is a repeated trait of Orpheus (3.65.6 and 4.25.2–3) and the Muses (4.4.3, 4.5.4, 4.7.3–4) as well as the guardian of Dionysus (3.70.1). In the ethnographic sections, Diodorus repeatedly comments on the level and manner of education of various classes of Egyptians and other peoples (e.g. 1.73.2, 1.92.5), and he mentions *paideia* as a trait of both Iambulus (2.54.2) and a nameless Indian king (2.60.3) who receives him. In the fragmentary books of early Greek history, education, and not just wisdom, is mentioned as a virtue of the Seven Sages collectively (1.96.1) and individually of Solon (3, 9.1.1 and 3) and Pythagoras (10.3.1), and the Delphic maxim ‘know thyself’ is interpreted at length as an exhortation to get educated (9.10). The description of Pythagorean asceticism offered in 10.7 quickly slips into a digressive diatribe against the ‘youth of today’, who cannot be bothered with either moderation or education (10.7.3).

In the later historical books, *paideia* is mentioned as a positive characteristic of all of Greece in the glorious years between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars (12.1.4); Athenian *paideia* is part of the Syracusan Nicolaus’ argument for sparing the Athenians captured at the end of the failed Sicilian Expedition (13.27.1), and in the end only the best-educated Athenians are rescued from the Syracusan quarries (13.33.1). *Paideia* – rather than *dikaiosyne*, as might have been expected – is mentioned as the virtue of both Charondas and Zaleucus that makes their fellow-citizens choose them as lawgivers (12.11.3 and 12.20.1), and the summary of the laws of Charondas is interrupted by a passionate encomium of *paideia* in the sense of reading and writing (12.13.1–3), ending with the lofty *gnome*: ‘therefore, although admittedly nature is the cause of life, the cause of living well is the education that arises from reading and writing’ (διὸ καὶ τοῦ μὲν ζῆν τὴν φύσιν αἰτίαν ὑποληπτέον, τοῦ δὲ καλῶς ζῆν τὴν ἐκ τῶν γραμμάτων συγκεκλιμένην παιδείαν). As a virtue, *paideia* is ascribed to various characters, most memorably Epaminondas, whose *paideia* is the reason why he ignores bad omens and marches out confidently to win the Battle of Leuctra (15.52.7).¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ *Paideia* is also ascribed to Dion (16.20.2), Cephalus of Corinth (16.82.7), Tiberius Gracchus (34/35.5.1), Micipsa, son of Massinissa of Numidia (34/35.35), and a Roman of the dubious name of Lucius Asyllius or Syllius (37.8.2).

Beside these specific virtues, some characters in the *Bibliothēke* are endowed with a mysterious bundle of qualities called ‘all the other virtues’ or ‘every other virtue’ (αἱ [ἄλλαι] πᾶσαι ἀρεταῖ or πᾶσα ἀρετή).¹¹¹ On the one hand, this seems to signal a certain laziness on the part of Diodorus, who could not always be bothered to enumerate the good qualities of the characters with whom he wanted his readers to sympathise. This laziness makes it a lot harder to gain any real sense of his characters than of the carefully sketched personalities of Polybius’ *Histories*. On the other hand, the use of such an expression shows that the author imagines a fairly fixed set of virtues, readily recallable to his readers, to which he can safely refer in shorthand without running the risk of being misunderstood, and this says something interesting about moral didacticism in Greek historiography in the first century BC: it points both to a high degree of similarity in the virtues extolled by the genre, and to a large area of overlap with popular morality. The historiographers could expect their readers to agree with what they described as virtuous and vile, freeing them from any obligation to discuss the complexity of moral goodness or any of the qualities that constitute it.

The Vices

The moral-didactic programme of Diodorus features not only virtues and behaviours to emulate, but also, and often more memorably, vices and behaviours to avoid. The ones that receive the most space are cruelty, greed and luxurious living. These vices are often combined, for example, in the description of the behaviour of tyrants or the sacking of cities. For the sake of clarity, however, we shall examine each one in turn.

Cruelty

In contrast with Polybius, Diodorus has a lot of space for cruelty. Cruelty (ὀμότης) and brutality (βιαιότης) are the hallmarks of a tyrant, from Astyages the Mede in book 9 over the early Sicilian tyrants Hiero and Thrasydaeus (11.53 and 67) and the Athenian Thirty (14.4), to Agathocles of Syracuse (see below), Charops of Epirus (31.31) and Diegylis of Thrace (33.14).¹¹² For most of Diodorus’ tyrants, their brutality leads to hatred

¹¹¹ 1.92.5, 2.33.1, 3.61.5, 4.54.2, 5.71.1 Zeus, 5.83.4 Tennes, 9.11.2 Pittacus, 9.22.1 Cyrus the Elder, 10.9.9, 10.12.2, 11.46.4, 13.102.1 Diomedon, 16.65.2 Timoleon, and 31.26 Scipio the Younger.

¹¹² Cruel tyrants: Astyages 9.23, Cylon 10.11.1, Cambyses 10.14.1, Hipparchus and Hippasus 10.17, Lucius Tarquinius 10.22, Thrasydaeus 11.53, Hiero and Thrasybulus 11.67, the Thirty 14.4.3, Clearchus 14.2.4, Agathocles 19.1.6–8, 19.107, 20.15.4–6, 20.72, 21.16, Acrotatus 19.71.1–5, Decius 22.1, Apollodorus 22.5, Hieronymus 22.15, Charops 31.31, Demetrius 33.4, Ptolemaeus 33.12, Diegylis 33.14, Attalus 34/35.3, Ptolemaeus Physcon 33.22, 34/35.14, Zilmilus 34/35.12.

among their subjects, and most often to revolt and loss of power,¹¹³ teaching the moral lesson that wickedness does not pay, even on a grand scale.

In fact, Diodorus shows a fascination with cruelty. While in the case of some tyrants it is enough for him just to mention the vice, in many cases he dwells on it and describes with scandalised relish the exotic punishments and tortures devised by his villains. We have seen an example above in Dionysius' torture of Phyton of Rhegium (14.112); other examples include the story of Phalaris and the brazen bull (9.19), Diegylis' habit of chopping off and swapping around the limbs of his still living victims (33.14), and the many atrocities of Agathocles (19.1.6–8, 19.107, 20.15.4–6, 20.54, 20.71–2). There is usually no explicit moralising connected with these pathetic scenes of suffering; the scandalised descriptions are left to speak for themselves. Such vivid depictions of atrocities may seem to us to be no more than tabloid sensationalism, and this is almost certainly the kind of writing on which Polybius heaps scorn in his criticism of Phylarchus (Polyb. 2.56–8); but, tasteless as it may seem to us and to some ancient readers, it probably found a dedicated readership, and – in contrast with viewers of twenty-first-century torture horror – the reader is never left in any doubt that the cruelty is despicable and an example to be avoided, not followed.

Graphic descriptions of atrocities occur in the context not only of the transgressions of tyrants, but also of soldiers sacking a city.¹¹⁴ Typical features include the crying and screaming of the victims (13.57.1, 13.89.1) and the shouting or egging each other on of the conquerors (13.57.1, 17.13.1, 19.6.5), the desperate courage of the citizens' last stand (13.57.2, 17.13.2–3, 19.6.6), the greed of the invading soldiers and their brutality in getting their booty (13.57.2, 17.70.4, 19.7.3), the indiscriminate slaughter (13.57.3, 13.90.1, 17.13.6, 17.70.2, 19.6.6–7.2), the disregard for the sanctity of temples (13.57.4–5, 13.90.3, 17.13.6, 19.7.3–4), children and women being dragged away as slaves (17.13.3, 17.35.7, 17.70.6), the pity felt by some onlookers, imagined or real, for the victims (13.58.1, 17.36.1–2, 19.7.4), the changed fortune of the victims, particularly the women (15.58.1–2, 13.89.1–3, 17.35.4–7, 17.70.3 and 6), allusions to the sexual abuse of captive women and girls (13.58.2, 17.35.7, 19.8.3–5), the richness of the spoils (13.90.3–4, 17.35.2–4, 17.70.2–3) and the number of the dead and captive (13.57.6, 17.14.1, 19.8.1–2). As with the detailed descriptions of torture, these vivid

¹¹³ Astyages 9.23, Hipparchus and Hippias 10.17, Thrasydaeus 11.53, Thrasybulus 11.67, the Thirty 14.4.3, Zilmius 34/35.12.

¹¹⁴ Selinus by the Carthaginians 13.57–8, Thebes by Alexander the Great 17.13, the Persian camp at Issus by the soldiers of Alexander the Great 17.35–6, Persepolis by the soldiers of Alexander the Great 17.70. Very similar are 13.89–90, where the Acragantines leave their city before it is sacked by the Carthaginians, and 19.6.5–8.6, where Agathocles' party takes power in Syracuse.

narratives of the destruction of cities and enslavement of citizens may seem tasteless (and 19.8.4 shows that Diodorus was aware that some readers might think so), but – apart from probably giving a fair picture of what the sacking of a city was really like – they appeal to the pity and sympathy of the reader and encourage condemnation of the brutal acts perpetrated by the conquerors. It is more than just tear-jerking; it is moralising through pathos.

Narratorial condemnation of atrocities does not always take such a spectacular form. Sometimes the use of the adjectives ὀμός (cruel) and βίαιος (brutal) or their cognates is enough to let a reader know that a character or action is a negative *paradeigma*. Thus Cleon is called ‘ὀμός καὶ βίαιος’ when pushing for the massacre of the Mytilenians (12.55); the Chalcedonians and Byzantines are said to show ὀμότης in their invasion of Bithynia (12.82.2); the Spartans demonstrate ὀμότης in demanding the handing over of all Athenian exiles to the Thirty (14.6.2); and killing child hostages in an armed conflict is termed an ‘action of outstanding cruelty’ (πρᾶξις ὀμότητι διαφεροῦσαν: 37.19.5).¹¹⁵ In an instance of moralising by means of correlation between action and result, the brutality of the slave masters is shown to be a root cause for the Sicilian Slave War in the long and detailed narrative of this revolt (34/35.2).

The Diodoran narrator often seems shocked by the cruelty of the characters in his history; in this he is very different from Polybius’ narratorial persona, who can moralise in a passionate voice when he wants to, but who much more often comes across as a wry man of the world who has seen it all and can no longer be shocked. This may sometimes give the *Bibliothēke* a tabloid feel, but it also brings historical human suffering to life and reminds its readers to take pity on sufferers in a way that Polybius’ *Histories* never does.

A striking contrast is presented by the mythological books of the *Bibliothēke*. Here moralising on cruelty is largely absent. Bloody deeds abound in the mythologies of Greece and Egypt, but they rarely receive narratorial comments. It is particularly noteworthy that Dionysus’ torturing of those who refuse to follow him is described in some detail, but without any hint that the reader is supposed to disapprove. Perhaps this savage side of the god was considered such an ingrained part of his divine nature that criticism was unthinkable for the pious Diodorus. By contrast, Apollo’s flaying alive of Marsyas is called ‘excessive revenge’ (τιμωρίαν ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν: 5.74.3), and we are told that Apollo himself regretted it and destroyed his lyre in penitence (3.59.5 and 5.74.3). Among mortals, only the Egyptian king Amasis (in an intriguing departure from the Herodotean

¹¹⁵ Other examples: 12.82.2, 19.11.7–9, 26.14, 36.11.

narrative of this king) and the members of the mythical family group of Aetes (Perses, Hecate and Circe) are called cruel (βιαιότερον: 1.60.1; various forms of ὤμῶς: 4.45–47), and their cruelty leads to their downfall. The only one to receive a scandalised narratorial outburst is Medea when she murders her children (4.54.7). In other words, as we saw with the virtue of moderation, there seem to be different standards of morality between the mythological and historical books: apparently, cruelty is only really worth moralising on in historical time, and most atrocities committed in mythology are considered either too distant in time, or legitimate because they were committed by gods.

Only very occasionally does the narrator of the *Bibliothēke* express his satisfaction with someone suffering, and almost exclusively when it can be presented as divine punishment for previous transgressions such as impiety or cruelty (e.g. 16.56.4, 20.65.2). Satisfaction with cruelty inflicted as human vengeance only occurs when the revenge is taken by the Sicilian Greeks on their Carthaginian neighbours (14.46 and 53). The Diodoran narrator does not discuss these actions, and his moral judgement seems unreflective.¹¹⁶ He does not, like the Polybian narrator (at least in the extant parts of the *Bibliothēke*), offer any thoughts on situations where brutality can be condoned for reasons of war or necessity. The closest he gets to such a discussion is the pair of speeches given at Syracuse after the failed Sicilian Expedition, debating what to do with the captured Athenians (13.20–32). In this instance, the scene-setting for the debate, during which the Syracusan people behave like a mob (θορυβοῦντος) and the statesman Hermocrates echoes narratorial moralising by saying that ‘more noble than victory is bearing victory with moderation’ (κάλλιον ἔστι τοῦ νικᾶν τὸ τὴν νίκην ἐνεγκεῖν ἀνθρωπίνως: 13.19.5), shows that the reader is supposed to side with mildness. The passage may well have been mirrored by a debate in the Roman Senate over what to do with Carthage after the end of the Second Punic War in book 27 (27.13–18), which is now fragmentary.¹¹⁷ This debate, in contrast with the Syracusan one, must have ended with a decision for mildness, and it is a shame that its context is lost so we cannot see how Diodorus signalled his agreement. Overall, by delegating the power of just vengeance in his narratorial world to the gods, Diodorus largely avoids the didactic inconsistency which we saw in Polybius’ *Histories* between the moral lesson that good fortune must not be abused and the idea that revenge can be just.

¹¹⁶ Ambaglio (1995: 113) seems right to say that the moralising here ‘disguises and justifies’ the cruelty of the Sicilians.

¹¹⁷ The context of the fragments is recoverable because of Appian’s narrative of the same debate (*Pun.* 57–61). For a comparison of these two speeches with the ones in the Syracusan debate see Sacks (1990: 101–7).

Greed

If Diodorus differs from Polybius in his emphasis on cruelty as a vice, he is much more in tune with him on the topic of another favourite vice, namely greed. For most Diodoran tyrants, it is greed (*φιλαργυρία* or *πλεονεξία*) that leads to (some of) their acts of cruelty: they want the money of the wealthy citizens and will happily use murder and torture to get them.¹¹⁸ It is also greed that leads to some of the worst atrocities committed during the sacking of cities.¹¹⁹ Likewise, the greed of the Carthaginians is responsible for the Iberian silver mines and the hardship suffered there, described with incredulous wonder by the Diodoran narrator (5.38.2), and greed is also the driving force behind the cruel treatment of Sicilian slaves by their masters which leads to the Sicilian Slave War (34/35.2.25–6 and 34–40). This causal connection between greed and cruelty is ubiquitous in the historical books of the *Bibliothēke*. Greed also leads to a whole host of other types of evil-doing – as the narrator says in 21.1.4a, it is the ‘very metropolis of many evils’. It is an almost universal flaw, which mars the characters of even otherwise good men such as Pausanias, victor at Plataea (11.23.3, 11.46–47), and the Roman Marius in his old age, although his youth had been characterised by an impressive lack of greed (37.29). The greed of others is therefore naturally a favourite tool for those who want to buy loyalty and support: thus the Phocians gain supporters in the early stages of the Sacred War by distributing the wealth of Delphi (16.30.2, 33.3, 37.4), the unlikeable Perdikkas in contrast with the universally liked Ptolemy secures loyalty by gifts (18.33.3–5), and Philip II wins over cities with bribes rather than weapons (16.54.2–4) in acts of ‘evil socialising’ (*πονηραῖς ὀμιλίαις*: 16.54.4).¹²⁰

In typical Diodoran fashion, greed also often leads to disaster for the greedy. Pausanias and the equally greedy Gylippus are both condemned by their fellow-Spartans (11.23.3, 11.46–7, 13.106.10), the Phocian Onomarchus is executed by Philip II (16.35.6), and Marius’ greed spells disaster not just for himself but for Rome with him (37.29). Similarly, it is greed that brings Perseus down (30.19, 30.21, 31.14), and the Delphic

¹¹⁸ Lucius Tarquinius 10.22, Hiero 11.67, the Thirty 14.2.1, 14.5–7, Agathocles 20.4.8, 20.72, Apollodorus 22.5.2, Diegylis 33.14. For a discussion of the role played by the attitude to money in Diodoran leaders see Bissa (2010).

¹¹⁹ 13.57.2, 17.70.4, 19.7.3.

¹²⁰ Nonetheless, in the next chapter the king’s generosity during symposia held after the capture of Olynthus, which is said to win him numerous supporters, is twice termed ‘benefactions’ (16.55.4) with no hint that the narrator disapproves. This apparent contradiction is symptomatic of Diodorus’ inconsistent attitude to Philip, who is in some passages portrayed as a divinely supported saviour of Delphi and Greece and in others as a tyrant who exerts a corrupting influence on the Greeks. The usual explanation that he inexpertly combined two different sources may well be true. See McQueen (1995: 8–14).

Oracle predicts to Lycurgus that greed will destroy Sparta in the end (7.12.5).¹²¹ Greed, in short, is a particularly bad vice in the *Bibliothēke* and only attaches to despicable characters.¹²²

Correspondingly, lack of greed (ἀφιλαργυρία) is, as in Polybius, the mark of a noble man. This characterises the Spartan Callicratidas, who in contrast with his fellow-citizens Pausanias and Gylippus refuses bribes (13.76.2), and it is the defining characteristic of the two Roman heroes whom Diodorus has taken over from Polybius, Aemilius Paullus (31.26.1–2) and Scipio the Younger (31.27). Actual generosity, rather than simply lack of greed, plays a slightly larger part in the *Bibliothēke* than in Polybius' *Histories*. It is displayed not only by Scipio the Younger (31.27), but also, conspicuously and with explicit narratorial approval, by the Sages Pittacus (9.12) and Bias (9.13) as well as by the famed Acragantine Tellias (13.83).

The despicability and destructive force of greed are a theme found in all parts of the historical books of the *Bibliothēke*. In the mythological books, however, neither greed nor generosity plays any significant part. The only god or hero said to possess the vice is Cronus, father of Zeus (3.61.1). This absence perhaps reflects the fact that the myths take place in a heroic world where motivations are rarely explored, and where typical benefactions consist in inventing agriculture and founding civilisations rather than handing out monetary gifts.

Luxury/Degeneration

The third cardinal vice of Diodoran villains is an extravagant and luxurious lifestyle, sometimes described in detail, sometimes called simply πολυτέλεια or τρυφή. This is characteristic of many of the tyrants of the *Bibliothēke*.¹²³ Likewise, luxurious living is coupled with cruelty and greed in the slave masters who cause the Sicilian Slave Revolt (34–5.2.26, 34.34). Correspondingly, good rulers and leaders can be praised for not giving in to luxury (33.18, 38/39.10).

Despicable though it is, such a lifestyle is also a source of fascination to the narrator of the *Bibliothēke*. Often he combines breathless description of the extravagances with evaluative vocabulary to show that such behaviour should only be admired at a distance, but must be considered both undignified and un-Greek. This mixture of fascination and condemnation can be seen, for example, in a passage describing Alexander the Great's appropriation of Persian customs (17.77.4–7). The passage begins

¹²¹ See also 23.19, 28.4.1.

¹²² E.g. the ignoble, miserly king Remphis 1.62.5–6, Cronus father of Zeus 3.61.1, Italian merchants corrupting the Gauls with wine 5.26.3, greedy and treacherous Roman tribunes 23.19, the evil king Artaxias of Armenia 31.22, a false friend of Gracchus 34/35.9.

¹²³ Acrotatus 19.71.1–5, Cleonymus 20.104, Hieronymus 26.15, Hasdrubal 32.22.

with the statement that Alexander now believed that he had secured his power over the Persian empire, and so began to ‘emulate Persian luxury and the extravagance of the Asian kings’ (ζηλοῦν τὴν Περσικὴν τρυφήν καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῶν Ἀσιανῶν βασιλέων). A description of this luxury and extravagance follows, focusing on clothing and the institution of a harem of 365 women, including the piquant detail that they would parade around the king’s bed every night so that he could decide whom to sleep with on each occasion. The narrator is clearly enjoying providing these details, and the reader is no doubt expected to enjoy them too. Suddenly, however, the tone changes. Following immediately on the information about the nightly beauty pageant comes this surprising statement: ‘And so Alexander followed these customs rarely and for the most part kept to his previous lifestyle, afraid to offend the Macedonians’ (τούτοις μὲν οὖν τοῖς ἔθισμοῖς Ἀλέξανδρος σπανίως ἐχρῆτο, τοῖς δὲ προϋπάρχουσι κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον ἐνδιέτριβε, φοβούμενος τὸ προσκόπειν τοῖς Μακεδόσιν: 17.77.7). This patently contradicts the introductory statement that Alexander began to emulate the luxurious lifestyle of the Persians and the Asian kings, and it also raises the question why the narrator would spend time on describing costumes and customs which Alexander only rarely used. In fact, it smells of backtracking. Alexander the Great is an overwhelmingly positive character in the *Bibliothēke*, and so the narrator cannot let the reader imagine him descending into a luxury-loving, Eastern way of life, enjoyable though the description of such a lifestyle may be.

Eastern luxury is an important part of such barbarian rulers as Semiramis (2.13.3–4) – mentioned in the same breath as the juicy and un-Greek detail that she refused lawful marriage and instead slept with the most handsome of her soldiers and then killed them – her effeminate son Ninias (2.21) and, in historical times, the ever-hated satrap Tissaphernes (14.80.2). It is also a feature of the life of the young Oriental Dionysus, before he forms his band of women into an army and goes on campaign (almost) like a proper Greek (3.64.6–7). The quintessential undignified, luxury-loving king is Sardanapallus of Assyria, who receives a chapter-long moralising introduction ending with the damning statement: ‘Being a man of this character, he not only ended his own life ignominiously, but also completely destroyed the Assyrian empire, which had been longer-lived than any other in human memory’ (2.23).¹²⁴ The causal connection is explained in the next chapter where Sardanapallus’ despicable lifestyle leads his subjects to revolt. It does not matter for Diodorus’ moralising stance that Sardanapallus actu-

¹²⁴ τοιοῦτος δ’ ὢν τὸν τρόπον οὐ μόνον αὐτὸς αἰσχρῶς κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν Ἀσσυρίων ἡγεμονίαν ἄρδην ἀνέτρεψε, πολυχρονιωτάτην γενομένην τῶν μνημονευομένων (Diod. Sic. 2.23).

ally puts up a staunch and sensible defence and holds out for a long time; the unmanly luxuriousness of his way of life makes him a negative *paradeigma* of the fact that luxury (1) is undignified and un-Greek, (2) leads to weakness of morals and body, and (3) ultimately leads to disaster.

This three-pronged message is borne out by a number of passages in the *Bibliothēke*. Some narrative passages in the ethnographic sections express wonder at peoples who derive extraordinary strength and toughness (the Ligurians, 4.20 and 5.39) or a simple nobility (the Britons, 5.21.6 and 5.40) from a freedom from luxury; others draw explicit connections between increased wealth and luxury on the one hand and degeneration and loss of strength and power on the other (the Tyrrenians, 5.40.4–5; the Spartans, 7.12.8). In the historical books, an evaluative digression passes scathing judgement on Pausanias for turning traitor to his country out of ‘love for Persian wealth and luxury’ (ἀγαπήσας τῶν Περσῶν τὸν πλοῦτον καὶ τὴν τρυφήν) and ‘imitating Persian luxury and lack of self-discipline’ (τὴν δὲ τῶν Περσῶν ἀκολασίαν καὶ τρυφήν ἐμιμήσατο: 11.46.3). In the second half of the digression, the reader is assured that the Spartan brought about both his own destruction and his city’s loss of sea-power by his defection to barbarian luxury (11.46.4–5). The same causal connection between a descent into luxury and loss of power – often by way of degenerate morals – is brought out by implicitly moralising narrative passages throughout the *Bibliothēke*.¹²⁵ Following the same logic, the laws of Zaleucus, which are repeatedly praised by the narrator, all rest on the assumption that there is a connection between luxury and lax morals, and that both need to be guarded against (12.20–1). In the detailed narratives of the sacking of cities, discussed above, the luxury of the city and its inhabitants is a *topos* (13.58.1, 13.89.3, 17.35.1–5), which both enhances the pathos of their suffering and functions as an explanation for why the city was worth sacking in the first place.

An evaluative digression sparked by a description of Pythagorean doctrine deals with the timeless theme of the decadence of contemporary youth (10.7.2–3). In the late historical books, presumably based on Posidonius, the extravagant lifestyles and moral decadence of Rome’s youth seems to have been a major theme (37.2.2–3, 37.3). The fragmentary state of these books unfortunately makes it impossible to see how Diodorus used this *topos*, that is, whether it was, as in Polybius, simply a backdrop against which to allow a favoured protagonist to shine so much the brighter, or whether it was developed into a moral-didactic theme in its own right.

¹²⁵ 19.71.1–5, 26.11, 29.2, 30.17, 32.19, 37.2.2–3. Sacks (1990: 46–52) argues that Diodorus’ ‘model of empire’ shows states losing hegemonic power because of harsh treatment of their subjects rather than because of luxury and decadence. It is certainly true that ἐπιείκεια carries more explanatory force than τρυφή in the *Bibliothēke*, but both have a place.

That extravagant luxury is nevertheless considered an entertaining subject is clear from such passages as 8.18–19, which describes the legendary luxury of the Sybarites and reports humorous Sybarite sayings supporting this stereotype (a favourite ancient joke topic, to judge from Ath. *Deipnosophistae* 12); 17.108.4–6, which gives scandalised details of the immorally luxurious lifestyle of Alexander the Great's corrupt treasurer Harpalus; and the lengthy, overawed *ekphrasis* on the wealth of Tellias and other Acragantines at 13.82–4, which functions as an ominous foreshadow of the imminent destruction of the city by the Carthaginians (13.86 and 89–90).

The moral theme of the despicability and dangers of a life in luxury is present throughout the *Bibliothēke*, in the mythological, historical and ethnographical books. Detailed descriptions of luxury and decadence, however, are only present in certain parts of the work, namely book 8, whose source is uncertain, and in the parts most probably based on Timaeus, Clitarchus and Posidonius.

CONCLUSION

On a reading from cover to cover, the extant parts of the *Bibliothēke* teach a simple moral lesson: good men are pious, mild towards those in their power, courageous and just, and know how to stay humble in good fortune; villains are cruel, impious, greedy and often addicted to a life in luxury. Moreover, both heroes and villains generally get what they deserve in the end. Teaching this lesson was a main purpose of the *Bibliothēke* and is stated as such in its preface, where it is closely connected with the project of writing universal history: only a universal history can offer the reader the comprehensive overview that leads to a true picture of how the world works, in moral terms or otherwise. And for Diodorus, only moral causation, driven by divine justice, can make sense of this world. In this sense, moral didacticism is certainly Diodorus' 'philosophy of history'.¹²⁶

However, just as the narrative style and moralising techniques vary between different parts of the *Bibliothēke*, so does the intensity of the moralising, and different parts of the lesson are dominant in different parts of the work. This unevenness is most easily explained by the theory that Diodorus took over most of his moralising from his sources, and that, although he sometimes changed the tone and adapted the message to suit his own view of history, he did not usually compose moralising passages from scratch. This tells us something about Diodorus, namely that although moral didacticism was apparently important to him – to

¹²⁶ So Ambaglio (1995: 118).

judge from his programmatic statements and the large amount of strong, explicit moralising in his work – he was too insecure, absent-minded, pressed for time or lazy to compose moralising from scratch. More interestingly, however, it tells us something about the historiographical tradition in which he was working: it seems that in the first century BC moral didacticism was an ingrained part of the genre of historiography. Although Diodorus' sources went about it in different ways and to differing degrees, they all engaged in it.

And we may be able to go further. The most explicit and pervasive moralising of the *Bibliothēke* is found in the parts of the work that are most probably based on Polybius, Timaeus of Tauromenium (the Sicilian narrative of books 13–14 and 19–21) and Posidonius of Apamea (books 32.27–38). The moralising found in the parts assumed to be based on Ephorus of Cyme (i.e. the Greek narrative of books 12–16.14) and Hieronymus of Cardia (the narrative of the Successor Wars in books 18–20) is much more subtle and less world-defining (i.e. in these parts of the *Bibliothēke* it is less obvious that the good thrive and the bad suffer). We may hypothesise that this difference reflects a difference in the moralising of those works. Having made this observation, it is worth pointing out that, considering this dependence on sources, Diodorus' moral messages are actually surprisingly consistent. We may unpick this discovery into three distinct statements:

1. The moralising techniques vary more between parts of the *Bibliothēke* than do the moral lessons.
2. The moral lessons may be unevenly represented, but they are not mutually contradictory.
3. Most moral lessons are present throughout the work, although each message is more dominant in some parts than in others.

Taken together, these observations point to two possible conclusions: either Diodorus tidied up contradictory moralising from his sources and moulded the passages into a coherent moral-didactic system, or the moral lessons in his sources were very similar to begin with; the variation was in the detail, which could be changed (as with the moralising on Regulus taken over from Polybius) or ignored, and sometimes in the moralising techniques. The latter theory is supported by the fact that Diodorus' moral lessons are very similar to the moral lessons propounded by Polybius, although they are generally expressed less analytically. If Diodorus often did take over his moral lessons from his sources, the *Bibliothēke* shows that not just the phenomenon of moral didacticism but also a canon of moral lessons were an established part of the genre of historiography by the first century BC.

Building on this hypothesis, we shall end this chapter with a tentative overview of what moralising in Diodorus' now lost sources may have looked like, on the basis of the moralising seen in different parts of the *Bibliothēke*. This will then be brought into the discussion of the preserved fragments of those sources in Chapters 3 and 7.

Tentative Characterisation of Moralising in Some of Diodorus' Sources

Ephorus of Cyme, whose work Diodorus most probably used for the Greek narrative of books 11 or 12 to 16.14, seems to have moralised sparingly, by means of a restrained use of moralising phrasing, a few moralising digressions, and some moralising introductions, conclusions and asides. His moral lessons seem to have mainly concerned battlefield courage (by means of heroic battle narratives and digressions such as the one on the Spartans at Thermopylae), justice and the positive effect of mildness/kindness.

By contrast, the **Alexander historian, perhaps Clitarchus**, whose work Diodorus used for book 17, seems to have moralised mainly by means of vignettes with speech and pathetic descriptions of atrocities and suffering, with a heavy-handed use of moralising phrasing in some passages, supported by internal evaluation and a few moralising introductions and conclusions. His favourite topics seem to have been divine support (for Alexander), the positive effect of mildness/kindness and the negative effect of luxury.

The source used for the Greek narrative of books 18–20, often assumed to be **Hieronymus of Cardia**, was perhaps the least moralising of Diodorus' sources for the historical period. He seems to have employed evaluative phrasing sparingly along with internal evaluation, supplemented by a few moralising digressions and asides. He seems to have presented a world governed by random fortune rather than divine justice, and to have moralised on cruelty and on the positive effects of mildness/kindness.

Timaeus of Tauromenium, whose work Diodorus probably used for the Sicilian narrative of books 13–14 and 19–21, seems to have been the most flamboyantly moralising of Diodorus' sources. He seems to have used the entire toolbox of moralising techniques in order to offer lessons on divine justice (including mirroring punishment), human inability to bear good fortune, piety, cruelty and the dangers of luxury. Interestingly, mildness/kindness does not seem to have played a big role in his work.

Posidonius of Apamea, on whose work Diodorus most probably based books 32.26–37 and perhaps some of 38–9 of the *Bibliothēke*, also seems to have had a strong moralising voice, although it is hard to tell from the fragmentary state of these last books of the *Bibliothēke*. He seems to have

used plenty of evaluative phrasing, moral digressions, and moral introductions and conclusions in the service of lessons on divine justice, the positive effects of mildness/kindness, and the evils of greed, luxury and cruelty.

Finally, as a check on the trustworthiness of this reconstruction, it is worth comparing the picture we get of Polybius from books 27–32.26 of the *Bibliothèque* with what remains of his *Histories*. On the basis purely of the *Bibliothèque* we should say that Polybius used a variety of moralising techniques, principally evaluative phrasing, moral digressions, moral introductions and conclusions, and moralising vignettes. This is confirmed when we look at the *Histories*. However, when we turn to moral lessons, the picture is less tidy: to judge from the *Bibliothèque*, Polybius mainly moralised on the topics of divine justice, mildness/kindness, human inability to handle good fortune, and the dangers of greed. In fact, only the latter two lessons play a big part in the *Histories*. As for the former two, mildness is certainly a virtue, but is only part of what makes a good ruler. And it is true that historical characters in the *Histories* often get what they deserve, but this is by no means as universal as in the *Bibliothèque*, and it is always due to human causes rather than divine intervention. Overall, the picture we get of moralising in the *Histories* through the *Bibliothèque* is reasonably accurate, but skewed in at least one important way. This is worth remembering when we try to imagine the moralising of Diodorus' lost sources on the basis of his use of them.

Characteristics of Diodorus' Moral Didacticism: Mildness and Divine Justice

In the overview of the moral lessons of parts of Diodorus' work offered above, one thing is striking: the message that mildness and kindness lead to good results is ubiquitous. This may mean that this was a lesson propounded across the board by Diodorus' various sources; but considering the more limited role that this theme plays in Polybius' *Histories*, it is perhaps more likely that Diodorus has emphasised what was there already and drawn it into a unifying theme. The same may well be true for the lesson about divine justice, which is also near-ubiquitous in the *Bibliothèque* and which, revealingly, plays a large part in the books based on Polybius, from whose work we have seen that such a message is absent. These moral messages, then, are distinctive of Diodorus' didactic programme.

3. *Fragmentary Hellenistic Historiography*

In this chapter, we shall examine the remnants of some of the most famous and influential works of history written in the Hellenistic period. These works have fared less well across the millennia than those of Polybius and Diodorus and only survive in fragmentary form, but it is important to remember that in their day they were as real, tangible and genre-defining as the works that have accidentally been transmitted in fuller form. If we want to understand moral didacticism in Hellenistic historiography, we have to examine these ‘fragments’ and try to catch as many glimpses a possible of the magnificent works they once were. In the previous chapter we saw how Diodorus’ moralising changes with his change of sources, but also how many of his moralising themes are present regardless of the identity of his source, although with different degrees of emphasis. I argued that this shows that not just moral didacticism but moralising on a specific set of themes was a ubiquitous feature of late Classical and Hellenistic historiography, present in all the authors Diodorus used as sources. In this chapter we shall test that hypothesis against the evidence of the ‘fragments’ of some of his likely sources.

We know hundreds of names of authors who wrote history in this time period, and a selection has to be made somehow. The works examined in this chapter have been chosen on the basis of two criteria. The first criterion is their importance for the development of the genre of historiography, to judge from the number and type of references to them in later authors including Polybius and Diodorus – except for Hieronymus of Cardia, who is included because of a twentieth-century scholarly obsession with seeing his work as more ‘serious’, which at least partly equals ‘non-moralising’, than those of his peers and close successors. The other criterion is genre: I have included only historians who wrote the same subgenre(s) of historiography as Polybius and Diodorus, namely ‘universal history’ or ‘continuous history’, rather than local history or mono-

graphs about single wars or events.¹ In practice, this means leaving out the Alexander historians (despite the fact that Diodorus certainly used one of them as his main source for book 17) as well as local historians including the Atthidographers. As a result, this chapter will discuss Timaeus of Tauromenium, Duris of Samos, Phylarchus (of Athens?), Agatharchides of Cnidus and Posidonius of Apamea in chronological order, before devoting a brief and chronologically misplaced discussion to Hieronymus of Cardia. The reason for placing this discussion at the end of the chapter will become clear from its conclusion. The fragments of the fragmentary Classical historiographers will be discussed in Chapter 7.

The ‘fragments’ we will be considering are, generally, not fragmentary scraps of papyrus as one might think from the word, but references and paraphrases in later authors. These references and paraphrases were collected by Felix Jacoby in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century in a monumental effort known as *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (FGrH) and left unfinished. It is currently being completed by a team of scholars under the leadership of Stefan Schorn. Alongside this effort, the passages collected by Jacoby, conventionally known as the fragments of Greek historiography, are being translated into English and provided with detailed scholarly commentaries in the online *Brill’s New Jacoby* (BNJ) under the directorship of Ian Worthington.² This chapter is based on Jacoby’s text and makes liberal use of the BNJ commentaries alongside Jacoby’s own original remarks.

Jacoby worked in a tradition of positivist *Quellenforschung* (even if his purpose was not so much to uncover the sources used by extant texts as to come to an understanding of those lost sources) which regularly ascribed long passages from later authors, especially Diodorus and Plutarch, verbatim to specific sources. Most scholars would now agree that such an approach is overoptimistic and distorts the picture of both fragmentary text and ‘covertext’, that is, the text that preserves the ‘fragment’.³ The problems haunting any work on fragmentary texts have received increasing

1 As stated in the Introduction to this study, I do not wish to imply that these are terms of fixed genres; they are simply useful shorthand for modern-day scholars to use when thinking about the traditions in which the ancient historiographers saw themselves, and what predecessors they imitated. For universal history see Alonso-Núñez (1990), Liddel (2010) with references to older scholarship, and Marincola (2011). For continuous history see Tuplin (2011).

2 The BNJ entries have no publication dates and will be referred to in the footnotes in the format ‘Pownall (n.d.)’. The BNJ has links to Jacoby’s original commentary, but does not reproduce his section headings and marginalia, as Baron (2013: 10–11) warns.

3 I adopt the expression ‘covertext’ from Schepens (1997: 166–7 n. 66), who argues rightly that we need a shorthand term for ‘the author who quoted or summarized the fragmentary author’, and that ‘covertext’ is fitting because it ‘covers’ the fragment in three senses of the word: (1) it preserves and protects it, (2) it conceals it, and (3) it encloses it. The expression is also adopted by, among others, Walbank (2007) and Baron (2013).

scholarly attention since a seminal article by Brunt in 1980.⁴ The primary problem, as illustrated by our discussion of Diodorus in the preceding chapter, is that of the faithfulness or otherwise of the covertext. It is necessary repeatedly to ask to what extent this later author has reworked the text of his source. We must assume a priori that the wording of any given fragment has been composed by the author of the covertext and is, at the very least, a rephrasing of the original. More often, the ‘fragment’ is a summary or paraphrase of the source. Only very occasionally does a covertext imply or explicitly state that it is giving the exact words of its source.

Apart from paraphrasing, the covertext may well also have recast the passage appropriated from an earlier text and put it to a new use. Part of this problem is the habit of ancient authors of ascribing sentiments and opinions to each other which in the actual works are put into the mouth of a narrative character. Sometimes, the author of the covertext ignores an introductory ‘some say’ (τινες λέγουσιν) and ascribes a version of events to his source which in the original was specifically argued against by the narrator. At other times, the covertext may even use a passage for a purpose almost diametrically opposite to the one for which it was intended.⁵ For this reason we cannot trust that any sentiment expressed in a fragment, moralising or otherwise, was actually in the original work, and, if it was, that it made the same point or was even equally explicit.⁶

This problem is perhaps particularly acute for the main covertext for Hellenistic historiography, the *Deipnosophistae* (‘Scholars at Dinner’) by the second-century AD author Athenaeus. This is a glorious display of learnedness and wit disguised as a symposiastic conversation, during which the various interlocutors quote, paraphrase and reference a vast number of literary works, both poetic and prose, and use them as examples of themes fit for the convivial setting: eating, drinking, sex, entertainment, funny stories and generally excessive lifestyles. Importantly, the original texts canvassed by the speakers do not always support the use to which they are put in their paraphrased form.⁷ This obviously makes it extremely difficult

4 For good discussions of these issues see Brunt (1980), Schepens (1997), Lenfant (1999, 2013), Pelling (2000), Yarrow (2006: 104–16, 2008, forthcoming), Berti (2013) and Baron (2011, 2013: 1–16).

5 For examples of Athenaeus’ deliberate misrepresentation of his sources see Pelling (2000).

6 On this fundamental point see especially Brunt (1980). It is often repeated, but also often ignored. Bernhardt (2003: 199–247), for instance, uses the fragments of Hellenistic historiography as evidence for Hellenistic attitudes to luxurious living without ever acknowledging the problem of the considerably later covertexts.

7 On Athenaeus see Braund and Wilkins (2000). On the specific problem of interpreting the ‘fragments’ preserved by him, see especially Pelling (2000), Gorman and Gorman (2007) and the papers collected in Lenfant (2007).

to interpret the tenor, moral or otherwise, of the original texts. The most obvious example of this problem is the term *tryphe* (τρυφή), which covers one of Athenaeus' favourite subjects, namely luxurious and immoderate living. It has been argued in an important article by Gorman and Gorman that the fascination with *tryphe* belongs to Athenaeus and his time, not to his Hellenistic sources, who may have reported the details of such lifestyles but would not have condemned them.⁸ Gorman and Gorman are most probably right that *tryphe* is a term more in use in the time of Athenaeus than in that of the Hellenistic historiographers discussed here: on a TLG search we find that τρυφή and its cognates are used not at all by Herodotus or Thucydides, three times in all of Xenophon's works, four times in the surviving parts of Polybius, and seventy-five times in the extant parts of Diodorus. This semantic group, then, is apparently only really coming into widespread use (at least by elite prose writers) in the late Hellenistic period;⁹ but it becomes extremely common in the second century AD, with 140 instances across the literary output of Plutarch and no fewer than 219 instances in the surviving volumes of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*.¹⁰ However, *tryphe* is a wide-ranging term that entails not just luxury and extravagance, but also immoderate eating and drinking, indolence, effeminacy and sexual excesses, all vices in the moral-didactic systems of Polybius and Diodorus, as we have seen in Chapters 1 and 2. So, while the appellation *tryphe* in the fragments preserved by Athenaeus is probably in most cases his own spin on the original text, it is unlikely that these Hellenistic historiographers differed so widely from their better-surviving peers as to recommend the kind of lifestyle that could fit that term.¹¹

It is harder to argue against the other part of Gorman and Gorman's argument, namely that the connection of *tryphe* with *hybris* and consequent destruction which we see in some of the historiographical fragments preserved by Athenaeus became common only in the first to second century AD and was not a feature of Hellenistic historiography. They show convincingly that the expressions 'to run aground on luxurious living' (ἐξοκειλεῖν εἰς τρυφήν) and 'to come/progress to such a degree of *tryphe* that . . .', which we see repeatedly in the fragments of Hellenistic historiography,

8 Gorman and Gorman (2007).

9 For the scarce use of τρυφή in the fifth century BC see Bernhardt (2003: 192–3).

10 For its use in the propaganda of the Ptolemaic court, see Heinen (1983) and Ager (2005). For its use in inscriptions, which may show a discrepancy between popular morality and the morality propounded by historiography, see Bernhardt (2003: 193–4).

11 Bernhardt (2003) traces criticism of luxurious living in Greek literature from Archaic through to Roman Imperial times and shows how such criticism was always part of Greek elite discourse, but began to be 'systematised' in the late fifth to early fourth century. His study of Hellenistic historiography is problematic, however, because he ignores the problem of distortion of fragments by the covertext.

were Athenaeus' own phrases which he used to demonstrate a connection between *tryphe* and disaster. This must necessarily make us sceptical about the interpretation of those fragments as instances of moral causation. However, I shall argue that Gorman and Gorman go too far in their scepticism and that some fragments can be assumed to be remnants of such causation in the lost historiographies. Every passage needs to be treated on its own premises, and we shall discuss some important cases below in connection with both Timaeus and Phylarchus.

The second problem facing our investigation is the question to what degree the fragments of a given author are representative of his original work. This is essentially a question of the selectivity of the covertext. For example, references to a historiographer in the geographical lexicon of Stephanus of Byzantium are likely to be short notices on the topography or ethnicity of a given city, but this does not mean that the historiographer named by Stephanus as his source was mainly interested in geography. Similarly, because of Athenaeus' preoccupation with the theme of *tryphe* the number of historiographical fragments which moralise on this theme is almost certainly disproportionate to the space it occupied in his historiographical sources. On the other hand, the fact that Athenaeus was able to collect such a large number of passages on luxury and decadence shows that the theme was significant to some extent in the historiographical tradition.¹² It is unfortunate that Athenaeus was not equally interested in other moral-didactic topics.

The third and related problem is the uselessness of arguments *e silentio*. We can never be certain that a qualifying remark, a negation or a specific type of moralising was *not* in the original work of history just because no instance of it happens to be preserved.¹³

Such considerations may well make one hesitant even to approach the fragments, but if we want to gain some understanding of Greek historiography as a genre, they are still our best evidence for vast stretches of it. Rather than throw up our hands in exasperation we shall therefore wade in bravely, at the risk of the occasional overinterpretation, and attempt to steer a course between naive trust in the covertext and fruitless agnosticism. The method for every author discussed in this chapter has been first to read all the fragments collected by Jacoby, in order to see whether any seem to have a moral-didactic purpose, and then to read the fragments that seemed interesting for our purpose in their covertexts, in order to get a sense of how the purpose of the latter may have distorted the original shape and contents of the former.

¹² Lenfant (1999) brilliantly shows how one would arrive at a distorted picture of Herodotus if we only had the 'fragments' of his *History*.

¹³ This is one of the main points of Brunt (1980).

TIMAEUS OF TAUROMENIUM (FGRH 566)

The *Sicelica* (sometimes also called the *History*) of Timaeus of Tauromenium is the best-preserved fragmentary history of the period, with 163 surviving fragments. Despite its title, it was not a work of local history, but a history of the western part of the Greek world to parallel the many *Hellenica* already in existence, beginning in mythical times and ending with the death of Agathocles of Syracuse.¹⁴ Timaeus was a prolific writer who composed several other works beside history. Champion's description of him as 'the most important Greek historian of the western Mediterranean before Polybius' is no doubt correct.¹⁵ The *Sicelica* was widely read, as can be seen from the vast range of authors who refer to and polemicise against it,¹⁶ and it is a mark of the esteem in which Timaeus was held that it was his work which Polybius decided to continue, even if he criticised it harshly. Diodorus most probably used Timaeus as his primary source for the Sicilian and Italian history in books 13–14 and 20–1 and for some of his mythological material.

There is an unusually high degree of scholarly agreement about the character of Timaeus' work, partly on the basis of the fragments, partly on more or less optimistic ideas about to what degree it can be reconstructed from Diodorus and from Polybius' criticism:¹⁷ he was a passionate critic of all tyrants except Gelon, who was idolised because of his relative antiquity and his successes against the Carthaginians, whom Timaeus presented as vile barbarians; the equally successful Agathocles was violently criticised because Timaeus had been exiled by him and so was influenced by personal bias. Positive bias, on the other hand, characterised his portrayal of Timoleon, the liberator of Sicily. Moreover, Timaeus was useless as a military historian, but was among the first to offer a history of Rome; and his work was 'rhetorical', emotional and full of moralising.¹⁸ This picture

¹⁴ For two of the more recent attempts at reconstructing the shape of Timaeus' work see Vattuone (2002: 192–203) and Baron (2013: 28–38, 202–32).

¹⁵ Champion (n.d.).

¹⁶ FGRH 566 T 1, T 11, T 15a, T 15b, T 16, T 17, T 18, T 19, T 22, T 23, T 26, T 27, F 28a.

¹⁷ Scholars who argue that Timaeus can to a large degree be reconstructed from Diodorus include Jacoby (1955), Laqueur (1936), Meister (1967) and Pearson (1984, 1986, 1987). More sceptical voices are Sanders (1987), Rubincam (1990) and Baron (2013). For good discussions of Polybius' criticism of Timaeus see Vattuone (2002) and Baron (2013: 58–88).

¹⁸ The main works on Timaeus essentially agree on these points: Laqueur (1936), Jacoby (1955), Meister (1967), Pearson (1984, 1986, 1987), Sanders (1987) and Walbank (1989–90). Vattuone (2002) essentially agrees with this characterisation, but sensibly reinterprets it as a legitimate and philosophical type of post-Thucydidean history writing, which cannot simply be dismissed as 'rhetorical'. Baron (2013) is more critical of the traditional characterisation.

has more recently been challenged by Baron, who argues that Timaeus was less biased against both the Carthaginians and the Sicilian tyrants than is usually assumed, more competent as a historian, and an imitator of Herodotus in the range and structure of his work.¹⁹

Almost a third of the 163 Timaeian fragments seem to refer to what in the original were moralising passages.²⁰ This is a very large proportion of moralising, and it is no doubt partly due to the selectivity of his main covertexts: Athenaeus, who tends to extract passages dealing with luxury or flattery, and Plutarch, Polybius and Diodorus, who all have a moral-didactic agenda. On the other hand, it is likely that Timaeus was a favourite source for these authors exactly because they found him a rich source of moral-didactic material.

No fewer than eleven of the collected fragments are Athenaeian references to Timaeus as a source for outrageous tales of *tryphe*.²¹ As discussed above, such cases call for special caution, and we cannot be sure that Athenaeus' interpretation is also Timaeus'. No condemnation (or praise) by the Timaeian narrator is preserved in any of these cases; the fragments consist simply of more or less detailed and scandalised descriptions of luxury. They range from brief remarks which must be references to longer treatments in Timaeus' original (F 1a: the Etruscans make their slave girls serve naked) through humorous vignettes with speech (F 48 on the extreme indolence of the Sybarites) to lengthy *ekphraseis* on opulence (F 149 on the blasé attitude to wealth of drunken Acragan youths). An *ekphrasis* on the wealth of Acragas in Diodorus is also attributed to Timaeus' eyewitness account (F 26a = Diod. Sic. 13.81.3–82.8). An added complication is that it is often impossible to see how much of the passage designated as a 'fragment' actually comes from Timaeus; but the fact that he is repeatedly cited in connection with this theme – which, for instance, his contemporary and equally influential fellow-historian Hieronymus of Cardia is not (see later in this chapter) – suggests that extravagance and immoderate luxury had some part to play in his *Sicelica*.

The varied forms of the fragments seem to indicate that the theme appeared in both vignettes and *ekphraseis*. The longest fragment is F 50 (= Ath. 12.519b–520c), the main part of which is an *ekphrasis* on extrava-

¹⁹ Baron (2013). The important part played by geography in his work is also discussed by Vattuone (2002: 222–4).

²⁰ F 1a, F 2, F 9, F 11a and b, F 22, F 24a, F 26a, F 29, F 31b, F 32, possibly F 35a and b, F 44, F 45, F 47, F 48, F 49, F 50, F 51, F 82, F 83, F 95, F 99, F 100a, b and c, F 102a and b, F 105, F 106, F 111, F 116, F 118, F 119a, b and c, F 121, F 122, F 124a, b, c and d, F 134, F 139, F 148, F 149, F 150b, F 154, F 156, F 158a and b. I do not count F 159 because its derivation from Timaeus is extremely doubtful.

²¹ F 1a, F 9, F 11a and b, F 44, F 47, F 48, F 49, F 50, F 51, F 149.

gant Sybarite customs, offering plenty of over-the-top details (such as the wealthy Sybarites having the roads leading from the city to their country estates covered with awnings so they do not get too hot on the road, and master chefs being crowned at public festivals). The fact that Timaeus is only mentioned by Athenaeus at the beginning of the long passage (in connection with the information that the Sybarites became friendly with the Milesians from wearing cloaks made from Milesian wool) prompts Gorman and Gorman to argue that the details of outrageous luxury are not based on his work, but are a hotchpotch of general ‘knowledge’ of Sybarite *tryphe*.²² Such an interpretation is possible, but perhaps overly sceptical: against Gorman and Gorman’s claim that no other Timaeian fragment shows a similar credulity with regard to fantastical details I would put the evidence of F 150a, which gives Timaeus as the source for an argument to the effect that the goddess Artemis was present at the birth of Alexander the Great, and F 95, according to which the future tyrant Gelon was saved from an earthquake by a wolf (see below), both more fanciful to a modern mind than the decadence of the Sybarites.

The list of extravagances in F 50 ends with a narrative of how the destruction of Sybaris was foretold by an oracle, which warned the Sybarites about honouring human beings more than gods, and how such a fatal mistake occurred (by a runaway slave being whipped in a temple, then saving himself by fleeing to the tomb of his master’s father). If this passage does in fact go back to Timaeus, it shows that he made a connection between the Sybarites’ impious arrogance and their destruction, and perhaps that he made their arrogance arise from wealth and luxurious living. On the one hand, it is impossible to know whether Athenaeus was still using Timaeus at this point, as it is a full page since his name was mentioned; on the other hand, no other source has been mentioned in between.²³ If Timaeus did create a causal link between the arrogance of the Sybarites and their destruction, this would put him in line with Polybius and Diodorus as a historian interested in human inability to handle good fortune.

A more certain indication that Timaeus did in some instances moralise on the difficulty of handling good fortune with moderation is F 100b (= Plut. *Nic.* 28.1–4). In this passage, a parallel narrative to Diodorus 13.19,

²² Gorman and Gorman (2007: 52–3).

²³ Gorman and Gorman (2007: 52–3) argue that Athenaeus was the one to make this causal connection and that he did not find it in any source. I find it unlikely that such a moral-didactic agenda should originate with Athenaeus, but it is entirely possible that he combined two different sources in the passage, which represented two different traditions: one where the Sybarites were destroyed because of their impiety and arrogance, and one where they were destroyed because of their *tryphe*. On Athenaeus’ practice of combining sources see Pelling (2000).

the Sicilian statesman Hermocrates lectures his fellow-Syracusans after the victory over Athens in 413 BC on how to bear success with moderation, and the narrator states that the Syracusans ‘were already abusing their good fortune’ (ὄβριζόντες ἤδη τοῖς εὐτυχίμασιν). It is difficult to be certain how much of this was in Timaeus, who is only mentioned in the next paragraph (ὡς δὲ Τιμαῖός φησι), which deals with the Syracusans’ dislike of Gylippus.²⁴ However, the dictum of Hermocrates about moderate behaviour in victory (ὄτι τοῦ νικᾶν κρεῖττον ἔστι τὸ καλῶς χρῆσθαι τῇ νίκῃ) is very similar to a dictum spoken by Hermocrates in Diodorus during the course of the same debate: ὡς καλλιόν ἔστι τοῦ νικᾶν τὸ τὴν νίκην ἐνεγκεῖν ἀνθρωπίνως (Diod. Sic. 13.19.5; see p. 115). There can hardly be any doubt that these two expressions of the same doctrine at the same point in the story must come from the same source. It is, however, entirely possible that Plutarch was combining several different sources, or even added extra details from his own imagination.²⁵ This would explain why the demagogue who proposes the death sentence is in Diodorus called Diocles and in Plutarch Eurycles, and also why Gylippus in Diodorus gives a speech for the execution of the generals while in Plutarch he wants to take them back to Sparta alive. Timaeus can only with any certainty be credited with the details that Diodorus and Plutarch have in common, namely the fact that the Syracusans shouted down Hermocrates when he said that ‘nobler than victory itself is bearing victory with moderation’. Even on its own, however, this dictum and the Syracusan reaction make for a powerful moralising vignette on the inability of the successful to remain moderate.

This leads us to the question of what precepts for behaviour Timaeus may have offered. On the basis of the extant fragments we get a more rounded picture of his negative *paradeigmata* of villainy, Agathocles and other tyrants of Sicily, than of any of his positive *exempla*. This, however, probably says more about the covertexts, who were interested either in passing on salacious details (Athenaeus, Plutarch) or in criticising Timaeus for being tasteless and overly harsh in his blame passages (Polybius, Diodorus), than it does about Timaeus’ moral pedagogy. The bad Timaeian leader seems to have been a tyrant, effeminate (F 111), sexually depraved (F 122, F 124b), cowardly (F 124d) and impiously faithless (F 121).²⁶ Such a leader has few friends, but many flatterers, who deserve

24 See Meister (1967: 63–9) *contra* Jacoby (1955: 582–3), Pearson (1986: 357–8) and Stylianou (1998: 58–61), who all believe all of F 100b comes from Timaeus.

25 This possibility is overlooked by Jacoby (1955: 582–3), Meister (1967: 63–9), Pearson (1986: 357–8) and Stylianou (1998: 58–61). See, however, Russell (1973: 42–62) and Pelling (2002) on Plutarch’s use of sources.

26 F 111 = Polyb. 12.24.3, F 122 = [Longinus], *Subl.* 4.5, F 124b = Polyb. 12.15.1–10, F 124d = Diod. Sic. 21.17.1–3, F 121 = Diod. Sic. 20.89.4–6.

painful deaths for their obsequiousness.²⁷ A further explicitly criticised characteristic, not attributed to any tyrant in the extant fragments, but only to the Spartan Gylippus, is greed (F 100a, b and c).²⁸ In contrast, the philosopher Xenocrates receives praise by internal evaluation for displaying conspicuous lack of greed (F 158a and b).²⁹

Otherwise, little survives to show what moral recommendations Timaeus gave. It is clear that he idolised Timoleon, the Corinthian who abolished tyranny in various Sicilian cities and defeated the Carthaginians (F 119a, b and c), but we cannot see what virtues Timaeus ascribed to him.³⁰ It seems that Timaeus praised him for being an enemy of all tyrants (T 3b and T 13) and even engineering the slaying of his own brother when the latter made himself tyrant of Corinth, although Timaeus' version (F 116) seems to have differed from the one in Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 16.65) in having Timoleon cover his head and cry during the deed rather than committing it with his own hand.³¹ T 13 states that Timaeus praised Timoleon for his 'moderation' (τοῦ μετρίου), albeit in the very specific sense of his sparing the life of Timaeus' father, who was ruler (tyrant?) of Tauromenium. The philosopher Empedocles likewise seems to have been a positive *paradeigma* of hostility to tyranny,³² but was perhaps presented as less than perfect in his private life, where Diogenes Laertius uses the words 'boastful' and 'egocentric' (ἀλαζόνα καὶ φίλαυτον) to summarise Timaeus' description (F 2 = Diog. Laert. 8.66).

F 118 (= Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 5.3.2.676d) is interesting. It narrates how Timoleon's troops get scared before a battle because some donkeys arrive carrying celery, which symbolises mourning, but how Timoleon then manages to turn their mood around by reminding them that celery is also used for victory wreaths in the Isthmian Games. This passage seems to show Timoleon as an eminently rational general capable of making the superstition of others work for him, along the lines of Polybius' Scipios. It is unfortunately impossible to know whether Timaeus commented on the episode in his narratorial voice or in other ways indicated to the reader how to interpret it.³³

27 F 115 = Plut. *Dion* 35.6–7 (Philiustus), F 155a = Polyb. 12.12b.2–3 (Callisthenes), F 32 = Ath. 6.250a–d (Democles).

28 F 100a and b = Plut. *Nic.* 19.5 and 28.1–4, F 100c = Plut. *Tim.* 41.4.

29 F 158 a = Ath. 10.437.b, F 158b = Phld. *Index academicorum philosophorum Herculaniensis* VIII (IV) pp. 138–9 (Dorandi).

30 F 119a = Polyb. 12.23.4–7, F 119b = Plut. *Tim.* 36.1–2, F 119c = Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.7.

31 T 3b = Plut. *Tim.* 10.6–8, T 13 = Marcellin. *Vit. Thuc.* 27, F 116 = Plut. *Tim.* 4.5–8.

32 F 2 = Diog. Laert. 8.66, F 134 = Diog. Laert. 8.63–4.

33 In addition, Cornelius Nepos (*Alc.* 11.1–6 = *FGrH* 566 F 99) cites Timaeus as someone who praises Alcibiades and goes on to talk about the chameleon-like qualities of the Athenian statesman. However, as noted by Champion (n.d.: *ad loc.*), Nepos says that

Having examined the meagre evidence for the virtues and vices of Timaeus' main characters, we now turn to the other important question for discerning his overall moral message(s): did he describe a world where virtue was rewarded and vice punished? F 50 on the fall of Sybaris, discussed above, may well show divine punishment of arrogance and impiety, and possibly also of extravagant living. The divine connection is not made explicit, however, and we cannot even be certain that this final part of the fragment is from Timaeus. We must therefore look elsewhere for clues to the extent of divine involvement in the world of the *Sicelica*.

Some fragments show that Timaeus portrayed a world where superhuman forces at least played a part. F 29 narrates a prophetic dream, F 95 has a future good leader (Gelon of Syracuse) saved from an earthquake by a wolf,³⁴ and, more concretely, F 155a quotes Timaeus' statement that the execution of the historian Callisthenes by Alexander the Great was divine punishment for honouring a human being like a god.³⁵ Intriguingly, two fragments indicate that Timaeus had a fondness for ironically apt punishment of the kind we have seen Diodorus use to signal divine involvement: F 24 (= Ath. 13.588b–589a) tells of the death of Laïs the courtesan (at the end of a string of outrageous stories about her, which were probably, but not necessarily, also in Timaeus), who is beaten to death with wooden footstools³⁶ by jealous women in a sanctuary of Aphrodite, thus aptly dying in the house of the goddess of lust.³⁷ Similarly, but more pointedly, F 102 (= Περὶ Ὑψους 4.3) interprets the Athenian defeat by Hermocrates ('Power of Hermes') son of Hermon as the city's punishment (ἔδωκαν δίκη) for having mutilated the Herms.³⁸ No divine power is mentioned, but the coincidence of crime and punishment – especially in the latter case – seems meant to indicate something superhuman (and so signal that the punishment was just).

Timaeus and Thucydides agree in their praise of Alcibiades, despite the fact that Thucydides is in fact extremely ambivalent about him. That means that we cannot be sure how unequivocal Timaeus' praise was, and makes it impossible to use the fragment as a basis for reconstructing Timaeus' advice for good leadership.

34 F 29 = schol. on Aeschin. 2.10, F 95 = Tzetz. *Chil.* 4.132.269–81. It is hard to know how seriously to take the attribution of this latter story to Timaeus, as Tzetzes dismissively talks of 'the Timaeuses, Dionysiuses, Diodoruses, Dion(s)', but it does not seem to be out of place with the other fantastical stories told in some of the fragments.

35 F 155a = Polyb. 12.12b: καὶ φησι τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀξίους γεγρονέαι, διότι ταῖς Ἀλεξάνδρου τιμαῖς ταῖς ἰσοθέοις ἀντέλεγον, τὸν δὲ φιλόσοφον αἰγίδα καὶ κεραυνὸν <περι>τιθέντα θνητῆ φύσει δικαίως αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ δαμονίου τετευχέναι τούτων ὧν ἔτυχεν.

36 ξυλίνας χελώναις, literally wooden tortoises. Most probably a type of footstool; cf. *LSJ* (*ad* χελώνα) and Pearson (1987: 150 n. 87).

37 Pearson (1987: 150) says that Timaeus relates her 'tragic death'. I think he misses the moral point of Timaeus' story.

38 Baron (2013: 192–4, 244–6) offers the tantalising suggestion that such wordplay in Timaeus was meant to provide a streak of humour in his narrative. If that is indeed the case, it is difficult to know how seriously to take it.

This interest in coincidences of the details of a crime with its punishment was almost certainly part of a wider theme in Timaeus of coincidences of various types, particularly of dates, and especially when they could be construed to show the changeability of fortune.³⁹ At 13.108.4, Diodorus cites him as his source (F 106) for the fact that on the same day and in the same hour as the Carthaginians had captured the Geloan colossal statue of Apollo, which they sent to Tyre, the same statue was later worshipped by the Greeks under Alexander the Great, who had on that day taken Tyre. This is a coincidence which shows how fortunes change and the arrogant victors become the humbled defeated. At the same time it functions as divine punishment of the Tyrians, who had committed sacrilege against the statue because they believed that Apollo was helping the Greeks in the siege. Coincidences are also the topic of F 60 (Rome and Carthage were founded on the same day),⁴⁰ F 105 (Euripides died on the same day that Dionysius, the tragedy-loving tyrant, became ruler of Syracuse) and F 150a, where Cicero states that Timaeus claimed that the temple of Artemis at Ephesus burned down on the same night as Alexander the Great was born.⁴¹ The point in Cicero's summary is Timaeus' explanation of the coincidence, namely that Artemis was away from Ephesus because she, as the goddess of childbirth, wanted to be present at Olympias' labour. Cicero says that Timaeus added the explanation of the coincidence *concinne*, which perhaps indicates that he thought of it as a learned and poetic explanation which was not to be taken literally. This would fit in with Pseudo-Longinus' criticism of Timaeus' tendency to showcase his learnedness (F 102). However, even if such highlighting of their author's learnedness was the meta-purpose of these coincidences, they nevertheless create a narrative universe where some sort of superhuman power organises events and thereby plays a very real part. The impression we got from the Timaeian parts of Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* was of an author who moralises frequently on divine vengeance and uses the mirroring of punishment and crime as an indication of divine involvement. It is now tempting to think that this is an accurate reflection of a prominent feature of the *Sicelica*.

The other dominating characteristics of the moralising of Diodorus' Timaeian narrative are the theme of human inability to bear good fortune and several *ekphraseis* on wealth and luxury. The hypothesis that both of these were characteristics of Timaeus' *Sicelica* is now supported by our examination of the Timaeian 'fragments'. However, in his 'Timaeian'

39 Meister (1967: 7–8) and Pearson (1987: 157–8).

40 Jacoby (1955: 536–7) has a good discussion of the implications of this synchronism for Timaeus' conception of history.

41 F 60 = Dion. Hal. 1.6.1, F 105 = Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 8.1.1.717c, F 150a = Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.69.

passages Diodorus also moralises frequently on piety and cruelty, topics which are not on display in the collected fragments. This could mean either that, by coincidence, none of Timaeus' passages on piety and cruelty have been preserved in later authors, at least not with his name attached, or that Diodorus was responsible for adding moralising on those topics – clearly central to his own moral-didactic programme, as we saw in Chapter 2 – to the material he took over from Timaeus.

In terms of moralising techniques, the Timaeian fragments are pleasingly varied. At the risk of assuming too much, they seem to show that Timaeus employed moralising vignettes (F 47, F 122, F 149), speeches (F 22, F 31), *ekphraseis* (F 26a, F 50), evaluative phrasing (F 100a, F 154a), internal evaluation (Hermocrates' remark in F 100b; end of F 158a and b), fulfilled prophecies (F 29) and digressions (F 124a, b and c mention a lengthy condemnation of Agathocles towards the end of the work).⁴² Again, this fits with what we might assume on the basis of Diodorus, except that we might have expected also to see examples of moralising through pathos among the collected fragments, which we do not.

DURIS OF SAMOS (FGRH 76)

Just under a hundred fragments survive from the historical works of Duris of Samos. Like Timaeus, Duris was a prolific writer of works spanning several genres, and was widely read. The fragments of interest for us are not only the ones assumed to come from his *Histories* (sometimes called the *Macedonica*), but also the ones ascribed by ancient sources to his *History of Agathocles*, as Landucci Gattinoni has convincingly demonstrated that this was not a separate monograph, but was extracted from the *Histories* in Roman times.⁴³ The work probably began with the death of Amyntas, father of Philip II of Macedon, and ended with the death of Pyrrhus. In an interesting contrast with most of the other historians discussed in this study, who composed their works in forced or voluntary exile, Duris probably wrote his while in a position of power, as tyrant of Samos.⁴⁴

Considering the scanty remains, a surprisingly large amount of scholar-

42 F 47 = Ath. 1.34c, F 122 = [Longinus] 1.45, F 149 = Ath. 2.37b–d, F 22 = Polyb. 12.25k.2–26.8, F 31 = Polyb. 12.26a.1–4, F 26a = Diod. Sic. 13.81.3–82.8, F 50 = Ath. 12.519b–520c, F 100a = Plut. *Nic.* 19.5, F 154a = Plut. *Dion* 36.1–2, F 100b = Plut. *Nic.* 28.1–4, F 158a = Ath. 10.437b, F 158b = Phld. *Index academicorum philosophorum Herculensis* VIII (IV) pp. 138–9 (Dorandi), F 29 = schol. on Aeschin. 2.10, F 124a = Polyb. 8.10.12, F 124b = Polyb. 12.15.1–10, F 124c = Polyb. 15.35.2.

43 Landucci Gattinoni (1997: 133–48). *Contra* Kebric (1977) and Pédech (1989). This means leaving out Duris' *Horoi* (*Annals*), on the basis that it was probably a work of local history; see Landucci Gattinoni (1997: 205–7) and Pownall (n.d.: ad F 22).

44 For a discussion of Duris' biography see Pownall (n.d.) with bibliography.

ship exists on Duris.⁴⁵ Much of the discussion centres on Duris' relationship with the Peripatetics and the question of 'tragic history'.⁴⁶ The concept of a Peripatetic school of 'tragic history', which allegedly valued vivid descriptions full of pathetic details and aimed to create pity and fear in its readers, originated with Schwartz in the nineteenth century, inspired by Polybius' criticism of Phylarchus (Polyb. 2.56–63), and held sway for half a century. It was refuted by Walbank (1955, 1960), who convincingly argued that both tragedy and historiography were inspired by epic, and that the elements often identified by modern scholars as typical of 'tragic history' are really traits which have always been part of Greek historiography. The argument against the concept has more recently been reframed by Marincola (2003), who shows that vividness and engagement of the reader's emotions were part of Greek historiography from Herodotus onwards. I would add that both tragedy and historiography were concerned with moral didacticism and that the melodramatic descriptions of suffering associated with 'tragic history' are, in fact, an attempt to teach a reader about the wickedness of certain kinds of behaviour on an emotional rather than an intellectual level (see pp. 85 and 153).

Most scholars, however, still agree that Duris wrote 'moralising history', and that the disastrous consequences of luxury and extravagance were a prominent theme in his historical works.⁴⁷ The problem is that despite the relatively large number of fragments it is hard to get a sense of Duris' writing, because most of the fragments are in reality just brief references to events for which Duris is listed as the source, and often only as one source out of several. In such circumstances we cannot know how he narrated the episode or conveyed the piece of information for which he is cited, and so whether or not he used it for any moral-didactic purpose. We shall begin with the few characteristics of his work that can be discerned relatively securely, and move gradually on to thinner ice.

Like Timaeus, Duris owes his image as a historiographer obsessed with

45 A representative selection is Schwartz (1905), Jacoby (1926b: 115–16), Kebric (1977), Gray (1987), Pédech (1989), Dalby (1991), Landucci Gattinoni (1997), Knoepfler (2000), Pownall (n.d.); but see additional bibliography in this last item.

46 It was once taken for granted that Duris was a pupil of Theophrastus (Kebric 1977, Gray 1987, Pédech 1989), but Dalby (1991) has shown that the evidence for the pupil–teacher relationship rests on a modern emendation of Athenaeus 4.128a (= T 1) which is unnecessary and indefensible. He has been followed by Landucci Gattinoni (1997) and Pownall (n.d.). Schwartz (1905) and Jacoby (1926b: 115–16) argue that Duris was influenced by the Peripatetics, without making him a pupil of Theophrastus. Knoepfler (2000) seems unaware of Dalby's article. Gray (1987) provides a brilliant analysis of Duris' use of the term *mimesis*, which has often been connected with 'tragic history'.

47 Kebric (1977), Pédech (1989), Landucci Gattinoni (1997), Pownall (n.d.). Knoepfler (2000), radically, argues that Duris did not moralise, but merely described scandalous behaviour in great detail for its entertainment value.

the deleterious effects of luxury to his covert texts. About a fourth of the surviving fragments of his works are preserved by Athenaeus, most of them for their descriptions of extravagance, and eleven of the longer fragments are found in Plutarch, who shares this interest to a lesser degree. We have to keep reminding ourselves that this percentage of text dealing with luxury and extravagance is disproportionate to the role played by this theme in Duris' original works. However, as with Timaeus, we should also note that the theme was clearly present in Duris' histories even if it played a smaller part than what is now apparent.

The two most conspicuous passages dealing with *tryphe* are F 10 on the luxurious lifestyle of Demetrius of Phalerum and F 14 on the extravagant habits of Demetrius Poliorcetes.⁴⁸ F 14 is presented as a verbatim quotation of Duris ('Παυσανίας μὲν' φησὶν 'ὁ τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν βασιλεὺς . . .'). The two passages are very similar in style: both are detailed descriptions in a scandalised tone with some evaluative phrasing (τὴν ἔμφοτον ἀκρασίαν, ἠφάνιζεν: F 10), and both use rhetorical comparisons: F 10 states that Demetrius of Phalerum surpasses the Macedonians in the expense of his dinners, and the Cyprians and Phoenicians in the elegance of his attire;⁴⁹ F 14 begins with brief statements about the descent into luxury of Pausanias, Dionysius I and Alexander the Great, and then makes the claim that Demetrius Poliorcetes trumped all of them. On this basis, even if F 10 is not a verbatim quotation, it is perhaps legitimate to take it as a fairly close paraphrase of Duris. It is certainly tempting to think that a moralising juxtaposition in F 10 which comments scathingly on the hypocrisy of its protagonist was in Duris' original.⁵⁰ Such comparisons and juxtapositions are rhetorical techniques employed in the service of moralising by Polybius at his most ardent.

Other fragments on the topic of *tryphe* are mere references to passages at whose original form we can only guess (F 35, F 37a and b, F 49), and one seems to have been an explanatory digression on background history with some evaluative phrasing (F 4 = Ath. 4.167c–d).⁵¹ Two fragments are ambiguous in that they seem to be scandalised descriptions of extrav-

⁴⁸ F 10 = Ath. 12.542b–e, F 14 = Ath. 12.535e–536a.

⁴⁹ καὶ ταῖς μὲν δαπάναις ταῖς εἰς τὰ δεῖπνα τοὺς Μακεδόνας ὑπερέβαλε, τῇ δὲ καθαριότητι Κυπρίους καὶ Φοίνικας: F 10; 'Παυσανίας μὲν' φησὶν 'ὁ τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν βασιλεὺς καταθέμενος τὸν πάτριον τρίβωνα τὴν Περσικὴν ἐνεδύετο στολήν. ὁ δὲ Σικελίας τύραννος Διονύσιος ξυστίδα καὶ χρυσοῦν στέφανον <ἐτι δ'> ἐπιπόρημα μετελάμβανε τραγικόν. 'Ἀλέξανδρος δ' ὡς τῆς Ἀσίας ἐκυρίευσεν Περσικαῖς ἐχρήτο στολαῖς. Δημήτριος δὲ πάντας ὑπερέβαλεν': F 14. For an analysis of the rhetorical effect of F 14 see Landucci Gattinoni (1997: 130).

⁵⁰ 'Demetrius who set down laws and ordered the lives of others made his own life completely lawless' (καὶ ὁ τοῖς ἄλλοις τιθέμενος θεσμοὺς Δημήτριος καὶ τοὺς βίους τάττων ἀνομοθέτητον ἑαυτῷ τὸν βίον κατασκευάζεν: FGrH 76 F 10 = Ath. 12.542b–e).

⁵¹ F 35 = Ath. 12.532d–f, F 37a = Ath. 6.231b–c, F 37b = Ath. 4.155d, F 49 = Ath. 1.17f.

agance, but concern people whom one would expect Duris to treat positively: Alcibiades, his alleged ancestor, in F 70, and the Samians, his own people, in F 60.⁵² The former passage has been explained well by Landucci Gattinoni as a preparation for the *peripeteia* that is soon going to happen to Alcibiades and bring about his downfall, and it is certainly true that Alcibiades would be an illustrious ancestor even if his larger-than-life persona eventually destroyed his career and led to his death.⁵³ F 60 cites some lines from the poet Asius about the richness of the annual procession of the Samians to the Heraeum, after stating that Duris uses this as evidence for Samian custom. The appellation of this custom as *tryphe* is most likely to be Athenaeus' interpretation of the custom described by Duris and Asius;⁵⁴ Duris probably used it as a sign of the former wealth, magnificence and power of his country rather than of any untoward behaviour on the part of its citizens. This leaves only the two passages on Demetrius of Phalerum and Demetrius Poliorcetes, discussed above, as true moralising passages on decadence.

Nevertheless, Duris also seems to have moralised on the kind of immoderation that is an integral part of *tryphe*: heavy drinking (F 15), sexual transgressions (F 18) and effeminacy (F 12, F 42).⁵⁵ F 42 even suggests that Duris, like Diodorus, drew a causal connection between the assassination of the Assyrian king Sardanapalus and his effeminacy, showing that vice can lead to disaster. On the positive side, F 50 (= Plut. *Phoc.* 4) ascribes an enthusiastic description of the extreme self-discipline of Phocion to Duris; it may well have formed part of an obituary, although Plutarch is unlikely to have taken it over verbatim. F 51 (= Plut. *Phoc.* 17) most probably refers to the same obituary when it cites Duris as evidence for Alexander the Great addressing Phocion more politely than anyone else in his letters, thus demonstrating that moral virtue can lead to positive results. The only other fragment that seems to refer to a positive evaluation of a historical character is F 53 (Plut. *Eum.* 1.1–3) on Eumenes of Cardia. Apparently Duris portrayed this Successor of Alexander as the son of a poor man risen to prominence through his good education (τραφήναι δὲ ἐλευθερίως ἐν γράμμασι καὶ περὶ παλαιστράν), intelligence and courage (συνετὸν καὶ ἀνδρεῖον).

An intriguing issue in the light of the moral-didactic themes found in Polybius and Diodorus is whether Duris moralised on human inability to handle good fortune. No such moralising survives from his works, but F 66 and F 67 certainly refer to scenes involving victors and their captors, which

52 F 70 = Plut. *Alc.* 32, F 60 = Ath. 12.525e–f.

53 Landucci Gattinoni (1997: 239–46).

54 See Pownall (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

55 F 15 = Ath. 12.546c–d, F 18 = Ath. 13.605d–e, F 12 = Ath. 4.155c, F 42 = Ath. 12.529a.

is the most common situation for moralising on this theme in Polybius and Diodorus. F 66 (= Phot. *Lexicon* s.v. Σαμίων ὁ δῆμος) is a lexicon entry giving Duris as an authority for the Athenian practice of tattooing their Samian captives with the image of an owl (and probably for the corresponding Samian practice of tattooing their Athenian prisoners with the image of a ship, although the text is uncertain), but gives no indication of how this information was conveyed in his narrative. In F 67 (= Plut. *Per.* 28.1–3), on the other hand, Plutarch criticises Duris for ‘making a tragedy out of’ (ἐπιτραγωδεῖ) events surrounding the Athenian victory over Samos in 441/0 BC. In Duris’ version, which Plutarch offers as an alternative to the one he considers the true version, the Athenians torture the captured Samian marines and trierarchs for ten days before executing them with wooden clubs. Presumably Plutarch’s accusation of ‘tragedising’ means that Duris’ narrative of these events was full of pathetic detail, much like some of the passages of Diodorus we saw in the previous chapter. Such details are not necessarily added for the sake of sensationalism, however: Duris presumably felt strongly about these events as they concerned the recent past of his own country, and may well have included them with the purpose of showing his readers the truth of what had happened, against the Athenophile versions of other historians such as Thucydides and Ephorus.⁵⁶ If Duris had a moral-didactic agenda, this narrative may well have been an instance of using pathos to moralise on how to behave in victory, but unfortunately this cannot be known with any certainty.

Finally, the question remains whether there is any evidence for divine punishment of vice and rewarding of virtue in Duris.⁵⁷ Only a single instance of divine punishment occurs in the fragments, and that is mythological and so must have occurred either as part of a digression or in a speech delivered by a character. This makes it impossible to interpret outside of its context.⁵⁸ If we look for punishment of human impiety, we are disappointed. Two fragments castigate people for celebrating a mortal like a god (Demetrius Poliorcetes F 13, Lysander F 71), but it is hard to see

⁵⁶ Plutarch probably also intends to imply that Duris has exaggerated or even added fictitious details. We cannot know whether Duris was guilty of doctoring the facts or Plutarch had been falsely persuaded by a dominant Athenocentric tradition.

⁵⁷ Schwartz (1905) argues that Duris was not a believer, but introduced gods and oracles for literary effect. Kεbric (1977: 30–1), on the other hand, has argued, partly on the basis of Duris’ interest in Herodotus and Sophocles, partly by analogy with the Peripatetic Clearchus of Soli, whose fragments share some features with those of Duris, that the Samian historiographer was an adherent of a ‘traditional’ belief in divine punishment of *hybris*. In fact, the similarities between Duris and Clearchus are no greater than those that exist between Duris and the other Hellenistic historiographers, and the same caveats apply to interpreting the fragments of Clearchus – also primarily preserved by Athenaeus – as to those of the historians, so this evidence is inconclusive.

⁵⁸ F 47 (= schol. in Ap. Rhod. II 1249).

whether it is just the flattery that is being criticised or also the impiety, and there is no indication that the peoples in question suffer for their actions. F 35 (= Ath. 12.532d–f) mentions Duris as ‘narrating the same thing’ at the end of a brief story about how the Athenian general Chares was given money stolen from Delphi during the Sacred War and spent it on dinner parties. If Duris told this story in any detail, he may well have moralised on the impiety of the temple-robbery – or he may have stuck to criticising the extravagance of the dinners, or he may have kept off moralising all together. The ‘fragment’ is too short to be of much use.

The only indication that there may have been some divine involvement in the world of Duris’ *Histories* is three fragments which seem to show that momentous events could be foretold by oracles and omens: F 36 refers to omens foretelling the loss of Philip II’s eye, F 38 mentions an omen predicting the Battle of Chaeronea, and F 84 an omen foretelling the mythical kingship of Aletes over Corinth.⁵⁹ F 56b (= Tzetz. schol. on Lycophron 1378) cites Duris as one among other authorities for the story of the self-sacrifice of Decius Mus (or his father; see Pownall n.d.: *ad loc.*) and may imply that the sacrifice resulted in Roman victory. In other words, superhuman causation may have played a part in the work, but little evidence remains, and it is impossible to see whether such powers enforced any kind of moral code.

The moralising techniques of Duris are equally hard to discern. It seems that he used detailed descriptions with evaluative phrasing, comparisons and juxtapositions. Beyond that, things get less certain. F 15 (= Ath. 12.546c–d) has been taken to indicate that he could use Homeric references to back up moralising on contemporary issues,⁶⁰ but it could equally well be a reference to a non-moralising erudite passage on changing customs. The fragments on Phocion discussed above seem to form part of an evaluative digression, probably as part of an obituary. Eumenes may or may not have received similar treatment. Strangely, perhaps, there is no evidence of a use of moralising vignettes, but that is of course not proof that Duris did not use them.

PHYLARCHUS (FGRH 81)

We know very little about Phylarchus, except that he wrote *Histories* in twenty-eight books and possibly several minor works which are now lost.⁶¹ Polybius (2.56.1 = T 3) says that Phylarchus was a contemporary of Aratus

⁵⁹ F 36 = Didymus *ad Dem.* 12.50–62, F 38 = Plut. *Dem.* 19, F 84 = [Plut.] *Proverbs of the Alexandrines* 1.48.

⁶⁰ See Pownall (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

⁶¹ Alternatively, as suggested by Africa (1961: 3–4), the works listed in the *Suda* were excerpts made from the *Histories* in Roman times.

the Elder, who died in 213 BC. The *Histories* began at the death of Pyrrhus in 272 BC, which means that it continued from the point where the works of both Hieronymus and Duris left off, and it most probably ended in 220/19, at the death of Ptolemaeus Euergetes, his wife Berenice and Cleomenes III of Sparta.⁶² This terminal date was probably decided partly by the work's bias in favour of Cleomenes, which is noted by Plutarch (*Arat.* 38.6 = F 52).⁶³ The *Histories* are the target of a vicious attack by Polybius (Polyb. 2.56–63), which gave rise to the early twentieth-century theory of 'tragic history' (see above, pp. 85 and 137), and which shows that Phylarchus' *Histories* was considered the authoritative account of his time period.⁶⁴

Eighty-five fragments of Phylarchus are collected in *FGrH*; he is not yet included in the *BNJ*. All eighty-five fragments are believed to derive from the *Histories*. Of these, almost half (forty-one) are from Athenaeus, and Plutarch, the second most frequent co-text, preserves twelve. It is thus unsurprising that a large number of the fragments are moralising, and it is likely that the proportion of moralising in the fragments is larger than it was in the original work. At the same time, however, as in the cases of Timaeus and Duris, Athenaeus' reason for using Phylarchus so extensively was probably precisely the large number of moral vignettes to be found in his work. Most scholars agree that Phylarchus' narrative was moralising, but also that this moralising was implicit in the narrative's display of universal justice rather than explicit. Schepens has argued that Phylarchus' work was more serious and historically informative than the fragments show; this may well be true, but does not preclude that his work was also moral-didactic.⁶⁵

Considering the large proportion of fragments preserved by Athenaeus, it is not surprising that there is an overweight of passages moralising on luxury and decadence and related topics.⁶⁶ Intriguingly, three of these fragments seem to indicate that Phylarchus propounded a causal connection leading from wealth and success to arrogance and then to disaster. The

62 Kroymann (1956), Africa (1961), Pédech (1989).

63 This is well discussed by Africa (1961).

64 Marincola (2003) and Schepens (2005) offer good analyses of Polybius' polemics against Phylarchus. For Phylarchus as an accepted authority see Schepens (2005: 141–3) with further bibliography in n. 5.

65 E.g. Africa (1961) and Pédech (1989). Kroymann (1956: 488) argues that the main message of Phylarchus' work was the helplessness of man in the face of *tyche*. However, Kroymann bases this theory not on the attested fragments of Phylarchus, but on Plutarch's *Agis* and *Cleomenes*, which he argues are based on Phylarchus' *Histories*. The doctoral thesis by Sonia Stelluto, *Filarco e la storiografia tragica* (1997, University of Salerno), on which Schepens (2007) bases some of his arguments, has unfortunately been unavailable to me.

66 Luxury and decadence: F 7, F 20, F 40, F 41, F 44, F 45, F 66. Related topics: F 2, F 6, F 13, F 21.

clearest instance is F 45 (= Ath. 12.521b–e). This passage begins with a summary of the sumptuary laws of Syracuse, attributed to Phylarchus, and then switches to the laws of the Sybarites, which aim to promote rather than curtail luxury. The switch is probably due to Athenaeus' combining two different passages, but he indicates by a repeated *φησὶν* that Phylarchus is also the source of the second passage. After the scandalised description of the *tryphe*-promoting laws follows a dramatic narrative of the downfall of the Sybarites, introduced with the statement that 'having run aground on their arrogance' (ἐξοκειλάντες εἰς ὕβριν) they killed ambassadors from Croton and threw their bodies out unburied – a clear instance of *tryphe* leading to arrogance and impiety, which then lead to disaster as dramatic omens immediately predict divine destruction. Gorman and Gorman have shown that the metaphor 'to run aground on luxury/arrogance' is a favourite expression of Athenaeus, and argue that it shows his interpretation of a given story and does not go back to any of his sources.⁶⁷ In this case, it is probably Athenaeus' way of abbreviating the narrative that took Phylarchus from the luxury laws to the murder of the envoys. However, if the murder of the ambassadors, the colourful omens and the subsequent destruction of Sybaris were part of Phylarchus' *Histories*,⁶⁸ the only possible interpretation is one of divine punishment for arrogant impiety regardless of how Athenaeus introduces his abbreviated version.

A similar problem attaches to F 40, another fragment dealing with the dangers of extravagance, which seems to be an abbreviated version of what was a full moralising vignette in Phylarchus:

ἐν δὲ τῇ δευτέρᾳ καὶ εἰκοστῇ ὁ αὐτὸς Πτολεμαῖόν φησι τὸν δευτέρον Αἰγύπτου βασιλευσαντα, πάντων σεμνότατον γενόμενον τῶν δυναστῶν καὶ παιδείας εἶτινα καὶ ἄλλον καὶ αὐτὸν ἐπιμεληθέντα, οὕτως ἐξαπατηθῆναι τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ διαφθαρήναι ὑπὸ τῆς ἀκαίρου τρυφῆς ὥστε τὸν πάντα χρόνον ὑπολαβεῖν βιώσεσθαι καὶ λέγειν ὅτι μόνος εὖροι τὴν ἀθανασίαν. κατατεινόμενον οὖν ὑπὸ ποδάγρας πλείους ἡμέρας, ὡς ποτ' οὖν ἐρραίσειεν καὶ κατεῖδεν διὰ τινῶν ὑπολαμπάδων τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους παρὰ τὸν ποταμὸν ἀριστοποιουμένους καὶ τὰ τυχόντα προσφερομένους ἐπὶ τε τῆς ἄμμου χύδην ἐρριμμένους, εἶπεν· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τὸ μηδὲ τούτων ἕνα γενέσθαι'.

In his twenty-second book the same author says that Ptolemy II of Egypt, the most august of rulers and second to none in his care for education, was so mentally beguiled and corrupted by unreasonable luxury that he assumed

67 Gorman and Gorman (2007).

68 The running-aground metaphor is often used by Athenaeus to introduce material taken from a new source, so it may mean that he got the omens of divine destruction from an unnamed author and not from Phylarchus. I would, however, choose to believe that he uses the metaphor in this case to introduce a later passage from Phylarchus rather than an entirely different source.

that he would live forever and said that he alone had discovered immortality. So, being tortured by gout for many days, when he eventually recovered and saw through some openings in his colonnade the Egyptians breakfasting by the river, contributing whatever they happened to have, sprawled on the ground, he said: 'Miserable wretch that I am to not be one of them!' (Phylarchus, F 40 = Ath. 12.536e)

This vignette shows a powerful and arrogantly impious character whose suffering makes him realise his mistake and, perhaps, avoid downfall. This philosophical insight could be the reason why the king is described in extremely positive terms at the beginning of the fragment, or this praise may have been composed by Athenaeus. Either way, the message that even powerful human beings are not masters of their own fates is clear, as is the message that power and wealth are not enough to make a man happy. (This message is often called Herodotean, and we shall encounter it again in Chapter 4.) What is less clear is whether the connection between Ptolemy's 'undiluted luxury' and his impiety was made by Phylarchus or by Athenaeus.

F 44, the third fragment relating to decadence and its consequences, seems to be a close paraphrase, if not a verbatim quotation, of Phylarchus by Athenaeus (Φύλαρχος γοῦν ἐν τῇ ε καὶ κ τῶν ἱστοριῶν τάδε γράφει). It compares the decadence of third-century Sparta with the moderation of a previous era. The mention of the habits of two men 'who lived a short time before the reign of Cleomenes' as the peak of degeneration perhaps points to a larger narrative arc in Phylarchus, whereby Cleomenes became the restorer of Spartan moderation and with it their fighting ability and general fortunes. Four further 'fragments' mention Phylarchus as a source for the luxurious or immoderate habits of historical characters (the Byzantines F 7, Isanthes of Thrace F 20, Alexander the Great and his companions F 41, the Colophonians F 66), but are too brief for an analysis to be possible.

One enigmatic fragment, Polybius' acidic criticism of Phylarchus' treatment of the fall of Mantinea (F 53 = Polyb. 2.56.6–7), shows that Phylarchus at least on one occasion narrated the fall of a city in dramatic detail. Considering the moralising use of such narratives in Diodorus and very probably also Timaeus, it is not unlikely that Phylarchus meant his narrative to be understood as moralising through pathos; and taking our cue from Polybius' statement that Phylarchus' vivid narrative derived from a desire 'to make crystal clear the cruelty of Antigonos and the Macedonians, and along with them of Aratus and the Achaeans' (βουλόμενος δὴ διασαφεῖν τὴν ὀμότητα τὴν Ἀντιγόνου καὶ Μακεδόνων, ἅμα δὲ τούτοις τὴν Ἀράτου καὶ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν) we may speculate that one of the moral messages was the typical abuse of good fortune by victorious troops and commanders.

Unfortunately, Polybius gives us so few details about what Phylarchus actually said that this must remain speculation.⁶⁹

It remains to be asked what moral qualities Phylarchus promoted. From the surviving fragments, the negative *paradeigmata* are easier to discern, and predictable from Athenaeus' prominence as covertext: the bad man lives in luxury, he is immoderate in drink and sexual appetites, and he treats his defeated enemies cruelly.⁷⁰ The good man is presumably moderate, although no one is credited with this virtue in the extant fragments. In addition, he is courageous and competent on the battlefield and shows steadfast endurance in the face of personal persecution.⁷¹ So far the vices and virtues are entirely traditional, if a little patchily covered due to the fragmentary nature of the evidence. One aspect of a leader's personality, however, seems to have been of more interest to Phylarchus than to any of the other Hellenistic historiographers covered by this study: a sense of humour. No fewer than five fragments are vignettes that display a ruler's wit: F 11 on Alexander (of Pherae or Epirus); F 12, F 19 and F 31 on Demetrius Poliorcetes, who is called 'fond of a joke' twice (φιλόγελλος: F 12 and F 19); and F 37, which shows Philip II's light-hearted reaction to a profession of undying hostility from an opponent.⁷² In this Phylarchus is more in line with the Classical Xenophon, as we shall see in Chapter 6, than with any of his Hellenistic peers. Phylarchus also seems to have had something to say about how to behave towards powerful rulers such as tyrants or Hellenistic kings. Three fragments concern flatterers (admittedly because they have been collected by Athenaeus for a passage of book 12 on flattery) and relate their ignominious behaviour in scornful detail, while other passages seem to give credit to subjects who behave with courage and *parrhesia* towards their rulers.⁷³

An important question for Phylarchus as for the other fragmentary works of history is whether his moral code was enforced by divine intervention.⁷⁴ If the end of F 45 on the omens and destruction of the Sybarites

69 On the allusiveness of Polybius' criticism see Schepens (2005).

70 Drinking and sexual immoderation: F 6 = Ath. 10.438c-d, F 7 = Ath. 10.442c. Too keen interest in sex, too little in politics: F 21 = Ath. 13.609b-c. Cruelty to defeated enemies: F 53-4 = Polyb. 2.56-9.

71 Courage: F 59 = Plut. *Cleom.* 27-9; I assume that only the bare bones of this narrative go back to Phylarchus. Endurance: F 67 = Diog. Laert. 9.12.115, which briefly gives Phylarchus as a source for the courage of Praxylus of the Troad.

72 F 11 = Ath. 6.58c, F 12 = Ath. 14.614d-615a, F 19 = Ath. 6.261b, F 31 = Ath. 6.261b, F 37 = Ath. 6.249c.

73 Flatterers: F 11 = Ath. 6.58c, F 29 = Ath. 6.254f-255a, F 31 = Ath. 6.261b. Courageous subjects: F 22 = Phot. *Lexicon* s.v. *tiara*, F 37 = Ath. 6.249c. Phylarchus also clearly had a fondness for stories about friendships between human beings and animals: man and dolphin F 26, Egyptians and asps F 27, man and horse F 49, boy and eagle F 61.

74 Africa (1960, 1961: 52-6) argues that Phylarchus does not display belief in any divine

does come from Phylarchus, this is clear evidence that divine punishment of impiety played a part in his work. One further fragment, F 70 (= Parth. *Amat. narr.* 25), certainly shows divine punishment of impiety. Here the mistress of one of the Phocian generals responsible for appropriating the Delphic treasure during the Sacred War asks for and receives Eriphyle's necklace after the plundering of Delphi during the Sacred War. The end of the story is similar to the one related by Diodorus (see p. 90):

ἐπει δὲ διεκομίσθη εἰς οἶκον τὸν Ἀρίστωνος, χρόνον μὲν τινα ἐφόρει αὐτὸν ἡ γυνὴ μάλα περίπυστος οὖσα, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα παραπλήσιον αὐτῇ πάθος συνέβη τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἐριφύλην γενομένων. ὁ γὰρ νεώτερος τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς μανεῖς τὴν οἰκίαν ὑφῆψε καὶ τὴν τε μητέρα καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν κτημάτων κατέφλεξεν.

When the necklace was brought into the house of Ariston, the woman first wore it for a time and was highly celebrated; but then a disaster struck her much like those that had happened to Eriphyle. For the younger of her two sons went insane, set the house on fire, and burned his mother to death along with all their possessions. (Phylarchus, F 70 = Parth. *Amat. narr.* 25)

It is not explicitly said that being burned to death is punishment for the woman's greed and impiety, or that the punishment is divinely sent. Nonetheless, superhuman causation is implied: firstly, the structure of the passage leads the reader to see a connection between the wearing of the necklace and the death caused by the son's madness, indeed between the necklace and the son's going mad in the first place, and that connection can hardly be human. Furthermore, the narrator is careful to point out that the fate which overtook Phaullos' mistress was 'much like those that had happened to Eriphyle' (i.e. murder at the hands of her son). Such an ironical aptness of punishment is in Diodorus, and most probably in Timaeus, a sign of divine vengeance, and is likely to have been so also in Phylarchus. (It goes back to Herodotus, as we shall see in Chapter 4.) Unfortunately, we cannot be sure whether this was exactly how Phylarchus told the story: the reference to his *Histories* is given in a 'manchette', one of the marginal notes added to most of the stories told by Parthenius at the bottom of the page of the manuscript (in this case ἱστορεῖ Φύλαρχος, 'Phylarchus says in his *Histories*'), which almost certainly go back not to the author, Parthenius, but to an ancient scribe or scholar. To what degree these manchettes signal correspondence between the story as told by Parthenius and the story as told by the work mentioned in the manchette is unclear, as all

power, and that his general tendency to let the good be successful and the wicked suffer is a purely human mechanism. *Contra* Pédech (1989: 473), who argues that even though Phylarchus did not believe in the traditional Greek gods, he does show belief in a more general divine justice which rewards the good and punishes the wicked.

of the works mentioned are now lost; they could essentially be references to places where the scholar has found similar but not identical versions of the same myth.⁷⁵ However, since the other known versions of the story of the woman who received Eriphyle's necklace all differ from the one told by Parthenius to some degree, it is tempting to believe that he reproduces Phylarchus' version faithfully.⁷⁶

Two further instances of divine punishment are found in fragments retelling obscure mythological stories, namely F 69 on Demiphon of Elaeusa, who sacrifices other men's daughters to Apollo and is finally given the blood of his own daughters to drink, and F 71 on Dimoetes who causes his wife's suicide and soon after falls in love with the dead body of another woman and kills himself. However, as Phylarchus' *Histories* began in 272 BC, these stories must have been told either in digressions or in speeches delivered by characters, which makes them impossible to interpret in their decontextualised and renarrated form.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, they may be evidence that divine justice played a part generally in the work.

It is difficult to say anything about the moralising techniques employed by Phylarchus on the basis of the fragments, as they have all been through some kind of adaptation process before being incorporated into the context. However, it is probably safe to assume that Phylarchus made use of moralising vignettes, often with speech, perhaps even soliloquies.⁷⁸ It is possible that he resembled Xenophon in this regard, as in his enthusiasm for reproducing the wit of his characters; we shall see in Chapter 6 that Xenophon was fond of quoting witty or punchy sayings of characters about to die, and two of the Phylarchan fragments may well be remnants of such courageous-death vignettes (F 24 on Danae and F 67 on Praullus). On the testimony of Polybius (2.56 = F 53) and Plutarch (*Them.* 32.4 = F 76), who both criticise Phylarchus for treating history like tragedy, we can assume that Phylarchus engaged in moralising through pathos, as we have seen that Diodorus and perhaps Timaeus and Duris did. From fragments such as F 41 on the extravagance of Alexander the Great and his companions it seems that Phylarchus also, like Diodorus and probably Timaeus and Duris, enjoyed detailed *ekphraseis* of luxury and decadence. A few

⁷⁵ For a discussion of 'manchettes' in Parthenius see Lightfoot (1999: *ad loc.*, 246–56 with bibliography).

⁷⁶ Other versions: Diod. Sic. 16.64.2, Plut. *Mor.* 553e, Ath. 6.232d = FGrH 70 F 96, Ath. 13.605a–d = FGrH 115 F 248.

⁷⁷ F 69 = Hyg. *Poet. astr.* II 40, F 71 = Parth. *Amat. narr.* 31.

⁷⁸ Pédech (1989: 460–2) notes that Phylarchus' penchant for pathetic direct speech uttered by characters with no one to hear them, such as Ptolemy here and Danae in F 24, is a technique used in tragedy. This is true, if the utterances are indeed soliloquies: we cannot know for certain that the original vignettes did not feature an audience for and perhaps even respondents to the exclamations.

fragments seem like moralising introductions (F 20) or conclusions (end of F 69), but it is impossible to be sure that these were employed in that capacity in the original *Histories*.

AGATHARCHIDES OF CNIDUS (FGRH 86)

Agatharchides of Cnidus lived from c. 215 to some point after 145 BC and was thus a contemporary of Polybius. The fragments of his works have traditionally been thought to come from three different outputs: *On Asia* (Τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν), *On Europe* (Τὰ κατὰ τὴν Εὐρώπην) and *On the Red Sea* (Περὶ τὰς Ἐρυθρὰς Θαλάσσης), the former two histories, the last one either a geography or a history.⁷⁹ Only twenty-two fragments, primarily preserved by Athenaeus, are said to come from *On Asia* and *On Europe*. *On the Red Sea* has fared rather better. Codex 250 of the *Bibliothèque* of the Byzantine patriarch Photius reproduces a long fragment (fifty-five pages in the Belles Lettres edition) partly of book 1, partly of book 5. The similarity between the extracts from book 5 and Diodorus 3.12–48 as well as Strabo 16.4.5–20 makes it possible to identify Agatharchides as the source of these later works, although in the case of Strabo through an intermediary source, probably Artemidorus of Ephesus.⁸⁰ Of these three coverttexts, Photius is the one that stays the closest to the original: as long ago as 1955, Palm showed that Photius had copied long stretches of Agatharchides verbatim and had abbreviated the text by leaving out passages rather than by summarising.⁸¹ Diodorus' version is fuller, but has changed both the style and some of the emphasis of Agatharchides' text. The fact that Strabo's version is not based directly on Agatharchides makes it less useful for our purposes.⁸²

The title *On the Red Sea* and, indeed, the contents of the long passage from book 5, which deals with the geography, flora, fauna and ethnography of the regions on either side of the Red Sea, give the impression of a work of geography and ethnography rather than history. However, both Photius and Diodorus call Agatharchides a historian,⁸³ and Burstein

79 T 2 (= Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 213); for this traditional interpretation of Agatharchides' outputs see Jacoby (1926b: 150–1), Fraser (1972: I, 516 with notes II, 744–5), Burstein (1989, n.d.), and Sacks (2003).

80 Schwartz (1893), Fraser (1972: I, 539 with II, 773 n. 160), Burstein (1989). This has made some scholars read and print Diod. Sic. 3.12–48 as Agatharchides (Müller 1855, Woelk 1966) despite the fact that Diodorus clearly changed the style as well as some of the points of Agatharchides' text; see Palm (1955) and Burstein (1989).

81 Palm (1955: 16–26).

82 For a fuller discussion of the difference between the three coverttexts see Burstein (1989: 36–9).

83 ἀνεγνώσθη Ἀγαθαρχίδου Ἱστορικόν: Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 213, BNJ 86 T 2; ὡς φησιν Ἀγαθαρχίδης ὁ Κνίδιος ἱστοριογράφος: Diod. Sic. 3.18.4.

and Marcotte have both argued convincingly that the work was primarily a work of history.⁸⁴ Marcotte, followed by Ameling, has further argued that *On the Red Sea* was not a separate work at all, but that it formed the introductory books to *On Asia*, which in its turn formed the preamble to *On Europe*, constituting one overall work of forty-nine books.⁸⁵ This is an attractive hypothesis, but ultimately we have too little evidence to be certain. For the purposes of the present study it is of no great consequence whether the remaining fragments come from one, two or three works, as long as we can assume that they were all works of history. In this respect it is telling that Photius, when praising Agatharchides for his grand and imaginative style, puts him on a par with Thucydides (T 1). Furthermore, the extant fragments of *On the Red Sea* would look perfectly congruous in a work of history, provided it included geography and ethnography on the scale of Herodotus and Diodorus. Jacoby, however, mainly relegated the long fragment of book 5 to his planned, but never realised, volume V about geography, and only printed twelve passages from it in his volume on universal history.

For the present study, the text has been accessed in the Belles Lettres edition of Photius and the Loeb edition of Diodorus. All numbers referring to the long Agatharchides fragment in Photius and Diodorus are the ones used by Burstein (1989), who helpfully prints the two texts side by side. They often correspond to the chapter numbers of Photius in the Belles Lettres edition; when they do not, this will be noted. When confusion is possible between the *FGrH* fragments and passages preserved in Photius and/or Diodorus, the former will be labelled '*FGrH*', the latter 'Bur.'

Of the twenty-two fragments of *On Asia* and *On Europe*, it is striking that no fewer than twelve are explicitly moralising,⁸⁶ of which eight are concerned with some form of *tryphe* or lack of moderation. This large proportion of moralising and the heavy emphasis on *tryphe* are no doubt due to the fact that thirteen of the twenty-two fragments are preserved by Athenaeus. However, in the continuous passage of *On the Red Sea* from Photius another seven instances of moralising are found on a variety of themes; some of these instances are lengthy, which shows that moral didacticism did play a part, perhaps even a central one, in Agatharchides'

84 Scholarship on Agatharchides is scarce. The best overall treatments are Woelk (1966), Fraser (1972: 539–50), Strasburger (1982 [1966]: 1006–10) and Burstein (1989, n.d.). Marcotte (2001) and Ameling (2008) provide an interesting and partially convincing corrective to the traditional understanding of his works, but Strasburger is the one whose reading comes the closest to my own, as shall become clear in the following.

85 Burstein (1989: 22–4), Marcotte (2001) and Ameling (2008).

86 F 2 = Ath. 4.155c–d, F 3 = Ath. 12.539b–d, F 6 = Ath. 12.527b–c, F 7 = Ath. 12.550b–c, F 10 = Ath. 12.550c–d, F 11 = Ath. 12.550c–e, F 12 = Ath. 4.168d, F 13 = Ath. 6.251f, F 14 = Ath. 12.528a, F 16 = Ath. 12.527f., F20a = Joseph, *Ap.* 1.205–11, F20b = Joseph, *AJ* 12.5.

work.⁸⁷ The unusual preservation of such a long passage of an otherwise lost work means that we have a better idea of Agatharchides' style and the flavour of his work than is the case for the other historiographers treated in this chapter. Nonetheless, we shall begin with the fragments collected in the *FGrH*.

Let us begin with the *tryphe* passages. As with the *tryphe* fragments of Timaeus, Duris and Phylarchus, it is impossible to say with certainty how much comes from Agatharchides and how much is Athenaeus' interpretation and rewriting. Thus F 2 and F 3 give Agatharchides' *On Asia* as the source for information about the extravagant dining habits of Alexander's companions (or his Successors),⁸⁸ labelling it 'excessive luxury' (ὕπερβαλλούση τρυφή), a phrase no doubt attached by Athenaeus.⁸⁹ However, the fact that these details – gold wrappers for dried fruit thrown away with the rubbish, gold studs on footwear, purple rugs for walk-and-talk meetings – were in Agatharchides' work in the first place is interesting: although not impossible, it is hard to imagine that he reported them with approval; more probably they were either narrated in a scandalised tone of voice or had pejorative phrases attached, maybe even explicit moralising. In two cases a fragment shows disastrous consequences resulting from extravagant living: F 7 states that Magas, tyrant of Cyrene, died from obesity 'because of bodily inactivity and the amount of food he ate' (δι' ἄργιαν σώματος καὶ τῷ προσφέρεσθαι πλήθος τροφῆς); and F 14 gives Agatharchides as the authority for the fact that the inexperience of the Zacynthians in war (leading to their capture by Philip V)⁹⁰ was due to their prosperity, wealth and luxurious living. Burstein argues that this causal connection was made by Athenaeus, not Agatharchides, which is possible, but it looks more as if Athenaeus is abbreviating a longer account in Agatharchides with the same moral point:

ἐν δὲ τῇ λᾶ Ζακυνθίους φησὶν ἀπείρους εἶναι πολέμου διὰ τὸ ἐν εὐπορίαι καὶ πλούτῳ τρυφῶντας ἐθίζεσθαι.

And he says in the thirty-first book that the Zacynthians were inexperienced in war because they were used to luxurious living in prosperity and wealth. (Agatharchides, *FGrH* 86 F 14 = Ath. 12.528a)

Finally, F 16 purports to quote Agatharchides verbatim as saying that the Arycandeis of Lycia joined Antiochus III (or his general

87 F 7 and F 11–18 from book 1; F 21, F 24–9, F 49, F 100a, F 103a from book 5.

88 See Burstein (n.d.: *ad* F 3).

89 As demonstrated by Gorman and Gorman (2007); see discussion above.

90 See Burstein (n.d.: *ad loc.*) for the probable historical context.

Mithridates)⁹¹ against the Romans because they had been led into debt by ‘their profligate and extravagant lifestyle’ (τὴν περὶ τὸν βίον ἀσωτίαν καὶ πολυτέλειαν). In this last passage, the causal connection was certainly in Agatharchides, and we have a clear instance of morally evaluative vocabulary:

Ἄγαθαρχίδης δ’ ἐν τῇ τριακοστῇ πέμπτῃ τῶν Εὐρωπιακῶν Ἄρυκανδεῖς’ φησί Ἄγκίας ὄμοροι ὄντες Λιμυρεῦσι διὰ τὴν περὶ τὸν βίον ἀσωτίαν καὶ πολυτέλειαν κατὰ χρεοὶ γενόμενοι καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀργίαν καὶ φιληδονίαν ἀδυνατοῦντες ἀποδοῦναι τὰ δάνεια προσέκλιναν ταῖς Μιθριδάτου ἐλπίσιν ἄθλον ἕξιν νομίσαντες χρεῶν ἀποκοπᾶς.’

Agatharchides says in the thirty-fifth book of his *On Europe*: ‘The Arycandeis of Lycia, who were neighbours of the Limyrians, had come into debt because of their profligate and extravagant lifestyle, and because of their indolence and addiction to pleasure they were unable to pay back their loans, so they joined in the hopes of Mithridates, thinking that they would win the cancellation of their debts as a prize.’ (Agatharchides, *FGrH* 86 F 16 = Ath. 12.35.52f)

A further two fragments refer to Agatharchides for information about the ignominy of being fat in Sparta (F 10 and F 11, the latter apparently from a speech), and one more mentions Spartan punishment for immoderation (ἀσωτία: F 12).⁹² Although all of these fragments are found in Athenaeus, whose interest in *tryphe* we have discussed above, the conclusion seems unavoidable that the theme of immoderation and its negative consequences played some part in Agatharchides.

This theory is supported by the fact that moderation and immoderation are also a theme in the long ethnographic passage from book 5 preserved by Photius and Diodorus. Here, the least civilised of all people, the ‘Fish-eaters’ who do not use tools and do not have a language, are also lacking in civilised virtues such as moderation. Whenever they have food, they eat ‘not according to any weight or measure, but only to each person’s desire and gratification’ (οὐ πρὸς μέτρον καὶ σταθμόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν ἐκάστου βούλησιν καὶ χάριν: F 34a and very similar phrase in F 34b).⁹³ And when the narrative reaches the wealthy Sabaeans of South Arabia, their extravagant riches are described in great detail, then rounded off with the devastatingly moralising conclusion:

Εἰ δὲ μὴ πόρρω διεστηκυῖαν τὴν οἴκησιν κατεῖχον τῶν ἐπὶ πάντα τόπον τὰς δυνάμεις στρεφόντων, οἰκονόμοι τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἂν ὑπῆρχον οἱ κύριοι

91 See Burstein (n.d.: *ad loc.*) for the probable historical context.

92 F 10 = Ath. 12.550c–d, F 11 = Ath. 12.550c–e, F 12 = Ath. 4.168d.

93 F 34a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250.34 459a; F 34b = Diod. Sic. 3.16.1–4.

τῶν ιδίων ἄθλων, τῆς ῥαθυμίας ἀδυνατουῦσης τὸ ἐλεύθερον πλείω χρόνον διατηρεῖν.

If they did not have their home so far from those who deploy their forces into every area, those who are masters of their own prizes would be the stewards of others' because laziness is unable to guard freedom for long. (Agatharchides, F 104a (Bur.) = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 102 l. 42–5)

This is a message with which especially Polybius, but also Diodorus, would agree. Likewise, the generalising moral conclusion to F 101a and b might equally well have been phrased by either of these authors: 'Thus, any natural advantage managed with moderation and order promotes life, but if deprived of due measure and proportion, it becomes a burdensome possession' (Οὕτως ἅπαν ἐπίτευγμα μεσότητι μὲν καὶ τάξει κυβερνώμενον παραπέμπει τὸν βίον, συμμετρίας δὲ καὶ καιροῦ στερηθὲν οὐκ ἔχει τὴν κτήσιν ὀνησιφόρον).⁹⁴ In Agatharchides, however, this message of moderation is connected with another core message which is less conspicuous in Polybius and Diodorus, namely that of virtues arising from necessity: the nomadic Troglodytes, who fight fierce battles over pasture, and whose funeral rites are 'intelligently' (νουνεχῶς) conceived, are able to conquer the desire for sleep by practice out of necessity (τῆς μελέτης διὰ τὰναγκαῖον τὴν φύσιν νικώσης; F 64), some of the Fish-eaters have been taught how to make shelters out of whale skeletons by 'a need arising from nature' (τῆς κατὰ φύσιν χρείας; F 43b), and the otherwise luxurious Sabaeans have been taught to make boats by the tide (διδασκούσης τὴν χρείαν τῆς ἀναπότιδος καίπερ ἐν τρυφῇ καταγινόμενους; F 103a).⁹⁵

But we can go further. The long, ethnographic fragment preserved by Photius and Diodorus begins with the least civilised people of all, the Fish-eaters and other peoples who are barely more advanced than animals (they do not use fire and do not have a language), but who live in a state of peace with each other and harmony with nature, without knowledge of what is morally good or bad (F 30–52).⁹⁶ It then proceeds through peoples of increased degrees of civilisation, who use increasingly complex tools and cooking methods and fight each other with weapons (F 53–64), through those who mine gemstones (F 84), until it gets to the extravagantly

⁹⁴ F 101a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 99 l. 37–9; F 101b = Diod. Sic. 3.47.3.

⁹⁵ F 64a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 63 l. 17–18; F 64b = Diod. Sic. 3.32.2–6; F 43b = Diod. Sic. 3.19.1–9; F 103a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 101 l. 24–5. See also F 53b (end). The idea seems to come from or be shared with the Stoics.

⁹⁶ For the 'harmony with nature' theme see especially F 38b = Diod. Sic. 3.17.3–4, F 40b = Diod. Sic. 3.18.1–2 and F 49 = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 451b. Lack of knowledge of the morally good and bad: αἰσχρῶν δὲ καὶ καλῶν οὐδὲ τὴν ἐλαχίστην εἰσφερόμενοι ἔνοιαν (F 31a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 449b and F 31b = Diod. Sic. 3.15.1–2). Some of these 'peoples' are almost certainly apes (F 52).

wealthy Sabaeans, whose civilisation has tipped over into degeneration (F 99–106).⁹⁷ This structure seems to carry a moral-didactic message: in order to live like a good human being one needs a certain amount of civilisation and a healthy dose of moderation and self-discipline, but not too much wealth, or slackness and effeminacy (F 103a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 101) are bound to follow.

Another theme that runs through the long fragment of Agatharchides' book 5 is suffering, human and animal. This was already singled out as a characteristic of his work by Strasburger, who emphasised Agatharchides' broadening of the historiographical horizon to encompass the suffering of the unnamed and socially marginal alongside that of famous generals and well-known Greek peoples, and saw it as a positive development.⁹⁸ For most other scholars it has been a sign that Agatharchides was a disreputable representative of the school of 'tragic history' influenced by the Peripatetics.⁹⁹ We see this feature of *On the Red Sea* in the description of the conditions of the convicts working the gold mines of Nubia (F 22–9 [Bur.]), but it is also a prominent theme of the long descriptions of elephant hunting (F 54 [Bur.]), of dying from Guinea-worm infestation (F 59 [Bur.])¹⁰⁰ and of the dangers of sailing on board an elephant transport ship (F 85 [Bur.]).¹⁰¹ I would argue that these passages, like the pathetic narratives of the fall of cities in Diodorus (and possibly Duris and Phylarchus), have a didactic point. Interestingly, the first few pages of Photius' summary of *On the Red Sea* book 5 supports such an interpretation (F 21 [Bur.] = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 21). Here, Agatharchides discusses exactly the appropriate way to talk about the destruction of a city. He criticises some specific expressions used by certain orators and historians as inappropriate because they are more concerned with creating a novel or clever turn of phrase than with how to describe the event in a vivid manner (διὰ τῆς ἐναργείας) or with pity for the sufferers (τοῦς οἴκτους). This focus on vividness in description (*enargeia*) and its relation to the provoking of pity in the

97 This structure has been demonstrated in detail by Ameling (2008), who argues that Agatharchides meant it as an analogy for the origins of mankind; I cannot see the evidence for this. Marcotte (2001: 425–35) argues in detail for a strictly geographical structure.

98 Strasburger (1982 [1966]: 1006–10).

99 Schwartz (1893), Woelk (1966) (both without using this expression), and Fraser (1972: 539–50). Burstein (1989) agrees that Agatharchides was influenced by the Peripatetics, but does not discuss tragic history. *Contra* Santoni (2001), who argues that Agatharchides criticised this type of historiography. For the flawed concept of 'tragic history', see above, pp. 85 and 137.

100 For the identification of the affliction with Guinea-worm infestation see Burstein (1989: *ad loc.*).

101 F 22–9 = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 22–9 and Diod. Sic. 2.12.1–14.5; F 54a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 53; F 54b = Diod. Sic. 3.26.1–4; F 59a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 58; F 59b = Diod. Sic. 3.29.1–7; F 85a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 83; F 85b = Diod. Sic. 3.40.1–9.

reader is extremely interesting, not least because it goes against Polybius' guidelines for how to write good history (Polyb. 2.56–68), which are much better known and have long been considered to represent the general view of 'good' or 'sober' ancient historiographers. Although Marincola (2003) has clearly demonstrated that Polybius is not in this passage denying pity and anger a place in historiography (the historiographer simply has to make sure that they are felt by his readers for the right people), it is clear from Polybius' contempt for Phylarchus' pathetic narratives of suffering that the former believes such scenes have no place in historiography, and in fact (the extant parts of) his work contain(s) none.¹⁰² In contrast with Polybius, Agatharchides believes that the good historiographer has a duty to the victims to describe their sufferings in vivid detail; he just wants such descriptions to be respectfully centred on the victims and free of the kind of wordplay that draws more attention to the author than to his subject. This is clear from a passage a bit further on in the fragment where Agatharchides gives an example of what he considers the appropriate way of describing the sack of a city, from Demosthenes:

‘Τὴν μὲν πόλιν ἐξώρυξεν ἐκ τῶν θεμελίων, ὥστε μηδὲ ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐστίας καταλιπεῖν τὴν τέφραν, παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας τῶν ἡγησαμένων τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐπὶ τὰς σκηνὰς τῶν βαρβάρων διένειμε.’ Πικρῶς καὶ σαφῶς καὶ βραχέως ἀφ’ ἐκάστου τῶν εἰδῶν εἰληφῶς τὴν ὑπερβολὴν, ὅμως τῆς διδασκούσης τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐναργείας οὐκ ἐπελάθετο.

‘He prised the city up from its foundations so as not to leave even ashes on the hearths, and he divided up the children and wives of those who had been the leaders of the Greeks among the tents of the barbarians.’ Although he sharply, clearly and concisely stripped each image of exaggeration, he did not forget the vividness that teaches the essence of the event. (Agatharchides, F 21(Bur.) = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 21 l. 30–6; translation modified from Burstein)

The quoted description of the brutality of this sacking of a city¹⁰³ is both vivid and pathetic, and contains an explicit reference to the sexual abuse of the captured women and children that is reminiscent of Diodorus' descriptions of the taking of cities. Nevertheless, Agatharchides praises Demosthenes for speaking ‘sharply, clearly and concisely’, for not exaggerating, and for not forgetting ‘the vividness that teaches the essence of the event (τῆς διδασκούσης τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐναργείας). This final phrase is especially

¹⁰² Polybius' sneering criticism of narratives of pathetic suffering in historiography is at Polyb. 2.56.7–10.

¹⁰³ The quotation is not from any of Demosthenes' preserved speeches, so we cannot be certain what city he is talking about, but if Agatharchides is right that he is speaking about Alexander the Great, it must be Thebes.

interesting for the purposes of the present study: Agatharchides believes that the mimetic vividness of the description makes it didactic. So what is the reader supposed to learn from it?

In Chapter 2, I argued that Diodorus' purpose with his pathetic descriptions was to teach a lesson about the changeability of human fortunes and human vulnerability and thereby lead the reader to a recognition of his own frailty and propensity for suffering, which should in turn lead him to avoid cruelty against those in his power. In Agatharchides' passages on human suffering the mutability of fortune does not play a prominent role: *tyche* is mentioned only once, and in the sense of the 'allotted fate' of the Nubian miners rather than a changeable force.¹⁰⁴ It seems rather that Agatharchides skipped this step and portrayed human suffering as a purely human affair: caused by human beings, suffered by human beings. What seems to have been radically new in his work is his instalment in the reader of pity for marginalised groups such as primitive non-Greek peoples, convicted criminals, and various labourers in the service of the Ptolemies.

Finally, we need to ask the question we have asked of the other fragmentary works of historiography: is there any sign of divine justice or other superhuman validation of a certain moral value-system? The short answer is no. Neither any of the fragments of *On Europe* and *On Asia* nor the sections from *On the Red Sea* found in Photius and Diodorus contain any examples of divine justice. The closest we get is the narrator expressing his satisfaction at pirates suffering their 'deserved punishment' (προσηκόντως ἐκολάσθησαν) in F 90b (Bur.),¹⁰⁵ but this is nothing more than use of evaluative vocabulary and does not imply that a superhuman power inflicts the punishment. Furthermore, one set of fragments shows that Agatharchides was deeply critical of certain types of religious behaviour: in F 20a and b (FGrH), Josephus says that Agatharchides mocked Stratonice (daughter of Antiochus I of Syria, wife of Demetrius II of Macedon)¹⁰⁶ for her superstition in obeying a dream that leads to her death, and then went on to ridicule the Jews for not defending themselves when Jerusalem was attacked by Ptolemy on the Sabbath. Josephus quotes the conclusion that turns this criticism into an explicitly didactic *paradeigma*:

τὸ δὲ συμβᾶν πλὴν ἐκείνων τοὺς ἄλλους πάντας δεδίδαχε τῆνικαῦτα φυγεῖν εἰς ἐνύπνια καὶ τὴν περὶ τοῦ νόμου παραδεδομένην ὑπόνοιαν, ἥνικα ἂν τοῖς ἀνθρωπίνους λογισμοῖς περὶ τῶν διαπορουμένων ἐξασθηήσωσιν.

¹⁰⁴ Οὗτοι πάντες οἱ τὸν εἰρημένον τῆς τύχης κληῖρον ὑπελθόντες ποθεινότερον ἔχουσι τοῦ βίου τὸν θάνατον (F 26b end [Bur.]).

¹⁰⁵ = Diod. Sic. 3.43.5.

¹⁰⁶ See Burstein (n.d.: *ad loc.*) for the historical context.

This event has taught everyone except those people [i.e. the Jews] only to take refuge in dreams and inherited notions about [religious] law when human reasoning about situations of great uncertainty falls completely short. (Agatharchides, *FGrH* 86 F 20a = Joseph Ap. 1.211)

This is tantalisingly similar to Polybius' statement about when it is appropriate to pray to the gods for answers, and for the historian to fall back on *tyche* as an explanation of events (Polyb. 36.17.2–4). Although he and Agatharchides disagreed on the way to deal with human suffering in a historical narrative, they seem to have shared a certain rationalising narratorial persona, which rejects many traditional ways of engaging with religion and sees it only as a last resort. This fits nicely with F 7–8 of Photius' extract from book 1 of *On the Red Sea*, which is a lengthy harangue against belief in traditional myths, based on rational arguments and kept in a sarcastic tone. A small sample is enough to convey the point:

Τῶν δὲ μετῆλλαχότων τὸν βίον ἐπὶ σχολῆς πρὸς Ὀδυσσεά διεξέρχεσθαι παντοδαπῇ ἀδολεσχίαν, ἐκ τῆς ἀμόρφου σκιᾶς τὸ τῆς ὄψεως γινώσκοντα ἰδίωμα, καὶ τοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πίνειν οὐ κοιλίας, οὐ βρόγχους ἔχοντας, ἑτέρουσ δὲ φοβεῖσθαι τὸν σίδηρον οὐκέτι δυναμένους τραθῆναι, τινὰς δὲ πέτρον κυλίειν τῶν σωμάτων πάλαι κατακεκαυμένων, ἄλλουσ δὲ δικάζειν ἑτέροις τεθνηκόσιν ἀδικήματος οὐδενὸς ὑπάρχοντος·

Dead people leisurely carried on all sorts of silly conversations with Odysseus, who recognised individual shapes from the formless shadow; and some of them drank although they had no stomachs and gullets; and others feared his sword although they no longer could be wounded; and others were rolling a stone although their bodies long ago had been cremated; and others judged other dead persons although no crime had taken place. (Agatharchides, *On the Red Sea* F 7 = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 443b; translation modified from Burstein)

This is a ruthlessly logical approach to ancient myths, expressed in a manner designed to amuse and shock the reader in equal measure. It could not be more different from Diodorus' pious narratives of gods and demigods as culture heroes, and one suspects that it would be too coarse for Polybius' sensibilities.¹⁰⁷

If the gods are absent from Agatharchides' narrative, it looks as though *tyche* may have played a part. It shows up five times as seemingly a historical agent: in F 41a and b of *On the Red Sea* the Fish-eaters 'endure without complaint what fortune has assigned to them from the beginning', and in F 103 of the same work the narrator comments on the fact that an Arabian people have no firewood, and so are compelled to burn expensive spices,

107 For a discussion of this aspect of Agatharchides' work see Santoni (2001).

with the remark that ‘so unequally has *tyche* distributed her goods, giving to some a scarce amount of the good things and to others plenty’ (οὕτως ἀνίσως τὰ αὐτῆς ἡ τύχη μεμέρικε, τοῖς μὲν σπάνιν τῶν σπουδαίων τοῖς δὲ πλῆθος διδοῦσα = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 459a).¹⁰⁸ F 17 (Bur.) of *On the Red Sea* is a third example of *tyche* as historical agent, but obviously comes from a speech, the context of which is now lost, which means that we cannot know how the reader was meant to respond to it.

The fourth passage that mentions *tyche* is F 100a of *On the Red Sea*, which describes a deadly snake found exclusively in the precious incense forests of Arabia Felix:

οἶονεῖ φθονούσης τοῖς ἄδροῖς ἐπιτεύγμασι τῆς τύχης καὶ παραπλεκούσης τὰγαθῶ τὸ βλαβερὸν, ὅπως μηδεὶς εἰς τέλος ἐξυβρίζων τιτανῶδες καὶ κατεγνώκως τοῦ θεοῦ τὸ φρόνημα λαμβάνη τῶν ἀγαθῶν εὐτυχοῦντων, παιδεύεται δὲ τῇ παραθέσει καὶ μνήμη τῶν ἐναντίων.

as if *tyche* was jealous of abundant prosperity and mixes the good with the harmful in order that no one should show complete insolence in a titanic manner and, disrespectful of the god, should become arrogant in their good fortune, but that they should be educated in the opposite of this behaviour by this juxtaposition and reminder. (Agatharchides, *On the Red Sea* F 100a (Bur.) = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 98.458b)

The idea of a superhuman power jealous of human success is reminiscent of Archaic Greek thought as well as Herodotus, as we shall remind ourselves in the next chapter; but the use of οἶονεῖ, ‘as if’, turns the whole statement into a simile, something that is typical of most of the colourful *tyche* passages in Polybius. It is hard to gauge how seriously to take the passage. On the one hand, οἶονεῖ creates distance, and the adverb τιτανῶδες (‘in a titanic manner’), used by the same narrator who has spent a large part of his introductory book ridiculing traditional mythology, can only be tongue in cheek. On the other hand, Agatharchides could only compose this simile because the presence of the snakes in the incense forests struck him as a paradoxical juxtaposition of good and evil, which he felt the need to comment on. It is safest to assume that he does not intend his reader here to understand *tyche* as a divine power, but that he does want us to notice the paradox and pause to realise that nothing in life is perfect; and this is a moral lesson on its own. This thought occurs also in F 91a, which deals with another area of Arabia which is infested with wild beasts.¹⁰⁹ But

¹⁰⁸ Woelk (1966: 247) argues that Agatharchides has exaggerated the need to burn spices in order to create an example of *tryphē*.

¹⁰⁹ Τούτοις δὲ τοῖς εὐκληρήμασιν ἀντικείμενον παραπέλεκται κακόν (F 91a = Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 250 457b).

however we interpret *tyche* in the passage, the message that one should stay humble in good fortune echoes Polybius and Diodorus.

The fact that fortune in Agatharchides seems to have been sometimes randomly unequal (F 103) and at other times consciously jealous (F 100a) points to an inconsistency in the use of the concept akin to the one found in Polybius.¹¹⁰ Ultimately, *tyche*, if it was presented as a real superhuman power and not simply used for rhetorical effect, does not seem to rule the world of Agatharchides, but rather to have sporadic influence.

In conclusion, Agatharchides seems to have promoted the staple virtues of moderation and self-discipline, but also less common ones such as pity and solidarity with suffering. We have no examples of what an exemplary good or bad man looked like in his work, but it does seem as if his narrative world was ruled by human rather than divine forces, perhaps with the destabilising factor of *tyche* thrown in. As for moralising techniques, the long text preserved by Photius and Diodorus allows us to say for certain that Agatharchides used evaluative phrasing and moralising conclusions frequently, but that his most striking technique is moralising through pathos.

POSITONIUS OF APAMEA (FGRH 87)

Posidonius lived c. 135–45 BC and so was Diodorus' older contemporary. He was a renowned Stoic philosopher who taught Cicero, and an extremely prolific writer: more than thirty titles of works by him are known, in fields as diverse as astronomy, zoology, ethics and history. The *Histories* was in fifty-two books; it took over where Polybius had left off and covered the time from 146 BC to probably the mid-80s.¹¹¹ It was probably a universal history and was in antiquity recognised as a work springing from Posidonius' Stoic ethics, that is, a work of explicitly moral history.¹¹² This understanding of the work was probably based on Posidonius' now lost preface, and it is a great shame that we do not have an articulation of his moral-didactic programme in his own words.¹¹³ Scholars of the fragments generally agree that Posidonius regarded history as an auxiliary discipline to philosophy, and intended his *Histories* both to show the organic unity of the world and to present moral *paradeigmata* in accordance with his

¹¹⁰ The fact that *tyche* in F 103 is said to act 'unequally' has led Fraser (1972: 539–50) to interpret it as the Peripatetic *tyche*. The interpretation offered in the present study is more in agreement with Burstein (1989: 51 n. 2). For *tyche* in Polybius see Hau (2011).

¹¹¹ Malitz (1983: esp. 70–1), Kidd (1999, 2003), Dowden (n.d.). Jacoby (1926b: 156–7) and Laffranque (1964: 118–22) agree on the start date, but argue that the terminus for the work was the mid-90s.

¹¹² Ath. 4.151e = T 12a.

¹¹³ See Kidd (1989: 39).

Stoic teachings.¹¹⁴ It should be clear from our discussions of Polybius and the fragments of Posidonius' other predecessors that this did not mean doing violence to the genre of historiography and bending it into a new and contorted shape; rather it meant continuing the tradition of already moral-didactic historiography, but with a more explicit commitment to one particular school of philosophy than had been the case in any of his predecessors.

The total number of fragments in *FGrH* (which includes both the fragments assumed to come from the *Histories* and an ethnographical work, *On the Ocean*) is 123, in *BNJ* 124. Of these, the final sixteen were relegated to Jacoby's *Anhang* as they do not mention Posidonius by name, and they will largely remain unmentioned here. Edelstein and Kidd, who have collected all the fragments of Posidonius across genres, include four historical fragments which are not in *FGrH* or *BNJ*.¹¹⁵ One of these, labelled F 284, will be discussed below. By far the most prominent covertexts for Posidonius are Strabo (fifty fragments) and Athenaeus (thirty-nine fragments). Third is Plutarch with eight fragments. It is therefore not surprising that most of the moralising fragments of Posidonius are focused on the evils of wealth and luxurious living and the virtue of moderation. Clarke has argued convincingly that Athenaeus and Posidonius shared many interests, including luxury and slavery, and that Athenaeus used references to Posidonius to make himself look like a more serious philosopher. It was therefore in Athenaeus' best interest to make it look as if he and Posidonius agreed on such issues even if they did not.¹¹⁶ The upside of this is that Athenaeus often purports to quote Posidonius verbatim, and, if nothing else, these quotations show that Posidonius was sharply critical of luxurious habits.¹¹⁷ An example is this passage relating to the outbreak of the Sicilian Slave Revolt:

Ποσειδώνιος δ' ἐν τῇ ὀγδόῃ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν περὶ Δαμοφίλου λέγων τοῦ Σικελιώτου, δι' ὃν ὁ δουλικὸς ἐκινήθη πόλεμος, ὅτι τρυφῆς ἦν οἰκεῖος, γράφει καὶ ταῦτα: τρυφῆς οὖν δοῦλος ἦν καὶ κακουργίας, διὰ μὲν τῆς χώρας τετρακύκλους ἀπήνας περιηγόμενος καὶ ἵππους καὶ θεράποντας ὠραίους καὶ παραδρομὴν ἀνάγων κολάκων τε καὶ παιδῶν στρατιωτικῶν. ὕστερον δὲ πανοικία ἐφύβριστος κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον ὑπὸ τῶν οἰκετῶν περιωβρισθεῖς.

114 Laffranque (1964), Malitz (1983), Kidd (1999, 2003), Dowden (n.d.). *Contra* Jacoby (1926b: 160–1), who argues obscurely that the work was full of 'ethical reflections' without being moralising in nature. Laffranque has argued that Posidonius' moralising partly took place on the macro-level of the structure of the work, which she sees as a form of objectivity.

115 Edelstein and Kidd (1972). Their decision is explained on p. xxii with n. 2 and 3.

116 Clarke (2007).

117 Fragments on luxury and wealth: F 1, F 6, F 7, F 9a and b, F 10, F 11, F 13, F 14, F 18a, b and c, F 20, F 21a and b, F 25, F 26, F 27, F 36 (among other topics), F 47, F 51, F 68, F 108 (among other topics).

Posidonius, speaking in the eighth book of his *Histories* about Damophilus the Sicilian, because of whom the slave war broke out, says that he was addicted to luxury and writes also this: 'He was a slave to luxury and villainy, driving four-wheeled coaches through the land accompanied by horses and young, lovely servants, a swarm of flatterers and soldier-like slaves. But later, along with his whole family, he met an ignominious end abused by his household slaves.' (Posidonius, F 7 = Ath. 12.542b)

This is a piece of moralising effected by evaluative phrasing of a particularly scathing kind. Calling Damophilus a slave to decadence and vice is not just derogatory, but also darkly ironic in this narrative of the inception of the Sicilian Slave Revolt, particularly as his flatterers and the slaves who are going to rise up against him are called soldier-like. The concluding line reads like a compression of a longer Posidonian narrative, probably reproduced more or less closely by Diodorus 34/35.2.12–13 (F 108). The scornful description of Damophilus' elaborate travelling style will then have functioned in the original *Histories* as the depiction of success which preceded his *peripeteia*, and there was almost certainly a causal connection between his arrogance and his downfall (which were both symbolic of the condition and fate of his entire society, to judge from F 108 = Diod. Sic. 34/35.2.12–13).

Numerous other fragments preserve only the detailed, and often derogatory, descriptions of extravagant lifestyles or parties, and may or may not originally have functioned as signals of impending disaster.¹¹⁸ Thus F 9a on the banquets of Antiochus VII Sidetes, F 10 on the public wealth of Syria, and F 21 a and b (= Ath. 12.540a–b and 5.210e) on the lavishness of Antiochus VIII Grypus' entertainment together point to a discourse on the decadence of Syria in the second century BC, which may well have been connected with its loss of territory to the Parthians and descent into civil war.¹¹⁹ This interpretation is supported by F 11, which records a saying of Arsaces VI Mithridates of Parthia over the dead body of his enemy Antiochus Sidetes – no doubt originally part of a moralising vignette – attributing his military defeat to heavy drinking and overconfidence.¹²⁰ It is also, perhaps, revealing that none of the Posidonian fragments betray

¹¹⁸ In addition to those discussed in the main text: F 1 on the feasting habits of the Romans and Tyrrhenians (probably combined from two different passages in the *Histories*; see Kidd 1999: *ad loc.*); F 13 on the entertainment of Himerus, tyrant of Babylon and Seleucia, by Lysimachus the Babylonian (probably under duress; see Dowden n.d.: *ad loc.*); F 14 on the over-the-top funeral held by Harpalus for the *hetaira* Pythionice; F 25 on varieties of beautiful cups; and F 68 on the preferred wine of the Persian king.

¹¹⁹ F 9a = Ath. 12.540b–c, F 10 = Ath. 12.527e–f, F 21a = Ath. 12.540a–b, F 21b = Ath. 5.210e. For the historical context see Dowden (n.d.: *ad F 10*).

¹²⁰ 'ἔσφηλὲν σε, Ἀντίοχε, θάρσος καὶ μέθη· ἤλιπυες γὰρ ἐν μεγάλοις ποτηρίοις τὴν Ἀρσάκου βασιλείαν ἐκπέειν': F 11 = Ath. 10.439d–e.

any admiration for a ruler's – or any other party host's – generosity despite detailed descriptions of lavish entertainment and take-home presents of considerable value.¹²¹ It is, of course, possible that such praise has been lost as Athenaeus focused on the extravagant details, but considering Posidonius' Stoic credentials it is more likely that no praise was there to begin with because such extravagances were negative rather than positive *paradeigmata*.

Part of *tryphe* is immoderate eating and drinking, and some memorable fragments of Posidonius deal with this theme. A good example is this description of Alexander, son of Ptolemaeus Physcon:

εἰς πάχος δ' ἐπεδεδώκει καὶ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ Ἀλέξανδρος, ὁ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα ἀποκτείνας συμβασιλεύουσιν αὐτῷ. φησὶ γοῦν περὶ αὐτοῦ Ποσειδώνιος ἐν τῇ ἑβδόμῃ καὶ τεσσαρακοστῇ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν οὕτως· 'ὁ δὲ τῆς Αἰγύπτου δυνάστης μισούμενος μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ὄχλων, κολακευόμενος δ' ὑπὸ τῶν περὶ αὐτόν, ἐν πολλῇ δὲ τρυφῇ ζῶν, οὐδὲ <ἀπο>πατεῖν' οἴος τε ἦν, εἰ μὴ διὐσὶν ἐπαπεριδόμενος [ἐπορευέτο]². εἰς δὲ τὰς ἐν τοῖς συμποσίοις ὀρχήσεις ἀπὸ μετεώρων κλινῶν καθαλλόμενος ἀνυπόδητος συντονωτέρας αὐτὰς τῶν ἡσκηκῶτων ἐποιεῖτο.

His (Ptolemaeus Physcon's) son Alexander also gave himself up to obesity, the one who killed his own mother when she was his co-regent. At any rate, Posidonius in the forty-seventh book of his *Histories* says thus: 'The king of Egypt hated by the masses, flattered by his entourage, and living in great luxury, was not even able to withdraw to relieve himself unless he leaned upon two [slaves]. But leaping into dances at the symposium from high couches he would perform them barefoot and more eagerly than the professionals.' (Posidonius, F 26 = Ath. 12.550a–b)

Like the passage on Damophilus, igniter of the Sicilian Slave War, quoted above, this is a description dripping with moralistic venom. Alexander's *tryphe*, the very thing on which he presumably prided himself,¹²² debilitates him to the degree that he cannot even go to the toilet without assistance.¹²³ This, however, does not prevent him from engaging in embarrassing and unkingly pursuits such as dancing. The fact that he, like any tyrant, is hated by his people and has flatterers instead of friends follows directly from his ignominious behaviour, rather than from, say, any cruelty or tyrannical acts (although, of course, Posidonius may well have discussed such addi-

¹²¹ E.g. F 9a and b (= Ath. 12.540b–c and 5.210c–d) relate that Antiochus Sidetes held daily receptions in which he gave out whole cooked animals, honey-cakes and gold-threaded garlands, and F 21a and b (= Ath. 12.540a–b and 5.210d–e) that Antiochus Grypus during feasts gave out to participants whole joints of meat as well as live animals, gold and silver, and a camel and its groom per guest.

¹²² See the interesting discussions of the role of *tryphe* in Ptolemaic court propaganda in Heinen (1983) and Ager (2005: 22–8).

¹²³ On the conjectures enabling this surely correct reading see Dowden (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

tional vices in now lost passages). A very similar and equally morally disgusted passage deals with the obesity and consequent physical lack of ability of Alexander's father, Ptolemaeus Physcon (F 6 = Ath. 12.549d–e).

At the opposite end of the scale, several fragments are concerned with positive *paradeigmata* of moderation. F 24 (= Ath. 4.153b–c) states that Heracleon, a general of Antiochus Grypus, made changes to the army's regime by having them take simple meals on the ground; no praise for this is preserved, but it is obviously meant as a positive counter-example to the extravagances of Antiochus Grypus himself. F 59 (= Ath. 6.273a–275b) is a long passage on old Roman virtue, which references Posidonius three times. Although it is unlikely that the whole passage is reproduced from his *Histories*, the implication seems to be that the passage is in general agreement with Posidonius' work.¹²⁴ This extract from the fragment is probably a paraphrase of Posidonius and perhaps uses some of his terminology:

πάτριος μὲν γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς, ὡς φησι Ποσειδώνιος, καρτερία καὶ λιτὴ διαίτα καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν πρὸς τὴν κτήσιν ἀφελῆς καὶ ἀπερίεργος χρῆσις· ἔτι δὲ εὐσέβεια μὲν θαυμαστὴ περὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον, δικαιοσύνη δὲ καὶ πολλὴ τοῦ πλημμελεῖν εὐλάβεια πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους μετὰ τῆς κατὰ γεωργίαν ἀσκήσεως.

Their ancestral ways, as Posidonius says, consisted in endurance, frugal lifestyle, and, in other matters concerning possessions, simple and unelaborate practice – also, amazing piety concerning the divine, justice and a great awareness of trespassing against other men, together with discipline through farming. (Posidonius, F 59 = Ath. 6.107; translation modified from Dowden n.d.)

Endurance, frugality, simple lifestyle, piety, justice and consideration are all virtues consistent with the moral outlook displayed by the fragments of Posidonius, as well as – except for piety – by all the other historiographers we have so far encountered in this and previous chapters. 'Discipline through farming', however, is a peculiarly Roman virtue, much propounded by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, but not prominent in the Greek moralising tradition. If it accurately summarises what Posidonius described, his portrait of the Roman good old days must have been based on and influenced by Roman sources, perhaps Roman acquaintances. The other possibility is that Athenaeus, even in this short passage, has conflated several sources, at least one of them Roman.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ For various views on how much of F 59 comes from Posidonius see Malitz (1983: 90–4), Kidd (1988: 913–14), Dowden (n.d.: *ad loc.*). All three mentions of Posidonius in this passage come at heavily moralising moments.

¹²⁵ Dowden (n.d.: *ad loc.*) argues that the entirety of F 59 ultimately goes back to Fabius Pictor, but that Posidonius has developed it to fit in with 'a neo-Polybian picture of the

The complete opposite to the degenerates Ptolemaeus Physcon and Alexander is the Ligurians, presented by F 57–8 as hardened by their rugged homeland and lack of commodities into a supremely strong and enduring people.¹²⁶ F 58a and b are renderings of an exemplary story of a Ligurian woman who takes a break from her work to give birth and then returns to it, thus making her an example of the key qualities of her entire people in the same way that Damophilus the extravagant slave owner stands in for his whole decadent society.

The mention of Damophilus leads us to the moralising topic of how to treat one's inferiors, that is, one's subjects or slaves. The key passage(s) here is clearly F 108 (divided into 108a–w in the *BNJ*). This is in reality a collection of extracts from Diodorus' *Bibliothēke*, the longest by Photius (= *FGrH* 87 F 108a), the rest out of the Constantinian compilations *De Virtutibus et Vitiis* and *De Sententiis*, all of them on the Sicilian Slave War, and presumed by most scholars to be a close approximation of what was in Diodorus' source, Posidonius.¹²⁷ The passage is a detailed account of the beginning of the Slave War, which is shown to arise because of the arrogance and extravagance of the slave owners and their inhumane treatment of their slaves. None of the extracts mention Posidonius by name, but the close similarity between Posidonius F 7 (= *Ath.* 12.542b) on Damophilus (quoted above) and *Diod. Sic.* 34/35.2.34 means that the identification of Posidonius as Diodorus' source for the Sicilian Slave War is certain. How much Diodorus changed what he found in Posidonius is, as always, contentious, and we cannot know for certain whether Posidonius ascribed the revolt only to the masters' *tryphe*, or also to their mistreatment of the slaves.¹²⁸ Equally frustratingly unclear is the short F 38 (= *Ath.* 6.266e–f), which gives Posidonius as the authority for the information that the Chians were enslaved by Mithridates and then handed over to their own slaves in fetters. It ends with a sentence which interprets this fate of the Chians as divine punishment for having been the first to use bought slaves at a time when most people did their own work, but it is impossible to see whether this sentence derives from Posidonius or is an interpretation by Athenaeus.

Finally, F 8 (= *Ath.* 6.263c–d) gives an indication that Posidonius also offered examples of 'good' master–slave relationships. In this passage Athenaeus states that Posidonius says that 'many of those who are unable

Romans, one that accords with his own philosophy and with the discourse of his Roman friends', and that Athenaeus has it from Posidonius.

¹²⁶ F 57a = *Strabo* 5.2.1, 218C; F 57b = *Diod. Sic.* 4.20.1; F 58a = *Strabo* 3.4.17, 165A–B; F 58b = *Diod. Sic.* 4.20.2–3.

¹²⁷ The passage is *Diod. Sic.* 34/35.2 in the Loeb, 34.1–20 in the Belles Lettres edition.

¹²⁸ For different views on how close Diodorus' account is to Posidonius' original see Dowden (n.d.: *ad* F 108a) and Wozniczka (forthcoming).

to look after themselves because of their weakness of intellect' (πολλούς τινας ἑαυτῶν οὐ δυναμένους προίστασθαι διὰ τὸ τῆς διανοίας ἀσθενές) of their own free will put themselves into the power of a more capable people in order to have their 'needs' (τὰ ἀναγκαῖα) taken care of. He then offers as an example of this the Mariandynoi, who are said to have given themselves over to the Heracleians on the one condition that they could not be sold abroad. This second half of the passage, which may be a brief quotation from Posidonius, is introduced by καὶ τοῦτω τῷ τρόπῳ Μαρνανδῦνοι μὲν . . . , showing that it was only the first in a pair or series of examples of such mutually beneficial master–slave relationships.¹²⁹ Apparently, Posidonius did not condemn slavery in itself, only, perhaps, mistreatment and exploitation of slaves. This ties in nicely with F 284 in Edelstein and Kidd (= Sen. Ep. 90.5–13),¹³⁰ which tells of a Golden Age when people were ruled by philosopher kings. The subjects not only submitted to these philosophers voluntarily, but also refrained from wrongdoing entirely: *cum bene imperanti bene pareretur* (Sen. Ep. 90.5). Posidonius, then, like Polybius and Diodorus, propounded the moral-didactic theory that the behaviour of ruler and ruled were mutually dependent.¹³¹

The final question that needs to be asked of the Posidonius fragments is whether there is any evidence of divine justice enforcing morality. On the basis of Posidonius' philosophical views it would be a natural assumption that his *Histories* showed a world ruled by benevolent Providence. However, the only explicit reference to divine justice in the fragments is F 38 on the Chians, which has just been discussed. The comment in this fragment that the fate of the Chians was due to 'the wrath of the divine' (τὸ δαιμόνιον ἐμήνισε) may equally well be Athenaeus' interpretation as Posidonius'.¹³² F 29 (= Ath. 8.333b–d), on how the army of the Syrian pretender Tryphon was overwhelmed by a tidal wave and drowned to a man, may narrate an instance of divine punishment, but does not explic-

129 The idea that some people are better off as slaves or subjects of others is often attributed to both Posidonius and Panaetius, his predecessor as leading Stoic, and assumed to have formed the basis of a justification of Roman Imperial power which they passed on to Cicero and other Romans. See Strasburger (1965: 40), Walbank (1965: 13–15), Franklin (2003: 104–6), Dowden (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

130 This fragment is not included in *FGrH*; Jacoby presumably believed that it came from one of Posidonius' philosophical works rather than the *Histories*. Edelstein and Kidd (1972) include it under 'History.' It is mentioned by Dowden (n.d.: *ad F* 8).

131 The more philosophical version of this, which Posidonius most probably propounded and which is discernible in F 8, namely that the best constitution is the rule of the wise over the unwise, is not reflected in any of the other historians discussed in this study.

132 F 108w (= Diod. Sic. 34/35.9) ascribes the death of someone who had eaten sacred fish to *to daimonion*, but it does not mention Posidonius by name, and even if the passage goes back to him, divine punishment is such a key theme for Diodorus (as we have seen) that he may well have added or altered the interpretation.

itly ascribe the event to supernatural causes. F 104 (= Strabo, *Geography* 7.3.1–5, 295a–298b) rationalises the Getan belief that their king communicates with a god in a cave into a deliberate exploitation of popular gullibility for political purposes, but as we have seen in Polybius, such cynicism about popular superstition does not preclude religious belief and piety on the part of the author. On the basis of this evidence we have to accept that we cannot say anything certain about the role of the divine in Posidonius' supposedly Stoic *Histories*.¹³³

In conclusion, it seems likely that wealth fulfilled a similar function in the moral didacticism of Posidonius to military success in that of Polybius, as a dangerous trap which lures most men into arrogance. In Polybius the arrogance is primarily expressed through mistreatment of the defeated; in Posidonius it seems to have been overwhelmingly expressed through extravagant and immoderate lifestyles. In both authors, however, such arrogance most often leads to disaster. Dowden (n.d.) has recently offered a persuasive interpretation of the fragments as showing that Posidonius' *Histories* were intended as a continuation of Polybius' *Histories* not just chronologically, but also morally: where Polybius showed the rise of Rome, Posidonius showed the degeneration of Rome – as well as the rest of the world – due to wealth and extravagance, and Rome's descent into civil war. This is a very attractive hypothesis, but keeping in mind the fact that Athenaeus was supremely interested in examples of luxury and decadence and much less in other moral issues such as cruelty and piety, we must not trust too much in such reconstructions. In fact, if we look at the picture we got of Posidonius' work from Diodorus' moralising in books 32.37–37.30, fragmentary though they are, it was of a work preoccupied with decadence, but equally so with greed and cruelty, and in which divine justice played an important part. It is possible that these themes were modified and amplified by Diodorus, but they are, I would claim, unlikely to have been added out of thin air. In other words, Posidonius supplied the basis for the moralising, even if he did not moralise explicitly on all of these topics himself.

What is clear, however, even without looking at the *Bibliothēke*, is that Posidonius' *Histories* was a work of moral history, and that it often taught its lessons by means of evaluative phrasing combined with biting sarcasm, and by showing how morally corrupt behaviour would lead to disaster. A few examples of moralising vignettes are also preserved (F 11, F 36, F 43), and possibly one of a moralising conclusion (F 38).

¹³³ This is also noted by Malitz (1983: 418–22), who argues that Posidonius may have preferred a secular causality in his historiography. If this was the case, that would be an intriguing sign of the importance that genre, in the concrete shape of imitation of Polybius, held for Posidonius.

HIERONYMUS OF CARDIA (*FGRH* 154)

Finally, we get to Hieronymus of Cardia (not yet on *BNJ*). Chronologically he lived and wrote earlier than Timaeus, but because of his apparent lack of moralising he has been relegated to the end of this chapter. Hieronymus wrote a history, the title of which is unknown, but which traced the events in the Greek world from the death of Alexander the Great to at least the death of Pyrrhus, much of it based on his own experiences on the staff of two of Alexander's successors, Eumenes of Cardia and Antigonos Gonatas.¹³⁴

This work was probably Diodorus' main source (perhaps through an intermediary source) for the Greek narrative of books 18–20,¹³⁵ and in the previous chapter we discussed the impression of this source text produced by an analysis of Diodorus' moralising. This impression was of a text that moralised on cruelty, the changeability of fortune, and the positive effects of mildness/kindness by means of evaluative phrasing used sparingly, moralising digressions and asides, and internal evaluation, in fact much like the impression produced of Ephorus' *History*. This is interesting, since most scholars who assume that the character of Hieronymus' work is discernible from the *Bibliothēke* tend to highlight, alongside Hieronymus' reliability and general competence as a historian, his 'seriousness' or 'sobriety', by which they partly mean his avoidance of moralising.¹³⁶ Scholars who want to stress Hieronymus' non-moralising have to argue that Diodorus added a few passages of explicit moralising on the changeability of fortune and the abuse of good fortune to a text otherwise taken over from Hieronymus. As argued in Chapter 2 and elsewhere, I find it much more likely that this moralising was already in Hieronymus' *History* in a very similar form.¹³⁷

Any discussion of Hieronymus is hampered by the fact that only nineteen fragments of his work have been preserved in later authors. None of the fragments contain any moralising, but that is partly because most of them are bare mentions of Hieronymus' name in connection with information about topography or numbers of dead in a battle. It would be absurd to claim that these few references are in any way representative of his original *History*. On the other hand, it may be significant that Athenaeus only refers to his work once (for a description of Alexander the Great's funeral

¹³⁴ Jacoby (1913, 1930: 544), Hornblower (1981).

¹³⁵ Meeus (2013) with references to earlier literature.

¹³⁶ Jacoby (1913), Hornblower (1981), Knoepfler (2000). The main point of contention is his political bias: Brown (1947), followed by Knoepfler (2000), argues that Hieronymus was a biased court historian, but this is played down by Hornblower (1981), building on the arguments of Jacoby (1913: 1543–6).

¹³⁷ See Hadley (1996) with the counter-argument of Hau (2009: 180–1), as well as Diod. Sic. 19.11, discussed in Chapter 2.

cart): perhaps Hieronymus' work was less fertile ground for passages on luxury, flatterers and false philosophers than were those of Timaeus, Duris, Phylarchus, Agatharchides and Posidonius. That, again, would bring him in line with Ephorus, as a historiographer who moralised sparingly, and preferred other topics to those of interest to Athenaeus, as we shall see in Chapter 7.

The only fragment of Hieronymus' *History* that may conceivably be a remnant of a once moralising passage is F 9 (= Paus. 1.9.8). Here Pausanias censures Hieronymus for saying, falsely in his opinion, that Lysimachus destroyed the royal tombs in Epirus in his war with Pyrrhus and cast out the bones.¹³⁸ It is impossible to know what Hieronymus' narrative of this incident looked like, but judging from Pausanias' criticism it was probably more than a bare notice. It is tempting to hypothesise that Hieronymus either wrote a detailed scene to portray Lysimachus as the immoderate victor abusing his good fortune, or explicitly moralised on the wrongness of Lysimachus' actions; but we cannot know.¹³⁹

In conclusion, it seems unlikely that Hieronymus of Cardia was a lone non-moralising historiographer in Hellenistic Greece. Rather, his moralising has been lost because it happened sparingly, and because his didactic topics were not to the taste of Athenaeus. There is also the possibility that he moralised at the macro-level of structure, by means of narrative arcs, repetition, and patterning. This was done masterfully by the three surviving Classical historiographers as we shall see in Part II.

CONCLUSION

It is ultimately impossible to know what the now fragmentary works of Hellenistic historiography once looked like in all their glory. Hence we cannot know for certain whether or not they moralised, and much less whether they had explicitly moral-didactic agendas, and what their potential moralising looked like. Nonetheless, on the basis of such evidence as there is, this chapter has made the case that some of the moral messages we have encountered in Polybius and Diodorus, or moral messages very close to them, seem to have been propounded by the majority of the most influential and best-preserved historiographies of the period.

¹³⁸ For a discussion of which war the fragment relates to, see Jacoby (1930: 546–7) and Hornblower (1981: 247).

¹³⁹ Hornblower (1981: 104) argues that the scene in Plut. *Pyrrh.* 34.4 which shows Antigonus Gonatas crying for the defeated Pyrrhus comes from Hieronymus and is the first instance of the *topos* of the victor crying for the vanquished. This is an attractive theory, but ultimately we cannot know whether Plutarch added this detail himself under the influence of the historical tradition of Polybius and Diodorus.

The wrongness of immoderation in all its aspects seems to have been a theme of all the historiographers under consideration, apart perhaps from Hieronymus, even taking account of the skewed picture resulting from the dominance of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* as a covertext. Phylarchus seems to have propounded a causal connection from luxurious living to arrogance and impiety and onwards to divine punishment. Posidonius most probably showed a similar connection from wealth to luxurious living and abuse of others and onwards to disaster, brought on either by purely human means or by some kind of divine justice, and it is possible that such a connection was also present in the work(s) of Agatharchides. Human inability to stay moderate in good fortune seems to have been a theme of at least Timaeus, Duris and Agatharchides, and perhaps also of Hieronymus. Agatharchides alone seems to have emphasised the suffering of the marginalised and nameless and encouraged the reader to feel pity and sympathy for them.

The image of the bad man or leader seems to have been similar in all of these historiographers: he is a tyrant, or like a tyrant, immoderate in his eating, drinking and sexual habits, cowardly and effeminate. Timaeus and Phylarchus add the vices of impiety and greed. Virtues clearly attracted less attention from potential covertext authors, but moderation and courage seem to have played a part in all of the works under discussion. Timaeus seems to have added lack of greed and a shrewd ability to interpret omens to one's advantage; and Phylarchus admired wit. At least Timaeus and Phylarchus apparently showed that impiety would be punished by divine forces, and that such divine punishment often mirrored the crime in poignant ways.

Moralising techniques are harder to discern from second-hand references, but evaluative phrasing was almost certainly used by all, in Posidonius combined with biting sarcasm, in Duris with rhetorical comparisons and juxtaposition. Moralising conclusions were used at least by Agatharchides. Most of the historiographers seem also to have used moralising vignettes, and at least Duris, Phylarchus and Agatharchides to have moralised by means of pathos. Moralising digressions seem to have been used by at least Timaeus, Duris and Posidonius. From Timaeus and Agatharchides we have evidence of moralising speeches, and from Timaeus also of internal evaluation.

In other words, although we cannot arrive at a full understanding of Hellenistic historiography on the basis of the evidence, we can gain an impression, and the impression is of a genre that embraced moralising, most probably with a didactic aim. Moreover, when compared with our analysis of Polybius and Diodorus, we see that there is a kernel of moral messages and techniques which all the Hellenistic historiographers share.

PART II: CLASSICAL
HISTORIOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

It is a common statement that Hellenistic historiography is ‘moralising’. This is often combined with statements to the effect that Hellenistic historiography is ‘rhetorical’ and less ‘serious’ or in some other way less worthy and less plain good than Classical historiography.¹ That what makes historiography ‘good’ is a matter of taste and changing values has been discussed in the Introduction to this book and will also be a topic for its Conclusion. In the present part we shall face the claim that ‘moralising’ is a phenomenon exclusively of Hellenistic historiography. Through an examination of the works of the three extant Classical historiographers – that is, Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon – I shall demonstrate that moral didacticism was a central concern of each author, and that their histories do, in fact, moralise. We shall see how the Classical works show forerunners of the types of moralising we have become familiar with from the Hellenistic histories, but also how they employ different moralising techniques of their own. We shall also consider what messages their moralising conveys. In the final chapter we shall then look at the fragments of three late Classical works of history, namely those of the Oxyrhynchus Historian, Ephorus and Theopompus, in order to get a sense of how the development from Classical to Hellenistic moral didacticism took place.

The three extant Classical historiographers will be discussed chronologically. In each chapter we begin with a look at the preface and programmatic passages in order to see what they say about the purpose of the work; then we proceed to examine the moralising techniques used and then the moral lessons offered by the work. Chapter 7 discusses what can be surmised about the moral didacticism of three late Classical historiographers from their preserved ‘fragments’ and what this might tell us about the development from Classical to Hellenistic moral didacticism.

No one could hope to take account of everything written about Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon in a single book, much less in a part of a book. I do not aim to give an overview of scholarship on any of these historiographers, or to reference every important or interesting monograph or article that discusses their works. I shall limit myself to referring, in the footnotes, to studies that have discussed in detail – but often under more reputable headings such as ‘philosophy’ or ‘political thought’ – some of the passages and phenomena that I identify as moral-didactic.

¹ See e.g. Usher (1969), Walbank (1990), Meister (1990: esp. 80–1), Luce (1997: 108), Gehrke (2001: 299). Even Pownall (2004), whose study is dedicated to uncovering ‘the moral use of history in fourth-century prose’, considers moralising an impairment to good historiography.

4. *Herodotus*

The question of moral didacticism has in recent years increasingly become part of the discussion of Herodotus' *Histories*. Scholars are largely divided into those who are content to see some moral aspect to the *Histories*, and those who apparently believe that admitting such an aspect to the work denies it the title of history.¹ I hope to show in the following that the moral lessons are certainly there, but also that this places Herodotus completely in line with the genre of historiography that developed after him, rather than separating his work from it.

PREFACE

In the opening lines of the *Histories*, Herodotus states his name, the type of his work, and his purpose in committing it to writing:

Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέος ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.

This is the presentation of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, in order that events that have occurred through human agency shall not become extinct because of the course of time and that the great and marvelous deeds demonstrated by both the Greeks and the barbarians shall not lose their fame – and that goes both for their other actions and achievements and for the reason why they began to be at war with one another. (Hdt. 1.1.1)

¹ The main proponents of the theory that Herodotus' purpose was at least partly moral-didactic are Harrison (2000) and Fisher (2002). Waters (1971) and Shimron (1989) argue vehemently against the *Histories* being moralising in any way. Grethlein (2011) discusses 'exemplarity' in Herodotus (and Thucydides), but limits himself to instances of characters learning from or failing to learn from the past.

In this proem to the first extant work of historiography in Western civilisation, the purpose of history is set out purely as memorial with no hint of didacticism. It is followed by a whirlwind account of abductions of girls from the East by Greeks and from Greece by Eastern peoples, culminating in the ‘Second Preface’ or second first-person statement about the contents of the work:

ταῦτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι· ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτω ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως σμικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄσπεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ σμικρὰ αὐτῶν γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ’ ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρὰ. τὴν ἀνθρωπιήν ὣν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῷτῳ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως.

Now this is what the Persians and the Phoenicians say. I cannot say with regard to these events whether they happened like this or in some other way, but the man I know was the first to commit crimes against the Greeks I shall point out, and then proceed from that point to the subsequent narrative, talking about small and big cities of men alike. For those that were once big have for the most part become small, and those that were big in my time, were once small. Knowing that human happiness never stays long in the same place I shall mention both equally. (Hdt. 1.5.3–4)

The Second Preface, as has often been pointed out, reveals the narrative of the girl abductions to be a false start, a semi-mythological tit-for-tat explanation of a great war that will not do on its own as a causal explanation in Herodotus’ more analytical inquiry.² The basis for the *Histories* is rather going to be secure knowledge (τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτός . . .) located in historical, evidence-based time. Here the purpose of the work is presented partly as explaining the beginning of hostilities between Greeks and barbarians, partly as preserving the memory of deeds performed everywhere in the world, in both small and big cities. The last two sentences of the Second Preface set out the earliest indication of the prominent role the instability of human success is going to play in the work, but it does not indicate that the work is also going to be teaching its audience any lessons about how to handle this.

This absence of moral didacticism from the purpose statements certainly sets the *Histories* apart from the works of Polybius and Diodorus, which we discussed in Part I. However, it has often been observed that Herodotus’ prefaces are hugely inadequate as an indication of the actual contents of the *Histories*: the richness of the work, its large ethnographical component

2 The best analysis of Herodotus’ two prefaces is still Moles (1993).

and its wealth of digressions and colourful vignettes are only dimly hinted at in the vague expression ‘their other great deeds’ (τὰ τε ἄλλα). The fact that the *Histories* contains much material and many narrative threads not hinted at by the prefaces reveals these as the first baby-steps – wobbly, but impressive – of a nascent tradition of prose preface writing. This makes it legitimate to look for themes and messages in the work not signalled by the prefaces.

Moreover, we know from Diodorus’ *Bibliothēke* that the concept of historiography as memorial can be closely intertwined with the idea of history as teacher, when readers follow the historiographical examples in order to be memorialised in their turn. Such a motivation for action is certainly seen in Herodotus’ *Histories*, most prominently in Leonidas’ reason for staying at Thermopylae (‘great fame would come to him if he stayed there’, μένοντι δὲ αὐτοῦ κλέος μέγα ἐλείπετο: Hdt. 7.220.2), and is often said to be inspired by a Homeric ethos. It is certainly true that both Herodotus and his characters are inspired by Homer in their attitude to *kleos*, but by expressing his wish to preserve *kleos* in his preface and then showing such *kleos* to be a motivation for noble actions, Herodotus comes very close to expressing a didactic purpose which becomes explicit only in Hellenistic historiography.

MORALISING TECHNIQUES

Moralising in Narrative Pauses

Herodotus’ *Histories* is a colourful tapestry of varied stories, woven together in a way that brings out contrasts, similarities and variations. Guiding statements (‘transitional sentences’) at the beginning and end of each episode tell the reader how it fits together with the episodes surrounding it and let the alert reader find his or her way through the wild-growing *logoi* (although there is also pleasure in allowing oneself to get lost in them and forget the connections for a while). Such an alert reader will also find narratorial guidance of another sort, in the shape of moralising introductions, conclusions and concomitant statements that tell them how to read some of the varied episodes, in the same way as in the narratives of Polybius and Diodorus.

A recurring feature of Herodotus’ style is a minimalist type of ring-composition which bookends an episode or digression with similar statements. For instance, Herodotus introduces the story of how Gyges goes from being commander of the king’s bodyguard to becoming king with ‘Here is how the kingdom passed from the Heraclidae, who had been the Lydian royal family, to Croesus’ family, who were called the Mermnadae’ (1.7.1), and

seven chapters later the story is rounded off by the very similar statement ‘That is how the Mermnadae deprived the Heraclidae of the rulership of Lydia and gained it for themselves’ (1.14.1).³ These statements sometimes carry a moral evaluation, such as ‘A short while later, however, retribution for Polycrates’ death caught up with Oroetes’ (3.126.1), introducing a story which a few chapters later is concluded with the very similar statement ‘And that is how retribution for the death of Polycrates of Samos caught up with Oroetes of Persia’ (3.128.5).⁴

There are also numerous instances of introductory, concluding and concomitant moralising in the work which are not picked up by correlative statements, but work exactly like their Hellenistic counterparts. An example is this conclusion to the story of how Cyrus the Great becomes king of Persia:

Ἀστυάγης μὲν νῦν βασιλεύσας ἐπ’ ἔτεα πέντε καὶ τριήκοντα οὕτω τῆς βασιληΐης κατεπαύσθη, Μῆδοι δὲ ὑπέκυψαν Πέρσῃσι διὰ τὴν τοῦτου πικρότητα, ἄρξαντες τῆς ἅνω Ἰλίου ποταμοῦ Ἀσίης ἐπ’ ἔτεα τριήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν δυῶν δέοντα, πᾶρεξ ἢ ὅσον οἱ Σκύθαι ἤρχον.

In this way, Astyages was deposed from power having been king for thirty-five years, and the Medes came under the Persian yoke because of his harshness after having ruled Asia above the River Halys for 128 years (except for the time when the Scythians ruled). (Hdt. 1.130.1)

The story has ended with a defiant speech by the captive Astyages (1.129, in *oratio obliqua*) to the traitor Harpagus, which might well make a reader sympathetic to the fallen king. The moralising conclusion ensures a different response: although Astyages may have a point in chiding his former right-hand man, the passing of power from the Medes to the Persians is still primarily his fault because he wielded power too harshly.⁵

Particular to Herodotus’ *Histories* is the use of a moralising conclusion to present the narrator’s own view on an episode, custom or cause after a summary of one or more views held by internal characters or external groups of people. Examples are 2.64.2, where he expresses distaste at excuses offered by non-Greeks and non-Egyptians for having sex in temples, and 8.129.3, where he agrees with the Potidaeans that a tide that drowned Persian attackers was divine punishment for their desecration of a statue of Poseidon.

3 For a good discussion of these transitional sentences and their likely connection with oral story-telling see Lang (1984: 1–17).

4 Other examples of moralising bookending: 1.185.1 with 187.5 and 1.196.1 with 5.

5 Other examples of guiding moralising: 1.34.1, 1.197.1, 1.199.1, 2.119.2, 2.126.1, 3.75, 3.118.1, 4.164.4, 4.205, 5.124.1, 6.45.2, 6.72.1, 6.91.1, 6.138.4, 7.107.1, 8.13, 8.90.1, 8.106.4, 8.116.1, 9.37.2, 9.78.1.

Another Hellenistic type of moralising found in Herodotus is the moral digression. Herodotus is, of course, famed for his digressions, but most of them are of a different kind from the ones encountered in Polybius and Diodorus: most of Herodotus' digressions are narrative in the sense that they either (analeptically) narrate events that have led to an event or situation that forms part of his main narrative or (proleptically) narrate events that happen later than those of his main narrative, and which will result from them. Some of these narrative digressions are provoked by moral concerns, such as 8.105–6, which begins with the moralising introduction: 'One of these Pedaesians, Hermotimus, was the one to whom it happened to take the greatest revenge on someone who had wronged him of all the people we know of' (ἐκ τούτων δὴ τῶν Πηδασέων ὁ Ἑρμότιμος ἦν τῷ μεγίστη τίσις ἤδη ἀδικηθέντι ἐγένετο πάντων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν: 8.105.1). After the story of the crime and the revenge, which is told with enough evaluative phrasing to make sure the reader knows where his loyalties should lie (ἔργων ἀνοσιωτάτων: 8.105.2), the digression is rounded off with the moralising conclusion: 'So this is how vengeance and Hermotimus caught up with Panionius' (Πανιώνιον μὲν νυν οὕτω περιῆλθε ἢ τε τίσις καὶ Ἑρμότιμος [being picked up by a δέ in the next sentence continuing the main storyline]: 8.106.4).

Occasionally, Herodotus' digressions constitute pauses in his narrative rather than glimpses backwards and forwards in time, and most of these have a moral bearing. Some of them discuss the causes behind events in moral terms (e.g. 3.38, arguing that Cambyses' ridiculing the religious customs of others must have been caused by madness), some offer moral evaluations of specific actions (e.g. 9.71 on the greatest courage shown at Plataea), some follow associatively from the main narrative (e.g. 5.78 on how democracy made the Athenians better fighters), and quite a few are included for reasons of polemic (e.g. 2.120 on the Trojan War as divine punishment for the violation of guest-friendship).⁶ All of these types of digressions – causal, evaluative, associative and polemical – are common in the Hellenistic historiographers, as we have seen. It is worth quoting a Herodotean moral digression in order to compare it with its Hellenistic counterpart:

εἰ μὲν νυν Ξέρξης τε ἀπέπεμψε ταῦτα λέγοντα κήρυκα ἐς Ἄργος καὶ Ἀργείων ἄγγελοι ἀναβάντες ἐς Σοῦσα ἐπειρώτων Ἄρτοξέρξεα περὶ φιλίας, οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεκέως εἰπεῖν, οὐδέ τινα γνώμην περὶ αὐτῶν ἀποφαίνομαι ἄλλην γε ἢ τὴν περ αὐτοῖ Ἀργεῖοι λέγουσι: [2] ἐπίσταμαι δὲ τοσοῦτο ὅτι εἰ πάντες ἄνθρωποι τὰ οἰκῆα κακὰ ἐς μέσον συνενεῖκαιεν ἀλλάξασθαι βουλόμενοι τοῖσι πλησίοισι,

⁶ Digressive moralising in Herodotus: 2.120, 3.33, 3.38, 3.108, 5.78, 6.21, 6.27, 6.84, 7.133, 7.137, 7.139, 7.152, 7.190, 7.213, 8.20, 8.77, 9.65, 9.71, 9.100–1.

ἐγκύψαντες ἂν ἐς τὰ τῶν πέλας κακὰ ἀσπασίως ἕκαστοι αὐτῶν ἀποφεροῖατο ὀπίσω τὰ ἐσενεικαῖατο. [3] οὕτω δὲ οὐδ' Ἀργεῖοισι αἰσχιστα πεποιήται. ἐγὼ δὲ ὀφείλω λέγειν τὰ λεγόμενα, πείθεσθαι γε μὲν οὐ παντάπασι ὀφείλω, καί μοι τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος ἐχέτω ἐς πάντα λόγον· ἐπεὶ καὶ ταῦτα λέγεται, ὡς ἄρα Ἀργεῖοι ἦσαν οἱ ἐπικαλεσάμενοι τὸν Πέρσην ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ἐπειδὴ σφί πρὸς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους κακῶς ἢ αἰχμὴ ἐστήκεε, πᾶν δὴ βουλόμενοι σφίσι εἶναι πρὸ τῆς παρεούσης λύπης. τὰ μὲν περὶ Ἀργείων εἴρηται·

Now, if Xerxes did send a herald who said this to Argos and messengers from the Argives went up to Susa and asked Artoxerxes about an alliance, I cannot say with certainty, but I am not announcing any other opinion about them than what the Argives themselves are saying. (2) I believe that if all human beings brought their own individual evils to market wanting to exchange them with their neighbours, when they had looked closely at their neighbours' evils, each of them would gladly take back what he had brought himself. (3) And so what the Argives did was not the most shameful thing in the world. I for my part have a duty to say what I have heard, but I do not have a duty to trust all of it, and let this statement hold true for my entire work – considering that it is also said that it was the Argives who called the Persians into Greece, because the war with the Lacedaemonians was going badly and they wanted anything rather than their present grief. So much for the story of the Argives. (Hdt. 7.152–3.1)

This digression follows the Polybian schema: it is tied to its surrounding narrative by its first and last sentence, but in the middle strays quite far away from the circumstances that sparked it in order to generalise about human behaviour and offer programmatic comments on the writing of history.⁷ The digression is part historiographical comment on the unreliability of sources, part moral comment on events narrated. In other words, it is at the same time evaluative and polemical. Significantly, however, the moral point is not as straightforward as is mostly the case in Polybian and Diodoran digressions: it does not just comment on the events, but also encourages the reader to question his own way of making moral judgement by implying that some actions which seem inexcusable can, in effect, be excused if one knows the full circumstances.⁸ It is characteristic of Herodotus' moral messages that they are complex and thought-provoking, as we shall see below.

⁷ Whether Herodotus' statement here is, in fact, meant as programmatic for the *Histories* as a whole or is only meant to apply to this instance has been much discussed, but is of little consequence for the present study. For discussions see Lateiner (1989: 79–83), Thomas (2000: 188 with n. 47, 214), Baragwanath (2008: 122–59).

⁸ Baragwanath (2008: 214–17) offers a brilliant analysis of Herodotus' moral message in this passage (although she does not use that expression).

Moralising Integrated into the Narrative of Events

The most pervasive method of moralising within the narrative of events in the Hellenistic historiographers is evaluative phrasing. This practice is also found in Herodotus. It is used more sparingly than in Polybius and Diodorus; often the moral stance is signalled by just one epithet (οὐκ ὄσια: 3.16.2) or rhetorical technique, such as emphasis through negation (e.g. ‘not having consulted the Delphic Oracle about where they should go to found the colony, or having followed any of the traditional customs’: 5.42.2).⁹ Nevertheless, such expressions are an attempt at guiding the reader’s moral response to a narrated episode.¹⁰

Another type of Hellenistic moralising used by Herodotus is to signal a moral world-order by the correlations between actions and results. Sometimes this is done through straight statements of causal connections, such as ‘the goddess afflicted the Scythians who plundered her temple in Ascalon and all their descendants forever with hermaphroditism’ (τοῖσι δὲ τῶν Σκυθέων συλήσασι τὸ ἱρὸν τὸ ἐν Ἀσκάλῳνι καὶ τοῖσι τούτων αἰεὶ ἐκγόνοισι ἐνέσκηψε ὁ θεὸς θήλειαν νοῦσον: 1.105.4).¹¹ More often, the connection is established obliquely, through the narrative, as in the Hellenistic historiographers. Thus the Spartan Dorieus’ colonisation attempt fails because he does not consult the Delphic Oracle (5.42, with emphasis through negation; see above), and Miltiades, victor of Marathon, dies from a wound received as he is trying to rob a Parian temple (6.134–6).¹² The message propounded by these causal connections is by no means as

9 οὔτε τῶ ἐν Δελφοῖσι χρηστηρίῳ χρησάμενος ἐς ἥντινα γῆν κτίσων ἦ, οὔτε ποιήσας οὐδὲν τῶν νομιζομένων.

10 Other examples of passages containing evaluative phrasing with a moral bearing: 1.127.2 (θεοβλαβής), 2.124, 2.129, 2.151–2, 3.16.1–4, 3.25, 3.30–1, 3.34–7, 3.55, 3.67, 3.117, 3.147, 3.149, 4.11 (ἀμείνω), 4.93, 4.106, 4.146 (οὐκ ὄσια), 6.15, 6.23–4, 6.31–2, 6.61, 6.96, 6.101.3, 6.114, 7.35, 7.118–19, 7.164, 7.225–7, 7.229, 7.238, 8.72, 8.112, 8.113.3, 8.117, 9.1, 9.64.

11 Other examples of straight statements of causal connections with a moral bearing: 1.106 (Scythians toppled because of oppressive rule), 1.66.1 (prosperity makes the Spartans warlike), 2.128 (hated kings are refused fame), 3.67 (Smerdis is generous and is loved), 4.149 (the children of the Spartan clan of the Aegeidae always die young, until they build a temple), 4.152 (the Samians help the Cretan guide left behind by the colonisers of Thera, and this becomes the beginning of a strong friendship between the Samians and the Therans), 7.231 (Aristodemus is punished for cowardice).

12 Other examples: 5.85 (Athenians who try to carry off divine statues from Aegina are struck with madness and kill each other), 6.139–40 (the Pelasgians create their own oracle, which is later fulfilled), 6.66 (Cleomenes gets Cobon to bribe the Pythian priestess to deliver an oracle in his favour; Cobon and the priestess are found out and banished [and Cleomenes will suffer later]), 7.181 (Pytheas fights bravely and is honoured by his Persian captors), 7.223.3–4 (high Persian casualties because of whip-wielding by officers), 7.233 (the Thebans who go over to the Persians end badly; emphasis by negation).

uniform and easily decoded as the one established by similar means in Polybius' *Histories* and Diodorus' *Bibliothēke* (a problem we shall return to below), but the technique is certainly used.

Much more regularly than either of these types of moralising, Herodotus uses moralising vignettes, a technique widespread in both Polybius and Diodorus as well as apparently many of the now fragmentary Hellenistic histories. Herodotean vignettes are typically slightly longer than the ones found in Polybius and Diodorus, but they tend to follow the same pattern of scene-setting, the presence of often two and sometimes more characters, and direct or reported speech by at least one character. A good example is the negotiations between Aristagoras of Miletus and Cleomenes of Sparta, which are narrated over three chapters (5.49–51). It falls in two parts taking place at two different occasions over the space of three days. The first part consists of a brief scene-setting which introduces a map that Aristagoras has brought with him (5.49.1), followed by a speech by Aristagoras in *oratio recta* punctuated by the narratorial remark that 'he said this pointing to the map' (5.49.5), and ends with the information that Cleomenes asks for two days to think about Aristagoras' proposal. The second part begins with a further scene-setting (5.50.1) and then combines indirect and direct speech in narrating a conversation between Aristagoras and Cleomenes, during which the distance from the Ionian coast to the palace of the Persian king becomes the reason why the Spartan rejects the proposal. Here, the narrator describes Aristagoras' efforts to persuade Cleomenes as *διαβάλλων*, 'intentionally misleading' (5.50.2),¹³ the only evaluative word uttered in the narrator's voice during the episode. Finally (5.51) the scene shifts to Cleomenes' house, where Aristagoras follows him as a suppliant, and a third character is introduced: Cleomenes' daughter Gorgo. The theme also shifts, from geography to money, as the narrator tells us that Aristagoras offers increasingly large bribes to Cleomenes until Gorgo speaks in *oratio recta*: 'Father, the stranger will corrupt you if you do not remove yourself from his company' (*πάτερ, διαφθερέει σε ὁ ξεῖνος, ἦν μὴ ἀποστᾶς ἡς*: 5.51.2). The vignette ends with Cleomenes 'being pleased with his daughter's advice' (*ἠσθεῖς τοῦ παιδίου τῆ παραίνεσι*: 5.51.3) and sending Aristagoras packing. There is no narratorial conclusion. The moral is unmistakable, though: Aristagoras was intentionally misleading Cleomenes and trying to corrupt him, and the Spartan king was only saved by his uncorrupted child – a girl, even, demonstrating Spartan peculiarity in gender roles. Gorgo's moral authority is reinforced by her statement being in *oratio recta*, and by internal approval by the

13 For *διαβάλλειν* in Herodotus see Pelling (2007).

criticised character himself. The lack of narratorial conclusion is typical of moralising vignettes in Herodotus, as in many of those found in Diodorus.¹⁴

Closely related to moralising vignettes are moralising speeches. There are a few of these in Herodotus' *Histories*, and, as with speeches in the Hellenistic historiographers, their moral lessons have to be discerned from their reception by their internal audience, the degree to which their moral points concur with the narrative, and the degree of moral authority held by the speaker. Thus, the reader is brought to take the dying speech of Cambyses seriously (3.65) because both its moral stance and its narrative of past events correspond to those of the narrator, and because the speech itself acts as an evaluation of Cambyses' actions by an internal authority, namely Cambyses himself, who has now, on his death-bed, 'become sensible' (ἔσωφρόνησε: 3.64.5). Written letters in the *Histories* function in the same way.¹⁵

A particular kind of speech, which occurs in a particular kind of vignette in the *Histories*, is the speech of the wise adviser, also sometimes called the tragic warner, in the vignette of ruler and wise adviser.¹⁶ The first and programmatic such vignette is the encounter between Croesus and Solon in book 1 where Solon offers important moral advice (the details of which we shall return to below), which Croesus would have done well to heed. Later on, Croesus becomes the wise and equally ignored adviser first to Cyrus, then to Cambyses. In the last three books, the quintessential wise adviser is Artabanus, who repeatedly advises Xerxes, but to no avail. The common traits of these wise advisers are that (1) they argue their cases on a moral basis, (2) their advice is ignored, and (3) the neglect of their advice leads to disaster for the ruler. They function as moral authorities whose judgement the reader can trust and whose advice he might decide to follow in his own life as far as possible.

Moral judgements by internal authorities are widely used in Herodotus: Darius is judged greedy and, by implication, impious by an inscription in a tomb he opens (1.187); Persian popular wit designates Cyrus 'father', Cambyses 'master' and Darius 'shopkeeper' (3.89.3); and the Spartans

¹⁴ Other moralising vignettes in Herodotus: 1.30-3, 1.43-4, 1.86-7, 1.88-90, 1.158-9, 3.14-15, 3.21-4, 7.100-5, 7.135, 7.45-52, 8.26, 8.79, 9.16, 9.78-9, 9.82, 9.122.

¹⁵ Other moralising speeches in Herodotus: 1.71, 1.206, 1.207, 5.92, 6.86, 6.109; letters: 1.212, 3.40.

¹⁶ The concept of the wise adviser in Herodotus was first explored by Lattimore (1939), who divides the stereotype into 'the tragic warner' and 'the practical adviser' and offers a long list of both types. In present-day Herodotus scholarship, however, it is the tragic-warner type that has become universally recognised, and which is most often called the 'wise adviser'. For more recent discussions see Stahl (1975), Dewald (1985), Flory (1987), Pelling (1991), Shapiro (1994).

realise that the Athenians will become stronger than them by gaining democracy (5.91).¹⁷ The ultimate internal authority in the *Histories* is oracles, particularly the Delphic Oracle. When oracles predict punishment for an action (1.13) or command characters to atone for their actions, the reader has to understand that those actions were wrong – particularly as the atonement usually makes the unwanted consequences go away, thus proving them to have been brought on by the divine (e.g. 1.19 and 22).¹⁸

The dominant type of moralising in Herodotus' *Histories*, however, is one that is not found in either Polybius or Diodorus, namely moralising by means of patterning and repetition. The fact that there is a pattern in Herodotus according to which a rich and powerful man is brought low by unpredictable and sudden disaster has long been recognised.¹⁹ For the purposes of the present study it is important to note that wealth and power, that is, supreme good fortune, tend to make Herodotean characters arrogant and overconfident, and that this is part of what leads to their downfall. This connection between good fortune, arrogance and downfall/*peripeteia* points forward to some of the most dominant moralising themes in Polybius, Diodorus and the fragmentary Hellenistic historiographers, as we have seen in Part I.

Space restrictions prevent an overview of the variations of the pattern in all its instances throughout the *Histories*; the following offers an outline only, with references to further reading in the footnotes. The pattern is established in book 1, by the programmatic story of Croesus (Hdt. 1.26–56, 1.69–91 and 1.206–14). At the beginning of this story, Croesus believes himself to be the happiest man in the world and wants the wise man Solon to confirm this. Instead he gets a speech about the uncertainty of human life and the malicious jealousy of the divine, during which Solon famously declares that no one should be called happy before he has died, but only 'favoured by fortune' (πρὶν δ' ἂν τελευτήσῃ, ἐπισχεῖν, μηδὲ καλέειν κω ὄλβιον ἄλλ' εὐτυχέα: Hdt. 1.32). In the subsequent narrative Croesus first loses his only able-bodied son in a freak accident (1.35–44), then impiously tests the famous oracles (Hdt. 1.46–9), asks Delphi whether he should make war on Persia and receives misleading answers which lead him to go ahead, and finally loses his wealth and power – the two things that specifically marked him out, in his own mind, as happy (ὄλβιος) – and is taken captive by King Cyrus of Persia (Hdt. 1.86). Cyrus decides to burn Croesus alive, and on the lit pyre Croesus shouts out the name of Solon. This is a

17 Other examples of internal evaluation: 2.115, 3.30.1, 3.43, 3.64, 7.228.

18 Other examples of moral evaluations by oracles: 1.167, 1.174, 2.133, 5.114. For the narrative authority of the Delphic Oracle in Herodotus see Kindt (2006).

19 Major studies of this pattern are Immerwahr (1966), Fornara (1971), Lateiner (1989), Harrison (2000).

clear instance of judgement by internal authority and shows that we are meant to take Solon's speech as a true insight: human life in the world of Herodotus' *Histories* is, indeed, uncertain, and prosperity only temporary.

As the *Histories* progress, Croesus' success and downfall are repeated, with variations, by each of the Persian kings: Cyrus is a good king in the beginning, but becomes overconfident and believes himself blessed by the gods (ἐμεῦ θεοὶ κήδονται καὶ μοι πάντα προδεικνύουσι τὰ ἐπιφερόμενα: 1.209.4), which leads to him attacking the Massagetae and losing his life. Cambyses is bad (and mad) from the outset and commits numerous acts of both impiety (3.16, 25, 29) and cruelty (3.14, 27, 31–3). He finally dies from a self-inflicted wound after discovering that he has killed his brother needlessly and lost his throne to an impostor (3.64). Darius is an acceptable king to begin with, but then becomes increasingly overconfident (4.83, 4.91) and cruel (4.84), leading up to his Scythian expedition, which ends in disaster (4.134–42).²⁰ Finally, the biggest villain of them all, Xerxes, is led to invade Greece partly by his own ambition, partly by divine dreams playing on this ambition.²¹ He then commits transgressions and atrocities – from whipping the Hellespont (7.35) and being mistaken for Zeus (7.56) to cutting young men in half (7.39) and burying children alive (7.114) – and finally loses the war and his dignity (7.115–20). Other characters in the work display similar, albeit shorter, story arcs, such as the Egyptian king Apries (Hdt. 2.161–3 and 169) and Polycrates, tyrant of Samos (3.39–43 and 120–5). The lessons to be learned from this pattern are not uncomplicated, and we shall return to them below.

A type of moralising related to the repetition of a pattern is moralising by means of a narrative juxtaposition. This can be done within a passage, as in 8.99, which begins with a description of celebrations in Susa because of Xerxes' capture of Athens, marking it the first half of a pair with μέν, and then narrates the arrival of the message about the defeat at Salamis and the Persian reaction to it in the corresponding δέ-clause. Most often, however,

²⁰ Waters (1971: 62–3 with n. 44) argues that, as Darius survives his Scythian adventure, he cannot be said to meet divine vengeance. Waters uses this as an argument against moralising and patterns in Herodotus. However, Herodotus portrays Darius' escape from Scythia as a very close call and hints that complete disaster would have followed if the Ionians guarding the bridge had not remained loyal, or if Darius had not left Scythia in time (Hdt. 4.134–42). The fact that Darius does see reason and retreats before it is too late means that he, in contrast to Cyrus, is saved by his own realisation of the limits set to his power (thus Gould 1989: 105). It is also worth remembering that Herodotus was writing moral history, not fiction: the historical Darius did in fact escape from his Scythian adventure unscathed, so Herodotus could not very well let his narrative alter ego die on the campaign. He was, however, free to interpret Darius' career as an example of arrogance and overconfidence checked at the last moment and of disaster being averted.

²¹ Baragwanath (2008: 242–53) offers a perceptive analysis of the interplay between the different factors influencing Xerxes' decision-making.

the contrast is played out over longer stretches of narrative, and the reader has to make the comparison without hints such as μέν–δέ constructions. Thus, Spartan courage, steadfastness and fighting ability at Thermopylae are contrasted with Persian uselessness in 7.208–12, and, more subtly, the hunger and desperation of Xerxes' army on their flight to the Hellespont after Salamis (8.115–20) contrast with the exaggerated and overconfident splendour of the same army when it reached the Hellespont at the outset of the expedition (7.44–56), heightened by the moralising vignette of the conversation between Xerxes and Artabanus about the fragility of human life and success at 7.45–52.

Importantly, however, none of this is ever uncomplicated. Herodotus shows very clearly that not even Xerxes is all bad and that his downfall was not simply due to his transgressions. It is now time to explore what messages it may be possible to extract from the patterns and their complications.

MORAL LESSONS

The overall lesson of the *Histories*, as has been hinted above, is one about the relationship between human beings and the divine forces that rule the world. We begin with the programmatic story of Croesus, the rich and powerful Lydian king who becomes a slave of Cyrus the Great. Such a spectacular *peripeteia* forcefully conveys the message that human life is in the hands of superhuman powers and therefore uncertain. For didactic purposes, the crucial question is whether Croesus could have done anything to avoid his fate, and, interestingly, the answer to this question seems deliberately to have been left ambiguous. In Solon's speech there is no hint that human beings can influence their own fate. Human existence is ruled by τὸ θεῖον, τύχη and ὁ θεός, which appear to be either different aspects of the same force or different expressions for it.²² On the other hand, the narrator introduces the story of Croesus' loss of his son by stating that 'a big righteous retribution from the god (ἐκ θεοῦ νέμεσις μεγάλη) struck Croesus, as far as one can guess, because he thought himself to be the happiest of all men' (1.34.1).²³ This amounts to saying that if Croesus had lis-

22 Harrison (2000: 158–79) has a good discussion of these concepts in Herodotus and concludes that it is impossible to distinguish rigidly between them.

23 Waters (1971: 47) argues that Herodotus only introduced the idea of nemesis 'to assist in presenting to his audience, mainly persons of little historical perceptiveness and obviously having no historical training at all, certain facts and features of the history he was recording'. To this it is necessary to ask (1) what 'historical training' did Herodotus himself have in an age before history was invented? And (2) if what he really meant was 'some people say this was nemesis, but I do not believe in that', why did he not write that when he elsewhere is not afraid to put forward unpopular ideas (e.g. 7.139)?

tened to Solon and learned humility, his son would not have been killed.²⁴ However, when Cyrus has decided to spare Croesus and let him send to the Delphic Oracle to ask about its reasons for tricking him into invading Persia (1.90–1), it tells him that ‘the god’ was punishing him, not for his own arrogance, but for the misdemeanour of his ancestor Gyges. It also tells him that Apollo has postponed the destined disaster for three years, but that even the gods cannot alter fate (1.91.1–2).

Herodotus never attempts to explain the contradiction between these three different explanations for Croesus’ misfortune, and probably no logical explanation should be attempted: as Harrison has rightly and forcefully argued, contradictions are common in all belief systems.²⁵ Moreover, important events in the *Histories* are often overdetermined, that is, brought about by a number of different and sometimes logically mutually exclusive causes such as predetermination, divine vengeance and purely human motivations.²⁶ This overdetermination does not make the story of Croesus devoid of a moral, it just makes the moral less clear-cut: Croesus suffers partly because human life is inherently uncertain and subject to the will of jealous and incomprehensible divine powers, partly because he does not stay moderate and humble in his success,²⁷ partly because one of his ances-

24 It has been pointed out (by e.g. Shimron 1989: 35) that the narrator ascribes only the loss of Croesus’ son and not his further fate to superhuman punishment. This is strictly true, but the fact that the idea of divine vengeance has been expressed in connection with Croesus’ overconfidence makes it easy for the reader to keep it in mind in the narrative, which shows him not learning from the loss of his son.

25 Various explanations have been attempted by scholars trying to make logical sense of the story. Shimron (1989: 42–9) argues that Herodotus himself did not believe in the Pythia’s explanation (or, indeed, any of the oracles given to Croesus), basing his argument on the λέγεται in 1.91.1. However, this λέγεται is not a distancing device; it simply shows that the narrator (and Herodotus) was not present when the Pythia gave its answer, but later had it reported to him. What Herodotus personally believed and did not believe is impossible to know, but it is clear that his narrator persona holds an inconsistent religious belief, and we can therefore assume that such an inconsistency was acceptable to both Herodotus himself and his intended audience. See Harrison (2000: *passim*) and Versnel (2011: 527–38).

26 This feature of Herodotean causation has been recognised by many. See particularly Lateiner (1989: 196–210), Gould (1989: 61–9), Pelling (1991: 139–42). Herodotus’ narrative use of complex and multiple character motivations is explored by Baragwanath (2008).

27 Waters (1971: 3, 45–7) argues that our general impression of Croesus is of a good and ‘pious but foolish person’, and uses this to argue against the episode forming a pattern with the narrative of Polycrates. Gould (1989: 125) and Harrison (2000: 42–3) also argue that Croesus is supposed to be a good man. This positive attitude to Croesus may have been influenced by his role in earlier Greek poetry (cf. Georges 1994: 169–76), but I do not believe that it is to be found in the *Histories*. Here Croesus is ‘the first to commit injustice against the Greeks’ (Hdt. 1.5), he is rude to Solon and loses his temper when he does not receive the answers he was hoping for, he shows arrogance in believing himself to be the happiest of all, and surely it is a sign of impiety to test the famous oracles before daring to trust them (see the words of the Croesus of the *Cyropaedia* 7.2.17). It is a modern misconception that this shows positive ‘scientific research’ (Waters 1971: 45). Croesus only

tors committed regicide. Thus the main message of the story is descriptive and thought-directing: human life is uncertain because it is ruled by powers whose motives we cannot fathom. But from the realisation of this message it is a small step to interpreting it prescriptively: we should stay moderate and humble in our times of success because they may well change to disaster in the blink of an eye. By avoiding arrogance we show proper understanding of the way the world works and our place in it as mere mortals, and this makes us more likely to avoid the jealousy of the mysterious god(s) and thus more likely to continue to prosper.

The same is true for the downfalls of overconfident and abusive men in power throughout the *Histories*: these seem to be brought about partly as divine punishment for crimes committed in the arrogance that inevitably follows great wealth and power, partly because the downfalls are either fated or simply necessitated by the inherent uncertainty of human life. The narrator never provides an explicit interpretation. Outside of the stories that conform to this pattern, however, disasters are sometimes ascribed by the narrator to divine vengeance. Such vengeance can punish individuals for their own transgressions (e.g. sacrilege, 8.129) or for those of an ancestor (e.g. 1.13 and 1.91), and the narrator will sometimes express doubt over which exact action led to the punishment (e.g. 6.75–84.1) or over whether it was a case of divine vengeance at all (e.g. 3.33).²⁸ In cases of doubt, a punishment that somehow mirrors the crime seems to be an indicator of divine involvement (e.g. Cambyses wounding himself ‘in the same place where he himself had previously struck the Egyptian god Apis’: 3.64), pointing forward to the fascination with mirroring or ironic punishment seen in Diodorus, Timaeus and Phylarchus.²⁹ A revealing passage is 7.133, where the narrator declares that he ‘cannot say what misfortune happened to the Athenians’ because they had killed Persian envoys.³⁰ It shows that he fully expects some punishment to have struck the men responsible but that he simply cannot put his finger on the exact events that fulfilled that function. In Sparta, he goes on to explain, the divine punishment struck the sons of two heralds who had been sent to Persia to pay with their lives for the Spartan transgression, but been pardoned by Xerxes; and this coincidence shows that it was indeed divine punishment (‘that it fell on the sons of the

becomes good, wise and pious from experiencing on his own body the truth of Solon’s words.

28 Other examples of divine punishment: 1.105, 1.167, 2.120, 2.133, 3.128.5, 4.205, 5.85, 6.72, 6.84.3, 6.91, 6.134–5 and 137, 6.139–40, 8.20, 8.105–6, 8.129, 9.64.

29 See also 7.137.

30 ὃ τι δὲ τοῖσι Ἀθηναίοισι ταῦτα ποιήσασι τοὺς κήρυκας συνήνεκε ἀνεθέλιτον γενέσθαι, οὐκ ἔχω εἰπαί τι, πλὴν ὅτι σφέων ἢ χώρα καὶ ἡ πόλις ἐδηλώθη. ἀλλὰ τοῦτο οὐ διὰ ταύτην τὴν αἰτίην δοκέω γενέσθαι: Hdt. 7.133.

men who had gone up to the king because of the wrath . . . makes it clear to me that it was a divine event because of the wrath', τὸ δὲ συμπεσεῖν ἐς τοὺς παῖδας τῶν ἀνδρῶν τούτων τῶν ἀναβάντων πρὸς βασιλέα διὰ τὴν μῆνιν, . . . δῆλον ὦν μοι ὅτι θεῖον ἐγένετο τὸ πρῆγμα ἐκ τῆς μήνιος: 7.137).

Sometimes divine destruction of human lives is rather less straightforward than simple punishment. Occasionally, the gods seem to be upholding some sort of law, according to which there need to be equal amounts of good and bad fortune in the life of each human being. This seems to be the case with Polycrates, who famously tries to safeguard his good fortune by inflicting grief on himself by throwing away a precious ring, only to get it back by a freak accident and then suffer death and crucifixion (3.39–43 and 3.120–5). Although Polycrates has certainly done enough to deserve divine punishment – killing and exiling his brothers, committing piracy (3.39) – the fact that the superhuman forces feel compelled to give him back his ring before punishing him points to some sort of balance to be upheld.³¹ A similar mechanism seems at work for Ameinocles, who is only mentioned once in the *Histories*, in order for the narrator to state that he paid for his sudden wealth by losing his child (ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν τᾶλλα οὐκ εὐτυχέων εὐρήμασι μέγα πλούσιος ἐγένετο· ἦν γάρ τις καὶ τοῦτον ἄχαρις συμφορῆ λυπεῦσα παιδοφόνος: 7.190). At other times the actions of the divine forces seem incomprehensible,³² such as at 7.12–19, where divine dreams bully Xerxes into invading Greece against his better judgment, and 9.93–4, where 'the gods' for no apparent reason send wolves against their own sacred flocks and then punish the town of Apollonia for punishing the sleeping shepherd. These divine actions are never explained. The reader is left with the impression that human life is uncertain because it is the subject of incomprehensible and ultimately unknowable superhuman forces whose motives can at best be guessed at.

Moreover, Herodotus' gods are a lot readier to deal out death and suffering than long life and happiness. Very few cases of divine rewards are mentioned in the *Histories* apart from that of Cleobis and Biton, who are rewarded for an extraordinary display of filial piety with the dubious gift of instant death (1.31.1–3), and that of Croesus, having his dire fate post-

³¹ In this case the gods work through a human being, Oroetes. For a brilliant discussion of the function of the alternative explanations of his motives see Baragwanath (2008: 96–100). For a perceptive discussion of the Polycrates story which focuses on Polycrates' transgressions rather than divine jealousy see van der Veen (1996: 6–22).

³² Shimron (1989) makes much of this and takes it to mean that Herodotus did not believe in oracles and miracles. I would still argue that we cannot know what Herodotus believed, but that his narrative shows repeated divine intervention, some of which happens to be incomprehensible by application of human logic.

poned for three years by Apollo (1.91.2–3).³³ Even in books 6–9, the narrative of the Persian invasions of Greece, the gods' siding with the Greeks seems to have more to do with the impieties and cruelties committed by the Persians than with a desire to reward the Greeks for good behaviour.³⁴

The overall didactic lesson of the *Histories*, then, is not to feel too comfortable in success and not to let good fortune go to your head. This is strikingly similar to the dominant moral lesson of Polybius' *Histories* and one of the main lessons of Diodorus' *Bibliothēke*. In the works of these two Hellenistic authors, the lesson is often delivered in the context of a victorious general deciding how to treat the defeated and/or his captives. Such situations are also found in Herodotus. The most famous is the one between the victorious Cyrus and his captive Croesus, where Cyrus first tries to burn Croesus alive, but is then intrigued by Croesus' calling out the name 'Solon' and decides to put out the flames (1.86). That this is the right decision and the one a reader should emulate is not stated explicitly, but signalled through various means. Firstly, the narrator expresses uncertainty about Cyrus' motivation for burning Croesus and offers three different suggestions (sacrificial victim, votive offering or test of Croesus' status with the gods: 1.86.2), demonstrating the strangeness and incomprehensibility of the decision. In contrast, when Cyrus then changes his mind and decides to spare Croesus, his motivation is expressed with complete certainty; now the narrator understands his reasoning (1.86.6; see below). Secondly, typically of this world of divine dominance and human powerlessness, it is, in fact, not Cyrus who spares Croesus in the end, but Apollo, who makes it rain to put out the fire that has become too strong for human beings to control. This act of divine intervention makes Cyrus – and with him the reader – realise that 'Croesus was dear to the gods and a good man', and, by implication, that it was wrong to maltreat him (1.87.2).³⁵ It is instructive to compare Cyrus' reasons for not burning Croesus with the moralising statements we have seen in Hellenistic historiography:

καὶ τὸν Κῦρον ἀκούσαντα τῶν ἐρμηνέων τὰ Κροῖσος εἶπε, μεταγόντα τε καὶ ἐννόσαντα ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐὼν ἄλλον ἄνθρωπον, γενόμενον ἐαυτοῦ εὐδαιμονίῃ οὐκ ἐλάσσω, ζῶντα πυρὶ διδοίῃ, πρὸς τε τούτοισι δέισαντα τὴν τίσιν καὶ ἐπιλεξάμενον ὡς οὐδὲν εἶη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι ἀσφαλῶς ἔχον, κελεύειν σβεννύναι τὴν ταχίστην τὸ καίμενον πῦρ καὶ καταβιβάζειν Κροῖσόν τε καὶ τοὺς μετὰ Κροῖσου.

When Cyrus had heard the explanation that Croesus gave, he changed his mind and realised that he himself was a human being and was about to burn

33 Other divine rewards: 2.141 (divine help is sent in the form of an army of mice), 2.181 (prayer to Aphrodite is answered).

34 Impieties and cruelties of the Persians: 7.32–3, 7.39, 7.53, 8.32–3, 8.35–9, 8.53.

35 The same points about this scene are made in more detail in Hau (2008: 123–5).

alive another human being, who had been his equal in good fortune. And fearing the punishment for this action and considering that nothing is safe in human life, he ordered the burning fire put out as quickly as possible and told both Croesus and those with him to come down. (Hdt. 1.86.6)

The stress on being human, as opposed to divine, is recognisable from Diodoran moralising on human ability/inability to handle good fortune, as are the idea that mistreating someone in one's power may well bring down (divine) punishment (τίσις in Herodotus, τιμωρία in Diodorus), and the stress on the shared humanity of the victim and the perpetrator, signalled here by 'who had been his equal in good fortune', γενόμενον ἕωυτοῦ εὐδαιμονίῃ οὐκ ἔλάσσω. The uncertainty of human life and the risk that the victor may one day end up in the same situation as his captive, which are both also implied by this expression, are *topoi* in Polybius. Herodotus' techniques to bring this message across are more subtle than those employed by the two Hellenistic historiographers, but the message is fundamentally the same.³⁶

Apart from arrogant and immoderate behaviour in good fortune, Herodotean readers are taught to avoid impiety and cruelty. These two vices are often displayed together, most magnificently by Cambyses, son of Cyrus the Great. In the course of thirteen chapters he burns down a temple of Zeus and pushes his men so hard on a poorly planned desert crossing that they descend into cannibalism (3.25), kills Egyptian officials (3.28), whips Egyptian priests and tries to kill the sacred Apis bull (3.29), assassinates his own brother (3.30) and kills his sister-wife in anger (3.32), shoots dead a young boy to prove his sanity, buries prominent Persians alive (3.35) and makes fun of a cult statue of Hephaestus (3.37). During this narrative, Cambyses' madness is repeatedly stressed (ἐμμανής: 3.25.2; ὑπομαργότερος: 3.29.1; οὐ φρενήρης: 3.30.1 and 3.35.4 ἐξεμάνη: 3.33.1 and 3.34.1) and his actions are labelled 'crimes' (ἀδίκημα: 3.30.1) and 'evil deeds' (τῶν κακῶν: 3.31.1). The narrative is rounded off with a moralising digression, which states that ridiculing religious and other customs is a sign of madness (3.38).³⁷ When Cambyses dies in 3.64–6, the statement that his self-inflicted wound is said to be in 'exactly the same place where he had previously struck Apis the Egyptian god' implies that his death is brought about by divine forces as punishment for his actions, but the connection is never made explicitly. This is typical of Herodotus' moralising: characters who

³⁶ A similar moral of moderation in victory is propounded by 9.78–9, where Pausanias refuses to maltreat Mardonius' dead body after his victory at Plataea, although here the contrast is between Greeks and barbarians rather than between human beings and immortal gods.

³⁷ πανταχῆ ὧν μοι δῆλα ἐστὶ ὅτι ἐμάνη μεγάλως ὁ Καμβύσης: οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἰροῖσι τε καὶ νομαίοισι ἐπεχείρησε καταγελᾶν: 3.38.1.

commit impiety in the *Histories* tend to come to grief, but the connection between the crime and the punishment is made clear at most through juxtaposition of action and result, as, for instance, in the narrative of Miltiades, who is injured in the attempt to plunder a sanctuary and later dies from gangrene.³⁸ Interestingly, cruelty can also be interpreted as impiety, as in the fate of Pheretime, who has taken an exaggerated revenge on her son's murderers (thus also transgressing the bounds of reciprocity) and is eaten alive by worms 'as if the gods are displeased by [lit. jealous at] too strong vengeance by human beings' (ὡς ἄρα ἀνθρώποισι αἰ λίην ἰσχυραὶ τιμωρίαι πρὸς θεῶν ἐπίφθονοι γίνονται: 7.205). The impious deed does not have to be as spectacular as this, though: people who ignore oracles and bad omens, or misinterpret them, also fail in their projects and often come to sticky ends.³⁹

Correspondingly, piety is an important virtue in the *Histories*. Characters who follow the – correctly understood – advice of oracles fare well (3.153, 5.1, 5.114), and Pausanias' steadfast waiting for favourable omens at the Battle of Plataea seems to earn the Greeks the support of the gods (9.61–2). Piety as recommended by Herodotus is not as straightforward as the piety propounded by Diodorus, however. It is complicated by the fact that the Herodotean gods can use trickery to get what they want, and that some clever human beings are occasionally able to manipulate the divine forces. Thus, the Cymeans ask the oracle at Branchidae what they should do about a suppliant who is putting them in danger. The oracle tells them to give him up. Suspicious of this answer, the Cymeans Aristodicus goes to the oracle and manages to trick it into revealing its true intention: it gave them bad advice in order to bring them to destruction because they were even asking what to do with a suppliant. The Cymeans then hand over the hapless suppliant to a third party and avoid disaster (1.158–9). Similarly, King Sabacus of Egypt dreams that he should cut all the priests in half, but he believes that the dream has been sent in order to drive him to sacrilege, which the gods could then punish, so instead of obeying it he leaves Egypt and goes into exile, apparently avoiding the catastrophe (2.139). Aristodicus and Sabacus are thus rewarded for their sagacity by averting the looming disaster, and the narrative seems to encourage the reader to admire them.⁴⁰ Apparently, blind obedience to the gods is not always the same as true piety.

38 That makes Cambyses (3.64–6), Miltiades (6.134–5) and Cleomenes (6.72–86) three Herodotean characters who die of wounds received in odd ways as a consequence of committing impiety. Other characters commit impious deeds and suffer, either in the same episode or later: 1.105, 1.183.10, 5.42, 6.66, 6.91–2.1, 6.96, 6.101.3.

39 E.g. 1.55–6, 5.42, 6.76. Croesus' testing of the famous oracles is another instance of impiety (1.46–8).

40 Another example of clever human beings tricking the divine or getting away with reinterpretations of its will are the Athenians and Themistocles (7.139.6–143).

Alongside the unfathomable divine powers, another force rules the Herodotean world, more human, but no less powerful: the force of reciprocity.⁴¹ In its simplest form reciprocity means returning good for good and evil for evil (not necessarily proportionately), and in this form it is seen repeatedly in the *Histories*: from the tit-for-tat of the girl abductions in 1.1–4, via Darius' Greek campaign occasioned by Atossa's promise to the doctor who cured her breast cancer (3.133–4), to the proleptic statement about how the Spartans would later leave Decelea alone during the Peloponnesian War because the Deceleans had helped the Tyndaridae in mythical times (9.73), far-reaching political decisions in the *Histories* are made on the basis of personal or national reciprocity.⁴² On a smaller scale, characters in Herodotus' world are generally punished for their evil deeds and often repaid or even rewarded for their good ones by their fellow-human beings.⁴³ When reciprocity is breached, this earns harsh words from the narrator.⁴⁴ The relationship between kings and their subjects is probably also to be considered on this model: kings who treat their subjects well win loyalty and posthumous fame;⁴⁵ those who mistreat their subjects are deposed or at least defamed.⁴⁶ This is not quite the iron law of power being secured by mild treatment of the ruled that we saw in Diodorus, but it is not a million miles away from it.

Beside the divine and reciprocity, a third force plays a part in the Herodotean universe, namely the mechanism that leads from wealth and/or possession of a fertile land to luxurious living and from there to degeneration, softness and cowardice.⁴⁷ We meet it already in the Croesus story, where Croesus after his capture saves the Lydians from enslavement by turning them from a constant threat to their new Persian masters into a docile and unwarlike people by forcing them to wear luxurious clothing and spend their time playing music (1.155–7). In the narrative of the Persian Wars, the mechanism takes on explanatory force, as a moralising vignette presenting the exiled Spartan king Demaratus in conversation with

41 Reciprocity in Herodotus has often been discussed; see e.g. Gould (1991) and Braund (1998) with references to earlier scholarship.

42 Other examples are 3.1, 3.49, 4.152, 5.82–9, 5.99, 5.102 and 105, 6.108.

43 Human punishment: 2.100, 2.151–2, 3.49, 3.118–19, 4.202 and 4.205, 5.82–9, 5.102, 8.90, 8.105–6; human rewards/repayments: 1.42, 3.129–32, 3.139–41, 4.152, 5.90, 6.108, 7.181.

44 See e.g. 3.120.1 (Oroetes committed a terrible crime by murdering Polycrates although he did not know him) and 6.87.1 (despite the fact that the Aeginetans still have not paid for a wrong they have done to Athens, they feel they are the injured party).

45 See e.g. 2.129 and 133, 2.161–2 and 169, 3.89.3.

46 See e.g. 1.130.1, 2.124 and 128.

47 This pattern and its significant variations have been discussed by, among others, Flory (1987: 81–118), Hartog (1988), Gould (1989: 86–109) and Pelling (1997). Thomas (2000: 28–74) connects it with the environmental determinism of the Hippocratics.

Xerxes sets out a clear connection between Greek, and especially Spartan, poverty, freedom and courage in contrast with the luxury, slavery and cowardice of the Persians, thus offering a moralistic model for understanding the ultimate Greek victory (7.100–5). This causal connection is reinforced in the final chapter of the work, where, in an analeptic digression, Cyrus the Great advises his contemporary Persians against giving up their rugged lifestyle for a life in luxury. Combined with the reader's knowledge, largely from the *Histories* itself, of the luxurious lifestyle enjoyed by fifth-century Persians and the fact that they lost the war, this ending carries both great irony and great explanatory force. The fact that some important Persians (and Greeks) in the *Histories* subvert the stereotype compels a reader to engage actively in the narrative and ask himself at any given point whether environmental determinism is at work or not.⁴⁸ Thus it is not an easy, catch-all causal explanation, but one moral-didactic strand among several. Nevertheless, it is striking that it is a moral message which continues to live on in Hellenistic historiography as late as Posidonius.

There are no digressions in the *Histories* condemning any particular inter-human vice in a way parallel to the digression on impiety and mocking of religion we saw above. Cruelty is a staple feature of the behaviour of kings and tyrants of all nationalities, often emphasised by evaluative phraseology and not rarely punished by either divine or human forces (or a combination of the two: 8.106.4), but never discussed at length.⁴⁹ Actions born out of greed occasionally earn a negative epithet or are presented negatively through moralising vignettes or internal evaluation,⁵⁰ but do not occupy much thematic space. Likewise, inter-human virtues do not hold a big place in the *Histories*. Justice⁵¹ and courage⁵² are praised occasionally and are sometimes shown to lead to advantages. The reader can be in no doubt that these are virtues to strive for, and cruelty and greed vices to avoid, but their scattered appearances means that they simply cannot occupy the same amount of thematic space as the overarching message of humility in the face of the uncertainty of human life.

So, in terms of action-directing advice, what lessons might a reader learn from the *Histories*? In terms of positive recommendations of actions, the moral is vague and not foolproof: towards other human beings, one should return kindness for kindness and hurt for hurt; towards the gods, one

48 Pelling (1997).

49 Moralising on cruelty in Herodotus: 2.119, 3.34.1, 3.147.2 and 149, 6.31–2, 6.91–2.1, 6.101.3, 6.138, 7.39, 8.106.4, 8.116.1.

50 Moralising on greed in Herodotus: 1.187, 2.126, 3.21, 5.51, 6.86, 8.112.

51 Moralising on justice in Herodotus: 1.96–8, 2.129 and 133, 4.106, 7.164.

52 Moralising on courage in Herodotus: 4.11, 5.119, 5.124.1, 7.100–5, 7.107, 7.135, 7.139, 7.153.4, 7.208–12, 7.229, 7.231, 8.92, 9.37, 9.71.

should show piety by performing the correct sacrifices and consulting the oracles about important decisions – but apparently one has to be careful about the types of questions asked, and if the answer seems unethical, one may well be better off not following the advice. The message is clearer on what actions to avoid: impiety towards the gods along with cruelty, greed and dependence on luxury in the human sphere; but above all one should avoid arrogance and complacent overconfidence when things go well. Keeping a humble and moderate state of mind should help one to treat mortals and immortals alike with the respect they deserve and is also the best guard against the uncertainty of life. Because the ways of the superhuman powers that rule the world are ultimately unknowable by human beings, the risk of superhumanly imposed disaster can never be nullified, but it can be reduced if one stays moderate in all things.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

We can conclude that Herodotus does indeed moralise. We see forerunners of the Hellenistic techniques of guiding and digressive moralising as well as of the more subtle types of evaluative phrasing, vignettes, speeches and internal evaluation. Over and above these types of moralising, we have seen that Herodotus conveys a moral message by the forceful means of patterning and repetition. It is this macro-level moralising that gives the *Histories* its structure and makes it feel like a coherent whole despite the multiplicity of stories and characters. Without it, the *Histories* would be not just unintelligible, but meaningless. Immerwahr, in his famous study of the structure of Herodotus' *Histories*, once stated that 'the study of structure has the effect of isolating the purely historiographical aspects of the work, together with their philosophical foundations . . . it is significant that moral, religious, and anthropological ideas appear chiefly in the internal structure of individual *logoi*, whose external structure reveals the pattern of history'.⁵³ I would argue that such a separation is impossible: the structural patterns which Immerwahr identify as 'purely historiographical' are, in fact, moral. The fact that morality is used in a causal manner to explain historical events such as the rise and fall of kings shows that Herodotus is writing Moral History, not, say, Economic History, or Environmental History. Moral didacticism forms the backbone of the work.

It is not only many of the moralising techniques that are recognisable from Hellenistic historiography; most of the moral lessons are too: every work of history we have looked at so far condemns cruelty, impiety and greed and points to a correlation between the way a ruler treats his subjects

⁵³ Immerwahr (1966: 308).

and the success of his rule. The overarching message of Herodotus, that one should stay humble in success, is also a prominent message in Polybius and Diodorus. There are two important differences, though, between the moral messages of the Hellenistic historiographers and those of Herodotus. Firstly, Herodotus' message is much more ambiguous: for every clear-cut message ('one should obey the gods', 'greed is bad') there seems to be a counter-message ('but sometimes the gods are trying to mislead you', 'sometimes people get away with it'), even if less strong. Things in Herodotus are never clear-cut, and this leads to the second important difference: Herodotus' advice on how to behave in the world is necessarily vague. The *Histories* is not a handbook, for statesmen or anyone else; it shows how the world works (according to Herodotus) and tries to endow its reader with the mind-set necessary in order to cope with it.

5. *Thucydides*

Thucydides is generally considered the paragon of an amoral historiographer. Even if most scholars (classicists, at least, if not historians) nowadays agree that his *History* is not an ideal, objective account of events ‘just as they happened’, few are happy to talk about ‘moralising’ or even moral didacticism in the work.¹ Rather than moralising, it is common to look for Thucydides’ political views, psychological insights, political theory or personal opinions, which are assumed to be more or less hidden in the text.² I would argue that, like other Greek historiographers before and after him, Thucydides did not distinguish between moral and political opinions, or between moral and practical didacticism. In this chapter, we shall search Thucydides’ *History*, first for the types of moralising we have seen in Polybius and Diodorus, then for other ways of teaching moral lessons, and finally we shall ask what those moral lessons might be. At the end, I hope it will be clear that Thucydides is not a lone non-moralising historiographer, but that there are features of his moral didacticism that set him apart from his predecessor and successors.

1 The notable exception is Cornford (1907), who, breaking with the positivist conception of Thucydides, suggested that his *History* was a prose tragedy, the main character of which was Athens, and the theme of which was divine punishment of *hybris* provoked by unexpected good fortune. Another exception is Moles, who in his brilliant 1993 article states that ‘Thucydides would have been astonished by modern claims that he was not a moralist’ (1993: 114). Rutherford (1994) argues that Thucydides’ work is didactic, but intellectually, not morally. Hornblower (1987: 133) argues that Thucydides was almost alone among ancient historians in that he did not moralise. However, Hornblower later qualifies this view (1987: 184–92) and argues that Thucydides is not a morally neutral, or amoral, writer, but simply generally hides his own point of view from his readers.

2 See e.g. de Romilly (1963), Finley (1940, 1947), Hunter (1973), Macleod (1983a), Connor (1984), Hornblower (1987, 1991, 1994, 1996), Orwin (1994), Rutherford (1994), Crane (1998), Rood (1998), Kallet (2001), Stahl (2003).

PREFACE

The introduction to Thucydides' *History* is deliberately structured on the same framework as the introduction to Herodotus' *Histories*: a brief proem presenting the author and his work (1.1) followed by a quick overview of ancient/mythological history (the *Archaeologia*, 1.2–19), followed by a second first-person statement setting out part of his methodology (1.21–2).³

An important purpose of the proem is to distinguish his work from that of Herodotus, without ever mentioning the latter's name: the war (not even the account of it, but the actual war) is 'written' (συνέγραψε: 1.1.1) rather than 'a presentation' (ἀπόδειξις), and the fact that the author himself lived through the war and experienced it is emphasised, whereas Thucydides insists that it is 'impossible' (ἀδύνατα: 1.1.3) to find reliable information to do what Herodotus did, namely write about earlier time periods.⁴ Moreover, Thucydides' topic is the 'greatest disturbance there has ever been for the Greeks and a part of the barbarians' (τοῖς Ἑλλησιν καὶ μέρει τινὶ τῶν βαρβάρων: 1.1.2), these latter surely being mentioned exclusively for the benefit of readers who might think that Herodotus' topic was greater in geographical scope, at least, if not in importance.⁵ We shall soon see that Thucydides and Herodotus have more in common than Thucydides is letting on.

In the methodology chapters, this superiority to Herodotus, and others, is reiterated: the account offered in the *Archaeologia* is more reliable than the accounts of the poets, who exaggerate, and of the prose writers, who are more interested in entertainment than in truth, whose sources cannot be checked, and who deal with a time that is more or less mythological (1.21.1).⁶ Then the greatness of the topic is repeated (1.21.2), before Thucydides offers some notoriously ambiguous information about his practice of reporting speeches (1.22.1). Returning to the difference between his approach and Herodotus', Thucydides then claims not to have written down simply what he heard from 'any random passer-by' (ἐκ τοῦ

3 The similarity to the structure of Herodotus' prefaces has also been discussed by Woodman (1988: 6–7), Moles (1993) and Stadter (2012). Thucydides' 'second preface' at 5.26–7, where he explains his decision to continue the work after the Peace of Nicias, is not concerned with the purpose of the *History*.

4 τὰ γὰρ πρὸ αὐτῶν καὶ τὰ ἔτι παλαιότερα σαφῶς μὲν εὐρεῖν διὰ χρόνου πλῆθος ἀδύνατα ἦν, ἐκ δὲ τεκμηρίων ὧν ἐπὶ μακρότατον σκοποῦντί μοι πιστεῦσαι ξυμβαίνει οὐ μεγάλα νομίζω γενέσθαι οὔτε κατὰ τοὺς πολέμους οὔτε ἐς τὰ ἄλλα: 1.1.3.

5 There is much scholarship on the relationship between Thucydides and Herodotus; see, for instance, the papers in Foster and Lateiner (2012). For an exploration of links between their prefaces see Moles (1993).

6 οὔτε ὡς λογογράφοι ξυνέθεσαν ἐπὶ τὸ προσαγωγότερον τῆ ἀκροάσει ἢ ἀληθέστερον, ὄντα ἀνεξέλεγκτα καὶ τὰ πολλὰ ὑπὸ χρόνου αὐτῶν ἀπίστως ἐπὶ τὸ μυθῶδες ἐκνευικηκότα: 1.21.1.

παρατυχόντος πυνθανόμενος: 1.22.2) or however he himself thought it had happened (ὡς ἐμοὶ ἐδόκει: 1.22.2), but to have constructed his account on the basis of a comparison of eyewitness accounts (1.22.3). Next, Thucydides offers a statement about the purpose of his work:

ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὐθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἔξει. κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ζύγκειται.

It will be enough for me if it [my work] will be judged useful by those who will want to examine with perfect clarity both the events of the past and those of the same and similar kinds which will happen again at some point in the future according to the human condition. It exists as a valuable object for all time rather than as a competition piece for immediate consumption. (Thuc. 1.22.4)

Here, for the first time in extant Western historiography, the purposes of memorial and didacticism are explicitly connected: the *History* is going to be useful for those who want to understand both the past (memorial) and the future, that is, their own present (didacticism). This is what will give the work its value and make it last forevermore. It is impossible to see exactly how Thucydides expected events of the past to repeat themselves,⁷ but there can be no doubt that a certain level of similarity is the premise on which his didacticism (like any historical didacticism) is based. More importantly for our purposes, it is not clear that Thucydides is talking about *moral* didacticism, or, indeed, didacticism with any other purpose than a purely intellectual one. To find out in what exact way he intended his work to be useful we must wait until we have followed his narrative further.

MORALISING TECHNIQUES

Despite Thucydides' reputation as a non-moralising historiographer, many of the types of moralising encountered in Polybius and Diodorus can also be found in his *History*. The one he most commonly uses is even the most explicit type, namely digressive moralising. Some of his moralising digressions are well known, but are usually discussed under different names; for instance, 2.65, the obituary of Pericles, which is a key passage for anyone

⁷ This is an issue that has caused intense scholarly debate and many creative interpretations of Thucydides' words by historians uncomfortable with the idea that history can ever repeat itself or that their great predecessor might have believed that it did. See e.g. Gomme (1945: *ad loc.*). See Hornblower (1991: *ad loc.*) for references to scholars who accept the idea of repetition.

analysing Thucydides' political views or attitude to Athens. The passage does, however, carry a moral message, along with a practical/political one: good leaders are authoritative, intelligent and incorruptible (τῶ τε ἀξιώματι καὶ τῇ γνώμῃ χρημάτων τε διαφανῶς ἀδωρότατος γενόμενος: 2.65.8) and do not abuse their power (μὴ κτώμενος ἐξ οὐ προσηκόντων τὴν δύναμιν πρὸς ἡδονὴν τι: 2.65.8). They lead the state moderately and safely (μετρίως καὶ ἀσφαλῶς: 2.65.5) with a strong hand (2.65.10). Bad leaders, on the other hand, want power for selfish reasons and care more about their own interests than about those of their city (2.65.10–12). This message is little different from Polybius' moral-didactic messages about good leadership. We shall return to this comparison below; for now it is enough to note that the Thucydidean passage is, in fact, moralising. Other moralising digressions in the *History* are 3.82.1–2, on how war as a 'brutal teacher' (βίαιος διδάσκαλος: 3.82.2) de-civilises human beings (see below, p. 212); 4.65.4, which establishes Athenian success-induced overconfidence as the cause of their actions; 6.54.2–7, arguing that Pisistratid tyranny was not an evil; 8.24.4–5, which takes Chios as an exception to the rule that most people(s) become overconfident in their good fortune; and 8.89.3, on how self-seeking and individual lust for power are the weakness of every oligarchy. These digressions can, indeed, be used to analyse Thucydides' political views or 'own opinion' about various matters, but they can also be read as morally instructive.

Thucydides also employs most of the other types of Hellenistic moralising, if only occasionally. His brief obituary of Nicias (7.86.5; see below, p. 212) is a clear example of a moralising conclusion; most of the narrative of the civil war in Corcyra is an instance of evaluative phrasing (3.82.3–83);⁸ the attribution of Heraclea in Trachis' lack of success to the harshness of its Spartan governors (3.93.2) shows correlation between conduct and result; and the vivid description of Athenian despair as they retreat from Syracuse (7.75.7) can be read as moralising through pathos, with the added finesse of punishment that mirrors the crime (see below, p. 203).

One type of moralising employed sparingly by Polybius and Diodorus is used much more extensively by Thucydides, namely speeches. Interpreting speeches in Thucydides, however, is trickier than in Polybius and Diodorus.⁹ No speech is ever endorsed by the narrator, no speaking character except for Pericles is set up as a straightforward moral authority (see below, p. 213), and no speech completely echoes explicit narratorial moralising. The task is not impossible, however. By comparing a speech with the

8 3.84 is probably spurious; see Hornblower (1991: *ad loc.*).

9 How to interpret Thucydides' speeches has been one of the burning questions of scholarship on this author for more than a century. For good discussions with references to previous scholarship see 'Speeches' in Hornblower (1987), Garrity (1998) and Pelling (2009).

narrative surrounding it in order to judge its view of past events and predictions of future events against the narratorial presentation of both, the reader can usually get an idea of how to respond to the speech. Sometimes additional guidance is given in the shape of evaluative epithets attached to the speaker (Cleon: 3.36.6)¹⁰ or to the issues discussed (πρῶγμα ἀλλόκοτον: 3.49.4), or the response to the speech (6.24), or by the speech being left unopposed (4.17–20, 4.59–64). We shall discuss one of the last type in more detail below.

Many speeches and speech-pairs are, however, left without a moral steer from the narrator. These instances often function as presentations of moral dilemmas. An example is the pair of speeches delivered by the Corcyraeans and Corinthians in Athens before the outbreak of the war. The Corcyraean speech argues that the Athenians should form an alliance with them despite the fact that they have no grounds for gratitude or friendship, on the grounds that they will help Athens in the future (1.32–6). The Corinthians argue that the Athenians should support them because the Corcyraeans have broken the traditional bonds of obligation towards their mother-city out of arrogance induced by their great wealth, because a treaty of non-interference exists between Corinth and Athens, and because the Athenians owe the Corinthians a favour (1.37–43). It is for the reader to make up his mind about the situation: should the Athenians honour reciprocity and traditional ties, or secure allies for the war they think will come? Thucydides provides the problem, not the solution, and he does not add any words of evaluation to the Athenian decision, on the grounds of self-interest, to back Corcyra (1.44.2). Such a technique is not usually labelled ‘moralising’, but it is an effective way of presenting a moral dilemma to readers, who are encouraged to make up their own minds, perhaps influenced by the subsequent narrative of how the Athenians’ siding with Corcyra becomes a catalyst for the Peloponnesian War. In this way the technique is didactic. Thucydides could have told the story without the two speeches, and without telling the reader the reason for the Athenians’ decision; the fact that he includes this information forces the reader to consider the basis for Athenian decision-making and, by extension, political and personal decision-making more generally, and its possible implications. This technique contrasts sharply with Polybius and Diodorus’ general practice of telling the reader exactly how to evaluate most actions and events, although Polybius’ juxtaposition of the four different Greek views on the destruction of Carthage is similar (Polyb. 36.9;

¹⁰ Κλέων ὁ Κλεινέτου, ὅσπερ καὶ τὴν προτέραν ἐνεκικήκει ὥστε ἀποκτεῖναι, ὧν καὶ ἐς τὰ ἄλλα βιαιότατος τῶν πολιτῶν τῷ τε δήμῳ παρὰ πολὺ ἐν τῷ τότε πῆθανώτατος, παρελθὼν αὐθις ἔλεγε τοιάδε: Thuc. 3.36.6.

see above, p. 37). It is not uniquely Thucydidean, as we shall see in our discussion of Xenophon in Chapter 6. A more extreme version of letting the reader draw his own conclusions from a presentation of a moral dilemma is the Melian Dialogue. This passage is unique in Greek historiography for being a dramatic dialogue written out in lines as if for delivery, and without the scene-setting and visual details that would make it into a vignette. We shall return to the function of this dialogue below.

This implicit way of getting the reader to think about moral questions is symptomatic of most of Thucydides' moral didacticism. A favourite method, not used by Polybius or Diodorus, is juxtaposition of information, as in the narratorial conclusion to the Spartan destruction of Plataea:

καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ Πλάταιαν ἔτει τρίτῳ καὶ ἐνενηκοστῷ ἐπειδὴ Ἀθηναίων
ξυμμαχοὶ ἐγένοντο οὕτως ἐτελεύτησεν.

And so Plataea perished in this way in the ninety-third year after she became the ally of Athens. (Thuc. 3.68.5)

The information about the length of the Plataea–Athens alliance is not there for chronographic reasons; Thucydides has already introduced his system of counting years from the beginning of the war and uses this to help the reader keep track of the timeframe. The information about the ninety-three years is there to alert the reader to the enormous failings of Athens as an ally, in that they did not come to the help of the Plataeans at any point during their ordeal and in the end let them be annihilated by their common enemy. It makes the reader think about the obligations of allies and the destructive force of ruthless self-centredness. Likewise these two narratorial remarks which frame the narrative of the savage civil war in Corcyra:

ἡμέρας τε ἑπτὰ, ἃς ἀφικόμενος ὁ Εὐρυμέδων ταῖς ἐξήκοντα ναυσὶ παρέμεινε,
Κερκυραῖοι σφῶν αὐτῶν τοὺς ἐχθροὺς δοκοῦντας εἶναι ἐφόνευον.

During the seven days that Eurymedon stayed there after arriving with his sixty ships, the Corcyraeans continued to massacre those of their own citizens whom they considered to be their enemies. (Thuc. 3.81.4; translation modified from Warner)

οἱ μὲν οὖν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν Κερκυραῖοι τοιαύταις ὀργαῖς ταῖς πρώταις ἐς
ἀλλήλους ἐχρήσαντο, καὶ ὁ Εὐρυμέδων καὶ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἀπέπλευσαν ταῖς
ναυσίν·

And so, throughout the city the Corcyraeans used such violent passion against each other for the first time, and Eurymedon and the Athenians sailed away with their ships. (Thuc. 3.85.1)

The juxtaposition of the information about the Athenian general Eurymedon and his sixty ships with references to the savageness of the civil war is as good as a moralising conclusion saying ‘the Athenians had the power to stop the Corcyraeans massacring each other, and yet they did nothing’. The difference between Thucydidean narratorial conclusions and those encountered in Polybius and Diodorus is that the former lets the reader draw that inference for himself. Twentieth- and twenty-first-century readers like this. We dislike being told what to think and prefer to feel that we have detected the author’s hidden meaning in the text. In fact, however, the meaning is not very well hidden: Thucydides meant the reader to get it. Throughout his *History* he repeatedly and deliberately juxtaposes bits of information to make the reader think about the moral implications of what he is reading. This may not be moralising in the traditional sense of that word, but when read in the light of Thucydides’ claim for the eternal usefulness of his text, as ‘similar kinds [of events] will happen again at some point in the future according to the human condition’ (1.22.4, quoted above), it is moral didacticism.

A type of moralising unique to Thucydides is the abstract, or generalised, summary of events. An abstract summary is a narrative that narrates not individual events, but rather types of events or general trends. The two extended examples in the *History* are the narrative of the effects on Athenian society of the plague (2.51.4–53) and the narrative of the effect on general behaviour and linguistic usage of the civil war in Corcyra (3.82.3–83 [84 is probably spurious]). These abstract summaries do not just use evaluative phrasing, but actually have moral issues as their main focus: the chapters of the plague narrative discuss the problem of people not daring to care for the sick for fear of contagion (2.51.4), the disregard of law and customs (2.52) and the complete breakdown of society (2.53); the Corcyra chapters focus on how morality and semantics alike change under the stress of civil war. This is not so much historiographical moralising as pure moral history: morality is the prime focus, and the author’s interest is in the history of morality, and not from a neutral standpoint: when reading these chapters there can be no doubt that Thucydides deplores the erosion of traditional morality¹¹ to be replaced by this dog-eats-dog mentality. We shall return to this below.

Arching above all of these instances of micro-level moralising, Thucydides also imparts a moral message by means of the macro-level structure of his work. If one turns to Thucydides’ *History* immediately after reading Herodotus’ *Histories*, the narrative from book 1 to book 7 seems

¹¹ See particularly 3.83.1. This passage is the point of departure for the insightful discussion of Crane (1998).

to follow the Herodotean pattern of success–overconfidence–disaster: The Athenians, whose rise to power and success is detailed early on in the *Pentecontaëtia* (1.89–117), become increasingly arrogant and overconfident throughout the narrative and ultimately suffer complete disaster in Sicily.¹²

We do not have the space here to trace every step of the Athenians from successful and confident to monstrously arrogant and overconfident, but key moments are: the first speech of any Athenian in the work (1.73–8), in which they are confident, but still try to dissuade the Spartans from war; the Mytilene Debate (3.36–50), which is our first extended encounter with their nasty side; their refusal of the Spartan peace offer after their initial successes in Pylos (4.17–21), which is generally recognised as a turning point in the narrative; their exiling of the generals who did not conquer all of Sicily on the first expedition there (4.65.4), a decision which the narrator in his own voice puts down to overconfidence induced by success;¹³ the Melian Dialogue (5.84–111; see below); and finally the extravagant and overconfident send-off of the fatal expedition to Sicily (6.31–2). The disaster follows in book 7. Book 8 seems to constitute a new beginning, but it is impossible to know where Thucydides would have taken it, had he completed the work.¹⁴

This is moralising by means of the repetition of a recognised pattern, but the Thucydidean manifestation of the pattern is intertextual: it is based on a template found in Herodotus' *Histories*. The intertextuality works because Thucydides references Herodotus repeatedly, although implicitly, in his prefaces, as we have seen above, and because he shows, by including the *Pentecontaëtia* to bridge the chronological gap, that he considers his work a continuation of, as well as an improvement on, Herodotus'. Even a fifth-century reader not au fait with Herodotus would, however, have been likely to pick up the message: as Cornford demonstrated long ago, the Athenian trajectory follows a pattern recognisable from fifth-century tragedy, which also had a strong presence in lyric poetry.¹⁵ The highlighting

¹² The *History* has often been read as a story of the deserved fall of Athens; see e.g. Cornford (1907), de Romilly (1963) (who ascribes the downfall to imperialistic ambition and *hybris*), Hunter (1973: *passim*, but esp. 134–5 n. 13), Rawlings (1981), Macleod (1983a), Connor (1984), Hornblower (1987: 172–3) (focusing on *pleonexia*, not overconfidence), Rood (1998) and Kallet (2001). None of these scholars, however, talk of the theme as moral-didactic in nature.

¹³ αἰτία δ' ἦν ἡ παρά λόγον τῶν πλεόνων εὐπραγία αὐτοῖς ὑποτιθεῖσα ἰσχὺν τῆς ἐλπίδος: Thuc. 4.65.4.

¹⁴ I am, however, extremely tempted by the brilliant hypothesis of Rawlings (1981) that the *History* was meant to end with an 'Athenian Dialogue' mirroring the Melian Dialogue.

¹⁵ Cornford (1907). The theme of the inconstancy of human fortune and the dangers of becoming complacent when successful has been explored briefly across ancient Greek genres by Cairns (2014).

of Athenian overconfidence by the Spartan speaker at 4.17–20 and again by the narrator in 4.65.4 would have set alarm bells ringing in the mind of any ancient Greek.

MORAL LESSONS

The moral lessons of Thucydides are as complex as those of Herodotus. In the following, we shall try to unpick what he may have intended a reader to learn from his *History*.

How the World Works: Uncertainty and Misinterpretations

One overall lesson of the *History*, as we have already seen, is that success tends to lead to overconfidence, which leads to disaster. The first stage, that success leads to overconfidence, is expressed as a general truth in a digression at 8.24.4–5, which begins with the statement that ‘the Chians are the only people apart from the Spartans of whom I know who have been successful and moderate at the same time’ (Χῖοι γὰρ μόνοι μετὰ Λακεδαιμονίους ὧν ἐγὼ ἤσθόμην ηὔδαιμόνησάν τε ἅμα καὶ ἐσωφρόνησαν). However, the whole chain reaction is most clearly expressed by the Spartan ambassadors to Athens in their speech for peace (4.17–20). The main theme of the speech is the uncertainty of human life and the fickleness of fortune. The Spartans argue that by making peace now, the Athenians would ‘handle their good fortune well’ (εὐτυχίαν τὴν παρούσαν καλῶς θέσθαι) and avoid ‘what usually happens to people who are unexpectedly successful’ (οἱ ἀήθως τι ἀγαθὸν λαμβάνοντες), namely that they ‘always hopefully reach for more because their present good fortune was unforeseen’ (ἀεὶ γὰρ τοῦ πλεονος ἐλπίδι ὀρέγονται διὰ τὸ καὶ τὰ παρόντα ἀδοκίτως εὐτηχῆσαι: 4.17.4). The speaker proceeds to exemplify the changeability of fortune by Sparta’s recent defeat by Athens. Then he states that war is governed by fortune (αἱ τύχαι) and that good and moderate people (σωφρόνων ἀνδρῶν) are able to stay moderate in both good and bad times because they know that their fortunes may change at any moment (4.18.4). He proceeds to apply the theory to Athens (4.18.5): they are now at the height of their good fortune and should conclude peace. If they do not, and then later are defeated (which could easily happen due to the changeability of fortune), they will be thought to have been successful only because of *tyche* (presumably because they will have shown that they do not possess wisdom).

After the end of the speech, several features point to its endorsement by the narrator. First of all, in contrast with the many speech-pairs in the work, it is a single speech with no counter-speech, leaving the Spartans’ argu-

ments for peace unopposed.¹⁶ Secondly, the negative Athenian response to the speech is led by Cleon, who has earlier been stamped as the opposite of a moral authority by the epithet ‘most aggressive’ (βιαίτατος: 3.36.3). Thirdly, the narrator gives two reasons for the Athenians’ rejection of the peace offer: they have the captives on Sphacteria and so believe that it is up to them to make peace whenever they want – that is, overconfidence induced by success – and they ‘want more’ (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο) – that is, they lust for power. This narratorial interpretation confirms what the Spartan speaker has just said, and the latter expression echoes the speech (4.17.4, quoted above). It is repeated by the narrator as an Athenian motivation for rejecting further Spartan overtures a few chapters later (οἱ δὲ μειζόνων τε ὠρέγοντο καὶ πολλάκις φοιτώντων αὐτοὺς ἀπράκτους ἀπέπεμπον: 4.41.4).

The speaker’s claim that such success-induced overconfidence brings disaster on the overconfident is confirmed gradually in the subsequent narrative, first when the Athenians are made despondent by difficulties at Sphacteria (4.27) and regret that they did not accept the offer of peace (4.27.2); again after the loss of Amphipolis, when they for a second time regret turning the offer down (5.14.1–2 and 15.2); and ultimately when the Sicilian Expedition suffers annihilation. At this point, Thucydides’ style becomes more vivid and laden with pathos than in any other part of the work. As the Athenians retreat from Syracuse, without provisions for the march, forced to leave behind the sick and wounded, and crying as they do so, the reader feels pity for them; but then comes the sting in the tail:

μέγιστον γὰρ δὴ τὸ διάφορον τοῦτο [τῶ] Ἑλληνικῶ στρατεύματι ἐγένετο, οἷς ἀντὶ μὲν τοῦ ἄλλους δουλωσομένους ἦκειν αὐτοὺς τοῦτο μᾶλλον δεδιότας μὴ πάθωσι ξυνέβη ἀπιέναι, ἀντὶ δ’ εὐχῆς τε καὶ παιάνων, μεθ’ ὧν ἐξέπλεον, πάλιν τούτων τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἐπιφημίσμασιν ἀφορμᾶσθαι, πεζοὺς τε ἀντὶ ναυβατῶν πορευομένους καὶ ὀπλιτικῶ προσέχοντας μᾶλλον ἢ ναυτικῶ.

For indeed this was the biggest change in circumstance for a Greek army. It happened that they, who had come to enslave others, instead went away fearing to suffer this fate themselves, and that, instead of the prayers and paeans with which they had sailed out, they started on their way back with words of ill omen, travelling as footsoldiers rather than marines, trusting to infantry rather than navy. (Thuc. 7.75.7)

In this brilliant piece of antithetical writing, the Athenian suffering is compared both with their previous good fortune and with their crimes, namely their evil plans for Syracuse. The great emphasis on changed circumstances

¹⁶ This is de Romilly’s (1963: 173) main reason for taking it to reveal Thucydides’ own opinion. *Contra* Rood (1998: 42–3).

in the Greek is hard to convey in English, but I have underlined the six words in Greek which focus on this aspect of the Athenians' situation. The mirroring of crime and punishment and of previous good fortune and high hopes with present suffering are characteristic features of both Herodotean and Hellenistic moralising, as we have seen. Thucydides' way of doing it is more subtle than the one seen in Hellenistic historiography; here the, relatively brief, antithesis has the effect of drawing the reader's attention to the previous success, the premature and cruel plans, and the present disaster at the same time without ever making the moral explicit. It is this absence of explicit narratorial evaluation that makes the passage moving to a twentieth- and twenty-first-century audience, but the moral is nonetheless there, in the Athenian story arc, and in this specific passage: you should strive to avoid becoming overconfident in your success, because overconfidence leads to wrongheaded treatment of other people and an overreaching of one's own limits, and thereby to disaster.¹⁷

This mechanism of success—overconfidence—disaster is only part of the larger uncertainty of human fortune, though. Throughout the *History*, the reader is frequently reminded of the precariousness of human life (by, for instance, the massacre of unsuspecting Mycalessians at 7.29, the phrasing of which clearly expresses the narrator's disgust),¹⁸ the unpredictability of events (by, for instance, the narrative of the Pylos and Sphacteria campaign at 4.1.14 and 29–40, with internal evaluation)¹⁹ and the infinitesimally small margin by which human life and death are decided in war (e.g. 'so close did Syracuse come to disaster', *παρὰ τοσοῦτον μὲν αἱ Συράκουσαι ἦλθον κινδύνου*: 7.2.4).²⁰

The big difference between the uncertainty that rules the world of Thucydides and the one that governs the universe of Herodotus is that

17 Stahl (2003) argues that Thucydides does not moralise in this passage, but that he recognises the universality of the Athenian mistake. I would agree that Thucydides probably considered the success—overconfidence—fall pattern universal, but would add that he consciously directs the reader's attention both to the nature of the Athenian mistake and to its cost, and in the light of 1.22.4 I find it unlikely that he did not hope his readers would learn from this.

18 On the moral bearing of the Mycalessus narrative see Kallet (2001: 140–6).

19 This narrative has been brilliantly analysed by Hunter (1973: 61–83), who has shown that Thucydides is taking pains to make the success of the Athenians look fortuitous rather than carefully planned. She argues convincingly that the purpose of this misrepresentation is to show Demosthenes, the man most responsible for the success at Pylos, as a *paradeigma* of the unexpected good fortune which would eventually destroy Athens by cementing Cleon's power and the people's *pleonexia*. Rood (1998: 24–39) modifies Hunter's interpretation by correctly observing that the Pylos narrative is not about the 'intervention of fortune', but about the 'role of the unexpected', the most unexpected thing of all being the Spartan surrender. See also Connor (1984: 108–18) and Stahl (2003: 138–49).

20 For a discussion of such side-shadows (i.e. hints at other possible outcomes) in Thucydides see Grethlein (2010) and Hau (2013).

Thucydidean uncertainty has nothing to do with superhuman powers. The Thucydidean narrator never ascribes any events to an act of a god, the gods or the divine. Only twice does the narrator attribute events to *tyche*, both times pertaining to weather (Thuc. 3.49.4 and 4.3.1).²¹ Speakers in the *History* largely mention the gods for two reasons: either to call them to witness on the justice of their own course or the injustice of their enemies' and to pray for their help, usually with no effect, or to claim that the gods are or will be on their side in a war or battle, in which they are proved wrong more often than not.²² Nine times in the *History* speakers use expressions with *tyche* to warn that plans might go wrong in the future, and, crucially, the *peripeteia* of which the speaker has warned always comes true.²³ However, in every instance the narrative provides the reader with a different, and human, cause of this *peripeteia*. For example, Nicias warns the Athenians that, due to *tyche*, they may well be defeated in Sicily (6.23.5), and they spectacularly are, but the reader who has followed the story through the voice of the narrator knows that their defeat is, in fact, due to the desertion of Alcibiades, the timely arrival and great talents of Gylippus and the resourcefulness of the Syracusans, not to any intervention of superhuman forces.²⁴ Likewise, two speakers in the *History* use *tyche* as an explanation for a previous defeat while the narrative of that defeat has shown it to be due to such human causes as lack of skill or planning.²⁵

This discrepancy between the world as experienced by the characters inhabiting it and as described by the narrator is clearly intentional. The fifth-century reader is here faced with a world he knows and is presented with two different views of how it works: on the one hand the homochronic view of people heavily involved in historical events, on the other hand the retrospective view of a detached, analytic observer. The analysis of Thucydides (presented most often not as analysis, but as narrative) shows

21 Discussed by Edmunds (1975: 176–7).

22 Speakers who invoke the gods: Athenians in Sparta 1.78.4, Plataeans before the Spartan siege 2.71.4, Archidamus before besieging Plataea 2.74.2, Plataeans after their surrender 3.58.1, 3.58.5 and 3.59.2, Brasidas at Acanthus 4.87.2, Boeotians at Delium 4.97.4, Athenians at Delium 4.98.6, Athenian spectators to the Battle in the Great Harbour 7.71.3. Speakers who claim the gods are on their side: Sthenelaidas 1.86.5, Corinthians in Sparta 1.71.5, 1.123.1 and 2, Pagondas 4.92.7, Nicias 7.69.2, 7.77.2, 3 and 4.

23 Thuc. 1.78.1, 1.84.3, 4.18.3–4, 4.62.3–4, 4.78.3, 5.102, twice in 5.104, 6.23.5. The instances have also been collected by Edmunds (1975: 181–2), who, however, substitutes 4.64.1 for 4.62.3–4.

24 This is well discussed by Edmunds (1975: 182–9).

25 Peloponnesian generals at Thuc. 2.87.2–3 and Nicias at Thuc. 7.61.3. Hunter (1973: 47–56, 107–13) has a good discussion of both as well as of the conclusions to be drawn from their similarities. Nicias' reference to *tyche* is picked up by Gylippus at Thuc. 7.67.4 and, with a memorable metaphor, 7.68.1, in order to show his and the Syracusans' superiority at this stage.

the reader that events which are unforeseen and therefore seem incomprehensible when experienced first-hand really do have human causes when properly investigated and analysed. It demonstrates that the world can be understood without recourse to divine powers, but only in hindsight. When living through the events, it is impossible to foresee everything that is going to happen, and for that reason one should not become overconfident in success, but stay moderate and clear-headed.²⁶

The discrepancy between the characters' and the narrator's worldview is shown nowhere more clearly than in the Melian Dialogue (Thuc. 5.84–116).²⁷ The dialogue is highly artificial, certainly unhistorical, and clearly composed by Thucydides in order to make a moral-didactic point.²⁸ In it, the Athenians attempt to persuade the Melians to give up their neutrality and join the Athenian alliance, threatening them with destruction if they refuse, while the Melians argue that they should be allowed to keep their independence.²⁹ Prevented from arguing on the grounds of justice by the rules set down at the outset by the Athenians (5.89–90), the Melians argue that they have to resist in order to preserve their honour (5.100); that fortune is changeable, so the struggle might equally well turn out in their favour (5.102); that the gods will be on their side because they are in the right (5.104); and that the Spartans will come to their aid because they are their colonists and because it is the honourable thing to do (5.104, 106, 108). In other words they use arguments based on a traditional concept of honour, the notion that fortune is fickle, a belief in divine justice, and the bonds of kinship – all fixed features of the Herodotean world. The warning about the changeability of fortune (Thuc. 5.102) is essentially the same argument employed in Herodotus by Queen Tomyris when warning Cyrus not to invade the land of the Massagetae (Hdt. 1.206). The difference is that Tomyris is proved right by the subsequent narrative and gets her revenge, while the Melians are proved wrong and are defeated and annihilated. This difference is significant. In the world of Herodotus, a warning like the one given by Tomyris only occurs when the person warned is about to embark on an unjust war, and, when ignored by the person warned, signals to the reader with absolute certainty that that person will fail in his enterprise,

26 The importance of the unforeseen in Thucydides has also been noted by Cornford (1907), Finley (1940) and Stahl (2003). It has been well discussed by Edmunds (1975).

27 The Melian Dialogue is one of the most discussed passages in Thucydides. See e.g. Cornford (1907: 174–87), Wassermann (1947), de Romilly (1963), Stahl (2003), Macleod (1974), Bosworth (1993), Orwin (1994: 97–117), Crane (1998: 241–53), Williams (1998: 195–205), Hornblower (2008: 216–25).

28 The dialogue's fictitiousness was already recognised by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Thuc. 41).

29 For a discussion of the historical reality of Melian neutrality see Hornblower (2008: ad 5.89).

most probably with disastrous results. When the same type of warning is given in the world of Thucydides, in the same breath as a condemnation of the injustice of the aggression, it works on an intertextual level – not just with Herodotus, but with the traditional Greek worldview – to make the reader aware of the traditional pattern and the expected narrative result of the warning, but at the same time also acutely aware of the fact that in the ‘real world’ portrayed in Thucydides’ *History* such causality does not exist, and the gods do not favour the righteous.

The Athenians, on their side of the dialogue, argue that might is right (5.89, 5.97);³⁰ that it is dangerous to trust in hope, prophecies and oracles (5.103); that the gods favour the strong, not the just (5.105.1–2); that the Spartans only ever act out of self-interest (5.105.3, 107, 109); and that clinging to one’s honour leads to disaster (5.111.3–4). Does the narrator agree with them? Much ink has been spilt on arguing about which side of the dialogue Thucydides favoured. The very fact that such uncertainty can exist surely shows that he did not mean to take sides: the purpose of the dialogue is to illustrate a clash of morals and worldviews which he saw in his own time, between a traditional, more or less ‘Herodotean’ attitude based on the notions of divine justice and reciprocity, and a new, Sophistic attitude based on self-interest and the rule of the stronger.³¹ The subsequent narrative shows the shortcomings of both types of ideology: in the short term the Athenians certainly prove that the Melians should neither have cared about their honour nor have relied on hope, the gods and the Spartans. In a longer perspective, however, Athens suffers mightily for its overconfidence. The *peripeteia* is initiated in 6.1, the very first chapter after the narrative of the destruction of Melos, with the Athenian decision to launch the Sicilian Expedition. The message seems to be that one should not trust in either kinship (no help comes from the Spartans) or the gods, but that those who take advantage of this realisation to become overconfident and overreaching will suffer disaster. The destructive force is not divine, but rather a force inherent in the very nature of overconfidence, perhaps in the very nature of human beings, helped on their way by the de-civilising force of war (see particularly 3.82.1–2).³²

30 Hornblower (1987: 185–6) points out that the Athenians do not explicitly say ‘might is right’. This is true, but their statement in 5.105.2 comes very close to saying so, and they certainly act as if this is their belief.

31 Crane (1998) argues cogently and lucidly for a tension in the *History* between a traditional attitude which was prevalent at the time and a ‘modern’ or ‘realist’ attitude, which Thucydides tried and failed to reconcile. I would argue that Thucydides left the tension in his narrative deliberately as a piece of descriptive moral didacticism.

32 Others have reached similar conclusions. Particularly enlightening are the analyses of de Romilly (1963: *passim*, but esp. 327–8), Stahl (2003: 159–72) and Orwin (1994: 97–117).

How to Act in the World: Simplicity versus Self-Seeking

This leads us to the question of how to act in this world without gods. On this topic Thucydides' guidance is rarely more than implicit. The *History* offers no moralising digressions on virtues or flaws and only one extended evaluation of a character (Pericles at 2.65; more about this below). Guidance is given throughout, however, in the form of correlation between behaviour and result, juxtaposition, speeches and the occasional evaluative phrasing.

Most of all, it is clear how one should not behave. Throughout the *History*, decisions made in an emotional state, because of anger, desire or fear, consistently lead to disaster. Thus, the Athenians make the decision to annihilate the Mytilenians 'in anger' (ὕπὸ ὀργῆς: 3.36.2),³³ but then later realise that such an action would be 'cruel and enormous' (ὠμὸν τὸ βούλευμα καὶ μέγα: 3.36.4), and they decide on the Sicilian Expedition under the influence of strong, emotional desire, emphasised in the narrative by a cluster of words denoting mindless passion (τὸ ἐπιθυμοῦν: 6.24.2; ὄρμητο: 6.24.2; ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι: 6.24.3; πόθῳ: 6.24.3; τὴν ἄγαν ἐπιθυμίαν: 6.24.4). Fear is the reason for the witch-hunt following the mutilation of the Herms (6.53 and 60), and for the outbreak of the entire war (1.23.6). Another important vice in the world of the *History* is greed for power, territory and wealth, expressed by the noun *πλεονεξία* and the expression *πλέονος ὀρέγειν*. This is the force that drives the Athenians to reject the Spartan peace offer (4.17.4 and 4.21.3) and is also a powerful motivator for the expedition to Sicily, and it plays a vital part in the breakdown of morals during the civil war in Corcyra (3.82.6–8 and 84.1).

The role of these three irrational emotions in Thucydides has been recognised by many.³⁴ Less discussed is an emotion which is no less destructive in the *History*, namely despondency brought on by misfortune. This state of mind and its disastrous effects are demonstrated repeatedly by the Spartans, both individually and as a body. Thus, Alcidas, the Spartan general sent to the relief of Mytilene, loses courage completely when he learns that the Athenians have already taken the city, and is too despondent to listen to sensible advice from his Elean adviser which might have saved Mytilene after all (3.29–31); and after their defeat at Pylos, the whole city suffers from it:

³³ De Romilly (1963: 158), Hornblower (1996: *ad loc.*). The narrator also signals his distaste for the original decision by the vivid and emotional description of the effort made by the trireme sent to annul that decision; see Connor (1984: 16–17).

³⁴ For the negative role of emotions in Thucydides see Stahl (2012).

καὶ ἅμα τὰ τῆς τύχης πολλὰ καὶ ἐν ὀλίγῳ ξυμβάντα παρὰ λόγον αὐτοῖς ἐκπληξιν μεγίστην παρεῖχε, καὶ ἐδέδισαν μὴ ποτε αὐτῆς ξυμφορὰ τις αὐτοῖς περιτύχη οἷα καὶ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ. ἀτολμότεροι δὲ δι' αὐτὸ ἐς τὰς μάχας ἦσαν, καὶ πᾶν ὅτι κινήσειαν ᾠοντο ἀμαρτήσεσθαι διὰ τὸ τὴν γνώμην ἀνεχέγγυον γεγενῆσθαι ἐκ τῆς πρὶν ἀηθείας τοῦ κακοπραγεῖν.

At the same time, they were in shock over the many misfortunes that had happened to them in a short space of time unexpectedly, and they were afraid that some other disaster should strike them, like the one on the island. For this reason they had little heart for battle, and every move they made they believed would be a mistake because their morale had been undermined as they were not used to setbacks. (Thuc. 4.55.3–4)

This is clearly not a desirable state of mind for a city, and it allows the Athenians a free rein in their sea raids (4.56–7). In fact the Spartans remain in the grip of this despondency (it is referred to at 4.108.7 and 5.13) until the Battle of Mantinea, when their allies rejoice that ‘although depressed by fortune, they were still themselves in spirit’ (τύχη μὲν, ὡς ἐδόκουν, κακιζόμενοι, γνώμη δὲ οἱ αὐτοὶ ἔτι ὄντες: 5.75.3). The one Spartan who does not suffer from this inability to act in difficult situations is Brasidas. His un-Spartan quality³⁵ is made clear when the cities in the north are elated by his successes and believe that the Spartans are finally acting decisively (4.108.6),³⁶ but the narrator immediately lets the reader know that Sparta as a state does not want anything to do with Brasidas’ actions (4.108.7).³⁷ It is clear that the decisiveness is all his and has nothing to do with his fellow-Spartans. The true destructive force of despondency is, however, brought out by the actions – and, above all, inaction – of an Athenian, namely Nicias. His setbacks in Sicily bring him to despair, clear and contagious in his letter to the Athenians (7.11–15). Later, after even more setbacks, he advises against leaving Sicily because he cannot make up his mind what to do (7.48.3).³⁸ The result is a delay (ὄκνος τις καὶ μέλλησις

35 See Edmunds (1975) for Brasidas’ ‘Athenian’ characteristics.

36 τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, διὰ τὸ ἠδονῆν ἔχον ἐν τῷ αὐτίκα καὶ ὅτι τὸ πρῶτον Λακεδαιμονίων ὀργάντων ἔμελλον πειράσεσθαι: 4.108.6.

37 οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τὰ μὲν καὶ φθόνῳ ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἀνδρῶν οὐχ ὑπηρετήσαν αὐτῶ, τὰ δὲ καὶ βουλόμενοι μᾶλλον τοὺς τε ἀνδρας τοὺς ἐκ τῆς νήσου κομίσασθαι καὶ τὸν πόλεμον καταλῦσαι: Thuc. 4.108.7.

38 ἂ ἐπιστάμενος τῷ μὲν ἔργῳ ἔτι ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα ἔχων καὶ διασκοπῶν ἀνεῖχε, τῷ δ’ ἐμφανεῖ τότε λόγῳ οὐκ ἔφη ἀπάξειν τὴν στρατιάν. εὖ γὰρ εἶδέναι ὅτι Ἀθηναῖοι σφῶν ταῦτα οὐκ ἀποδέξονται, ὥστε μὴ αὐτῶν ψηφισαμένων ἀπελθεῖν. ‘Nicias was aware of all this and, though in fact he held back because he still could not make up his mind what course to take and was still considering the question, in the speech which he delivered openly on this occasion he refused to lead the army away. He was sure, he said, that the Athenians would not approve of the withdrawal, unless it had been voted for at Athens’ (7.48.3). Strangely, many scholars have taken his pretext – unwillingness to face the Athenian *demos* after a failed expedition – to be his real reason (e.g. Finley 1947: 240, Edmunds 1975: 134, Williams 1998:

ἐνεγένετο: 7.49.4) which means that the Athenians are still in Sicily to experience an eclipse of the moon (7.50), which results in their final, fatal delay.

This final delay is due to a characteristic which is a virtue in every single other Greek historiographer (perhaps with the exception of Agatharchides), but which comes very close to being a vice in Thucydides: piety. Piety does not play a big part in the world of the *History*. In striking contrast with his continuator Xenophon (as we shall see), Thucydides keeps silent about the large number of sacrifices that were routinely carried out by generals in the course of their duty.³⁹ Only three times in the course of the *History* are we told that someone consulted an oracle before making an important decision; in two cases the answer received leads to disaster: the Epidamnians are told to hand their city over to Corinth for protection, which leads to war with Corcyra and the destruction of Epidamnus (1.25.2 and 1.29–30), and Cylon is told to go ahead with his attempted coup in Athens, which ends in the death of all his supporters (1.126). In the third case, during the narrative of the plague, the narrator simply states that consultation of oracles was ‘useless’ (ἄνωφελῆ: 2.47.4).⁴⁰ Moreover, the narrator twice passes negative judgement on the practice of taking guidance from oracles and omens: at the end of the plague narrative he comments on the retrospective interpretation of an oracular saying with the wry statement that ‘people were adapting their memory (of the saying) to be in line with what they had experienced’ (οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς ἃ ἔπασχον τὴν μνήμην ἐποιοῦντο: 2.54.3); and when Nicias gives in to the demands by his troops to obey the omen of the lunar eclipse and so fatally delays the retreat from Syracuse, the narrator explains his decision by the remark that ‘he was a bit too dependent on superstition and this kind of thing’ (ἦν γὰρ τι καὶ ἄγαν θειασμῶ τε καὶ τῷ τοιούτῳ προσκειόμενος: 7.50.4). This bit of narratorial moralising is not as negative as has sometimes been made out.⁴¹ The modification of ἄγαν effected by τι creates a cautious and almost polite expression; after all, Thucydides could easily have said that Nicias was ‘far too dependent’ or ‘excessively dependent’ on superstition. There is probably more than one reason why he did not condemn Nicias more severely for

240, 243). However, the narrator explicitly states that this was only the reason which Nicias gave in public (τῷ μὲν ἔργῳ . . . τῷ δ’ ἐμφανεῖ, followed by the pretext in *oratio obliqua*), probably because he thought that that would resonate with Demosthenes and his other advisers.

39 The exception is 6.69.2, which is part of an unusually detailed battle description.

40 There are three instances in the *History* of people responding to oracular sayings from an earlier time period: 1.103.2, 2.17 and 2.54. These all seem to come true, in keeping with Thucydides’ remark about the retrospective interpretation of such sayings at 2.54.

41 Westlake (1968), Edmunds (1975), Connor (1984) and Kallet (2001) all argue that the remark shows Thucydides’ disapproval of Nicias. *Contra* Cornford (1907), Stahl (2003), Rood (1998), Williams (1998).

his response to the eclipse: partly such a response to an unusual natural phenomenon was normal and expected in the world that he and Nicias shared, and partly Thucydides appreciated Nicias' adherence to traditional morality (as we shall see below), of which piety was an important part.

Another important vice in the *History* is self-seeking at the expense of one's city. This is the major flaw of Alcibiades, who is described as a supremely capable politician and general (6.15), but who only ever acts with his own glory in mind: he sabotages the Peace of Nicias because he feels slighted by the fact that it had not been negotiated through him (5.43), he advocates the expedition to Sicily because he wants the glory of conquering not only Sicily but also Carthage (6.15), and he defects first to Sparta and then to Persia out of spite (6.92). The narrator does not comment on any of this beyond the inference of motives, but when Alcibiades finally does something right, as late in the narrative as book 8, he calls this his 'first beneficial act for Athens' (πρῶτον τὴν πόλιν ὠφελῆσαι: 8.86.4). Self-seeking and lack of patriotism are likewise among the flaws of Cleon (4.27.3–29.1), who is usually recognised as the most villainous character in the *History*. His other flaws are expressed by evaluative phrasing: brutality (3.36.6), inability to stay moderate in good fortune (5.7.3) and cowardice (5.10.9–10).⁴² Brutality is described in vivid detail and earns explicitly moralising comments in the description of the atrocities during the civil war in Corcyra (3.81.5 and 3.82.2) and in the short, sharp narrative of the massacre at Mycalessus (7.29.4–5).⁴³ The inability to stay moderate in good fortune is demonstrated repeatedly by the Athenians and leads to their downfall (see above). Cowardice does not otherwise play a part in the *History*.

After this list of vices, it is time to look for virtue in the *History*. It says something about the bleakness of the work that this is rather harder to find. The clearest statement about moral virtue made in the narrator's voice comes, strangely, in the course of the abstract summary of the civil war in Corcyra:

οὕτω πᾶσα ἰδέα κατέστη κακοτροπίας διὰ τὰς στάσεις τῷ Ἑλληνικῷ, καὶ τὸ εὐηθές, οὗ τὸ γενναῖον πλεῖστον μετέχει, καταγελασθὲν ἠφανίσθη, τὸ δὲ ἀντιτετάχθαι ἀλλήλοις τῇ γνώμῃ ἀπίστως ἐπὶ πολὺ διήνεγκεν.

42 It has been argued that this portrait of Cleon is unlikely to be historical, and that Thucydides presents him in a bad light out of personal hostility. The historicity of Cleon's personality as presented in the *History* is not our focus here, but we might note that if Thucydides did invent some details of it, he chose to include some very traditional vices, perhaps to make sure that his readers got the message.

43 On the moral bearing of the Mycalessus narrative see Kallet (2001: 140–6).

Thus every form of evildoing was established during the civil wars in Greece, and simplicity, which is a large part of nobility of character, was ridiculed and disappeared, and a distrustful, battle-arrayed hostility in opinion largely prevailed. (Thuc. 3.83.1)

What exactly is this ‘simplicity’? We can get a sense of it from the abstract summary of events of which it forms part (Thuc. 3.82.3–83). This summary begins with the statement that ‘men assumed the right to reverse the usual values in the application of words to actions’ (καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇ δικαιοσεί),⁴⁴ conditioning the reader to think about the new ‘values’ honoured by the Corcyraeans as vices and to go through his own mental process of reversal in order to think about the virtues thus destroyed. Going through the long list of honourable terms applied to despicable behaviour and imagining their opposites, we arrive at the following set of no-longer-existing virtues: moderation in/avoidance of violence (3.82.3), foresight and moderation (3.82.4), respect for kinship (3.81.5 and 82.6), loyalty, honesty and abiding by oaths (3.82.6–7 and 83.2–3), lack of greed for money and power (3.82.8), justice (3.82.8) and willingness to put city interests before self-interest (3.82.8).⁴⁵ These qualities are very much in line with the virtues propounded by both Herodotus and the Hellenistic historiographers, and it is clear that the Thucydidean narrator considers them virtues as well. Disturbingly, however, Thucydides does not present these virtues as straightforwardly worthy of emulation: in these chapters on civil war, these are exactly the qualities that lead people to their deaths. In fact, the overall point of 3.82.3–83.4 is that such virtues have become liabilities that will most probably get you killed. This is seen not just in the Corcyra narrative, but also in the Melian Dialogue, as we saw above, and, with greater emotional force, in the brief obituary of Nicias:

καὶ ὁ μὲν τοιαύτη ἢ ὅτι ἐγγύτατα τούτων αἰτία ἐτεθνήκει, ἥκιστα δὲ ἄξιός ὢν τῶν γε ἐπ’ ἐμοῦ Ἑλλήνων ἐς τοῦτο δυστυχίας ἀφικέσθαι διὰ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐς ἀρετὴν νενομισμένην ἐπιτήδευσιν.

And he died for such a reason or something very close to it, he who least of the Greeks in my time deserved to come to such misfortune, because he had ordered his whole life towards moral virtue. (Thuc. 7.86.5)⁴⁶

44 The translation offered here is the one by Mynott (2013).

45 Williams (1998) analyses the ‘ancient simplicity’ on this basis in more detail.

46 The meaning of διὰ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐς ἀρετὴν νενομισμένην ἐπιτήδευσιν is contentious. The discussion centres on whether νενομισμένην is to be understood with ἀρετὴν, giving ‘merely conventional virtue’ (among others, Rutherford 1994: 62 and Orwin 1994: 139 n. 41) or ‘what was considered virtue’ (Connor 1984: 205 n. 53), or with ἐπιτήδευσιν, rendering ‘his lifestyle having been regulated’ (among others, Gomme et al. 1970: *ad loc.* and Rood 1998: 184 n. 9). I follow the latter interpretation and also take πᾶσαν with ἐπιτήδευσιν.

This explicitly moral evaluation set forth in the narrator's own voice has caused much consternation in modern scholarship. Many scholars have found it incongruous that Thucydides could at the same time show Nicias to be partly responsible for the Athenian disaster in Sicily and praise him as a good man and lament his death.⁴⁷ The explanation is surely that Nicias' behaviour – moderate (6.8.4), minded for peace rather than war (5.16, 6.8.4), cautious (5.16, 6.8.4), foreseeing (6.8.4–6.14), pious (7.50.5), unmotivated by greed for either power or money (5.16, 6.8.4), loyal to Athens (he sails to Sicily despite his misgivings and remains in command even during illness and after having made it clear that he considers the campaign a disaster) – is the epitome of the 'simplicity', or traditional virtue,⁴⁸ which Thucydides admired and wished to be central to the way the world works, but which he increasingly saw ridiculed, outmanoeuvred and destroyed. By turning the reader's attention at this moment of grief and high drama to a picture of the world as it should have been, Thucydides makes the reader grieve not just for Nicias, but for himself as a creature of this world.⁴⁹

If such traditional virtue is not recommended in practice, what behaviour does Thucydides advise his readers to emulate? Across the eight books of the *History*, there is only one positive and viable *paradeigma* for behaviour, and that is Pericles. Pericles' virtues are extolled in his obituary, the only extended character evaluation in the work (2.65). This passage focuses on Pericles' supreme ability as a leader: his power to rule the ungovernable *demos* (2.65.1–4 and 8–9), his moderation and foresight (2.65.5–7), his authority, intelligence, integrity and lack of power lust (2.65.8), and the fact that his successors destroyed Athens by lacking these virtues (2.65.7). These same virtues are demonstrated in the other passages where Pericles plays a part: his strong leadership (1.127, 1.139, 1.140–4, 2.21, 2.34), his foresight (2.13), his intelligence (2.34), his integrity (2.13, 2.60), his commitment to putting the city before himself (2.13, 2.35–46, 2.60–4). No criticism of Pericles is ever voiced or implied by the narrator. The absence of criticism might be considered surprising given the fact that Pericles is

47 For attempts to explain away this narratorial evaluation see Gomme et al. (1970: *ad loc.*), Edmunds (1975: 142) and Connor (1984: 205). Strangely, this is not discussed by Kallet (2001), although one of her main conclusions is that Thucydides blamed Nicias for the Sicilian disaster. Hornblower (1987: 168–9) argues convincingly that Thucydides was critical of Nicias as a general, but sympathetic towards him on a personal level. For a good defence of the sincerity of the remark see Williams (1998: 244–6).

48 Finley (1947: 245–6) comes close to saying this when explaining the remark by a reference to Nicias' 'moderation and stability'.

49 Rood (1998: 198 with n. 72) observes that the primary function of the character of Nicias is to create pathos, and comments on the similarity between the phrasing of the Thucydidean obituary and Arist. *Poet.* 1453a4 on the evoking of pity in tragedy. Cornford (1907: 190) also labels the character Nicias 'pathetic'.

the politician who leads Athens into the war. This is, however, presented not as a villainous act, but rather as something about which the Athenians in reality had no choice: Pericles twice states as much in speeches (1.140, 2.61.1), and it is confirmed by the narratorial discussion of the causes of the war: the underlying reason which made the war necessary (*ἀναγκάσαι*) was the growth of Athens and the fear this caused in Sparta (1.23.6). Since war was inevitable, Pericles showed his quality in recognising this to be the case, in galvanising the Athenians to face it with courage, and in advising them against overreaching themselves in the course of it.⁵⁰ Foster has demonstrated how discrepancies between Thucydides' narrative and Pericles' speeches show Pericles' enthusiasm for war and confidence in Athenian victory to be wrong, but it is significant that Thucydides does not mention these shortcomings in the character evaluation of 2.65: they are failings, but minor ones compared to Pericles' virtues.⁵¹ Pericles, then, is a paradigm of great leadership. The *History* has nothing to say about his traits as a private individual, and in this Thucydides' moral *paradeigma* differs from the ones seen in Herodotus and the Hellenistic historiographers.

Pericles dies in Thuc. 2.65. His moderation and foresight dominate only the very beginning of the war and are then countered by the self-seeking, overconfidence, power lust and greed of his successors. Pericles' qualities are to a certain degree mirrored in Hermocrates of Syracuse (see especially 6.72.1), and some of them in other Athenian leaders (moderation and foresight in Nicias, strong leadership in Alcibiades), but no one else is presented as a *paradeigma* for emulation. This makes the world of the *History* a very bleak place: old-fashioned virtue is dying and being hunted down, and there is no contemporary virtue to displace it.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Thucydides' *History* cannot be separated from its moral lessons. When Thucydides decided to write a true narrative of the Peloponnesian War, this narrative for him entailed showing the truth about the absence of divine justice and the dying out of simple morality in the world. In this

⁵⁰ τὴν μὲν γὰρ ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν, ἀφανεστάτην δὲ λόγῳ, τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἡγοῦμαι μεγάλους γιγνομένους καὶ φόβον παρέχοντας τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ἀναγκάσαι ἐς τὸ πολεμεῖν: Eckstein (2003: 763–4) is technically correct that this means not that war was objectively inevitable, i.e. forced upon both parties by some impersonal, superhuman force (such as international systems theory), but that the Athenians forced the Spartans to war by their growth and the fear it caused. The practical implication of this interpretation, however, is that the only way the Athenians could have avoided the war would have been by dissolving their empire. As that was never on the table, war was inevitable.

⁵¹ Foster (2010). I am less convinced by the argument of Taylor (2010) that Thucydides intends to throw Pericles' definition into doubt.

way he intended to make his work useful for a reader who wanted to see the world ‘with perfect clarity’, and thus make it ‘a valuable object for all time’.

Thucydides’ moralising has escaped censure by modern scholars because of its minimalist subtlety. His minimalist moralising feels ironic, almost postmodern, and rewards the alert reader. His speeches and the Melian Dialogue leave the conclusion hanging and give the reader scope to think for himself. Both of these techniques are more to the twentieth- and twenty-first-century taste than the explicit moralising of Polybius and Diodorus. Thucydides does, however, also moralise explicitly, using some of the techniques that we see in Hellenistic historiography. Moreover, he moralises on the macro-level, by means of a pattern of success–overconfidence–disaster that plays on intertextuality with Herodotus and contemporary performance literature, and by means of repeated contrasts between the interpretation of the world offered by the characters and by the narrator of the *History*.

Through these means, an ancient reader of Thucydides is presented with a picture of his own world that is as radical as it is bleak: it is a world with no gods, where virtue does not pay, and the wicked often come off better than the good. Is this, then, moral didacticism? If Thucydides was recommending wicked behaviour as more advantageous and praiseworthy than virtuous behaviour, that would be anti-moral didacticism. He is, however, not doing that. It cannot be stated clearly enough that the narrator of the *History* presents the injustice of the world as a deplorable reality (especially in the narrative of the Corcyraean civil war and in the obituary of Nicias) and not as an opportunity to be grasped. He would prefer the traditional virtues to prevail, but has learned from experience that they do not. This means that he cannot strongly recommend any way to act in the world. Pericles’ moderation and selflessness combined with a great statesman’s skills are a shining example, but the fact that it is the only such example in the work and disappears early in the story shows how rare it is in reality. Rather, Thucydides’ didactic message is an intellectual one; he offers understanding of the world, of human motivation and interaction, and of military success and failure, but no very certain recipes for how to obtain it. This is the ‘clarity’ promised in his preface. If his work should inspire readers to begin to practise traditional virtue in an attempt to save it from extinction, he would no doubt consider that an added achievement, as long as they did so with intelligence, foresight and the understanding of the world gained from reading his *History*.

6. *Xenophon, Hellenica*

If Thucydides is often regarded as too good a historian to moralise, Xenophon is often regarded as too much of a moralist to be a good historian. Scholarship in the nineteenth century regarded Xenophon as an incompetent historian who wanted to think and write like Thucydides, but was intellectually incapable of doing so.¹ This trend persisted throughout much of the twentieth century;² but at the same time a trickling stream of scholars began to study the *Hellenica* on its own terms and discuss what its purpose may have been.³ Such discussions have generally concluded that the work's purpose was to a certain extent moral. Grayson (1975) has even argued that the *Hellenica* is not historiography at all, but is a purely moral treatise. It is part of the purpose of the present study to show that a work can comfortably be both at the same time, and even that this was, in fact, the norm for Greek historiography. In the following, we shall see how Xenophon's *Hellenica* in many ways functions as the link between Classical and Hellenistic historiographical moralising.

There is general agreement that Xenophon wrote the *Hellenica* in (at least) two instalments, the first (1.1.1–2.3.10) as a continuation of Thucydides⁴ probably shortly after the end of the Peloponnesian War, the second (2.3.11–end) some, perhaps many, years later in a style more his own.⁵ Nevertheless, I shall treat the work as a unified whole, in the belief that

1 Niebuhr (1828), Schwartz (1889).

2 Delebecque (1957), Finley (1959), Westlake (1966–7), Soulis (1972).

3 Breitenbach (1950), Henry (1967), Krafft (1967), Anderson (1974), Grayson (1975), Higgins (1977), Cawkwell (1979). For the decision to include the *Hellenica* but not the *Anabasis* in the present study, see the Introduction.

4 However he himself understood that; see Dover (1981: 444).

5 First posited by MacLaren (1934). See also Anderson (1974: 61–72), Cawkwell (1979), Krentz (1989: 5), Dillery (1995: 12–15). *Contra* Henry (1967) and Gray (1989), who believe that it was all written in one continuous effort. Henry has a good discussion of the arguments.

Xenophon intended it to be read as such, regardless of how many years passed between his writing of the first and second part.

PROGRAMMATIC STATEMENTS

The *Hellenica* has no preface. The fact that the first and last lines of the work make it, in effect, a chapter in a continuous story says much about Xenophon's view of history,⁶ but it does not provide any information about the content or purpose of the work. For such information we need to turn to four brief, programmatic narratorial statements within the narrative. The first one concerns the last words of Theramenes, who pretended to play the drinking game *kottabos* with the last drops of his hemlock and toasted Critias, his former friend, now persecutor. After quoting the joke, the Xenophontic narrator comments:

καὶ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἀγνοῶ, ὅτι ταῦτα ἀποφθέγματα οὐκ ἀξιόλογα, ἐκεῖνο δὲ κρίνω τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀγαστόν, τὸ τοῦ θανάτου παρεστηκότος μήτε τὸ φρόνιμον μήτε τὸ παιγνιῶδες ἀπολιπεῖν ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς.

I know that these witticisms are not worthy of mention, but I judge that this was an admirable quality in the man that on the threshold of death neither reason nor a sense of humour left his mind. (Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.56)

The second programmatic statement comes when the narrative switches from the land war to the war at sea during the Corinthian War:

καὶ ὁ μὲν δὴ κατὰ γῆν πόλεμος οὕτως ἐπολεμεῖτο. ἐν ᾧ δὲ πάντα ταῦτα ἐπράττετο, τὰ κατὰ θάλατταν αὖ καὶ τὰς πρὸς θαλάττη πόλεις γενόμενα διηγῆσομαι, καὶ τῶν πράξεων τὰς μὲν ἀξιομνημονεύτους γράψω, τὰς δὲ μὴ ἀξίας λόγου παρήσω.

The war on land, then, had been fought in this way. While all of this had been going on, events happened at sea and in the cities by the sea which I shall now narrate. I shall write about those actions that are worthy of remembrance and pass over those not worthy of mention. (Xen. *Hell.* 4.8.1)

The third one is a justification for the detailed account of the celebration of the Spartan general Teleutias by his enthusiastic troops:

γινώσκω μὲν οὖν ὅτι ἐν τούτοις οὔτε δαπάνημα οὔτε κίνδυνον οὔτε μηχανήματα ἀξιόλογον οὐδὲν διηγούμαι· ἀλλὰ ναὶ μὰ Δία τόδε ἀξιόν μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι ἀνδρῶν

⁶ Opening words: μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα οὐ πολλαῖς ἡμέραις ὕστερον ἦλθεν ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν Θυμοχάρης ('Then, not many days later, Thymochares came from Athens'). Closing words: ἐμοὶ μὲν δὴ μέχρι τούτου γραφῆσθω· τὰ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ἴσως ἄλλω μελήσει ('Let the events this far have been written by me. The later ones will perhaps be someone else's task').

ἐννοεῖν, τί ποτε ποιῶν ὁ Τελευτίας οὕτω διέθηκε τοὺς ἀρχομένους. τοῦτο γὰρ ἦδη πολλῶν καὶ χρημάτων καὶ κινδύνων ἀξιολογώτατον ἀνδρὸς ἔργον ἐστίν.

I know that in this passage I am not talking about any great expense or danger or stratagem worthy of mention; but, by Zeus, this seems to me worthy for a man to think about: what Teleutias had done to make his soldiers feel this way. For this is a job for a man that is much more worthy of mention than any expenses or dangers. (Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.4)

And the fourth explains the decision to narrate in detail the Phliasians' steadfast resistance against Argive aggression for the sake of keeping their alliance with Sparta:

ἀλλὰ γὰρ τῶν μὲν μεγάλων πόλεων, εἴ τι καλὸν ἔπραξαν, ἅπαντες οἱ συγγραφεῖς μέμνηται· ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ, καὶ εἴ τις μικρὰ πόλις οὔσα πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ ἔργα διαπέπρακται, ἔτι μᾶλλον ἄξιον εἶναι ἀποφαίνειν.

For if one of the big cities does something glorious, all the historiographers mention it; but it seems to me that also if some city, although being small, has accomplished many glorious deeds, it is even more worthwhile to give an account of it. (Xen. *Hell.* 7.2.1)

What these four brief remarks have in common is the fact that they all explain Xenophon's decision to include certain historical details to the exclusion (we must assume) of others.⁷ The details he decided to include are the witticisms uttered by a man about to die for his commitment to moderate government over bloody tyranny (2.3.56); a narrative of naval warfare that focuses on the personalities and leadership styles of a string of commanders on both sides, rather than on any overall picture of strategies or objectives (4.8.1);⁸ the honours showered on a talented and likeable commander by his loyal troops (5.1.4); and an extended narrative of the trials and tribulations of a relatively unknown city in its quest to keep its treaty of friendship with a bigger power (7.2.1). These are all details with a moral-didactic bearing. We shall return to the lessons they teach below; here we shall just note that whenever the Xenophontic narrator turns aside from the narrative to comment on his selection methods, these methods turn out to rest on moral-didactic principles.

For placing the *Hellenica* in its generic context it is significant that in the quoted passages Xenophon repeatedly plays with the word ἀξιόλογος,

7 The passages were first discussed side by side by Breitenbach (1950: 17–22) and have since often been discussed in the context of Xenophon's purpose; see e.g. Rahn (1971), Grayson (1975), Tuplin (1993: 36–41), Pownall (2004: 76–83), and, most cogently, Gray (2010).

8 For a good, brief analysis of the relevant chapters in this light see Pownall (2004: 76–9).

‘worthy of mention/noteworthy/important’, in order to show how in every instance he thinks details important which might not be thought so by others. It would be tempting to assume that the main target for his apologetic polemics is Thucydides,⁹ but this is not an unproblematic assumption: it is true that the details whose inclusion he defends would not be out of place in Herodotus, so this predecessor is unlikely to be his target, but it is less clear that they would in fact fall outside of Thucydides’ remit: Thucydides narrates the deeds and sufferings of small cities when they are morally significant (e.g. the sack of Mycalessus, Thuc. 7.29; see p. 204), can include witticisms (e.g. the Athenian jibe at the captured Spartans and their very Spartan reply, Thuc. 4.40), and sometimes comments on the likeability of a commander and its practical results (e.g. Brasidas, Thuc. 4.81). We have to remember that we have lost most of the histories that were written as continuations of Thucydides; one of these – perhaps the one now known as the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, which seems to have been less morally focused than Xenophon and Theopompus, as we shall see in Chapter 7 – may well have set out explicit rules for what did and did not belong in a proper work of history, inspired by Thucydides, but going beyond his practice.¹⁰

MORALISING TECHNIQUES

Some of the types of moralising employed in the *Hellenica* are types pioneered by Thucydides. Juxtaposition is used to great effect, for instance between the oath-breaking of Tissaphernes and the pious oath-keeping of Agesilaus (3.4.6 with 11), between the leadership qualities of the Athenian Iphicrates and the Spartan Mnasippus (6.2.27–32), and between the Spartans’ trumped-up accusations of Ismenias at 5.2.35–6 and the narrative of their own previous shady actions.¹¹ There is also an instance, and a very effective one, of moralising by abstract summary, namely the final two chapters of the work (7.5.26–7).

9 As has been done by Breitenbach (1950: 17–22), Rahn (1971) and Grayson (1975). Breitenbach recognises that the juxtaposition of Xenophon and Thucydides is not straightforward.

10 Gray (2010) argues that Xenophon’s ‘interventions’ were not intended as polemics against any other historiographer, but were meant to address his readers’ expectations of the content and moral judgements of his work. She is no doubt right about their function as reader guidance, but he must have had some reason for thinking that his practice was diverging from reader expectations, and it is simplest to assume that this reason was its difference from one or more of his influential rivals.

11 See also the contrast between Agesilaus’ treatment of Lysander in 3.4.7–9 and Pharnabazus’ of Spithridates in 3.4.10 (see Krentz 1995: *ad loc.*), between the god-like honours awarded to a bellicose king at 3.3.1 and the ignominious death of a peace-loving king at 3.5.25, and between the Spartan and Theban cavalry at Leuctra (6.4.10–12).

Most of the moralising in the *Hellenica*, however, points clearly towards the kind of moralising we see in Polybius and Diodorus. There are a number of moral-didactic digressions, such as 5.3.7 on the dangers of acting in anger and 6.1.2–3 on the upright character of Polydamas.¹² Likewise, there are numerous instances of both introductory and concluding moralising, such as 4.4.2, which tells the reader that the Corinthian revolutionary party ‘made the most unholy plan imaginable’ (τὸ πάντων ἀνοσιώτατον ἐβουλεύσαντο), and 7.3.1, which rounds off the story of the Phliasian resistance against Theban aggression with the statement that ‘I shall move on now from the story of the Phliasians, how loyal they were to their friends, how steadfast they remained in the war, and how despite lacking everything they maintained their alliance.’¹³ This guiding moralising works exactly like its Hellenistic counterpart in telling the reader how to read certain episodes in a moral way. In contrast with the guiding moralising of Polybius and Diodorus, however, it is never prescriptively didactic; the reader of Xenophon has to make the leap from admiring the Phliasians to applying the same virtues in his own life without help from the narrator.

Moral asides, which are such a defining characteristic of the *Bibliothēke* of Diodorus, are also used by Xenophon, particularly as brief explanations of actions. Thus, Phoebidas decides to take the Cadmea because he is ‘more in love with the idea of doing something glorious than with life itself, but not considered particularly rational or sensible’ (καὶ γὰρ ἦν τοῦ λαμπρόν τι ποιῆσαι πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ τοῦ ζῆν ἐραστής, οὐ μέντοι λογιστικός γε οὐδὲ πάνυ φρόνιμος ἐδόκει εἶναι: 5.2.28), and Stasippus does not pursue the routed enemy in a civil war battle because he is ‘the kind of man who does not like to kill his fellow-citizens’ (τοιοῦτος ὁ Στάσιππος ἦν οἷός μὴ βούλεσθαι πολλοὺς ἀποκτείνουνα τῶν πολιτῶν: 6.5.7).¹⁴

Of the more implicit types of moralising, evaluative phrasing is used in many passages of the *Hellenica*, although it is by no means universal in the work. Favourite techniques are counterfactual statements and emphasis through negation. Thus, at 5.3.20, Agesilaus ‘did not, as one might have thought, rejoice’ at the death of Agesipolis, but ‘cried and missed his

12 Other moralising digressions in the *Hellenica*: 4.8.22, 5.1.4, 5.1.19–20, 5.1.36, 5.4.1, 5.4.33, 6.2.32, 6.2.39, 6.5.51–2, 7.2.1, 7.5.8, 7.5.19–20.

13 περὶ μὲν δὴ Φλειασίων, ὡς καὶ πιστοὶ τοῖς φίλοις ἐγένοντο καὶ ἄλκιμοι ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ διετέλεσαν, καὶ ὡς πάντων σπανίζοντες διέμενον ἐν τῇ συμμαχίᾳ, εἶρηται: 7.3.1. Other moralising introductions and conclusions in the *Hellenica*: 2.3.56 concluding, 3.4.18 concluding, 4.20–1 introductory, 4.5.4 introductory, 4.8.31 obituary, 5.1.3 introductory, 5.2.6 concluding, 5.4.1 introductory, 5.4.51 introductory, 7.2.1 introductory, 7.3.12 concluding, 7.4.32 concluding, 7.5.16 introductory.

14 Other examples of moral asides in the *Hellenica* are 5.4.65 (μᾶλα θρασὺν ἄνδρα), 6.4.3 (ἦδη γάρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸ δαιμόνιον ἦγεν) and 6.4.8 (ἐν δὲ τῇ μεσημβρίᾳ ὑποπινόντων καὶ τὸν οἶνον παροξύναι τι αὐτοὺς ἔλεγον).

company'; and at 5.4.64 Timotheus wins Corcyra for Athens by not enslaving or killing anyone or changing their constitution.¹⁵

The fact that evaluative phrasing is only used in certain episodes makes these stand out noticeably as moralising narratives.¹⁶ These are the episodes that are chiefly responsible for Xenophon's long-standing reputation as a strongly biased historian. Thus, the narrative of the civil war in Corinth and the attempt to unite Corinth and Argos (4.4.1–14) leaves the reader in no doubt about the contempt Xenophon felt for such revolutionary measures and the people responsible for them.¹⁷ Likewise, the narrative of Lycomedes' efforts to form an Arcadian alliance outside the influence of both Thebes and Sparta (7.1.23–7) shows Xenophon's aversion to this idea in no uncertain terms. However, to dismiss such passages as political bias is to see only half the picture. As argued in the Introduction, moral and political views are closely intertwined in Classical and Hellenistic thought. Xenophon despised the Corinthian revolutionaries because he saw them behaving in ways he considered impious and lawless (see especially 4.4.2–3), and he considered the Arcadian attempt at hegemony an example of unfounded arrogance led by the selfish ambition of one man (see especially 7.1.23). It is these moral messages that the passionate language of these two passages brings across with crystal clarity to the reader, not any political message about the wrongness of opposing Sparta, although that can be read between the lines by a reader who so wishes.¹⁸

Correlation between action and result is another common type of moralising in the *Hellenica*, usually without explicit narratorial guidance. For instance, in the narrative of the Spartan campaign in Asia Minor, the general Dercylidas sacrifices with a view to attacking the fortress of Cebren (3.1.17). The sacrifices are unfavourable for four days, and for four days Dercylidas waits outside the fortress. One of his officers, Athenadas of Sicyon, thinking that Dercylidas is a fool to keep waiting (3.1.18), runs

15 Other examples are 4.4.15 (the Spartans do not attempt to bring back the exiles to Phlius), 4.5.2 (Agesilaus does not pursue the Argives who were making Corinthian sacrifices, but stays and lets the Corinthians sacrifice), 5.4.55 (Agesilaus reconciles the two parties in Thespieae instead of letting his supporters kill the democrats), 7.1.27 (the Spartans and Thebans do not consult 'the god' about how to bring about peace). For Xenophon's use of such sideshadows see Hau (2013).

16 Examples of passages with evaluative phrasing in the *Hellenica*: 1.1.29–31, 2.2.6, 2.3.11–14, 2.4.1, 2.4.26, 3.3.1, 3.4.16–18, 3.5.24, 4.3.8, 4.3.12, 4.3.19, 4.4.6, 4.4.15, 4.5.2, 4.5.11–15, 4.8.18–19, 4.8.36–8, 5.1.3, 5.3.10, 5.3.20, 5.3.21, 5.3.22, 5.4.11–12, 5.4.44, 5.4.55, 5.4.57, 5.4.64, 6.5.12, 6.5.14, 6.2.15–19, 6.2.20–3, 6.2.27–32, 6.2.33–8, 6.4.28–32, 6.4.33–7, 7.1.15–17, 7.1.23–6, 7.1.27, 7.1.46, 7.2, 7.4.3, 7.4.27, 7.4.33–9, 7.5.12–13, 7.5.16.

17 Gray (1989: 154–7) offers a masterly close reading of this passage, focusing on its literary artistry.

18 For readings of these two passages in terms of pro-Spartan bias see Cawkwell (1979: notes *ad* 4.4.4 and 6).

forward with his men in order to cut off the water-supply of the besieged. The people in the city break out, wound him, kill two of his men and drive the rest back. In the next paragraph, Dercylidas is approached by messengers from the city's garrison, who offer to change sides, and – in a masterful use of delayed disclosure¹⁹ – we are suddenly told that his sacrifices on this day have been favourable; he leads his men towards the city, and the gates are opened to him. We must conclude, without being explicitly told, that piously waiting for the sacrifices to turn out favourably was the right decision.²⁰

Moralising by internal evaluation is also common in the *Hellenica*. Thus the Athenians after Aegospotami are allowed to condemn themselves by expecting to be treated by the Spartans in the same way they have treated Melos and Scione (2.2.3 and 10), and the acquittal of Sphodrias is considered 'by many' the 'most unjust decision ever reached by a Spartan court' (πολλοῖς ἔδοξεν αὐτῆ δὴ ἀδικώτατα ἐν Λακεδαίμονι ἡ δίκη κριθῆναι: 5.4.24).²¹ Many opinions with a moral bearing are also expressed in speeches. Their exact interpretation is often left as implicit as in Thucydides and has to be deciphered by the same means, namely the correspondence between speech and narrative. Sometimes, however, the reader is given a steer by the reaction of the speech's audience, in the same way as in Polybius and Diodorus. Thus, the speech by Callistratus for peace between Athens and Sparta on the basis of forgiveness for past wrongs (6.3.10–11), which demonstrates a learned lesson of humility in good fortune (6.3.11 and 16–17) and gratitude for past favours (6.3.13), gets the moral approval of its audience (δοξάντων δὲ τούτων καλῶς εἰπεῖν: 6.3.18) and results in a peace treaty – in contrast with the preceding speech of Autocles, which scolded the Spartans for always acting in their own interest under false pretences, and which was greeted with silence and non-effect (6.3.10).²²

One type of moralising is more characteristic of Xenophon's style than any other, and, by its prominence and distinct flavour, makes the moralising of the *Hellenica* stand out from that of any other surviving work of

19 For 'delayed disclosure' see Hornblower (1994).

20 Other examples of moralising by means of correlation between action and result in the *Hellenica*: 4.1.17–19 (overconfidence leads to death), 4.5.11–15 (overconfidence and inability to cope with setbacks lead to disaster), 4.8.18–19 (overconfidence and negligence lead to death and disaster), 4.8.36–8 (overconfidence leads to death and disaster), 5.4.64 (good treatment of the defeated leads to loyalty), 6.2.15–19 (bad treatment of subordinates leads to disloyalty and inefficiency), 7.1.32 (arrogance leads to disaffected allies), 7.4.10 (loyalty to allies is respected and rewarded even by enemies).

21 Other examples of internal evaluation in the *Hellenica*: 1.4.13–17, 4.4.3, 4.4.6, 4.4.19, 4.5.10, 4.8.6, 5.2.37, 5.3.16, 6.4.14–15, 6.4.16.

22 Some other speeches with a moral message in the *Hellenica* (in both *oratio recta* and *obliqua*): 1.4.13–17, 2.3.15–23, 2.4.40–1, 5.1.13–18, 5.2.32, 6.1.4–16, 6.4.2–3, 6.4.22–3 (gains authority from echoing 6.3.16), 6.5.33–48.

history: the moral vignette. Throughout the *Hellenica*, the discourse often slows down to real-time pace and broadens into scenes, usually with two or three speaking characters, whose utterances are rendered in direct speech, often at length.²³ Some instances are shorter, with only one or two brief utterances,²⁴ or with just one witty or punchy line.²⁵ This practice is part of what earned Xenophon admiration for a ‘charming style’ (*charis*)²⁶ among his ancient readers, but it has also been partly responsible for his nineteenth- and twentieth-century reputation as ‘not a proper historian’. Gray has fittingly called this feature of Xenophon’s style ‘conversationalised narrative’ and has correctly identified it as presenting moral and philosophical lessons (as well as offering variety and pleasure in reading).²⁷ What exactly the lesson of each vignette is can be quite tricky to decipher, however, and for some of them different scholars have argued for diametrically opposed interpretations.²⁸ Such ambiguity is surely no accident: Xenophon was a skilful writer and story-teller and could make his meaning plain without destroying a good story.²⁹ When he chose not to, we must assume that he had his reasons. Apparently, like Thucydides with the Melian Dialogue, he sometimes wanted to present his readers with a moral dilemma without providing a solution. Showing that such dilemmas are part of human life and that they have no easy solutions is thought-directing didacticism. We shall examine some of Xenophon’s moral dilemmas below.

MORAL LESSONS

The Good Leader and His Men

Several scholars have observed that Xenophon’s *Hellenica* is primarily about how to be a good military leader, and this is certainly one of the major moral and practical lessons of the work.³⁰ Many have taken Agesilaus

23 Long moral vignettes in the *Hellenica*: 2.3.23–56, 3.1.10–15, 3.1.20–8, 3.4.7–9, 4.1.4–15, 4.1.29–38, 5.4.25–33.

24 Short moral vignettes in the *Hellenica*: 4.1.39–40, 4.2.3–4, 4.8.38–9.

25 1.5.2–7, 2.1.31–2, 1.6.32, 4.4.10.

26 Demetr. *Eloc.* 128–35.

27 Gray (1989: 11–78).

28 See e.g. Gray (1989: 52–8) and Krentz (1995: *ad loc.*) on the vignette of Agesilaus and Pharnabazus sitting in the grass discussing loyalty (4.1.29–38).

29 See e.g. 5.1.3 with explicitly moralising introduction.

30 See e.g. Breitenbach (1950), Gray (1989), Pownall (2004), Tamiolaki (2012). Tuplin (1993: esp. 163–8) and Dillery (1995: esp. 241–9) have argued that the *Hellenica* has a politico-moral message. Tuplin argues that its purpose is to show the moral evil and necessary failure of every recent attempt at hegemony over the Greek world, as a warning to contemporary Athens not to commit the same mistakes. Dillery agrees, but detects also a positive message, namely that Athens and Sparta should put away their mutual enmity and

to be the ultimate *paradeigma* of a good commander in Xenophon, but this assumption is not straightforward: Xenophon's portrayal of his friend in the *Hellenica* is complex and at times ambiguous. We shall return to Xenophon's portrait of Agesilaus below; for now, in order to establish the virtues of the good commander which remain the same throughout the work, it is safer to start elsewhere.

The most important aspect of a commander's virtue in the *Hellenica* is the correct way of treating his soldiers; this will make them loyal in the extreme and therefore efficient as a fighting force as long as the commander makes sound decisions. The most explicit *paradeigma* of a commander and his loyal soldiers is Agesilaus' brother Teleutias, whose celebration by his men is described in detail at 5.1.3. The extended focus on this aspect of Teleutias' generalship is then justified by the narratorial remark that 'this seems to me worthy for a man to think about: what Teleutias had done to make his soldiers feel this way. For this is a job for a man that is much more worthy of mention than any expenses or dangers' (5.1.4; the Greek has been quoted above). What exactly it was that Teleutias did is demonstrated more clearly at his next appearance (5.1.13–24). Here he is shown to be prepared to share hardship with his men (5.1.14–16), but also to make an effort to get them plentiful supplies, not in the form of gifts from Persia, but by plundering enemy territory (5.1.17) in raids of great daring (5.1.21–4) and, Xenophon is careful to point out, careful planning (5.1.19–20). In other words, the soldiers love him because he is a model of the behaviour he expects from them. (Teleutias will later be shown to suffer from one fatal character flaw, which we shall return to below.) Similar adoration of a commander is displayed by the troops of Hermocrates, because of his 'consideration, ready kindness, and approachability' (ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ προθυμίαν καὶ κοινότητα: 1.1.29–31). That is, they love him for being good to them rather than for being a good soldier. We should probably imagine that Teleutias treated his men well too, and that Hermocrates also set a good example on the battlefield, but this is not spelled out.

The correlation between consideration for troops, loyalty and success is exemplified in detail in an extended juxtaposition of the bad Spartan commander Mnasippus and the good Athenian commander Iphicrates, which shows how stinginess and brutality will result in defeat and death whereas proper consideration will bring loyalty and victory (6.2.15–39). Interestingly, however, the good commander Iphicrates (praised by the

join in creating an empire 'based not on force, but on a reputation for fairness and generosity' (1995: 248–9; this view originated with Schwartz 1889). It will be clear from the following that this interpretation of the *Hellenica* is perfectly compatible with the one offered here, proving that, as in all of the ancient historiographers, the moral and the political messages are closely intertwined.

narrator at 6.5.51), whose troops show an ‘eagerness for battle well worth seeing’ (ἀξία θεας ἢ σπουδή: 6.2.35), is not noticeably kind to his men, although he does not display the disregard and brutality of Mnasippos. Rather, he works them hard to make sure that they are always ready for battle and always in peak physical condition. His training methods receive explicit narratorial praise (6.2.32), as does the training camp of Agesilaus at Ephesus in an almost lyrically descriptive passage at 3.4.15–18.³¹ What these two training regimes have in common, apart from their effectiveness, is the use of competition and the offering of prizes for performance. The reader is clearly meant to take away from the reading that this kind of incentivisation is the way to get the best out of soldiers.³²

In his focus on the relationship between military commanders and their soldiers Xenophon is unique among the ancient Greek historiographers. In some other respects, however, his ideal commander is very similar to the paradigm offered by Polybius. Thus, intelligent courage is a major component of what makes a good general in the *Hellenica*. Courage is a generally praiseworthy quality in the work,³³ but in military commanders it needs to be tempered with intelligence. This is seen most clearly when the narrator digresses from the narrative of Teleutias’ raid on the Piraeus in order to defend his plan against the imagined charge of idiocy (ἀφρόνως) by explaining how it rested on careful calculations (ἀναλογισμὸν: 5.1.19); and even Epaminondas, leading the hated Thebans against Sparta, receives grudging narratorial approval for his combination of foresight and courage.³⁴ By contrast, Agesilaus’ brave, but risky head-on attack on the Theban centre in the Battle of Coronea receives a ticking-off despite the fact that the Spartans were victorious (4.3.19),³⁵ and defeat is in store for the excessively daring Nicolochus (μάλα θρασὺν ἄνδρα: 5.4.65).

Like Polybius, however, Xenophon also has time for old-fashioned heroic courage: his implied criticism of Agesilaus’ risky frontal attack is

31 On this passage and its implications for Xenophon’s portrayal of Agesilaus see Hau (2012: 598–601).

32 Prize competitions are also used by Dercylidas (3.2.10), another good commander in the *Hellenica*, as well as by the idealised Cyrus the Great in the *Cyropaedia* (*Cyr.* 2.1.22–3).

33 The vignette of the death of Theramenes is explicitly said to be included to show courage, along with a sense of humour, in the face of death (2.3.56). 7.5.15–17 is a beautiful piece of eulogistic writing showcasing the courage of Athenian soldiers, among whom was, according to Diogenes Laertius 2.54, Xenophon’s own son Gryllus.

34 εὐτυχῆ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἂν ἔγωγε φήσαιμι τὴν στρατηγίαν αὐτῷ γενέσθαι· ὅσα μὲντοι προνοίας ἔργα καὶ τόλμης ἐστίν, οὐδέν μοι δοκεῖ ἄνθρωπος ἑλλυπεῖν (‘I would deny that this campaign was favoured by fortune; but as for deeds of foresight and courage, the man seems to me to have left nothing undone’) (7.5.8).

35 ἐναυθὰ δὲ Ἀγησίλαον ἀνδρείον μὲν ἔξεστιν εἰπεῖν ἀναμφισβητήτως· οὐ μὲντοι εἴλετο γὰρ τὰ ἀσφαλέστατα (‘Then it can undoubtedly be said that Agesilaus was brave; he did not, however, choose the safest course’).

also apologetically admiring (see above, n. 35), and when characters face death bravely, this is duly noted. Some courageous commanders go to their deaths with a witty and/or brave one-liner in a mini-vignette (Callicratidas 1.6.32, Pasimachus 4.4.10); many others are simply noted to have ‘died fighting’ (μαχόμενος ἀπέθανε: Polycharmus 4.3.8, Pisander 4.3.12, Anaxibius 4.8.39, Teleutias 5.3.6, Phoebidas 5.4.45, Polytropus 6.5.14). These battlefield death narratives are clearly the forerunner of the heroic death narratives of Diodorus, although they are rather less standardised in Xenophon. In every case the commander’s death signals the defeat of his troops, for which he often bears a large part of the blame, but his heroic death ensures the preservation of his reputation. Contrast the ignominious death of Thibron, who is surprised while relaxing in the company of a flute-player and is not honoured with the epithet ‘fighting’ (4.8.18–19).

Good Xenophontic commanders also display a very un-Polybian virtue: piety. In the *Hellenica*, good military leaders always sacrifice before going into battle, crossing the border or completing any other important action. There are no fewer than thirteen instances of such sacrifices in the work, all performed by commanders who function as positive *paradeigmata*.³⁶ The action of sacrificing is usually not emphasised, but simply mentioned as a matter of course, in the same way as the commander is said to collect his troops or order them to prepare to move out. The commander’s sacrifices are only emphasised twice. The first time is in the narrative of Dercylidas discussed above (3.1.17–19). The success of the pious commander contrasted with the fiasco of his less scrupulous subordinate leaves the reader in no doubt that sacrificial omens must be taken seriously, and, by extension, that commanders who abort their missions because of unfavourable omens are doing the right thing (Agesilaus 3.4.15, Agesipolis 4.7.7). The other instance of a commander’s sacrificing taking centre-stage is the launch of Agesilaus’ Asian campaign. First the king leaves Sparta ‘having performed all the necessary sacrifices, both the *diabateria* and the others’ (θυσάμενος ὅσα ἔδει καὶ τᾶλλα καὶ τὰ διαβατήρια: 3.4.3). By giving us the name of one particular type of sacrifice and implying that there were others which he could name if he wanted to,³⁷ the narrator gives the impression of a very pious commander. Agesilaus then decides that he wants to go to Aulis to

³⁶ Agesilaus: 3.4.3–4, 3.4.15, 5.1.33, 6.5.17, 6.5.18; Dercylidas: 3.1.17, 3.1.23, 3.2.16; Agesipolis: 4.7.2, 4.7.7; Archidamus: 6.4.19; Herippidas: 4.1.22; Chares: 7.2.21. Other types of sacrifices also feature prominently: 1.6.37, 2.4.39, 3.2.26, 3.3.4, 4.5.1–2, 4.4.5. By contrast, Thucydides only mentions military sacrifices twice: in a report on Brasidas’ actions to Cleon (5.10.2) and at a point where they turn out so unfavourable that the Spartan army returns home without having crossed the border (5.54.2).

³⁷ The word διαβατήρια is found only eleven times in Classical Greek literature: three in Thucydides and eight in Xenophon’s *Hellenica*. This is the only instance when it is coupled with other, unnamed sacrifices.

sacrifice, ‘like Agamemnon’, an expression that has caused some scholarly debate. The easiest reading is to take it as a continuation of Agesilaus’ piety: Agamemnon, after all, was victorious in Asia, and no doubt Agesilaus is planning to be less extreme than the mythical king in his choice of sacrificial victim. The fact that the planned sacrifice is foiled by the Thebans (3.4.4) marks them as impious (and functions as a bad omen for Agesilaus’ campaign), but it does not make the king’s plan to sacrifice any less pious.³⁸

Beside sacrificing and obeying the sacrificial omens, a commander’s piety is demonstrated by his willingness to keep oaths scrupulously. This quality is also exemplified by Agesilaus in a deliberate contrast with the Persian satrap Tissaphernes. When Agesilaus arrives in Asia, the two exchange oaths on a truce until the satrap can receive orders from his king. Although Tissaphernes immediately proceeds to break his oath, Agesilaus continues to be true to his (3.4.6), and when hostilities begin, he informs Tissaphernes that ‘he was very grateful to him because by breaking his oath he himself had made the gods his enemies and allies of the Greeks’ (πολλὴν χάριν αὐτῷ ἔχοι, ὅτι ἐπιορκήσας αὐτὸς μὲν πολεμίους τοὺς θεοὺς ἐκτήσατο, τοῖς δ’ Ἕλλησι συμμάχους ἐποίησεν: 3.4.11). This internal evaluation underlines the message, and when Tissaphernes is subsequently beheaded by his king for incompetence (3.4.25), it seems that the Spartan king’s confident words have come true.

When we turn to the flaws of the bad commander, some of them are simply the opposites of the virtues of the good one: poor treatment of subordinates (Mnasippus), excessive daring (Nicolochus), impiety (Athenadas). The worst mistakes, however, seem to be committed under the influence of various strong emotions. Thus Phoebidas is ‘in love’ with the idea of doing some glorious deed, but is neither rational nor intelligent (καὶ γὰρ ἦν τοῦ λαμπρόν τι ποιῆσαι πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ τοῦ ζῆν ἔραστής, οὐ μέντοι λογιστικός γε οὐδὲ πάνυ φρόνιμος ἐδόκει εἶναι: 5.2.28). His blind ambition is what leads him to commit the one most criticised act in all of the *Hellenica*, namely the occupation of the Theban Cadmea. And Teleutias falls from grace in his fourth and final appearance in the *Hellenica* by giving in to anger and launching a blind attack on Olynthus, only to get himself killed (5.3.3–6), sparking a moralising digression on how dangerous and wrong it is to do anything at all in anger (5.3.7). The vice that most often leads commanders to disaster in the *Hellenica*, however, is overconfidence and complacency. The danger is demonstrated by the dire fates of numerous bad commanders (unnamed polemarch 4.5.11–15,³⁹ Thibron 4.8.18–19, Anaxibius 4.8.38–9,

³⁸ *Contra* Tuplin (1993: 56–7) and Krentz (1995: *ad loc.*).

³⁹ This is the hapless Spartan who loses his entire regiment at Lechaeum. In addition to overconfidence he showcases the flaw of lack of resourcefulness and imagination: when things start to go wrong, all he can do is repeat the same ineffectual actions over and over,

Alcetas 5.4.57). Xenophon offers no explicit moralising in the manner of Polybius on the dangers of trusting good fortune to last, but the pattern is clear.⁴⁰

Lessons of Phlius: Loyalty and Friendship

The longest explicit *paradeigma* in the *Hellenica* is the Phliasiens' resistance against aggression in order to stay faithful to their alliance with Sparta (7.2). It is introduced by the justification that even small cities should rightly be praised for their 'many glorious deeds' (εἰ τις μικρὰ πόλις οὔσα πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ ἔργα διαπέπρακται: 7.2.1) and rounded off by a transitional statement labelling it a narrative about 'the Phliasiens, how loyal they were to their friends, how steadfast they remained in the war, and how despite lacking everything they maintained their alliance' (ὡς καὶ πιστοὶ τοῖς φίλοις ἐγένοντο καὶ ἄλκιμοι ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ διετέλεσαν, καὶ ὡς πάντων σπανίζοντες διέμενον ἐν τῇ συμμαχίᾳ: 7.3.1). These qualities are richly demonstrated in the narrative between the two bookends. Xenophon's admiration seems to be inspired not primarily by the Phliasiens' plucky courage, although that clearly impressed him (7.2.4, 7.2.8), but by their ability to endure hardship (7.2.16, καρτερίας: 7.2.17) and for the right reasons: in order to keep faith with their allies, often designated by the more personal and emotional word 'friends' (φίλοι: 7.2.17, 7.3.1).

The passage has often been used to exemplify Xenophon's pro-Spartan bias, but it might equally well be used to demonstrate his moral didacticism: if he chose to give these events such extended treatment because Phlius remained loyal to Sparta in difficult times, we misread the passage if we focus only on Sparta and not on loyalty. The qualities of loyalty – to allies and to friends – self-discipline and courage were so important to Xenophon's purpose with the *Hellenica* that he decided to compose a special chapter showcasing them. It is only natural that the *paradeigma* also corresponds to his political ideals; it would be a strange thing to choose as a model of morality a city, country or individual whose politics one profoundly disagrees with. The chapter becomes more didactic because the glorious deeds are performed not by one of the major players in Greek history, but by a comparatively small and unknown city. By stressing this fact in the introduction to the narrative Xenophon makes it clear

with disastrous results (ποιοῦντες δὲ καὶ πάσχοντες τὰ ὅμοια τούτοις καὶ αὐθις: 4.5.11–15), in deliberate contrast with Agesilaus' resourcefulness and efficiency when he arrives on the scene (4.6.9–12). Cawkwell (1979: 38) argues convincingly that Xenophon knew the Spartan's name but deliberately withheld it as a means of censure.

40 For a detailed examination of the dangers of overconfidence, complacency and arrogance in all of Xenophon's works, see Hau (2012).

that loyalty, self-discipline and courage can be shown by anyone, no matter how insignificant, and that such qualities are always *καλά*.

The narrative of Phlius is contrasted with that of Euphron, tyrant of Sicyon. The contrast is signalled by a μέν–δέ construction which concludes the Phlius story and begins the narrative of Euphron’s assassination.⁴¹ The theme of the story of the end of Euphron is his disloyalty: he has previously betrayed Sicyon’s alliance with Sparta, but now, under the influence of fear, he pretends that he has, in fact, been a paragon of loyalty, using his tyrannical powers to exile anyone hostile to Sparta. The narrator comments, with typical Xenophontic understated humour: ‘many people heard him say these things; it is less clear how many believed him’ (ἠκροῶντο μὲν δὴ πολλοὶ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα· ὀπόσοι δὲ ἐπίθοντο οὐ πᾶν κατάδηλον: 7.3.3). Beyond this, there is no narratorial comment on Euphron’s dishonesty and disloyalty; the point is made by the contrast with Phlius. There is also a lesson in the fact that the story ends with Euphron’s assassination (7.3.5), and the acquittal of his assassins by the Thebans, in whose city the murder has taken place (7.3.12).

So far, so simple. However, many passages in the *Hellenica* show a didactic interest in split loyalties. The most famous instance is a beautifully written vignette in book 4 (4.1.29–38). Here Agesilaus meets the satrap Pharnabazus, whose country he has invaded, and they recline in the grass, Pharnabazus eschewing the ornate trappings of Oriental nobility to match the Spartan simplicity. The satrap then reproaches the Spartans for repaying his ‘friendship and alliance’ (φίλος καὶ σύμμαχος ἐγενόμεν: 4.1.32) in the Peloponnesian War not with gratitude, but with ravaging his land. The Spartans are ashamed at this (ἐπισχύνθησαν: 4.1.34), and Agesilaus has to explain that they are treating Pharnabazus as an enemy because he is a subject of the Persian king, with whom they are at war. He offers Pharnabazus an alliance if he will secede from the king, but when Pharnabazus refuses, Agesilaus praises him for his loyalty (4.1.38).⁴² It is possible to read the episode as reflecting badly on Agesilaus for not reciprocating the favours Pharnabazus has done for Sparta,⁴³ or to think Pharnabazus naive for expecting such reciprocation in a post-Thucydidean world. Xenophon, however, does not take sides. Instead, the vignette

41 περί μὲν δὴ Φλειασίων, ὡς καὶ πιστοὶ τοῖς φίλοις ἐγένοντο καὶ ἄλκιμοι ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ διετέλεσαν, καὶ ὡς πάντων σπανίζοντες διέμενον ἐν τῇ συμμαχίᾳ, εἴρηται. σχεδὸν δὲ περὶ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον Αἰνέας Στυμφάλιος, στρατηγὸς τῶν Ἀρκάδων γεγενημένος, νομίσας οὐκ ἀνεκτῶς ἔχειν τὰ ἐν τῷ Σικυῶνι, ἀναβάς σὺν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ στρατεύματι εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν συγκαλεῖ τῶν Σικυωνίων τῶν τε ἔνδον ὄντων τοὺς κρατίστους καὶ τοὺς ἄνευ δόγματος ἐκπεπρωκότας μετεπέμπετο: Xen. Hell. 7.3.1.

42 Similarly, Corinthian ambassadors are admired by Thebans for showing loyalty to Sparta and refusing to join Thebes against them (7.4.10).

43 So e.g. Krentz (1995: *ad loc.*).

foregrounds the civilised and eloquent conversation, the mutual sympathy between Pharnabazus and Agesilaus, and the impossibility of overcoming the hostility between their two countries.⁴⁴

The repeated application – in the *Hellenica* and in much of Greek literature – of the terminology of friendship to the topic of alliances makes it natural to think about personal friendship in much the same way as about political alliance.⁴⁵ Here too, loyalty is a complex issue. Thus, in an extended vignette, Sphodrias, a Spartan who was bribed by Thebans to invade Attica in order to provoke war between Athens and Sparta, is tried in Sparta and acquitted because of the love between his son and the son of Agesilaus (5.4.25–33). The focus of the vignette is on Agesilaus' son Archidamus, his love for the beautiful Cleonymus, his commendable shyness and respect for his father, and his mixture of grief and pride when Cleonymus eventually repays his favour by dying heroically at Leuctra. The episode presents a moral dilemma between loyalty to friends, family and lovers and the demands of international politics.⁴⁶ And again Xenophon does not take sides: the love and friendship between Archidamus and Cleonymus are portrayed in a rosy light (5.4.25 and 33), and Cleonymus' heroic death in battle adds the ultimate validation; but the vignette is framed by a statement about the perceived injustice of the acquittal (5.4.24) and a brief narrative of how it resulted in Athens joining the Thebans against Sparta (5.4.34). The didactic point is not the solution, but the dilemma, much as in Thucydides' Melian Dialogue.

Friendship as a theme figures much more prominently in the *Hellenica* than in any of the other extant Greek works of historiography, Classical or Hellenistic. The ability to make friends is presented as a positive trait: the statement, with emphasis through negation, that Agesilaus did not rejoice at the death of Agesipolis, his rival, but missed his friendship (5.3.20, quoted above) is surely meant to reflect positively on Agesilaus. Likewise, the brief narrative of the impulsively formed guest-friendship between Pharnabazus' son and Agesilaus and the way the latter honoured

44 The dialogue fulfils much the same function as the coffee-shop conversation between Al Pacino's hardened cop and Robert de Niro's career criminal in Michael Mann's 1995 film *Heat*: the charmingly unexpected setting (grass, coffee shop); the eloquent, philosophical dialogue; the wistfulness of two sympathetic protagonists who feel mutual sympathy, but have to return to being enemies after this peaceful interlude.

45 Indeed, Gray (1989: 52–8) interprets the scene between Agesilaus and Pharnabazus as an example of Agesilaus as a friend, along with 4.1.3–15 and 3.4.7–10. Her analysis is pertinent and excellently brings out the qualities the reader is supposed to admire in both protagonists.

46 It has been interpreted in diametrically opposite ways as a statement about the importance of helping friends (Gray 1989: 59–63) and as a satirical glimpse into Spartan corruption (Tuplin 1993: 126–8).

it functions as a contrasting vignette at the end of Agesilaus' conversation with Pharnabazus, demonstrating the way friendship can work straightforwardly if there are no political obstacles (4.1.39–40). That a sociable personality can also be useful for the military commander is shown by the brief vignette of Lysander dining with Cyrus and obtaining by means of friendly banter what impersonal diplomacy could not (1.5.2–7), as well as by the much more detailed scene in which Agesilaus arranges a marriage connection between two friends/allies (4.1.4–15). This latter vignette has been interpreted variously as showing Agesilaus as a true friend and as a selfish manipulator.⁴⁷ I would argue that the point is exactly the combination: like Lysander with Cyrus, Agesilaus uses his likeable personality and social skills to make friends and benefit Sparta at one stroke. In a military commander, such a combination of patriotism and friendliness is meant to be a quality worthy of emulation.

In didactic terms, then, the *Hellenica* demonstrates the universality and importance of friendship, both personal and political. It sets up those characters who are good at making friends as positive *paradeigmata*, but it also shows that friendship is not uncomplicated, and that it can lead to situations of split loyalties.⁴⁸ The moralising is purely descriptive; there is no solution offered, but the reader is taught to be aware of the possible dangers and be ready to make his own moral choices.

Agesilaus and Jason: The Ideal Hero and the Ideal Villain?

It used to be considered a self-evident truth that the Agesilaus of the *Hellenica* was meant to represent the epitome of ideal leadership: in real life he had been a personal friend of Xenophon's, and he was the protagonist of Xenophon's encomium, the *Agesilaus*. More recently, some scholars have claimed to see subversive strands in Xenophon's representation of Agesilaus, not just in the *Hellenica*, but even in the encomium.⁴⁹ The encomium does not concern us here, but in order to uncover the moral-didactic lessons of the *Hellenica* it is necessary to come to a decision about the character who functions as the main protagonist of this latter work from 3.3.1 onwards.

47 Gray (1989: 49–52) versus Krentz (1995: *ad loc.*).

48 The universal need for friendship and the challenges this poses for the great and powerful are also a major theme of Xenophon's philosophical dialogue *Hiero*. The issue was clearly close to his heart.

49 The traditional view of Xenophon as an unquestioning admirer of Agesilaus is well represented by Anderson (1974). A more recent and better-founded version of this view is Schepens (2005). For a good uncovering of much of the ambiguity of the portrait of Agesilaus in the *Hellenica* see Tuplin (1993) and Krentz (1995: *passim*). Harman (2013) reads even the encomium *Agesilaus* as subversive.

Let it first be stated clearly that Agesilaus is primarily intended as a positive *paradeigma*: he is considerate towards his soldiers (4.5.4) and gets the best out of them (3.4.15–18), he is brave (4.3.19), resourceful and efficient as a commander (4.6.9–12), but also intelligent (3.4.7–9, 4.1.4–15) and sociable (4.1.39–40, 5.3.20), and he piously obeys omens (3.4.15) and keeps oaths (3.4.6 and 11). To deny any of this or the fact that such behaviour is supposed to encourage emulation is to read the *Hellenica* against the grain in a way that would have been entirely foreign to Xenophon's intended readers. Having said that, Agesilaus (like his brother Teleutias) is not flawless, and there are times when the reader is encouraged to question his behaviour.

Thus, several vignettes show him in situations of moral dilemma, as we have seen above, and leave it open for the reader to decide whether Agesilaus is prioritising correctly. Implied criticism is offered in the statement that Agesilaus' frontal attack at Coronea was undoubtedly brave, but not very safe (4.3.19 discussed above). More critical is a vignette that uses Agesilaus to demonstrate the folly of acting arrogantly in success. Here, the satisfaction of having won a military victory makes the Spartan king treat envoys from the defeated with disdainful arrogance, which is ruptured when a messenger arrives to tell him that an entire Spartan regiment has been wiped out at Lechaem.⁵⁰ Finally, Agesilaus' speech in defence of Phoebidas after the latter's unauthorised occupation of the Theban Cadmea directly contradicts the Xenophontic narrator's stand on the issue: Agesilaus claims that the question boils down to whether Phoebidas has done 'good or bad deeds' (ἀγαθὰ ἢ κακὰ) for Sparta, using moral vocabulary to designate political interest (5.2.32), whereas the narrator has used the occupation as an example of impious deeds (τῶν ἀσεβοῦντων, τῶν ἀνόσια ποιοῦντων: 5.4.1) and presented it as the transgression that brought divine vengeance on Sparta in the form of defeat at Leuctra (5.4.1). In none of these cases is the criticism or the moralising explicit, but they are there by contrast and by correlation between action and result. By these means Xenophon juggles his own split loyalties between friendship and moral-didactic history writing.⁵¹

⁵⁰ For a detailed analysis of this passage see Gray (1989: 157–60) and Hau (2008: 128–9). Breitenback (1950: 4) uses it as an example of the absence of moralising in the *Hellenica*, but this relies on a definition of moralising as explicit statements in the narratorial voice.

⁵¹ The brief account of Agesilaus' Sardis campaign in the *Hellenica* has been adduced as evidence of Xenophon's critical attitude to the Spartan king (e.g. Tuplin 1993: 56–60). Xenophon's narrative treats the potentially glorious details perfunctorily (3.4.12 and 3.4.20–4) and dwells instead on a dearly bought victory against Pharnabazus (3.4.13–14) and the fact that a sinister sacrificial omen makes Agesilaus turn back before any significant victory could be achieved (3.4.15). Xenophon's motivation for this negative treatment has been much discussed. I would venture the explanation of his personal disappointment both that the magnif-

Only slightly less than Agesilaus, the role of Jason of Pherae in the *Hellenica* has divided scholars. On the one hand he seems to be presented as the ideal commander in terms of his relationship with his soldiers and his ability to endure harsh conditions, on the other hand he can be considered a tyrant who gets his comeuppance.⁵² I would come down firmly on the side of the latter interpretation. When Jason's magnificent leadership abilities are described by Polydamas of Pharsalus, a character who seems to have been included in the narrative for the sole purpose of introducing the Thessalian warlord, the purpose is to place his power, resources and physical and mental abilities firmly and vividly in the reader's mind. The speech (6.1.4–16), in its terrified admiration of Jason, functions as an elaborate description of his potential for destruction. Offering the description as internal evaluation in direct speech allows Xenophon to express urgency and terror much more acutely than if he had described Jason's power in his narrator's voice.⁵³ It is true that the qualities attributed to Jason by Polydamas are qualities which characterise the good leaders of the *Hellenica* – endurance, ability to get the best out of soldiers (6.1.6 and 15), efficiency and resourcefulness (6.1.15), self-discipline (6.1.16) – but any outstanding ability which can be used for good can also be used for evil; this is what makes the description of Jason so terrifying.⁵⁴ That we are not supposed to be fooled into thinking Jason a hero is shown by the fact that the description of his magnificent abilities frames a conversation between him and Polydamas, which Polydamas claims to quote word for word. In this conversation Jason boasts of his power (6.1.5 and 7), predicts that it will soon become greater still (6.1.9–12) and threatens Polydamas with taking over his city by force if they do not yield voluntarily (6.1.5 and 7). These threats show up Jason's imperialistic ambition;⁵⁵ and overconfident

icent preparations at Ephesus did not lead to more in terms of conquest, and, above all, that the liberation of the Asian Greeks was ultimately given up; cf. Dillery (1995: 114). *Contra* Gray (1979), who argues that the passage shows Agesilaus as the good commander, and Pownall (2004: 83–4), who argues that the victory is meant to be the crowning achievement of Agesilaus' pious campaign, and that it is narrated so summarily because the preparations are more important than the battle from a moral point of view. The latter is true, but surely it is no coincidence that the outcome is shown to fall so far short of the morally and practically magnificent preparations. See also below, p. 242.

⁵² Many scholars have remarked that Jason seems to possess the same qualities as Xenophon's 'ideal leader': Breitenbach (1950), Krafft (1967), Westlake (1966–7), Soulis (1972). Pownall (2004: 100–1) even argues that Jason should be seen as a 'moral leader' and a good man according to Xenophon's standards until the point when he commits impiety.

⁵³ His reasons for conveying much of the information about Jason in this speech instead of in the narrative have been much discussed, e.g. Westlake (1966–7), Soulis (1972: 182–5).

⁵⁴ Cf. Sallust's description of Catiline (*Cat.* 5.1–8) and Livy's of Hannibal (21.4.2–9) as well as Tacitus' of Poppaea Sabina (13.45).

⁵⁵ Tuplin (1993) has shown that all imperialistic plans in the *Hellenica* fail.

boasting is always a dangerous activity in the works of Xenophon.⁵⁶ Polydamas is also careful to point out that Jason's subjects are loyal to him out of fear and would revolt if they had Spartan support (1.6.14) – and ruling by fear is, of course, the hallmark of a tyrant. Moreover, there is one important quality of the good commander which Jason does not possess: piety. This absence contributes in no small way to his downfall.

The downfall comes a few chapters later (6.4.28–32), in an impressively structured narrative which perfectly balances a description of Jason's overconfidence and his punishment.⁵⁷ In the first paragraph, 28, the greatness of Jason is stressed in a tricolon stating first that he was a great man (μέγας), then that he became even greater (μείζων) and thirdly that he was the greatest man of his time (μέγιστος δ' ἦν τῶν καθ' αὐτόν). In paragraph 29, the greatness of Jason is shown visually by the impressive number of sacrificial animals he is able to produce from his subject cities for the Pythian festival and the lavishness of his offered prizes. Then, in paragraph 30, the narrator slips subtly from the description of the festival processions to the subject of Jason and the Delphic Oracle. We are told that there were rumours (ὡς ἔφασαν) that Jason was planning to make himself head of the Amphictyonic Council and the Pythian games, and 'what he was contemplating about the Delphic treasure is still to this day unclear' (περὶ μέντοι τῶν ἱερῶν χρημάτων ὅπως μὲν διανοεῖτο ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἄδηλον). 'It is said' (λέγεται), the narrator continues in unusually Herodotean style, that when asked about Jason, Apollo claimed to be able to take care of himself (ἀποκρίνασθαι τὸν θεὸν ὅτι αὐτῷ μελήσει). Considering the ostensible lack of reliable information on this subject it is remarkable that Xenophon has decided to mention it at all: the Xenophontic narrator, as opposed to the Herodotean one, is usually not keen to reproduce rumours. We shall return to this point shortly.

The structure of the sentence that tells of the murder is designed to bring out the paradox of Jason's *peripeteia* from the height of power to ignominious death in a split second: first Jason is described emphatically as ἀνὴρ τηλικούτος ὢν καὶ τοσαῦτα καὶ τοιαῦτα διανοούμενος ('being so great a man and making plans of such a magnitude and quality'); secondly we are told

⁵⁶ See Hau (2013).

⁵⁷ Pownall (2004: 102–3) argues that Xenophon shows Jason as having changed from a 'good moral leader' in Polydamas' description to being now 'corrupt with power'. She sees the change mainly in the difference between Jason's 'humane' treatment of Polydamas, as reported in the speech, and his cynical playing off of the Thebans and the Spartans against each other in 6.4.22–5. However, Jason's behaviour towards Polydamas and towards the Thebans and Spartans is equally cynical, in that it springs from the same knack for diplomatic manipulation and in both cases furthers his own interests without regard for those of others. The only vice he does not already show when he puts pressure on Polydamas is impiety.

that he was in the process of passing judgement in judicial questions among his subjects, an activity which places him in the position of a king or tyrant; thirdly the murderers are introduced, not named but called simply and dismissively νεανίσκοι (youths); and only then, in the very last words of this for Xenophon very long sentence, is it revealed that they killed him.⁵⁸ Explicit moralising would have ruined the effect, and there is none.

What moral lessons is the reader supposed to extract from the death of Jason? The fact that there is no moralising conclusion to tell us what the narrator considers to be the reason for his death allows for at least three interpretations, all encouraged by the text. Firstly, the structure of the narrative of the murder brings out the shock of Jason's sudden fall and reminds us of the instability of human success and power and the importance of not becoming overconfident. This message has been signalled on a smaller scale by the string of military commanders who come to grief through overconfidence (see above), but here it is writ large. Secondly, Jason was a tyrant, and an imperialistic one, as demonstrated by Polydamas' speech and by Jason's actions between the end of the speech and the beginning of the narrative of his death. Tyrants generally come to bad ends in the *Hellenica*, as evidenced by the bloody fates of Jason's successors, related in the two paragraphs immediately following upon his murder (6.4.33–5), and by the murder of Mania of Aeolis by her son-in-law (3.1.14) as well as Pharnabazus' sworn revenge on the latter (3.1.15).⁵⁹ Thirdly, Jason may have been planning to commit an act of gross impiety. The narrator remains uncommitted to the truth of this rumour, but the fact that Xenophon reports it must mean that he wants it to stick in the reader's mind. Apollo said that he could look after himself, and so he did – perhaps. In the assassination of Jason Xenophon has created a story with Herodotean elements, including overdetermination of causes.⁶⁰ Perhaps the fate of Jason seemed to him to follow so closely the Herodotean success–overconfidence–disaster pattern that a Herodotean presentation felt natural.⁶¹

⁵⁸ For an analysis of this passage as a *peripeteia*, but centring on its prose rhythm, see Gray (1989: 163–5).

⁵⁹ Higgins (1977: 110–11) and Dillery (1995: 171ff.) have argued that Jason's death in the *Hellenica* is meant to show that autocratic rulers always come to bad ends. However, the *Cyropaedia* shows that Xenophon was not opposed to autocratic rule per se, but thought it could work with the right person in charge. Furthermore, nothing in the *Hellenica* shows hatred of autocratic rulers as such: Pharnabazus is treated as a sympathetic character (cf. 1.1.6, 1.1.24, 1.4.6–7, 4.1.30–8), and Mania is described very positively, her murder reflecting badly only on her murderer. Jason's crime (apart from impiety) is that he rules tyrannically, i.e. by fear, and that he wants to conquer the rest of Greece.

⁶⁰ Cf. Tuplin (1993: 119–21), who notes that 'the impression one is left with in the end is that it is the sum total of Jason's achievements and aspirations which caused his downfall'.

⁶¹ See also the parallels between Apollo's assertion that he can look after himself and Hdt. 8.37–8.

How the World Works: Divine Justice and Changeable Fortune

This leads us finally to the question of the role of divine justice and changeable fortune in the *Hellenica*. At 5.4.1 this world-defining piece of introductory moralising occurs:

πολλὰ μὲν οὖν ἂν τις ἔχοι καὶ ἄλλα λέγειν καὶ Ἑλληνικὰ καὶ βαρβαρικά, ὡς θεοὶ οὔτε τῶν ἀσεβούντων οὔτε τῶν ἀνόσια ποιούντων ἀμελοῦσι· νῦν γε μὴν λέξω τὰ προκειμένα. Λακεδαιμόνιοι τε γὰρ οἱ ὁμόσαντες αὐτονόμους ἔασιν τὰς πόλεις τὴν ἐν Θήβαις ἀκρόπολιν κατασχόντες ὑπ' αὐτῶν μόνων τῶν ἀδικηθέντων ἐκολάσθησαν πρῶτον οὐδ' ὑφ' ἑνὸς τῶν πώποτε ἀνθρώπων κρατηθέντες, τοὺς τε τῶν πολιτῶν εἰσαγαγόντας εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν αὐτοὺς καὶ βουληθέντας Λακεδαιμονίοις δουλεῦειν τὴν πόλιν, ὥστε αὐτοὶ τυραννεῖν, τὴν τούτων ἀρχὴν ἑπτὰ μόνων τῶν φυγόντων ἤρκεσαν καταλῦσαι. ὡς δὲ τοῦτ' ἐγένετο διηγῆσομαι.

One might adduce many examples, both Greek and barbarian, as evidence that gods are not indifferent to those who commit impious deeds, and I shall now mention the instance that lies before me in my chain of events. The Spartans who had occupied the Theban acropolis despite having sworn to leave the cities autonomous were punished by the very people alone who they had wronged, being defeated for the first time in history. And those citizens [of Thebes] who had led them into the acropolis and had plotted with the Spartans to enslave their own city so that they should become tyrants, their rule it only took seven exiles to shatter. How this came to pass I shall explain. (Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.1)

This is the introduction to the narrative of the revolution in Thebes that brought the Cadmea back into Theban hands and toppled the Sparta-collaborating oligarchs. The narrator says explicitly that this will be an example of the fact that ‘gods’ (θεοί) punish impious actions. There is no definite article, let alone indication of personality. This makes the expression very impersonal and probably the equivalent of τὸ θεῖον, another common denominator of divine power in the *Hellenica*. The actions punished are described in religiously charged vocabulary (ἀσεβούντων, ἀνόσια), which fits both Spartan oath-breaking and the Theban conspirators’ crime of letting an enemy into the most sacred place in their city.

The punishment for the Spartans is the Battle of Leuctra. In the build-up to the battle, the narrator is careful to remind the reader that it will be decided by divine intervention: the Spartans ‘seem *already* to be led to their wrong decisions by a divine force’ (ἤδη γὰρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸ δαίμονιον ἤγεν: 6.4.3),⁶² and the Thebans are supported by *tyche* (6.4.7–8). He ignores any

62 This clearly refers back to 5.4.1, as noted by Tuplin (1993: 134) and Pownall (1998: 256–7). *Contra* Bowden (2004: 243–4), who argues that it is a ‘hint of divine involvement,’ but not a suggestion that the Spartans were being punished for earlier crimes.

military explanation for the Spartan defeat, with the effect that the battle seems to be decided purely by divine favour or disfavour.⁶³ There is no doubt that the hour of reckoning has come for the Spartans.

The punishment for the Theban oligarchs is the counter-revolution. Xenophon's narrative of this has often been criticised as historically inept, but can be explained by his desire to drive home the unexpectedness and unlikelihood of the liberation: he focuses on the secretary of the Theban polemarchs, Phillidas, to the extent of almost excluding the other conspirators, thus crafting a story of how one man overthrew the Spartan-imposed tyranny: divine intervention indeed.⁶⁴ Two features of this narrative are interesting for our purposes.⁶⁵ The first is the nature of the crime of the polemarchs. As we saw above, the crime of the Thebans has so far been described in exclusively religious vocabulary; now, however, when we meet them in person, their wrongdoing is entirely secular: we see them celebrating a festival and getting drunk, and then expecting their secretary to bring them the 'most respected and beautiful' (σεμνοτάτας καὶ καλλίστας: 5.4.4) women in the city for their pleasure. While getting drunk is not always a crime in Xenophon's universe (see e.g. Xen. *An.* 7.3.26–33), the fact that it is in this case accompanied by the desire to debauch citizen women brands the polemarchs as true tyrants, unable and unwilling to keep their sexual desires under control.⁶⁶ The narrator makes this clear by his acid comment 'for they were that sort of men' (οἱ δὲ ἦσαν γὰρ τοιοῦτοι: 5.4.4). When they are killed by men disguised as the women they coveted, they are punished not just for the religious crime of letting the enemy into the sacred Cadmea, but also for the moral crime of intended abuse of free people.

The second interesting feature of the story is the obvious Herodotean imitation. The narrative of the counter-revolution is introduced by the sentence 'There was a certain Phillidas, who was a secretary for Archias and the polemarchs' (ἦν τις Φιλλίδας, ὃς ἐγραμμάτευε τοῖς περὶ Ἀρχίαν

63 Cf. Pownall (2004: 90). *Contra* Tuplin (1993: 138), who argues on the basis of the καὶ in τοῖς δὲ πάντα καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς τύχης κατορθοῦντο that Xenophon's narrative of the battle shows the victory to be due to a combination of *tyche* and the skill of the Theban commanders. This is strictly true, but the lack of detail in the battle description and the absence of any mention of Pelopidas and Epaminondas do not invite the reader to contemplate Theban tactical skill.

64 The narrative and its focus on Phillidas have been well analysed by Gray (1989: 65–70). Tuplin (1993: 147–8) argues convincingly that Xenophon consciously differs from the tradition preserved by Plutarch, Diodorus and Nepos, and that the effect of the version in the *Hellenica* is to avoid putting any of the human agents in a positive light while showing the events to be divinely ordained.

65 I leave undiscussed the question of why Xenophon makes no mention of either Pelopidas or Epaminondas, the traditional heroes of the story. For a brief discussion see Tuplin (1993: 147–8).

66 Lack of control of one's sexual appetites is the hallmark of a tyrant; see Dunkle (1967) and Rosivach (1988) with references.

πολεμάρχοις: 5.4.2), echoing Herodotus' introduction of Themistocles and other protagonists of individual *logoi*.⁶⁷ Moreover, there are close parallels between Xenophon's story and the one told by Herodotus of the Persians murdered by men disguised as women after having demanded the company of the female relatives of King Amyntas of Macedon. Xenophon even offers an alternative version (the assassins were masquerading as revellers, not women), a practice extremely rare for him, but ubiquitous in Herodotus. The purpose of the Herodotean 'feel' of this narrative is surely to alert the reader to the similarities, at this point especially, between the world of his *Hellenica* and that of the *Histories*: in both worlds impiety is punished by superhuman powers, and transgressions against one's fellow-human beings are more often than not punished by divine powers working through human agents.⁶⁸

Another throwback to the world of Herodotus is the fact that oracles and omens in the *Hellenica* are generally fulfilled. This is most spectacularly true for the prophecy of the seer before the Battle of Munychia (2.4.18–19) and the good omens observed in Thebes before the Battle of Leuctra (6.4.7–8), but already in 5.4.17–18 Spartans being forced to leave their shields behind because of a violent storm is interpreted as an omen for the future.

Interestingly, however, divine punishment for wrongdoing is much more consistent in the world of the *Hellenica* than in the world of Herodotus' *Histories*. In all of the *Hellenica* only two instances of impiety and one unjust murder are not said or shown to lead to disaster for the perpetrators. In two of the cases this narratorial silence can be put down to Xenophon subsequently focusing on a different storyline and not following the future fate of the impious.⁶⁹ Thus, we hear no more of the Thebans who desecrate Agesilaus' sacrifice at Aulis (3.4.4) because Xenophon is

67 Themistocles; Hdt. 7.143.1. See also Hdt. 3.4.1. Xenophon famously uses the expression to introduce himself in the *Anabasis* (Xen. An. 3.1.4).

68 Gray (1989: 66–7) draws out the Herodotean parallels nicely, but then argues that Xenophon's story carries a different message from the one of Herodotus: Herodotus' message is that 'custom is king' (the Persians were breaking Macedonian custom by demanding the company of women at dinner), and Xenophon's is that it only took a few men to overthrow the Theban tyranny. Dillery (1995: 229–30) also analyses the parallels, but argues that, rather than imitating Herodotus, Xenophon was 'trying to claim the authority of a historian telling a story with a moral'. I obviously agree that the story has a moral, but I find it unlikely that Xenophon did not intend the reader to notice the Herodotean 'feel' of the story and to be led to more or less conscious conclusions from it.

69 Pownall (1998) examines in detail every instance of impiety in the *Hellenica* and concludes that only the Theban desecration of Agesilaus' sacrifice (3.4.4) and the Tegean stoning of people hiding in a temple (6.5.6–9) go unpunished. She argues that Xenophon in these cases believed that divine punishment would eventually strike the offenders, even if delayed, but this does not explain why he did not state this explicitly.

too interested in following a different narrative thread, namely Agesilaus' reaction to the Theban provocation and his subsequent campaign in Asia. Likewise, nothing is said about what happened later to the Theban counter-revolutionaries who killed the children of the toppled oligarchs (5.4.12) because Xenophon is only interested in Theban affairs until the counter-revolution is complete, and then reverts to his focus on Sparta.⁷⁰ In the third instance of impiety unpunished, which concerns Tegeans stoning their political opponents with tiles from the roof of the temple in which they have sought refuge (6.5.6–9), the episode seems to hold special interest for Xenophon.⁷¹ Here his reticence about divine punishment of the perpetrators is harder to explain. Perhaps it is due to historical scruple: perhaps Xenophon did not know what happened to the Tegeans afterwards, or perhaps he knew that they got away scot-free and did not want to put this in his history. All sixteen other instances of impiety in the *Hellenica* are punished.⁷²

In several cases the divine punishment involves a dramatic fall from power and success, thus corresponding to Herodotus' pattern of success–overconfidence–disaster. This is true of Sparta, whose great power is described and stressed in the chapter immediately before the *peripeteia* is signalled (παντάπασιν ἤδη καλῶς καὶ ἀσφαλῶς ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐδόκει αὐτοῖς κατεσκευάσθαι: 5.3.27), and of Jason of Pherae (see above). It is also the case for Euphron, the tyrant of Sicyon (7.3.1–5; see above), and Lycomedes, the Arcadian almost-tyrant (7.4.3). The consistency of the punishment of the impious along with the absence of generational punishment, jealous gods and predetermined fate make the world of the *Hellenica* less of an incomprehensible wilderness than the world of Herodotus' *Histories*. The bleakness of the ending shows, however, that lasting human happiness is still elusive.

⁷⁰ Pownall (1998: 258) argues that the killing of those Thebans 'who had been freed from the prison' by the troops of Cleombrotus at 5.4.14 is meant to be understood as punishment for the massacre. It is not clear, however, that the children of the oligarchs were murdered specifically by those newly freed from prison; the massacre seems rather to be committed by the Theban 'cavalry and hoplites' who join the counter-revolution at 5.4.9.

⁷¹ Ultimately the story serves only as the reason for a Spartan campaign against Tegea and Mantinea, so the circumstantial details seem to signal a special interest of Xenophon's in the events (Pownall 1998).

⁷² List of instances modified from Pownall's appendix (Pownall 1998: 276–7): oath-breaking: 3.4.6 and 11, 5.4.1, 5.4.11–12, 6.4.2–3, 7.4.36; violation of sanctuary: 4.4.3, 7.2.6; violation of festival: 4.4.2, 5.2.29; negligence in religious ritual: 3.1.18, 3.2.22, 4.8.36, 7.1.27; temple-robbery: 6.4.30, 7.1.46, 7.4.33.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Moral didacticism is central to the *Hellenica*. It informs Xenophon's selection of material, overall narrative structure and crafting of individual episodes. The work is, however, not a 'purely moral tract' (Grayson 1975), but a work of historiography: it aims to present a true narrative of historical events from a moral angle.

In the *Hellenica*, it is easy to spot early versions of the types of moralising that become widespread in Hellenistic historiography. Conversely, macro-level moralising and moralising by patterning are a lot less dominant than in Herodotus and Thucydides. Overall, the moralising of Xenophon is more explicit than that of his two famous Classical predecessors, pointing towards Hellenistic moral didacticism. Neither the explicitness nor the transitory nature of the moral didacticism should be exaggerated, however: Xenophon's moral vignettes are entirely implicit in their didacticism and have consequently been interpreted in diametrically opposite ways by different readers, and his divinely ruled world in which impiety is always punished may foreshadow Diodorus, but it also harks back to Herodotus and has as little resonance with Polybius as with Thucydides. Likewise, Xenophon's focus on friendship and loyalty is more of an individual quirk than an evolutionary link between one era of historiography and the next.

The most noticeable difference between the moral messages of the *Hellenica* and its surviving predecessors is the degree of practicality. Whereas the messages of Herodotus and Thucydides are largely intellectual and advocate a certain state of mind based on a proper understanding of the world obtained through reading their works, Xenophon offers practical advice on how to live in the world he describes. Although the ending shows that peace and happiness are elusive, the rest of the narrative teaches the reader that by being pious, brave, self-disciplined, a good friend and a good leader of men, you have a fair chance not only of being celebrated by both your contemporaries and history, but also of achieving real, practical success. In this Xenophon stands a step closer to Hellenistic historiography than his two famous predecessors.

Comparison of Moral Didacticism in the Xenophontic Corpus

Xenophon is the only one of the authors considered in this study by whom other works than his historiographical one(s) have survived. This gives us a unique chance to compare moral didacticism between genres, which we shall grasp even if we do not here have the space to develop the comparison in much detail.

All of Xenophon's works are moral-didactic, and they all use some

of the moralising techniques we have seen in the *Hellenica*. Even technical treatises such as *The Cavalry Commander* (*Hipparchicus*) or *Ways and Means* (*Poroi*) have moralising introductions and conclusions and are sprinkled with explicit narratorial moralising throughout. The dialogues *Hiero*, *Oeconomicus* and *Symposium* revolve at least partly around moral themes and the *Memorabilia* (*Memories of Socrates*) is entirely moral-didactic. Moreover, the same moral lessons we have seen in the *Hellenica* are propounded in the other works: divine justice,⁷³ the importance of piety,⁷⁴ the qualities of the good commander and the relationship between a commander and his men,⁷⁵ which seems to be a subcategory of the good ruler and the value of a relationship with subjects based on love and respect,⁷⁶ friendship as a virtue and a complication,⁷⁷ moderation and self-control,⁷⁸ and the importance of wit, charm and a sense of humour.⁷⁹ In addition, some of the other works include *paradeigmata* of moral topics which do not receive much space in the *Hellenica*, such as education and gratitude, both important virtues in the *Cyropaedia* (*Education of Cyrus*). Throughout all of Xenophon's works it is common for the good to thrive and the wicked to come to grief (with a few exceptions, the most important one being Socrates).

Three of Xenophon's works are especially interesting to compare with the *Hellenica* because they belong to neighbouring genres: the *Anabasis*, the *Agesilaus* and the *Cyropaedia*. To begin with the *Anabasis*, this is the work that most resembles the *Hellenica* in terms of moralising, just as it is the one closest to it in genre. Like the *Hellenica*, it mostly engages in implicit moralising by means of evaluative vocabulary and a correlation between behaviour and result (e.g. *An.* 4.4.14). Its only explicit moralising takes place in digressions focused on the characters of individuals (Cyrus 1.9, Clearchus 2.6.1–15, Proxenus 2.6.16–20, Menon 2.6.21–9). The differences which make the *Anabasis* and the *Hellenica* such different reading experiences are not in the moralising, but in the scope and focalisation of the narrative.

The encomium *Agesilaus* is moralising from cover to cover, and the treatise on kingship, the *Cyropaedia*, is permeated with moralising. In comparison with these two latter works, the *Hellenica* and *Anabasis* are

73 E.g. *Eq. mag.* 9.8–9.

74 E.g. *Eq. mag.* 1.1 and 9.8; *Cyr.* 1.6.44–6; *Ages.* 1.27–8, 3.2; *Mem.* 1.3.1–4, 1.1.6–9, 4.4.19; *Lac.* 8.5; *Poroi* 6.2–3.

75 E.g. *Eq. mag.* 6; *Cyr.* 4.2.9–11, 8.1.3; *Mem.* 3.1–4, 3.5.21–4; *Ages.* 1.38.

76 *Cyr.* and *Hier.* in their entirety; *Mem.* 1.2.10–11, 1.2.32; *Oec.* 11.2–12.

77 E.g. *Ages.* 1.17–10; *Mem.* 1.2.51–5; *Cyr.* 7.1.30, 8.3.3; *Ap.* 5; *Mem.* 2.4–6.

78 E.g. *Cyr.* 4.5.1–4 and 7–8, 7.5.78–85, 8.1.30–2; *Ages.* 5.1–2, 5.6, 8.6–8; *Mem.* 1.2.14–23, 1.3.5–7, 3.13.2–3; *Hier.* 4.6–11.

79 E.g. *Ages.* 7.3.2, 11.11; *Cyr.* 1.3.4–12, 2.2.1–16; *Symp.* 1.1.

quite restrained in their expressions of moral didacticism. They offer moral lessons, but they have another purpose beside, namely to narrate factual events in a truthful (if selective) manner. In doing this, these historiographical works have a special relationship with historical truth, with the events that actually happened, which the *Cyropaedia* and even the *Agesilaus* do not.⁸⁰ Thus, for instance, the *Agesilaus* is able to claim that Agesilaus was chosen as king over Leotychidas ‘because of his birth and his virtue’ (τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ ἀρετῇ: *Ages.* 1.5), while the *Hellenica* offers the more detailed and less morally satisfying narrative of Lysander’s reinterpretation of an oracular warning to ‘beware the lame kingship’ to refer not to Agesilaus, although he had a limp, but to Leotychidas, whose parentage was thus thrown into doubt (*Hell.* 3.3.1–4). Similarly, the *Agesilaus* has Agesilaus reach and burn down the outskirts of Sardis in his Asian campaign and then concludes in a tone as moralising as it is triumphalist:

ἐπεὶ μέντοι οὐδεὶς ἀντεξήει, ἀδεῶς δὴ τὸ ἀπὸ τούτου ἐστρατεύετο, τοὺς μὲν πρόσθεν προσκυνεῖν Ἑλλήνας ἀναγκαζομένους ὀρῶν τιμωμένους ὑφ’ ὧν ὑβρίζοντο, τοὺς δὲ ἀξιοῦντας καὶ τὰς τῶν θεῶν τιμὰς καρποῦσθαι, τούτους ποιήσας μὴδ’ ἀντιβλέπειν τοῖς Ἑλλήσι δύνασθαι, καὶ τὴν μὲν τῶν φίλων χώραν ἀδήλωτον παρέχων, τὴν δὲ τῶν πολεμίων οὕτω καρπούμενος ὥστε ἐν δύοῖν ἔτοῖν πλεόν τῶν ἑκατὸν ταλάντων τῷ θεῷ ἐν Δελφοῖς δεκάτην ἀποθῆσαι.

When no one came out to meet him in battle, however, he continued his campaign fearlessly. Thus he saw the Greeks who had before been forced to make servile obeisance now being honoured by those who had abused them; he made those who thought themselves worthy to enjoy divine honours unable to look the Greeks in the eye; he made the land of his friends unravaged, and he enjoyed the fruits of his enemy’s land to such a degree that he was able to dedicate in the space of two years more than a hundred talents to the god at Delphi as tithe. (*Xen. Ages.* 1.34)

Here, then, the arrogant Persians get their punishment for abusing the Greeks. In the *Hellenica*, however, Agesilaus does not reach the suburbs of Sardis, but strikes a deal with the Persian satrap Tithraustes and marches towards Phrygia instead (*Hell.* 3.25–6). There is no moralising conclusion. The possible reasons for the discrepancy between the narrative of the Sardis campaign in these two works by the same author, who most probably had himself taken part in it, have been much discussed.⁸¹ I would venture a solution based on genre: in the encomium, Xenophon offers an account ‘with amplification’; in the *Hellenica*, he gives an account that is ‘true

⁸⁰ For the different relationships of encomia and historiographies with truth see Polyb. 10.21. For an overview of scholarship on this see Farrington (2011).

⁸¹ See e.g. Anderson (1974), Cawkwell (1979: 38), Gray (1981), Krentz (1995: 188–92) and Dillery (1995: 110–14).

and demonstrates the reasoning accompanying each action'.⁸² Moralising is important for both genres, but supports two different goals: persuasion in the encomium (of the fact that its protagonist was the epitome of virtue) and didacticism in historiography. This is why the *Hellenica* and the *Anabasis* often offer moral dilemmas for the reader's contemplation and the *Agesilaus* does not.

The *Cyropaedia* shares the didactic goal of the *Hellenica* and the *Anabasis*, but as historico-philosophical fiction it is even further removed from obligations to the truth than the *Agesilaus* and is thus free to present fully invented moralising *paradeigmata* for the reader's edification. The moralising techniques it uses are largely the same as those employed in the *Hellenica* and *Anabasis*, including moral dilemmas, just as its narrative form is modelled on historiography, but, crucially, it lacks the commentary track that characterises historiography (see above, pp. 9–10), and for that reason lacks moralising digressions.

On the basis of this whirlwind tour of Xenophon's literary output, we can conclude that historiography is not unique in either its moralising techniques or its moral lessons. What makes historiography unique is that it is at the same time committed to offering what the author considers a truthful account of the past and to presenting this past in a way that will be morally useful to the reader.

CONCLUSION: MORAL DIDACTICISM IN CLASSICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

We can conclude not just that the three surviving Classical historiographies do indeed moralise, but that moral didacticism is part of their *raison d'être*, and has informed every level of their works from the choice of words to the macro-structure. Each of the three works would have looked dramatically different if the author had not had complex moral lessons to deliver, and I would venture the claim that were it not for those lessons, they would not have been written at all.

Most of the types of moralising that characterise the Hellenistic historiographers are found also in the Classical ones, sometimes in embryonic form, sometimes fully developed, but less frequently used. The difference is one of degree, not of kind. In addition, the Classical historiographers use different types of moralising: minimalist moralising and macro-level moralising. Because of the fragmented nature of what is extant of Hellenistic

⁸² ὑπάρχων ἐγκωμιστικὸς, ἀπῆτει τὸν κεφαλαιώδη καὶ μετ' αὐξήσεως τῶν πράξεων ἀπολογισμὸν, οὕτως ὁ τῆς ἱστορίας, κοινὸς ὢν ἐπαίνου καὶ ψόγου, ζητεῖ τὸν ἀληθῆ καὶ τὸν μετ' ἀποδείξεως καὶ τῶν ἐκάστοις παρεπομένων συλλογισμῶν (Polyb. 10.21.8). The distinction is Polybius', but it works well for Xenophon.

historiography it is impossible to see whether macro-level moralising remained a feature of the genre. On the one hand, some authors such as Diodorus may not have expected their readers to read their work from beginning to end and so may not have thought it worthwhile to impose a moralising superstructure on it. On the other hand, Polybius' theory of the cycle of constitutions may indicate a desire to show the history of Rome as conforming to a preconceived pattern to some extent based on moral premises.

In terms of the behaviour advocated, it is striking how similar Classical moral didacticism is to its Hellenistic counterpart: the instability of human happiness and the dangers of overconfidence, the virtues of courage, intelligence, justice and fair treatment of subjects and subordinates, and the vices of cruelty, injustice and self-interest are universal across both time periods. There are differences, of course. Herodotus, Xenophon and Diodorus present divine justice as a historical force and, correspondingly, have piety as a cardinal virtue whereas Thucydides and Polybius do not. The reciprocity that is a driving force in the *Histories* of Herodotus becomes an issue of euergetism and appropriate gratitude in the Hellenistic historiographers. Xenophon's good leader is a lot more sociable than Thucydides' or Polybius'. Overall, however, Thucydides is the truly odd one out: only in his work does a dissonance exist between the admirable virtues and the results they bring. However, considering that we are looking at a period of 400 years, the similarities in moral messages are more striking than the differences.

7. *Fragmentary Classical Historiography*

In Chapters 1–3 we examined the form and content of moral didacticism in what remains of Hellenistic historiography until Diodorus Siculus. In Chapters 4–6 we have seen that the three extant Classical historiographers also moralised, and we have traced many of the moralising techniques of Hellenistic historiography back to them. However, it has also become clear that the Classical historiographers' primary means of moral didacticism were different from those of their Hellenistic successors in that the moralising took place partly on the macro-level of structure, partly in a less explicit form than what is mostly seen in Hellenistic historiography. In this final chapter we shall examine the fragmentary remains of three famous works of the late Classical period and ask how this development from Classical to Hellenistic moralising happened. We have already seen that the moralising of Xenophon in some ways points towards the works of Hellenistic historiography; now we shall see whether the trend continues throughout the late Classical period or the development is less straightforward.

Three once famous universal and/or continuous histories from the fourth century survive only in fragments: those of the so-called Oxyrhynchus Historian, Ephorus of Cyme and Theopompus. We shall look at the remaining evidence of their works in turn. The methodological issues involved in interpreting fragments which were discussed in the introduction to Chapter 3 are equally relevant for the fragments of Classical historiography, but will not be repeated here.

THE OXYRHYNCHUS HISTORIAN

The Oxyrhynchus Historian (also known as P) was probably contemporary with Xenophon, although we cannot know for certain. His work is known from three papyrus fragments named after the places where they are kept: the London fragment (POxy 842, published in 1909 by Grenfell and Hunt),

the Florence fragment (PSI 1304, published in 1949 by Bartoletti) and the Cairo fragment (published in 1976 by Koenen). This makes the text of the Oxyrhynchus Historian especially interesting because, unlike the other fragments of historiography looked at in this study, it represents the actual text written by the author (as closely as any second-century papyrus can be said to represent the exact words of a fourth-century writer) rather than a string of quotations, paraphrases and references by later authors.

Scholars have argued for the identification of the Oxyrhynchus Historian with one or other of the historians whose names we know, the preferred candidates being Theopompus (the papyrus would then be a piece of his otherwise all but lost *Hellenica*) and Cratippus.¹ As the question of authorship is not of great importance for this study, we shall not enter into the discussion, except to note that, in terms of moral didacticism, what remains of the Oxyrhynchus Historian bears little resemblance to the glimpses we get of Theopompus' work through its fragments in covert texts, as will become clear from this chapter. In fact, in contrast with the fragments of Theopompus' *Philippica*, the narrative of the Oxyrhynchus Historian seems bland. This has made scholars claim that the Oxyrhynchus Historian does not moralise, and to line him up along with Thucydides against the more obviously moralising Xenophon. However, we have seen that Thucydides does offer moral lessons in his *History*, and we shall soon see that the same may well have been true of the Oxyrhynchus Historian.

The most explicit instant of moralising in the papyri is a heavily fragmented passage which seems to have formed part of a positively phrased character sketch:

ἄριστα τ[οῖς πράγμασι φαίνεται] κεχημέν[ος:] οὐ γὰρ ὥσπερ οἱ πλείστοι
τῶν πρὸ τοῦ δου-] ναστευόντων[ν] ὄρμησεν ἐ?[πὶ τὰς τῶν χρημάτων ἄρπα] γὰς,
καὶ δη[μο]τικώτα?[τ]ο?ς? τ?[.....]

[He showed himself] to be the best at handling [affairs]. For he was not, like [most of the other r]ulers [before him], eager to st[eal other people's money], but most public[-minded] . . . (*Hell. Oxy.* London fragment C2 column 10)²

¹ Both suggested by Grenfell and Hunt (1909). The case for both candidates is lucidly argued by McKechnie and Kern (1988: 8–16), who come out on the side of Theopompus. So also Laqueur (1934: 2193–203) and Bleckmann (2005). Advocates for Cratippus include Shrimpton (1991: appendix I), Meister (2003) and Schepens (2001). Bruce (1967: 22–7) and Behrwald (2005: 9–13) reach an agnostic conclusion. In earlier discussions Ephorus had been put forward (Walker 1913), and Jacoby (1926b: 2–20) idiosyncratically argued for Daimachus of Plataea. The modern discussions of the Oxyrhynchus Historian have, apart from the question of authorship, centred on the truth-value of his narrative, especially as contrasted with that of Xenophon. For the main arguments in this debate see Anderson (1974), Gray (1979), McKechnie and Kern (1988), Behrwald (2005) and Bleckmann 2005.

² This corresponds to XIV.2 in McKechnie and Kern, 27.2 in Behrwald.

The passage is too fragmentary for us to be able to tell whom it describes,³ but there can be little doubt that – even if we disregard the restorations – it compares one ruler favourably against someone else, using the moral adverb ἄριστα; and if we accept the restorations, the passage makes a moral generalisation about rulers, who are said normally to be eager to appropriate the wealth of others, and the person in question is praised for being an exception. Another, slightly less fragmentary, passage is an evaluative conclusion to a narrative of how Conon quells a mutiny in the city of Caunus:

τὸ μὲν οὖν βασιλικὸν στρατό[πεδὸν οὔτ]ως εἰς μέγαν κίνδυνον προελθὼν διὰ Κόνων[α καὶ] τὴν ἐκείνου προθυμίαν ἐπαύσατο τῆς ταραχῆ[ς].

[Th]us, when the king's arm[y] had come into great danger, it ceased from confusion because of Conon and his zeal. (*Hell. Oxy.* London fragment D column 20)⁴

This is the kind of minimalist evaluation we find in Thucydides. From the context it seems that we are supposed to admire and potentially emulate Conon in his zeal (προθυμία); but it would also be possible to read the statement ironically, as a criticism of the Athenian Conon for working with the Persian army. Then the conclusion would be a sharp reminder of the political realities after the rousing narrative of Conon's efforts against the mutineers, a kind of sting in the tail known from both Thucydides and Xenophon.

Beside these two instances of moral evaluation, the narrative of the Oxyrhynchus Historian often uses restrained evaluative phrasing. Positive vocabulary is used, for instance, in an interesting narrative about how the Athenian Council secretly sends a messenger to Conon. We are told that the 'well-born and well-bred' ([ὄσοι γνῶ]ριμ[οὶ κ]αὶ χαρίεντες ἦσαν) disappeared, two positively loaded terms for what was essentially the social elite. Negative vocabulary is used most prominently to call political murders in Rhodes 'slaughter' (τὴν σφαγὴν), and to label one side in the Theban civil war as 'ready to do evil' (κακῶς ποιεῖν ἐτοίμους).⁵

3 Jacoby (1926b: 14), Bruce (1967: 93–5), McKechnie and Kern (1988: *ad loc.*), Behrwald (2005: 118). Jacoby argues that we cannot know who the protagonist of the passage is; but Bruce and McKechnie and Kern make good cases for either Agesilaus or Cyrus the Younger. Earlier suggestions have been Euagoras and Dionysius I (Bruce 1967: 93). Behrwald (2005), interestingly, suggests Tissaphernes.

4 This corresponds to XX.6 in McKechnie and Kern, 23 in Behrwald.

5 The three passages are: London fragment A column 1 (= McKechnie and Kern VI.2 and Behrwald 9.2), London fragment D column 11 (= McKechnie and Kern XV.2 and Behrwald 18.3) and London fragment D column 13 (= McKechnie and Kern XVII.1 and Behrwald 20.1).

This is the kind of subtle moralising employed by Thucydides and Xenophon, who were probably close contemporaries of the author of this text. As with Thucydides and Xenophon, such cases of evaluative phrasing in the Oxyrhynchus Historian are usually discussed only in the context of the author's political bias; but, as we have seen in the other historiographers of this study, political opinion and moral conviction go hand in hand. The Oxyrhynchus Historian is giving the reader moral guidance and a political steer at the same time. With the text in this fragmentary state it is impossible to know whether its moral didacticism overall was as subtle as these examples suggest, or whether there were occasional bursts of moralising passion as in Thucydides, Xenophon and most probably the otherwise 'sober' Hieronymus, just as we cannot know whether he engaged in macro-level moralising, but it seems clear that the moralising of the Oxyrhynchus Historian resembled that of his Classical near-contemporaries.

EPHORUS OF CYME (*FGRH* 70)

Perhaps the most famous Classical historian whose work has not survived down to our time is Ephorus (*FGRH* 70), who was Xenophon's younger contemporary (c. 405–330 BC). He wrote several works, including a treatise on style and a local history of his native city of Cyme, all of which are now lost. His *History* (or *Histories*; both the singular and plural are attested in the tradition) is praised by both Polybius (5.33.2) and Diodorus (5.1.4) as the first work of universal history, and was used as a source by both of these historiographers.⁶ Diod. Sic. 5.1.4 (= T 11) states that Ephorus organised his material in books *kata genos*. Much discussion surrounds the exact meaning of this phrase, but the most likely interpretation is that he focused on one event at the time, for instance one war, rather than proceeding annalistically and cutting up series of events in order to preserve a strict chronological framework.⁷ Ephorus also seems to have been the

⁶ Diodorus is often assumed to have taken over large stretches of Ephorus' work with very little editing (see e.g. Stylianou 1998, Parker n.d.). It is certainly true that Diodorus stuck very close to his sources when writing his *Bibliothēke*, but the sheer length of Ephorus' *Hellenica* compared with the space into which Diodorus compressed it necessitates a certain amount of selection and pruning. For this reason, in addition to the ones stated in Chapter 2, I treat as Ephorus fragments only those passages of Diodorus which explicitly mention him as a source (discounting passages where he compares numbers given by Ephorus and Timaeus, which can be shown to depend on the latter; see Parker n.d.: ad F 201). For a good and detailed argument against reading Diodorus as if it were Ephorus, see Parmeggiani (2011: 357–90).

⁷ The most important studies of Ephorus are: Jacoby (1926b: 22–35), Schwartz (1907), Laqueur (1911), Barber (1993), Meister (1967), Stylianou (1998), Pownall (2004), Parker (n.d.) and Parmeggiani (2011). For good, more recent discussions of the meaning of *kata genos* with references to older scholarship see Parker (n.d.: ad T 11) and Parmeggiani (2011: 156–64) (who are unfortunately not aware of each other).

first historiographer to divide his work into books and preface each with a proem, which may or may not have been moralising.⁸

Ephorus is particularly interesting for our project because it has long been common for scholars of Greek historiography to consider him the first moralising historian, who, under the influence of his teacher Isocrates, set history on its downward-spiralling path towards degenerate Hellenism.⁹ Even after it has become common to distrust the evidence for the relationship with Isocrates, his reputation as the ‘first moralising historian’ still stands.¹⁰ It rests largely on a brief passage in Polybius:

ὁ γὰρ Ἐφορος παρ’ ὄλην τὴν πραγματείαν θαυμάσιος ὢν καὶ κατὰ τὴν φράσιν καὶ κατὰ τὸν χειρισμὸν καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν τῶν λημμάτων, δεινότητός ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς παρεκβάσεσι καὶ ταῖς ἀφ’ αὐτοῦ γνωμολογίαις, καὶ συλλήβδη ὅταν πού τὸν ἐπιμετροῦντα λόγον διατίθῃται . . .

For Ephorus is marvellous throughout his work with regard to expression, management of material, and acuity of argument, but he is most powerful in his digressions and in the maxims expressing his own opinion; in short whenever he composes something additional to the narrative. (Polyb. 12.28.10 = Ephorus T 23)

This has since Schwartz’s 1907 *RE* article been interpreted as admiration for Ephorus’ moralising despite the fact that Polybius seems to be praising Ephorus for all manner of narratorial interventions, not just for ‘expressing maxims’.¹¹ The idea that Ephorus was the one to introduce moralising into historiography for pedagogical reasons has often been coupled with the notion that he preferred praise to criticism, a notion which is based partly on Isocrates’ practice, partly on a remark in Strabo 7.3.9 (= Ephorus F 42).¹²

8 The evidence for this is Diod. Sic. 16.76.5 (= T 10). Ephorus’ proems have mainly been discussed by scholars who believe that Diodorus took them over more or less wholesale and glued them on to his own narrative; see Laqueur (1911), Kunz (1935), Barber (1993), Stylianou (1998) and, with more nuance, Parker (n.d.: *ad* T 11) *contra* Sacks (1990) and Parmeggiani (2011: 148).

9 On Ephorus as representative of ‘rhetorical’ and therefore inferior post-Thucydidean historiography, see Schwartz (1907), Laqueur (1911), Jacoby (1926b: 23 and *ad* T 11) and Meister (1990: 85–9), with the strong defence of Parmeggiani (2011: 9–80). For a re-evaluation of the evidence for Isocrates’ influence on history writing see Marincola (2014).

10 That Ephorus was a pupil of Isocrates is stated by the *Suda* (s.v. ‘Ephorus’), but was first doubted by Schwartz (1907) and Jacoby (1926b: 22–3). Their arguments have been taken up by Flower (1994), Stylianou (1998) and, more forcefully, Parmeggiani (2011: 34–66). *Contra* Laqueur (1911), Barber (1993). The arguments are helpfully reviewed by Parker (n.d.: *ad* Ephorus T 1). Ephorus as the originator of moralising historiography, with no mention of Isocrates: Meister (1990: 85–9).

11 Interpreting the passage as solely about moralising: Schwartz (1907: 7–8), Jacoby (1926b: *ad loc.*), Schepens (1977), Meister (1990: 87), Parker (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

12 E.g. by Sacks (1990: 27–9). *Contra* Pownall (2004: 128).

However, Strabo quotes Ephorus as saying about other accounts of the Scythians that ‘they speak only of those of their customs that are barbaric, seeing only what is striking, marvellous, and shocking; but one should also tell about the opposite and provide *paradeigmata*’ (τὰ περὶ τῆς ὀμότητος αὐτῶν λέγουσιν, εἰδότες τὸ δεινὸν [δὲ] καὶ τὸ θαυμαστὸν ἐκπληκτικὸν ὄν· δεῖν δὲ τὰναντία καὶ λέγειν καὶ παραδείγματα ποιῆσθαι) – which surely does not mean that Ephorus generally prefers praise to criticism, only that he thinks a historiographer ought to offer a balanced account. It does show, however, that he thought in terms of moral *paradeigmata* and that he believed he had a duty to provide these in his work. Indeed, this is the first time in extant works of historiography that we see the idea that the historiographer has a moral-didactic duty (δεῖν). It has been thought that Ephorus got this idea from Isocrates, but, having examined the moral didacticism of his predecessors within his own genre, it now seems more likely that he simply made explicit a function of historiography which was already generally accepted. We would know more about how he conceived of this duty if we had his preface, but we do not.

No fewer than 238 fragments of Ephorus’ *History* were collected by Jacoby. Of these, fifty-five come from Stephanus of Byzantium, forty-two from Strabo. Thus it is unsurprising that seventy-six of the extant fragments are nothing more than brief notices about names or locations of cities or topographical features, and that many more are concerned with geography in some form. However, even from a reading of the remaining 162 fragments the idea that Ephorus was supremely concerned with moralising is not borne out. There is very little explicit moralising in them, and only sparing use of evaluative phrasing.

If we begin by looking for explicit praise and blame, the kind of passages which scholars generally believe that Ephorus was famous for, we find only a few indications. The clearest one is F 42, the Strabo passage referred to above, about the importance of offering both criticism and praise. Strabo goes on to say:

εἴτ’ αἰτιολογεῖ, διότι ταῖς διαίταις εὐτελεῖς ὄντες καὶ οὐ χρηματισταὶ πρὸς τε ἀλλήλους εὐνομοῦνται, κοινὰ πάντα ἔχοντες τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τέκνα καὶ τὴν ὅλην συγγένειαν, πρὸς τε τοὺς ἐκτὸς ἄμαχοί εἰσι καὶ ἀνίκητοι, οὐδὲν ἔχοντες ὑπὲρ οὗ δουλεύσουσι.

Then he [Ephorus] explains that it is because they are simple in their lifestyle and not fixated on money (as they have everything in common including their wives and children and the whole extended family), that they both have good laws governing their internal relationships with each other and are unwarlike towards and unconquered by the outside world because they have nothing for the sake of which they might be enslaved. (Ephorus F 42 = Strabo 7.3.9)

Praiseworthy characteristics, according to Ephorus, then, are a simple lifestyle, lack of greed, and a self-sufficiency that leads to security from attack. Similarly, in F 122a Strabo gives Ephorus as his source for the fact that the Aetolians have never been conquered ‘because of the ruggedness of their land and their training in warfare’ (διὰ τε τὰς δυσχωρίας τῶν τόπων καὶ διὰ τὴν περὶ τὸν πόλεμον ἄσκησιν). It is tempting to assume that Ephorus made a causal connection between the ruggedness of Aetolia and the warlikeness of its inhabitants in the vein of Herodotus and, later, Posidonius. This ideal of the simple life is also seen in F 149, which is Strabo’s summary of what Ephorus had to say – probably at much greater length – about the Cretan constitution, and which states that civil harmony is achieved by citizens ‘living in a simple way’ (λιπῶς ζῶσιν) because in this way they avoid the ‘envy, arrogant abuse, and hatred’ (οὐτε φθόνον οὐθ’ ὕβριν οὐτε μῖσος) caused by ‘greed and luxurious living’ (πλεονεξίαν καὶ τρυφήν). The use of the word *tryphe*, which only became common in the first and second centuries AD (see Chapter 3), makes it likely that the phrasing here is Strabo’s, but he seems to be crediting Ephorus with the thought behind it.

Correspondingly, F 183 from Athenaeus gives Ephorus as the source for the information that the Milesians were formidable before they became subject to luxurious living (ἕως μὲν οὐκ ἐτρυφῶν), but again the expression with *tryphe* makes it likely that the wording is Athenaeus’, and in this case we cannot be sure that Ephorus made the connection between luxurious living and martial degeneration explicit.¹³ Similarly, in F 131a Strabo offers Ephorus as the source for an Iberian habit of punishing people for getting fat, but again we cannot see whether Ephorus approved or condemned this or simply reported it. It does seem, then, that Ephorus didactically promoted the simple life over a life in luxury, but along a more Herodotean line of argument than the kind of scandalised *tryphe ekphraseis* that we have seen in the Hellenistic fragments of historiography preserved by Athenaeus. This difference in focus is probably why Athenaeus did not use him a lot: a mere twelve fragments of Ephorus are preserved by Athenaeus against twenty-five of Timaeus, forty-one of Phylarchus and eighty-three of Theopompus.

Interestingly, another fragment shows that a simple and rugged lifestyle is not always all that is needed for a strong state in Ephorus’ didacticism. This is F 198, which seems to be a summary of a much longer passage by Ephorus about Boeotia. Here Strabo states that Ephorus ‘praised’ Boeotia for its fertile land and said that it was ‘by nature well suited for hegemony’

¹³ For the problem with Athenaeus and *tryphe*, see Chapter 3. Parmeggiani (2011: 233–4) argues that these passages show a Hippocratic streak in Ephorus; I would argue that it might equally well be Herodotean.

(πρὸς ἡγεμονίαν εὐφυῶς ἔχειν), but that it had only held such power for a short period of time because its people did not engage in ‘training and education’ (ἀγωγῇ δὲ καὶ παιδείᾳ), but rather neglected ‘letters and civilised socialising’ (τὸ λόγων καὶ ὁμιλίας τῆς πρὸς ἀνθρώπου). It seems that in order not just to stay unconquered, but to exercise hegemony, a certain level of civilisation is needed.

Another quality apparently promoted by Ephorus is justice: F 139 (= Strabo 6.1.8) states that he ‘praises’ (ἐπαινεῖ) the lawgiver Zaleucus for this. A third seems to have been courage: at least, it is tempting to connect F 220 (Plut. *Dion* 36.1), which says that Ephorus ‘lauded’ (ἐγκωμιάζων) the Sicilian historiographer and adviser to the tyrant Dionysius, Philistus, with F 229 (Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀκραϊφία), which gives Ephorus as the evidence for Philistus committing suicide rather than being captured alive by his enemies.¹⁴ It is also possible that F 85, in which Diogenes Laertius credits Ephorus with a story of the death of Xenophon’s son Gryllus, is a reference to a heroic battle-death narrative (ισχυρῶς ἀγωνισάμενος ἐτελεύτησεν, ὡς φησιν Ἐφορος) like the ones that we have seen are characteristic of the ‘Ephoran’ books of Diodorus.¹⁵ However, all of these references are too brief to be conclusive evidence.

The one historical character who is most obviously criticised in the Ephoran fragments is the Spartan general Dercyllidas (F 71).¹⁶ Athenaeus purports to quote Ephorus to the effect that Dercyllidas ‘did not have anything Spartan or straightforward in his character, but had an unscrupulous and savage streak’ (οὐδὲν ἐν τῷ τρόπῳ Λακωνικὸν οὐδ’ ἀπλοῦν ἔχων, ἀλλὰ πολὺ τὸ πανοῦργον καὶ τὸ θηριῶδες). This is an extraordinary description of a character who seems to be admired by Xenophon, and it is hard to know whether Athenaeus is really quoting Ephorus. In any case there is no context preserved for the evaluation, so we cannot know exactly what it was Dercyllidas did to earn such condemnation. Perhaps it is simply his lack of adherence to the Spartan ethos and his propensity for trickery, which earned him the nickname Sisyphus (same fragment, and Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.8).

Other behaviours possibly criticised by Ephorus are tyrannical behaviour (F 178 and 179, both about Periander of Corinth), and political corruption and starting a war to cover it up (F 196 on Pericles).¹⁷ In neither instance, however, is any actual moralising – even in the form of evaluative phrasing – preserved, and it is impossible to see whether Ephorus merely reported these behaviours without guiding the reader’s evaluation of them. A similar

¹⁴ This is the suggestion of Pownall (2004).

¹⁵ F 85 = Diog. Laert. 2.53.

¹⁶ F 71 = Ath. 11.500c.

¹⁷ F 178 = Diog. Laert. 1.96, F 179 = Diog. Laert. 1.98, F 196 = Diod. Sic. 12.38.1–41.1.

instance is F 206, from Plutarch, which relates Lysander's attempts to bribe various oracles, but here the moralising comes in the form of an internal evaluation, in direct speech by the priests of Ammon when they refuse the bribe.¹⁸ It is impossible to see whether Ephorus disapproved of such behaviour on religious grounds, like Diodorus, or on social grounds, like Polybius.

An important question is whether or not Ephorus showed that morally good behaviour would generally lead to success. If we look for evidence of specifically divine justice in the collected fragments of Ephorus, there is obvious evidence of it in F 96, which, however, comes from book 30 of the *History*, which was completed by Ephorus' son Demophilus after his father's death. The fragment describes divine punishment of the Phocian 'temple-robbers' after the end of the Sacred War and has elements of mirroring or ironically apt punishment, but the fact that this passage was not written by Ephorus himself begs the question whether his son made an effort to keep to the overall tenor of the work in terms of moral and divine justice. Since this question cannot be answered, it is safest to leave the fragment out of our analysis of Ephorus' work. Nonetheless, it is powerful evidence that some historiographers writing as early as the time of Ephorus were happy to include explicit instances of divine punishment of impiety.

There is some evidence among the fragments that Ephorus portrayed oracles in a respectful way. F 16 shows an oracle coming true, and in F 31b, Strabo quotes Ephorus' statement that 'it is inappropriate if we follow this sort of a method in regard to other matters, but when speaking of the oracle, which is the most truthful thing of all, we use such untrustworthy and false tales' (περὶ δὲ τοῦ μαντείου λέγοντες, ὃ πάντων ἐστὶν ἀψευδέστατον, τοῖς οὕτως ἀπίστοις καὶ ψευδέσι χρῆσόμεθα λόγοις).¹⁹ This fragment then continues with portraying Apollo as a rationalised culture hero, who kills a violent man named 'Python' and brings civilisation to Greece. In F 174 Clement of Alexandria cites Ephorus (with Plato and Aristotle) as an authority for the fact that Minos learned his laws from Zeus, Lycurgus his from Apollo. This points to a work marked by a mixture of piety and euhemeristic rationalising, which may or may not have contained an element of divine justice.²⁰

18 F 206 = Plut. *Lys.* 25.3.

19 F 16 = schol. on Pind. *Pyth.* 5.101b, F 31b = Strabo 9.3.11–12.

20 Such rationalising is also seen in F 34 (following on from F 31a) and F 147. Pownall (2004: 123) argues that F 34 is moralising in that Heracles is victorious over the Giants *because* they are impious, but this is a misreading: Theon says that the victory was thought to be divine because Heracles had conquered many with few, and the many were impious (οἱ δὲ περὶ τὴν πάλαι μὲν Φλέγραν, νῦν δὲ Παλλήνην ὀνομαζομένην κατοικοῦντες ἦσαν ἄνθρωποι ὅμοιοι καὶ ἱερόσυλοι καὶ ἀνθρωποφάγοι, οἱ καλούμενοι Γίγαντες, οὓς Ἡρακλῆς λέγεται χειρώσασθαι τὴν Τροίαν ἐλών· καὶ διὰ τὸ κρατῆσαι τοὺς περὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέα ὀλίγους

Pownall has argued that Ephorus portrayed the world as a just place where the wicked come to bad ends, though not necessarily by means of divine punishment.²¹ One of the fragments she adduces as evidence is F 19. Here a scholiast of Plato explains the expression Διὸς Κόρινθος, used of pompous people who get their comeuppance, by means of a story about Corinthian ambassadors to their colony Megara, which has revolted, who keep referring in a pompous manner to their own city as ‘Zeus’ Corinth’. In the end they are stoned out of the assembly by the Megarians, and later a battle takes place in which the Megarians defeat the Corinthians, encouraging each other to ‘strike Zeus’ Corinth’ as they kill the fleeing. Thus it seems that the Megarians get their revenge while the arrogant and pompous Corinthians are punished. However, there are problems with the interpretation of the fragment. Firstly, as Jacoby already pointed out, we cannot see whether Ephorus actually told this story or just referred to the proverb.²² The scholiast refers to four different sources:

μέμνηται δὲ ταύτης Ἀριστοφάνης ἐν τοῖς Βατραχίοις . . . καὶ ἐν Ταγηνισταῖς, καὶ Ἐφορος ἐν πρώτῳ Ἱστοριῶν, καὶ Πλάτων Εὐθυδήμῳ. ἄλλοι δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπ’ οὐδενὶ τέλει ἀπειλούντων φασὶν εἰρῆσθαι τὴν παροιμίαν. Μεγαρεῦσι γὰρ ὠρμημένοις ἀφίστασθαι ἐπιλέγειν τὸν Κορίνθιον ὅτι ἀνέξεται ταῦτα ὁ Διὸς Κορίνθος. μέμνηται ταύτης καὶ Πίνδαρος.

This expression is mentioned by Aristophanes in the *Frogs* . . . and in the *Broilers*, as well as Ephorus in book 1 of the *Histories*, and Plato in the *Euthydemus*. But others say that the expression is used of people who make idle threats . . . For the Corinthian told the Megarians, who were about to revolt, ‘Zeus’ Corinth will not abide these things’. Pindar uses the expression too. (Ephorus F 19 = schol. Pl. *Euthyd.* 292e; translation modified from BNJ)

However, both Aristophanes’ *Frogs* and Plato in the passage which the scholiast is explaining use the expression ‘Zeus’ Corinth’ without explaining it.²³ It is tempting, then, to hypothesise that the scholiast must have found the story in Ephorus since he did not find it in any of his other named sources, but it is entirely possible that he knew it from somewhere else – the expression is also used by Pindar (*Nem.* 5, 105) and by Aristophanes again

ὄντας τῶν Γιγάντων πολλῶν ὄντων καὶ ἀσεβῶν θεῶν ἔργον ἅπασιν ἐδόκει γεγονέναι τὸ περὶ τὴν μάχην). For an interesting discussion of what role mythological narratives may have played in Ephorus see Luraghi (2014).

²¹ Pownall (2004: 113–42).

²² Jacoby (1930: 46). See also Parker (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

²³ Ar. *Ran.* 439; Pl. *Euthyd.* 292e. Aristophanes *Tagenistae* is lost except for fragments, and the Platonic scholiast’s words are our only testimony of what it may have said about Διὸς Κόρινθος.

in *Ecclesiastusae* 828 – and referred to Ephorus, as to Aristophanes, simply because the expression was mentioned in his work.

If we do accept that Ephorus told the story, it would show that at least in this instance he implied that the arrogant got their comeuppance. Pownall further adduces as evidence of such universal justice the end of F 118 (= Strabo 8.5.5). Here, Ephorus is given as the source for the fact that Lycurgus is honoured in Sparta because he gave just laws, and Agis and Eurypon because they ruled justly (δικαίως), but not the two founders, Procles and Eurysthenes, because they did not. One gets the impression that Ephorus here worked back from the honours he saw bestowed on these Spartan heroes and the curious fact that the founders were not among them and inferred their respective moral and immoral behaviour from that.²⁴ If so, that would demonstrate a commitment to viewing the world as a place where the good (rulers, at least) are honoured after their death and the bad (rulers) forgotten. F 58a–d show that worse things could happen to the afterlife of a villain: here, Eurybatus betrays Croesus to Cyrus, with the result that Eurybatus' name becomes proverbial for traitors.²⁵ One further fragment shows punishment for morally bad behaviour during the villain's lifetime, namely F 60a, a scholion on Apollonius Rhodius, where Ephorus is given as the source for the fact that the Amazons killed their husbands because they had been mistreated (ὕβριζομένας) by them.²⁶

One fragment, nonetheless, shows that people in Ephorus did not always get what they deserved. F 191 is a damaged piece of a papyrus which has often been thought to come from a copy of Ephorus' *History*. It is, however, more likely to come from an epitome of Ephorus and so does not necessarily reproduce his writing style.²⁷ It is a brisk summary of events from the end of the Persian Wars to the murder of Xerxes in 465 BC, kept in plain language with hardly any evaluative vocabulary, as befits an epitome. The only passage of this text which demonstrates moral evaluation is fragments 3–5, which concern Themistocles:

Fr. 3: .] ε[.]ω[.] ἐκ[εῖνον] | μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς πόλε[ως] | ἠτιμασμένον, τ[ὴν] | δὲ πόλιν διὰ τ[ῆς] ἐκείνου πράξε[ι]ς τῆς μεγίστης τιμῆς ὑπὸ | τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀξι|ωθεῖσαν· ἢ μεγάλην | [ἡγεμονί]αν(?) οἶον τ.
Fr. 4–5: σοφ[ωτάτην καὶ] | [δικαι]οτά[την(?) ...]...[τα[τ]η[ν] κ[αὶ] || χαλεπ[ωτάτην] [γενο]μένην πρὸς ἐκεῖνον.

24 For the likely historical truth behind all of this see Parker (n.d.: *ad loc.*).

25 F 58a = Harpocration, s.v. Εὐρύβατον; F 58b = schol. on Hermogenes 63.140.2; F 58c = Suda, s.v. Εὐρύβατος; F 58d = Diod. Sic. 9.32.

26 F 60a = schol. on Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.965.

27 For a brief overview of the case for attributing the papyrus to Ephorus see Parker (n.d.: *ad loc.*). For the compelling counter-arguments and the case for an epitome of Ephorus see Parmeggiani (2011: 376–8 with n. 150 and 155).

Fr. 3: . . . that h[*e* had been] deprived of honour by the city, t[*he*] city which had been deemed worthy of the highest honour by the Greeks because of h[*i*]s deeds: it [had obtained?] great [international po]wer like . . .

Fr. 4–5: . . . that [the w]i[sest and most j]ust [had becom]e the [mo]s t..... a[*nd* harsh]est towards him. (Ephorus F 191 = POxy. 13.1610.1–16)

Even without looking at the restored bits, there is a clear rhetorical antithesis between ἡτμισσμένον ('having been deprived of honour/disfranchised') and τῆς μεγίστης τιμῆς . . . ἀξι|ωθεῖσαν ('having been deemed worthy of the greatest honour'). The word *polis* is also clearly readable twice in this sentence, and since the text has just been talking about Themistocles, it makes sense to assume that it is here contrasting the honour and glory that he brought on Athens with the dishonour bestowed on him by the city when it sent him into exile. The heavy restoration of fragments 4 and 5 is based on the text of Diod. Sic. 11.56, which can be seen to follow the papyrus closely and must have used the same source, namely Ephorus. Here again we see an antithesis, this time between the reputation of Athens and the city's treatment of Themistocles. The adjectives used are morally evaluative: 'wisest', 'most just', 'harshes'. This looks like an abbreviation of a longer passage of narratorial moralising, which indeed the corresponding passage in Diodorus is. The fact that most of the passage appears to be indirect discourse need not trouble us: it may well have been dependent, in the unfragmented epitome, on a statement such as 'the well-educated and sensible people thought that' as an instance of internal evaluation, or even on an expression such as 'one might reasonably say that' or 'I believe that', thus forming part of a narratorial moralising evaluation. In any case, the juxtaposition of Themistocles' contribution to the glory of Athens and his disfranchisement by the city deliberately underlines the injustice of his fate and shows that not everyone in Ephorus' *History* got the rewards their conduct deserved.

A similar message can perhaps be drawn from F 175, where Aelian says that Lycurgus received 'an inglorious reward' (οὐ καλοὺς τοὺς μισθούς) when he had his eye knocked out. He finishes the story with the statement that 'Ephorus, at any rate, says that Lycurgus died in exile, having patiently endured hunger' (λέγει δὲ Ἐφορος αὐτὸν λιμῶ διακαρτερήσαντα ἐν φυγῇ ἀποθανεῖν).²⁸ If this passage was indeed in Ephorus, it would be interesting that he stressed the injustice of Lycurgus' 'reward'. However, the phrasing is almost certainly Aelian's own, and we cannot even be certain how much of the content he found in Ephorus, as he only gives him as the source for the information that Lycurgus starved himself to death. Most probably, this sentence is an extreme compression of what Ephorus spent at least a

²⁸ Ephorus F 175 = Ael. *VH* 13.23.

passage or a chapter narrating in much greater detail. This means that we cannot know how Ephorus constructed his narrative of Lycurgus' death, or whether he moralised on it.²⁹ In short, there is evidence that some morally bad characters came to bad ends in Ephorus, and an indication that he may have deplored Themistocles' and Lycurgus' undeserved fates, but there is not enough for us to draw a firm conclusion about the presence or absence of general moral justice in his narrative.

If we compare this image of Ephorus' moral lessons with the impression produced by our analysis in Chapter 2 of Diodorus' moralising in the books of the *Bibliothēke* based on Ephorus, we see that they only partly correspond: both Diodorus' 'Ephoran' text and references to Ephorus in other later authors indicate that Ephorus moralised on courage and justice, but the moralising on the positive effects of mildness and kindness which we saw in Diodorus is absent from the fragments. This means either that it was in Ephorus' original, but has been lost, or that it was Diodorus' own addition to what he found in Ephorus. By contrast, moralising on the connection between inhabiting a fertile land, living an easy life and becoming soft and easy to conquer seems from the fragments to have been part of Ephorus' *History*, but plays no prominent part in Diodorus' 'Ephoran' narrative.

Before leaving Ephorus behind, we need to ask what can be deduced about his moralising techniques from the fragments. This is a tricky question to answer in his case because most of the fragments are not verbatim quotation, but summaries, paraphrases and more or less vague references. However, we can tentatively suggest that he seems to have used evaluative phrasing, juxtaposition of information, and evaluation by an internal audience – although sparingly, to judge from the papyrus fragment. He also seems to have shown that morally bad deeds can lead to disastrous results, although his narrative world does not seem to have been a universally just place and there is no evidence of divine justice. Finally, according to Polybius, he was exceptionally good at expressing his opinion in digressions and maxims, but no actual evidence of this exists among the fragments. This corresponds well with the picture that emerged from the analysis of Diodorus' moralising: according to this, Ephorus made sparing use of evaluative vocabulary, but also engaged in moral digressions, moralising asides and moralising introductions and conclusions.

In conclusion, there is nothing to suggest that Ephorus was the first moralising historiographer. Rather, it looks as if he picked up the style

²⁹ Pownall (2004: 140) argues that the moral, λέγεται δὲ ὁ λόγος πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλα <μὲν> θελήσαντας ἄλλων δὲ τυχόντας, is taken over from Ephorus; but even if that were true, it would not be evidence that he moralised on the injustice of Lycurgus' fate.

of Xenophon, including that author's techniques of moralising by infrequent use of morally evaluative phrasing and subtle juxtaposition, possibly as well as moralising digressions. In other words, subtle moralising was already present in Xenophon, and Ephorus only developed it further. How much further is impossible to say from the scant evidence, but it certainly seems that he was less explicitly moralising than Theopompus, his younger contemporary, to whom we turn next. In fact, it looks as if the development from subtle to explicit moralising in Greek historiography was gradual rather than sudden, and that Ephorus was just one step along the way. Pownall has argued that Ephorus 'was willing to stray from his stated historical principles and, what is more, that at times he did so on purpose, to make a moral point'.³⁰ I would argue that Ephorus most probably did not consider himself as straying from any principles when he told what we consider to be mythological stories, but that he believed that he was able to get to their core of truth by rationalising them. And moralising was not something he engaged in only when 'straying' from his principles; rather it was an integral part of what he thought a historiographer should do in order to make his work useful and relevant to his readers. In this Ephorus was in line with both his Classical predecessors and his Hellenistic successors.

THEOPOMPUS OF CHIOS (*FGRH* 115)

Theopompus of Chios was Ephorus' contemporary and probably lived c. 403–320 BC.³¹ Ancient tradition has it that they were both pupils of Isocrates, and ancient authors often compare them.³² As with Ephorus, it is impossible now to know for certain whether the relationship with Isocrates was real or a later fabrication, but with Theopompus it is at least obvious why his historical works might be associated with Isocrates' teachings of rhetoric and moral didacticism.³³ He wrote several works, including a *Hellenica* in twelve books, which picked up where Thucydides left off and ended with the Battle of Cnidus in 394 BC, and a *Philippica* in fifty-eight books, from the accession of Philip II to the throne of Macedon in 360/59 BC to his assassination in 336 BC. This latter work was not so much a history of Philip as a Greek history, including the history of Sicily,

³⁰ Pownall (2004: 128–9).

³¹ For a discussion of Theopompus' dates see Flower (1994: 11–17) and Morison (n.d.: *ad* T 1 and T 2, 'Biographical Essay').

³² See e.g. *FGRH* 115 T 1, T 6b; T 20a; T 24; T 37; T 39a; T 39b; T 39c.

³³ The connection with Isocrates goes back at least to the *Suda* (T 1). It has been disputed by Schwartz (1907), whose views are revived by Flower (1994). *Contra* Laqueur (1934), Pédech (1989), Shrimpton (1991) and Morison (n.d.: 'Biographical Essay').

structured on the framework of the reign of Philip with numerous lengthy digressions.³⁴ That is clear from the varied fragments as well as from testimonia, especially Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 176.121a35 = T 31), which states that the material about Philip II, when excerpted on the orders of Philip V, ran to no more than sixteen books. For this reason both of these works must be included in our study. Theopompus' separate work on the Sacred War, however, provocatively entitled *On the Funds Stolen from Delphi*, was clearly a shorter treatise with a political purpose, and so the fragments preserved from this (F 248–9) cannot contribute to an understanding of moral didacticism in universal or continuous histories. Neither can the fragments of his speeches or his letters to Philip II and Alexander the Great (F 250–9).

Theopompus is among the best-attested of the fragmentary historiographers, with 413 fragments collected by Jacoby (411 in *BNJ*). Of the ones that preserve the title of their work, thirteen come from speeches, letters and pamphlets (F 247–59), five from his epitome of Herodotus (F 1–5), eighteen from the *Hellenica* (F 6–23) and a staggering 231 from the *Philippica* (F 24–254), showing that this was by far his most-read work. In terms of cocontext, 107 fragments are preserved by Stephanus of Byzantium and consist of short, geographical notices, and thirty-three in Harpocration are mainly brief lexicographical entries. However, an impressive eighty-three fragments are preserved by Athenaeus and twenty-four by Plutarch, all of which are longer and often moralising passages. Of the rest, forty fragments come from various scholiasts, thirteen from Strabo, and the remaining 113 from a wide variety of later authors, who are each responsible for fewer than ten fragments and often no more than one or two. The wide spread in cocontexts and the large number of fragments perhaps mean that what is left is more representative of the original works than is the case for most other fragmentary historiographers, but it is risky to make assumptions. Even though use of Theopompus by Athenaeus and Plutarch shows that they found his work a rich quarry of moral anecdotes, it also means that the extant fragments are likely to contain a larger proportion of moralising than the original works.

Scholarship on Theopompus is quite extensive.³⁵ Everyone agrees that Theopompus was a moralising historian, who propounded traditional moral values, first and foremost moderation and sobriety, and who blamed more than he praised. He is generally considered a pessimist who depicted his historical characters in the worst light possible, although he may have

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of the likely contents of the Sicilian digressions of the *Philippica* see Occhipinti (2013).

³⁵ Main works are: Laqueur (1934), Westlake (1954), Connor (1967, 1968), Pédech (1989), Shrimpton (1991), Flower (1994), Pownall (2004) and Morison (n.d.). Jacoby (1930), strangely, does not give Theopompus' *FGrH* entry his usual introduction.

made a few exceptions.³⁶ It is also common to consider his works part of the rhetorical/moralising decline of post-Thucydidean historiography.³⁷ An interesting question is Theopompus' attitude to Philip, after whom he named his greatest work of history: did he admire or despise him?³⁸ We shall return to these issues below.

The fragments of Theopompus contain a large number of explicitly moralising passages, mainly from Athenaeus. Most of these are negative *paradeigmata*, some are positive, two are combinations of praise and criticism.³⁹ The most revealing evidence of his moralising style is a set of fragments found in Athenaeus and Polybius, who both claim to be quoting Theopompus verbatim. The fragments overlap (with minor differences) and are obviously from the same passage, an extended and passionate lecture on the moral failings of Philip II. The text quoted below is from Polybius, but overlaps with Athenaeus (and Pseudo-Demetrius, *On Style*) at several points.⁴⁰

εἰ δέ τις ἀναγνῶνα βουληθείη τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἐνάτης καὶ τετρακοστῆς αὐτῷ βύβλου, παντάπασιν ἂν θαυμάσαι τὴν ἀτοπίαν τοῦ συγγραφέως, ὅς γε χωρὶς τῶν ἄλλων τετόλμηκε καὶ ταῦτα λέγειν—αὐταῖς γὰρ λέξεις αἰς ἐκεῖνος κέχρηται κατατετάχαμεν· ‘εἰ γάρ τις ἦν ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ἢ τοῖς βαρβάροις’ φησὶ ‘λάσταυρος ἢ θρασὺς τὸν τρόπον, οὗτοι πάντες εἰς Μακεδονίαν ἀθροίζόμενοι πρὸς Φίλιππον ἐταῖροι τοῦ βασιλέως προσηγορευοντο. καθόλου γὰρ ὁ Φίλιππος τοὺς μὲν κοσμίους τοῖς ἤθεσι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων βίων ἐπιμελουμένους ἀπεδοκίμαζε, τοὺς δὲ πολυτελεῖς καὶ ζῶντας ἐν μέθαις καὶ κύβοις ἐτίμα καὶ προῆγεν. τοιγαρ<οὖν> οὐ μόνον ταῦτ’ ἔχειν αὐτοὺς παρεσκευάζεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ

36 The idea of Theopompus as a harsh judge of character goes back to ancient critics; see e.g. Polyb. 8.8.7–11.6 (= Theopomp. T 19), Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 6 (= Theopomp. T 20a) and Luc. *Hist. conscr.* 59.59 (= Theopomp. T 25a). Pessimist: Pédech (1989); misanthrope: Laqueur (1934). Connor (1967) famously says that Theopompus' work depicted no heroes, only villains. Westlake (1954) argues that Theopompus made an exception for Timoleon and portrayed him as a good man, Morison (n.d.) that he did this with Lysander and Agesilaus; Shrimpton (1991) argues that Theopompus did not paint all his characters in black, but some in 'shades of grey', and that these are his heroes. Shrimpton (1991) and Pownall (2004) argue for a distinction between two types of villains: those who are merely corrupted and slaves to their own pleasure, and those who are contagiously villainous and corrupt others.

37 E.g. Lane Fox (1984: 116–18), Meister (1990: 90–4).

38 Some scholars argue that Theopompus despised Philip for his immorality and used his narrative to show that Philip's success was due to luck (Connor 1967, Pownall 2004) or to the prevailing moral corruption of Greece (Connor 1967, 1968, Shrimpton 1991, Flower 1994). Others argue that Theopompus admired Philip's political and military achievements despite being critical of his personal life (Pédech 1989, Westlake 1992).

39 Negative: F 36, F 39, F 49, F 62, F 81, F 100, F 105, F 114, F 117, F 121, F 124, F 143, F 162, F 163, F 192, F 204, F 213, F 224, F 236, F 281, F 282, F 290, F 291; positive: F 8, F 18, F 20, F 139, F 289, F 321, F 333; mixed: F 97 and F 99. For a good discussion of these two 'mixed' passages see Flower (1994: 72–3).

40 For a good overview of the overlapping fragments see Morison (n.d.: ad F 224–5c) and Flower (1994: 105–6).

τῆς ἄλλης ἀδικίας καὶ βδελυρίας ἀθλητὰς ἐποίησεν. τί γὰρ τῶν αἰσχρῶν ἢ δεινῶν αὐτοῖς οὐ προσῆν, ἢ τί τῶν καλῶν καὶ σπουδαίων οὐκ ἀπῆν; ὧν οἱ μὲν ξυρόμενοι καὶ λεαινόμενοι διετέλουν ἄνδρες ὄντες, οἱ δ' ἀλλήλοις ἐτόλμων ἐπανάστασθαι πώγωνας ἔχουσι. καὶ περιήγοντο μὲν δύο καὶ τρεῖς τοὺς ἐταιρευομένους, αὐτοὶ δὲ τὰς αὐτὰς ἐκείνοις χρήσεις ἐτέροις παρείχοντο. ὅθεν καὶ δικαίως ἂν τις αὐτοὺς οὐχ ἐταίρους ἀλλ' ἐταίρας ὑπελάμβανεν [εἶναι] οὐδὲ στρατιώτας ἀλλὰ χαμαιτύπους προσηγόρευσεν· ἀνδροφῶνοι γὰρ τὴν φύσιν ὄντες ἀνδρόπορνοι τὸν τρόπον ἦσαν. ἀπλῶς δ' εἶπεῖν, ἵνα παύσωμαι' φησί 'μακρολογῶν, ἄλλως τε καὶ τοσοῦτων μοι πραγμάτων ἐπικεχυμένων, ἡγοῦμαι τοιαῦτα θηρία γεγονέναι καὶ τοιοῦτους τὸν τρόπον τοὺς φίλους καὶ τοὺς ἐταίρους Φιλίππου προσαγορευθέντας οἴους οὔτε τοὺς Κενταύρους τοὺς τὸ Πήλιον κατασχόντας οὔτε τοὺς Λαιστρυγῶνας τοὺς τὸ Λεοντίνων πεδῖον οἰκῆσαντας οὐτ' ἄλλους οὐδ' ὁποίους.'

If someone should wish to read the beginning of his [i.e. Theopompus'] forty-ninth book, he would be completely amazed at the absurdity of the historiographer, who apart from the other things has dared to say also this – for I have set down the very words which he has used: 'For if someone among the Greeks or the non-Greeks', he says, 'was a hairy predator or brazen in character, these were all gathered together to Macedon and Philip and became known as the king's companions. For, in short, Philip rejected those who were orderly in character and managed their own lives with care while honouring and promoting those who were extravagant and lived a life of drink and dice. Accordingly he not only made sure that they had these things, but also made them masters of the other unjust and perverse behaviours. For what shameful or awful thing was not present for them, and what honourable and good thing was not absent? Some of them lived their lives shaved and smoothed although they were men, others dared to have sex with each other although they had beards. They also led around with them two or three of those who prostituted themselves, and they themselves offered the same use of those to others. For this reason someone might justly assume that they were not companions (*hetairous*) but prostitutes (*hetairas*) and call them not soldiers but streetwalkers. For though man-killers (*androphonoi*) by nature, they were man-whores (*andropornoι*) by character.⁴¹ To cut a long story short', he says, 'especially as I am drowning in such great events, I believe that those who have become known as the friends and companions of Philip have in character become beasts of a kind and magnitude such as neither the Centaurs at Pelion nor the Laestrygonians living in the Leontinian Plain nor any others can match.' (Polyb. 8.9.5–13 = *FGrH* 115 F 224–5C)

Polybius is shocked at Theopompus' style, and he is certainly right that it is unusual for its genre: the coarse language and the dirty puns are closer in style to Aristophanes than to anything we see elsewhere in historiography. It is also this 'low' style that causes Pseudo-Demetrius to take issue with the passage, and it is no doubt also the reason why Athenaeus decided to

41 The translations of these terms are taken from *BNJ*.

quote it verbatim.⁴² We shall return to the techniques of moralising below; for now the focus will remain on the moral lessons. What Theopompus criticises about Philip and his companions here is their lifestyle: drinking, gambling, hard partying, sexual intemperance. Secondly, he alludes to their injustice and dishonesty, but these – one might think more historically significant – vices are not the focus of the passage. The sexual immoderation criticised here is unregulated homosexuality (i.e. between grown men rather than between a grown man and a youth), but other fragments show that Theopompus was also critical of deviant heterosexual sex, that is, sex with prostitutes and adultery with free women.⁴³ All of these behaviours are criticised repeatedly in the Theopompan fragments, often in combination. Heavy drinking is the most frequent vice, closely followed by hard partying and gambling.⁴⁴ Sometimes extravagant eating, over-the-top dress and equipment, and effeminacy are thrown into the mix.⁴⁵ Theopompus also seems to have singled out lavish and thoughtless spending as a particular vice.⁴⁶

Such behaviours are all part of what Athenaeus calls *tryphe*, and indeed most of the fragments on these topics are found in the *Deipnosophistae* (forty-six fragments). However, there are enough fragments with similar contents from other covertexts to make it clear that this was, indeed, an important feature of Theopompus' *Philippica*, and no doubt that was why he was a favourite of Athenaeus'.⁴⁷ They are also typical behaviours to criticise, both for Theopompus' Classical predecessors and particularly for his Hellenistic successors. What seems to have singled Theopompus out is his *style* of moralising, which we shall return to below, and his insistence on the presence of these vices more or less across the board. They are central in his characterisation of Philip and his companions, as we have seen;⁴⁸ they play an important part in his description of various peoples and ethnic groups (Illyrians F 39, Chalchidians F 139, Thessalians F 162, Tarentines F 233), they characterise tyrants (Dionysius F 134, Apollocrates F 185, Hipparinus F 186, Timolaus F 210), but they also attach to leaders of oligarchies (F 121) and democracies (Chares of Athens F 213). In fact, in one fragment Theopompus seems to have argued that democracy in

42 F 225c = Ps.-Dem. 27, F 224 = Ath. 4.166f–7c, F 225b = Ath. 6.260d–1a.

43 See F 121, F 143, F 187, F 213, F 227.

44 Drinking: F 27, F 39, F 121, F 134, F 139, F 143, F 162, F 185, F 186, F 210, F 233, F 282, F 283a; partying: F 27, F 31, F 162, F 213, F 233, F 236; gambling: F 121, F 134, F 228.

45 Eating: F 40, F 57, F 113, F 179, F 187; dress and equipment: F 187, F 188; effeminacy: F 132, F 232.

46 See especially F 224 and F 227.

47 F 99 from Harpocration, F 283b from Aelian, F 107 and F 333 from Plutarch, F 27 and F 225a from Polybius.

48 F 27, F 224, F 225a–c, F 236, F 282.

particular led to such dissolute behaviour, not only in the leaders, but in the whole people (F 62).⁴⁹ In tyrants, and people behaving like tyrants, the extravagant lifestyle is combined with a violent temperament and actions of cruelty.⁵⁰ Other traits criticised intermittently in the fragments are corruption (repeatedly designated ‘thieving’), dishonesty, injustice, flattery, fickleness and impiety.

Positive *paradeigmata* seem to have been rather thinner on the ground in Theopompus’ works than the by all accounts frequent negative *exempla*. Partly for that reason they carried greater weight with some readers, as we can see from Plutarch’s remark that we should trust Theopompus more when he praises than when he blames because he enjoys blaming more (ψέγει γὰρ ἥδιον ἢ ἐπαινεῖ: F 333 = Plut. *Lys.* 30.2–3), and from the testimony of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (T 20a = Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 6) that Theopompus reflected on ‘justice, piety, and the other virtues’ (δικαιοσύνης καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀρετῶν) throughout his work.⁵¹ Revealingly, positive role-models in the *Hellenica* and *Philippica* seem always to have belonged to the previous generation: the only four fragments that say something unambiguously positive about a historical character concern Lysander (F 20 and F 333) and Agesilaus (F 22 and F 107), and a possible fifth deals with Alcibiades (F 288). The passages on Lysander both extol his lack of greed, but one of them goes further and praises him for moderation in every aspect of his life. Athenaeus purports to quote verbatim from the *Hellenica*:

Παυσανίαν δὲ καὶ Λύσανδρον ἐπὶ τρυφῇ διαβοήτους γενέσθαι σχεδὸν πάντες ἱστοροῦσιν. . . . Θεόπομπος δὲ ἐν τῇ δεκάτῃ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν τάναντία φησὶ περὶ τοῦ Λυσάνδρου, ὅτι ‘φιλόπονος τε ἦν καὶ θεραπεύειν δυνάμενος καὶ ιδιώτας καὶ βασιλεῖς, σώφρων ὢν καὶ τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀπασῶν κρείττων. γενόμενος γοῦν τῆς Ἑλλάδος σχεδὸν ἀπάσης κύριος ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ φανήσεται τῶν πόλεων οὔτε πρὸς τὰς ἀφροδισίους ἡδονὰς ὀρμήσας οὔτε μέθαις καὶ πότοις ἀκαίροις χρῆσάμενος’.

Almost all historiographers say that Pausanias and Lysander were famous for their extravagant lifestyles. . . . But Theopompus in the tenth book of his *Hellenica* says the opposite about Lysander, namely that ‘he was hardworking and able to help both private people and kings, being temperate and indifferent to all pleasures. And so, although he became master of almost all of Greece, he will be seen in none of the cities to have been eager either for sexual pleasures or for those related to carousals or to drinking at odd times’. (Theopomp. F 20 = Ath. 12.543b–c)

⁴⁹ For a good discussion of Theopompus’ views on luxury see Flower (1994: 71–83). Pédech (1989: 226–30) has a good discussion of the different terms used by Theopompus in this context.

⁵⁰ F 31 Cotys, F 181a and b Clearchus, F 187 Nysaeus, F 291 Hermeias.

⁵¹ See Flower (1994: 69–71).

‘Hard-working’ (φιλόπονός), ‘temperate’ (σώφρων), ‘indifferent to all pleasures’ (τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀπασῶν κρείττων), with no weakness for sex or drinking Lysander seems to be the very opposite of Philip and all the other corrupt characters of his time. In the other fragment, Plutarch gives Theopompus’ *Philippica* as his source for the fact that Lysander was so scrupulous in money matters that although he had held so much power during his lifetime, he died in poverty, again the antithesis of the lavish spenders that seem to have populated most of the two works. Similarly, the two fragments on Agesilaus, one from the *Hellenica* (F 22 from Athenaeus) and one from the *Philippica* (F 107 from Plutarch), both present the same moralising vignette: Agesilaus is sent delicacies as presents, but gives them to the helots so he and the Spartans will not get corrupted. Finally, in F 321 Plutarch claims that ‘even’ Theopompus says that Agesilaus was the greatest and most famous of all of his contemporaries (μέγιστος μὲν ἦν ὁμολογουμένως καὶ τῶν τότε ζώντων ἐπιφανέστατος, ὡς εἰρηκέ που καὶ Θεόπομπος). The uncertainty signalled by *που* makes this unlikely to be a verbatim quotation, but the fact that Theopompus had something positive to say about anyone apparently stuck in Plutarch’s mind. It seems that Theopompus’ moral lesson was consistent: just as he poured scorn on intemperance in all areas of life, he praised self-control and moderation. In this he is in line with the rest of the Greek historiographical tradition, as we have seen; what is unusual is his apparent focus on this one moral lesson to the exclusion of others.

For that reason it is worth spending a little time on the two other possible praise passages among the Theopompan fragments in order to see whether there were in fact other character traits and behaviours that he actively recommended in his historical works. One of these fragments comes from Cornelius Nepos, who claims that Theopompus, along with Timaeus and Thucydides, ‘praised’ Alcibiades (*summ̄is laudibus extulerunt*: F 288) because he was able to adapt to any culture and outdo the Athenians in brilliance, the Thebans in strength, the Spartans in self-discipline and endurance, the Thracians in drinking and sex, and the Persians in hunting and luxurious living. After having read through all the other fragments of Theopompus, it is a priori unlikely that he would, straight-faced, praise Alcibiades for such a frivolous talent. Furthermore, the pairing with Thucydides does not inspire confidence: Thucydides does praise Alcibiades briefly, but only for his intelligence and ability, in order then to show how his personal life is contributing to the downfall of Athens (Thuc. 6.14), and he certainly does not describe Alcibiades as a cultural chameleon as explicitly as Nepos makes out. Surely it is possible, then, that Nepos missed similar nuances in Theopompus, who may well have described Alcibiades in such terms only then to make it clear by some acerbic remark in the next paragraph that such a lack of personal integrity was not to be admired.

The other fragment that might be construed as praise passage is F 328, where Plutarch gives Theopompus as his source for the galvanising effect of Demosthenes' speech to the Thebans:

ἡ δὲ τοῦ ῥήτορος δύναμις, ὡς φησι Θεόπομπος, ἐκριπίζουσα τὸν θυμὸν αὐτῶν καὶ διακαίουσα τὴν φιλοτιμίαν ἐπεσκότησε τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν, ὥστε καὶ φόβον καὶ λογισμὸν καὶ χάριν ἐκβαλεῖν αὐτοὺς ἐνθουσιῶντας . . .

But the power of the orator, as Theopompus says, roused their spirit and set alight their ambition. It cast everything else into darkness so that they threw away fear, reason, and gratitude under its influence. (Theopomp. F 328 = Plut. *Dem.* 18.1–3)

This is strong praise of Demosthenes' oratorical power (δύναμις), but it has immoral consequences: reason and gratitude should surely not be given up on the basis of a speech, and ἐπισκοτέω, 'cast into darkness', sounds decidedly ominous. Further on in the same passage Plutarch disagrees with Theopompus' judgement that Demosthenes' position among the Athenians and Thebans was obtained 'unjustly and beyond his merit' (ἀδίκως, παρ' ἄξίαν). Another fragment shows that Theopompus had called Demosthenes' political manoeuvring 'fickle' (ἀβέβαιον: F 326). While Demosthenes' oratorical skill may have been presented as worth emulating, then, it is unlikely that he was represented as a morally good person. It does seem, in fact, that the only positive role-models provided by Theopompus were the ascetic and disciplined Spartans of the previous generation, whom he presented as foils for the unscrupulous, decadent and debauched kings and politicians of his own time.

The question of Theopompus' portrayal of Philip II needs to be faced. It seems clear from the fragments that he was presented as a thoroughly negative *paradeigma*: immoderate in his personal life, corrupting in his friendship, treacherous and brutal in international relations. But how did a moralist such as Theopompus square that with Philip's undeniable success? On the basis of a brief passage from Athenaeus, it has been argued that Theopompus showed Philip's success to be due to *tyche*, luck or fortune, rather than to any personal qualities:⁵²

ὁ Θεόπομπος δὲ ἐν τῇ πεντηκοστῇ τετάρτῃ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν κατὰ τὴν Φιλίππου φησὶν ἀρχὴν περὶ τὴν Βισαλίαν καὶ Ἀμφίπολιν καὶ Γραιστονίαν τῆς Μακεδονίας ἕαρος μεσοῦντος τὰς μὲν συκάς σῦκα, τὰς δ' ἀμπέλους βότρυς, τὰς δ' ἐλαίας ἐν ᾧ χρόνῳ βρῦειν εἰκὸς ἦν αὐτὰς ἐλαίας ἐνεγκεῖν, καὶ εὐτυχήσαι πάντα Φίλιππον.

⁵² Pownall (2004: 174–5) building on the arguments of Connor (1967). *Contra* Jacoby (1930: 389), who sees the passage as encomiastic of Philip.

Theopompus says in the fifty-fourth book of his *Histories* with regard to Philip's rule in the region of Bisaltia, Amphipolis, and Graestonia in Macedon that in mid-spring the fig trees produced figs, the vines produced grapes, and the olive trees – at the time when it was reasonable for them to come into bloom – produced olives, and that Philip was fortunate in all things. (Theopomp. F 237a = Ath. 3.77d–e)

This is a tempting conclusion, but hardly permissible on the basis of this fragment alone, which is the only reference in the fragments to Philip's luck or fortune. If Theopompus had developed a theory on the reasons for Philip's success to the effect that it was due to fortune rather than to the king's own qualities, I find it hard to believe, in view of the interest of later authors in both Theopompus and Philip, that no source would have referred to it. It is more likely that the reference is to a speech delivered or a view expressed by a character in the *Philippica* in the aftermath of the Battle of Chaeronea, perhaps Demosthenes, who says something similar in his speech *On the Crown*.⁵³ It has also been argued that Theopompus was critical of Philip's personal life, but admired his military and political achievements.⁵⁴ Nothing in the fragments points to this: rather, Philip's politics and wars seem as morally flawed as his companion-keeping (e.g. F 162, F 209, F 236). The explanation best supported by the fragments is that Theopompus showed Philip to be degenerate and debauched, but also calculating and clever. All those around Philip, from his companions to the rulers of barbarian peoples and Athenian democrats, were equally degenerate and were so busy wallowing in their own sordid luxury that they were unable to form an efficient defence against Philip.⁵⁵ The only remedy against this contemporary weakness and degeneracy would be to emulate the Spartans of the past: refuse pleasure and embrace hard work in order to gain military and moral strength.

To a modern mind it would perhaps seem logical for such a negative portrayal of contemporary history also to be void of divine justice. However, such an assumption would be jumping to conclusions. Three fragments from the *Philippica* clearly narrate instances of superhuman punishment. The most obvious one is F 31. The story as told by Athenaeus runs like this: Cotys was the most decadent of all the Thracian kings. He travelled around his country and designated all the loveliest places as banquetting halls. He also used to sacrifice regularly to the gods and so was happy and prosperous (εὐδαίμων καὶ μακαριστὸς ὢν) until he committed impiety and

53 Dem. *De cor.* 18.300: οὐδέ γ' ἠττήθην ἐγὼ τοῖς λογισμοῖς Φιλίππου, πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ, οὐδέ ταῖς παρασκευαῖς, ἀλλ' οἱ τῶν συμμάχων στρατηγοὶ καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις τῆ τύχῃ.

54 Pédech (1989), Westlake (1992).

55 Thus, more or less, Connor (1967, 1968), Shrimpton (1991), Flower (1994).

blasphemy against Athena (εις τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν βλασφημεῖν καὶ πλημμελεῖν). The narrative of the impiety, where Athenaeus seems to be paraphrasing Theopompus, deserves to be quoted in full:

διηγῆται τε ἐξῆς ὁ συγγραφεὺς ὅτι δεῖπνον κατεσκεύασεν ὁ Κότυς ὡς γαμουμένης αὐτῷ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς καὶ θάλαμον κατασκευάσας ἀνέμενεν μεθύων τὴν θεόν. ἤδη δ' ἔκφρων γενόμενος ἔπεμπε τινα τῶν δορυφόρων ὀψόμενον εἰ παραγέγονεν ἡ θεὸς εἰς τὸν θάλαμον· ἀφικομένου δ' ἐκείνου καὶ εἰπόντος μηδένα εἶναι ἐν τῷ θαλάμῳ, τοξεύσας τοῦτον ἀπέκτεινεν καὶ ἄλλον δευτερον ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς, ἕως ὁ τρίτος συνεῖς παραγενομένην ἔφη πάλαι τὴν θεὸν αὐτὸν ἀναμένειν. ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς οὕτως ποτε καὶ ζηλοτυπήσας τὴν αὐτοῦ γυναῖκα ταῖς αὐτοῦ χερσὶν ἀνέτεμε τὴν ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰδοίων ἀρξάμενος.

The historiographer narrates subsequently that Cotys prepared a meal as if he was going to marry Athena. He prepared a bed-chamber and sat down to drink while he waited for the goddess. Since he had already gone out of his mind, he sent one of his bodyguards to see if the goddess had come into the chamber. When he had come back and reported that there was no one in the chamber, Cotys shot and killed him and sent a second guard in with the same purpose, until the third, having understood the situation, said that the goddess had been there for a long time and was waiting for him. This king was also once struck with jealousy of his own wife and cut the woman up with his own hands beginning from her private parts. (Theopomp. F 31 = Ath. 12.531e–532a)

The interesting thing here is the expression ‘already gone out of his mind’ (ἤδη δ' ἔκφρων γενόμενος). ἔκφρων is a word used of frenzied bacchants and inspired poets. It is only used in one other passage by Athenaeus (Timaeus F 149), so it is very tempting to believe that he took it over from Theopompus. The sense seems to be that Cotys has been struck by madness for his impiety and that this madness is driving him on to still more crimes, that is, killing off his bodyguards as they one by one come to tell him that the goddess is not in the bridal chamber. The end of the story in Athenaeus is abrupt; we are not told what Cotys did when he was finally told that Athena was waiting for him. From the skip to the information that he ‘also once’ (ποτε καί) killed his wife out of jealousy it is perhaps not too far-fetched to assume that Theopompus connected the two events and made the murder a result of the divinely sent madness. Thus, we find in Theopompus a narrative world where the gods can punish impiety by madness, something which we have seen clearly in Herodotus and which was implied in Thucydides’ description of the Athenians rushing towards the Sicilian Expedition.

A slightly more ambiguous fragment is F 232 (= Ath. 12.536c–d), where Archidamus, son of Agesilaus, is said to have turned from the traditional Spartan values to live ‘in a non-Spartan and soft way’ (ξενικῶς καὶ μαλακῶς)

and, when he dies a mercenary in a foreign land, is not even deemed worthy of a proper funeral (οὐδὲ ταφῆς κατηξιώθη). On the one hand, no superhuman force is mentioned in the fragment. On the other, the enemies' refusal to give back Archidamus' body is hardly provoked by his deviation from Spartan moderation. If a connection is supposed to be seen between the two things – and Athenaeus clearly intends this, which makes it likely, but not inevitable, that his source also did – one must assume that some superhuman power had engineered Archidamus' dire fate as punishment for his lack of moderation. This is supported by F 312, where the same story is told by Pausanias, who adds that Archidamus was unburied 'with Apollo standing in the way' (ἐμποδῶν τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος). Regardless of whether Pausanias took this interpretation from Theopompus or inferred it, it must surely be the one Theopompus intended.⁵⁶

One intriguing fragment implies the existence of a divine power which not only punishes the wicked, but also if not rewards, then at least notices, piety. This is F 344 (Porph. *Abst.* II.16),⁵⁷ which tells the story of a wealthy man who has always offered splendid sacrifices. He travels to Delphi to ask who honours the gods best, in the hope that he himself will be named. To his disappointment, he is told the name of another man. When he goes to find him, he sees that the other is a poor man who never sacrifices lavishly, but is always careful to give the gods the best of what he has (there are clear parallels to Herodotus' narrative of Croesus and Solon). Such a story serves as a comment on one of Theopompus' favourite moral subjects, namely extravagant spending, but it also conveys the message that the world is ruled by the gods, and that they appreciate – and so perhaps reward – piety. A final indication that Theopompus promoted traditional piety is his fantasy of two cities, Wartown and Saintsburg (Μάχιμος and Εὐσεβεῖα: F 75a–e; the translations are offered by Shrimpton). This seems to be Theopompus' addition to an older myth and tells the story of a supremely warlike people who spend their lives in misery and a supremely peaceful and pious people who live completely happy lives.⁵⁸

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Theopompus is frequently referenced by various covertexts as evidence for oracles and divine portents:⁵⁹ such stories belong in a narrative world ruled by divine forces, not in one governed only by human causation. Theopompus, then, may well have been a pessimist with regard to human nature, but it seems that he was not as

⁵⁶ F 312 = Paus. 3.10.3.

⁵⁷ In a clear example of covertext authors appropriating an earlier text for their own purposes, Porphyry uses the anecdote to argue against sacrificing and eating meat.

⁵⁸ For good discussions of this digression with references to earlier literature see Shrimpton (1991: 143–4), Pownall (2004: 154–5) and Morison (n.d.: *ad* F 75c).

⁵⁹ F 316, F 331, F 336, F 343, F 392.

much of a pessimist as Thucydides:⁶⁰ he apparently did believe in a super-human force which, at least sometimes, punishes evil and rewards virtue.

It has been argued that Theopompus portrayed a world where another kind of universal justice is at work, by means of which good rulers thrive and harsh rulers fail. This may well have been the case, but the arguments are not compelling. One rests on a statement in F 256 which connects Philip's 'behaviour' or 'habits' (ἐπιτηδεύμασιν) with his ability to extend his rule across Europe; but the verb tenses of the sentence show that it must come from a speech delivered by a character in the *Philippica*.⁶¹ The second argument on which rests the theory that Theopompus demonstrated a causal relationship between the way a ruler treats his subjects and his success is based on F 185–8 and F 283a and b, which criticise a series of Syracusan tyrants for their decadent living, especially their drinking habits.⁶² As these fragments most probably come from Theopompus' Sicilian digression (see F 184 = Diod. Sic. 16.71.3), it has been argued that Theopompus showed the decline and fall of the Syracusan tyrants to have been caused by their decadent lifestyle.⁶³ However, it is impossible to see from the brief fragments whether Theopompus made such a causal connection, and there is no mention in any of the fragments of the tyrants' behaviour towards their subjects.

One further fragment may point to a moralising connection between the way a ruler or hegemonic power treats his or its subjects and his or its success. This is Theopompus F 103, the table of contents for book 12 of the *Philippica*, which is preserved by Photius. Number 7 of Photius' entries is:

καὶ ὡς Ἀθηναίων ἡ πόλις ταῖς πρὸς βασιλέα συνθήκαις ἐπειρᾶτο ἐμμένειν, Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ὑπέρογκα φρονοῦντες παρέβαινον τὰς συνθήκας

And that the city of the Athenians tried to keep to their treaty with the king, but the Lacedaemonians transgressed the treaty in their excessive arrogance. (Theopomp. F 103 = Phot. *Bibl.* 120a)

If the phrase 'in their excessive arrogance' (ὑπέρογκα φρονοῦντες) was in Theopompus' text, he must have criticised the Spartans for being arrogant

⁶⁰ *Contra Pédech* (1989: 249–51).

⁶¹ Aelius Theon (*Progymnasmata* 2.110.27–32) says that the sentence comes from an encomium of Philip by Theopompus, and many scholars have speculated about the date and purpose of this work (e.g. Jacoby 1930: 354, Laqueur 1934: 2206, Connor 1967, Shrimpton 1991). However, as Flower (1994: 38–9, 102) has argued, the fact that the conditional sentence is a mixture of present unreal and future potential means that it could only have been spoken while Philip was still alive, which would be an extremely unusual situation for an encomium. It is therefore more likely to come from a speech of the *Philippica* which was later extracted as an encomium of Philip.

⁶² F 283a = Ath. 10.453d, F 283b = Ael. *VH* 6.12).

⁶³ Westlake (1954: 295–7), Pownall (2004: 164–6).

in the time after the King's Peace, a point of view which was shared by Xenophon, as we have seen. Taking it a step further, we can hypothesise that Theopompus, like Xenophon, interpreted the defeat at Leuctra as the punishment for Sparta's arrogance and crimes against their allies. However, we cannot know whether the phrase was in Theopompus at all, or whether it merely expresses Photius' interpretation of Theopompus' text, perhaps influenced by the patriarch's reading of Xenophon. All we can say for certain is that Photius found the phrase 'in their excessive arrogance' apt to describe the Spartan behaviour after the King's Peace as depicted by Theopompus. In short, the evidence is insufficient to support an argument that good rulers were rewarded with success and bad rulers were punished with failure in Theopompus' historical works.

Finally, we turn to Theopompus' moralising techniques. The fact that his words are so often quoted verbatim makes this a more rewarding exercise than for many of his equally fragmentary peers. From these quotations, Theopompus seems to have used the full toolbox of moralising techniques: from evaluative phrasing (e.g. F 13, F 81 and F 97) via speeches (e.g. F 166–7, F 256, F 380) to moralising vignettes (e.g. F 21 and F 280), moral causation (Philip conquering Greece because of its degeneration) and moralising digressions (e.g. F 225a and b). Perhaps he even cast his ethnography in a moralising light (e.g. F 39, F 139, F 162, F 233) and told a moralising utopian myth of his own invention (F 75). What seems to have been unique to Theopompus is both his amount of moralising and its rhetorical shape: in all of his different types of moralising he seems to have made frequent use of sarcasm, puns, antitheses and similes, to a much greater extent than any of the other historiographers examined in this study, perhaps apart from Posidonius.⁶⁴

CONCLUSION: FROM MACRO AND MINIMALIST MORALISING TO EXPLICIT *PARADEIGMATA*

Moral didacticism does seem to come into its own in the fourth century BC, but the innovator was not Ephorus; it was Theopompus. Both the Oxyrhynchus Historian and Ephorus seem to have engaged in the kind of moralising already displayed by their predecessors. The Oxyrhynchus Historian seems to have played safe and stuck close to the minimalist moralising of Thucydides and stretches of Xenophon's *Hellenica*. Ephorus

⁶⁴ Flower (1994: 184–7) argues convincingly that Theopompus only used the highly rhetorical style seen in the preserved quotations in passages of special passion and that his style was otherwise more like Isocrates', which is indeed what Dionysius of Halicarnassus says (*Pomp.* 6.9–10 = T 20a). It seems likely that most or all of these passionate passages were moralising.

innovated by writing a much longer work than any of his predecessors and so, of necessity, introduced a new principle of organisation, *kata genos*, and prefaced each book with a proem. Whether or not these proems were moral-didactic we cannot now know. What we can see from his fragments and discern from Diodorus' use of his work suggests that his style of moralising was close to that of Xenophon, even if Ephorus had more frequent moralising digressions and expressed narratorial judgement more often. Theopompus, on the other hand, seems to have created a work of history that was radically new: guided by the principle of moral condemnation of his own generation against the backdrop of a nobler past, it emplotted contemporary history as a satire, combining entertainment with moral outrage and plenty of examples of how not to behave. No later historiographer had the temperament to imitate this approach exactly (although Posidonius may have gone some way towards it), but it did pave the way for centuries of more explicit moralising where the narrator's overt moral judgements were considered necessary to guide the reader.

Conclusion

This study has explored moral didacticism in the best-preserved works of history from the beginnings of the genre in the fifth century BC to the time when it began to merge with the Roman tradition in the first century BC. It has shown, I hope, that moral didacticism was an integral and indispensable part of the historiography of these four formative centuries. In the works of Polybius and Diodorus moralising is ubiquitous, and the reader is repeatedly and explicitly told to take it to heart in his own life. We misread these authors if we do not take that seriously. This seems also to have been the case in most of the Hellenistic works of history which now exist only in very fragmented states. In Herodotus and Thucydides, the moralising is a lot more subtle, and the moral lessons are more intellectual and thought-directing, but both the lessons and the didactic intention are certainly there. The historiographers of the fourth century, the Oxyrhynchus Historian, Xenophon, Ephorus and Theopompus, seem to constitute a bridge between the subtle Classical moralising and the explicit Hellenistic moralising, with Theopompus being the innovator who made explicit moralising a frequent and striking feature of his work.

I shall not here reiterate all the conclusions drawn in individual chapters, but simply wish to dwell for a moment on what strikes me as the most surprising finding of this study: these differences between early Classical, late Classical and Hellenistic historiographical moralising exist on the formal plane; they are differences in technique and intensity of moralising, as we have explored in detail in the preceding chapters. In terms of moral lessons, by contrast, the picture is remarkably constant. The message that human success is unstable and that we should remain moderate in times of good fortune runs like a red thread from Herodotus through Thucydides and Xenophon to Polybius and Diodorus via the now fragmentary works of history. It has variations between authors – for some the fall of the arrogant is linked with divine punishment, for others it is a purely human

mechanism – but the central action-directing message of the importance of moderation, especially in times of good fortune, remains unchanged. Similarly, in all of the historiographers examined apart from Thucydides (more about him below), being good is likely to stand you in better stead than being immoral. The virtues and vices are also remarkably consistent. Virtues are moderation, kindness towards those in one's power, piety, lack of greed, and courage. Vices are greed for power or money, impiety, cruelty and an immoderate lifestyle. There are variations, of course: piety and cruelty play a smaller part in Polybius than in any of the other well-preserved historiographers, and kindness towards those in your power is more important in Diodorus than in any of the others. In Xenophon, more than in any of the other historiographers, the complications of friendship are a burning issue.

Herodotus stands slightly apart from the genre he initiated by offering less clear-cut messages than any of his successors. His picture of how the world works offers patterns and chains of causation, but they are always problematised and produce the overall impression that the ways of the world are unpredictable. Consequently, his lessons about how to act in the world are more a form of thought-directing guidelines than any prescriptive advice. Nonetheless, his main moral guidance for the reader corresponds to the moral messages offered by those who come after him in advocating humility, mildness towards those in one's power and an avoidance of greed and cruelty. Thucydides is the odd one out for another reason: firstly, he has a slightly different palette of virtues and vices from the others. The vices are greed for power, strong emotion, indecisiveness and self-seeking, surely vices in the other historiographers as well, but not major ones (apart from anger, which is a major vice in Xenophon). Cruelty/brutality is the only major vice in Thucydides which is also a major vice in most of the other historiographers. Virtues in Thucydides' *History* are few and far between, but those that can be discerned correspond more closely to those propounded by other historiographers – moderation, avoidance of violence, foresight, loyalty, honesty, abiding by oaths, lack of greed for money and power, justice, and willingness to put city interests before self-interest. None of these virtues, however, relate to the private individual: in contrast with the historiographers who came before and after him (perhaps with the exception of the Oxyrhynchus Historian), Thucydides was uninterested in the dining habits and private conversations of the men who influenced history. What sets him apart the most, however, is the fact that being moral does not give a character a better chance of success or even survival in his narrative world than being immoral. In this, Thucydides differs dramatically from the other authors of his genre.

Even with these divergences in the two originators of the genre,

Herodotus and Thucydides, the similarity of the moral lessons offered over the course of these 400 years is remarkable. Not only is it mostly the same virtues that are held up for emulation and the same vices that are criticised, but many moralising *topoi* are common across time. The *topos* of the victorious commander who either mistreats his prisoners/the defeated or passes the test of success and refrains from abuse is seen in Herodotus, Xenophon, Polybius and Diodorus, as well as very possibly Timaeus, Duris, Phylarchus and Hieronymus.¹ The *topos* of the wicked suffering a punishment that somehow echoes their crime is seen in Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Diodorus, Phylarchus and very possibly Timaeus and Theopompus. It is easy to forget how extraordinary this agreement about morality is: if we were to compare the work of a historian writing today with that of, say, Voltaire writing three hundred years ago, we would be unlikely to find such constancy of values, not to mention such a uniform presentation of them. The fact that Herodotus, writing in a Greece populated with city-states still flush with their victory over Persia, and Diodorus, writing in a Rome ravaged by civil war, largely agree on the main lesson to be learned from history (do not become arrogant in your good fortune) testifies to the tradition-bound nature of Greek popular morality. It supports the argument that the ancient Greeks thought of the present and the past as a timeless continuum in which human psychology and motivation – and, we should add, human virtues and vices – as well as the social and cultural parameters within which they functioned, remained more or less constant.² However, it also shows the power of *topoi* and *imitatio* in making a literary work recognisable as historiography.

An unavoidable question is how the realisation that all the works of Greek historiography from the fifth to the first century BC engage in moral didacticism should influence our use of these works as historical sources. Can we still trust them? My answer would be that the jumble of random events that is the past is always turned into historiography (and, indeed, history) by a process of narrativisation and emplotment. White has argued, as we saw in the Introduction, that this process is always driven by a desire to moralise (a ‘moralising impulse’), and that is certainly the case of the historiographers we have examined.³ They looked at the past through a moralistic lens, and it influenced their selection and organisation of events as well as their emplotment of (some of) those events – as a series of moral *paradeigmata* or a recurring pattern – and, especially in the cases of Polybius, Diodorus, Theopompus and probably also some of the other

1 See Hau (2008) for a diachronic exploration of this *topos*.

2 Koselleck (2004), Marincola (2009), Grethlein (2011).

3 White (1980).

now fragmentary Hellenistic historiographers, the tone of their narrative. In this, historiography with a moralising agenda is no different from history with a Marxist, feminist, international relations or economic agenda: it just uses a different lens.

But is moral didacticism always just a lens – or does it sometimes drive the historiographer to invent details, or even events? The problem with asking this question about ancient historiography is that in many cases we simply cannot tell. It is perfectly possible that Scipio cried and quoted Homer while watching Carthage burn – he was keen on Greek literature and had had Polybius as mentor for twenty years, so knew what was expected of him; moreover, he knew that Polybius was going to record the scene in his *Histories*. However, it is also possible that Scipio was too exhausted and preoccupied to think of such self-staging at that moment and that he watched the flames in stone-faced silence. Then, perhaps, later over dinner and wine, he expressed his sentiment about the changeability of fortune to Polybius, prompted or not, and quoted Homer. Or Scipio expressed the sentiment, and Polybius added the Homer quotation when writing up the episode. There is no way now to be able to tell which of these scenarios (if any) really took place. But if one of the latter two did, then Polybius engaged in a minor type of invention, which we might call poetic licence – or moralising licence. By doing it, he made the scene memorable and famous and also crafted a powerful moral *exemplum*. Instead of the factual truth he has then given us a more symbolic truth that distils Scipio's character and the moral lessons inherent in the moment into something more pertinent.

A more extreme example can be taken from Thucydides. Apart from Thucydides' well-known selectivity in choice of events to record, and apart from his doubtless partly invented speeches, the Melian Dialogue stands out as a flagrant invention. The Athenians and Melians held discussions in the council chamber behind closed doors. In those days no one took minutes. Later, perhaps, at most, Thucydides was able to meet with one or more of the delegates on one or both sides and get a brief of what had been said. But when he sat down to write it up, he did not give his reader such a vague impression of a diplomatic negotiation, but instead composed a full-scale dramatic dialogue like something out of a contemporary tragedy for the stage. Dionysius of Halicarnassus already recognised its fictitiousness. Thucydides' purpose with this fiction, I have argued, was to present to his reader two different worldviews and sets of rules for behaviour which he saw repeatedly clashing in the world around him. The Dialogue presents them in a riveting way, making the reader emotionally as well as intellectually involved in a way a report of a council meeting could never do. It is brilliant literature, but also brilliant historiography, despite employing

poetic and moralising licence. It may not represent the truth of what was actually said that day, but it presents the more profound truth of the assumptions and worldviews on which those utterances and the actions that followed were based. This is Moral History in the hands of a master: it does not offer prescriptions for behaviour, it does not even offer a guideline for which behaviour is right and which wrong; it simply offers an exploration of a complex moral issue. Herodotus does something similar in his Constitutional Debate and Xenophon in his vignette of Agesilaus and Pharnabazus reclining in the grass. Polybius may well have done it with scenes involving one or both Scipios, and Diodorus with the speeches at Syracuse about the fate of the Athenian prisoners. In this the ancient Greek historiographers differ from most modern history writing, regardless of its agenda or ideology: although many historians working today are happy enough to hypothesise about what their long-dead subjects thought and felt, few are willing to make up scenes like these.⁴

Nonetheless, Moral History is still history. If we compare ancient Greek historiography with other ancient genres that have a partly or wholly moral-didactic purpose (as we have done briefly in the Introduction and in Chapter 6), we notice a crucial difference: moral historiography, as opposed to lyric poetry, tragedy, encomium and philosophical narrative, is committed to telling if not *the* truth about the past, then *a* truth about the past, *at the same time as* presenting this past in a way that will be morally useful to the reader. Most of the time these twin purposes can coexist peacefully, but sometimes they come into conflict. At those times the resolution can go either way: the historiographer can decide to go with factual truth to the detriment of moral didacticism, like Xenophon in the narrative of Agesilaus' Sardis campaign in the *Hellenica*, or he can decide to teach a moral lesson to the detriment of factual truth, like Thucydides in the Melian Dialogue. This, I would argue, does not make Moral History poor historiography. Rather, it displays a tension that exists in all (good) history writing, modern as well as ancient, between telling a particular story and making general points about history and the world.⁵ When the historian decides to aim for the general level, he has the opportunity to point at more universal truths than he could if he stuck to the simple facts, and so to make his history more relevant, more important, or true on a higher plane. This is harder to do for a present-day historiographer, working within the established limits of his discipline, than it was for the ancient trailblazers who invented it, but if we were to try to learn from it, we might be able to

⁴ Although there is a small movement within the present discipline of history which experiments with the use of creative writing techniques. See some of the papers in five special issues of *Rethinking History* (2010–14).

⁵ As observed by Moles (1993).

write works of history that would last through the ages rather than being read only by our academic peers.

In a postmodern world where objectivity is recognised as impossible and the past – or the present – can never be fully known, teaching readers ethical behaviour is surely a worthier goal for historiography than most of the possible alternatives.

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The text and the fragment numbering of **Polybius** and **Diodorus** referred to throughout are those of the Loeb edition because that is assumed to be the edition most readily available to most of the readers of this study. When deemed necessary, the Polybius text has been supplemented with the Teubner edition, the Diodorus text with the Belles Lettres edition, and this has been recognised in the notes.

For **Herodotus**, **Thucydides** and **Xenophon** I refer to the OCT edition.

For the **fragmentary histories** I refer mainly to *FGrH*. Information about supplementary texts of individual fragmentary works is in the relevant chapters.

Journal abbreviations follow the format of *l'Année Philologique*. Abbreviations for classical authors and works follow the format of S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, rev. 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). *Brill's Online Jacoby* is available at referenceworks.brillonline.com.

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