

that is most likely intended to mirror the audience's perception of its own knowledge of its past.

The approach sketched above has implications for the vexed question of the problematic status of the *Histories* between history and literature. Contemporary professional historians are often unwilling to see historiography as a genre. Writing in a genre means saying certain things because the norms of the genre require so, whereas pre-postmodern historians like to think that by and large the only laws that govern their writing are the old ones of Cicero, 'not to say anything untrue and not to leave out anything true' (*de orat.* 2.62). The notion of an implied author in a modern work of history is bound to create uneasiness, yet its appropriateness cannot be seriously denied. The same ambiguous relationship between genre and method applies to ancient historians. The texts of the ancient historians are not straightforward reflections of extra-textual 'true facts', but complex cultural artefacts, whose correct interpretation requires an understanding of their social logic.⁴⁴

Understanding meta-*historiē* is not the same as adjudicating the question of Herodotus' reliability. The claim that meta-*historiē* is more a literary strategy than a genuine depiction of the historian at work should not be taken to imply that Herodotus, the real author of the *Histories*, was not interested in a truthful reconstruction of the past. The amount of external confirmation that is available for countless pieces of information contained in the *Histories* should of itself show that indeed he was. However, fifth-century Greek culture had its own ideas on the nature and proper textual form of truth. Herodotean meta-*historiē* is shaped by such ideas, while at the same time attempting itself to shape them.

FURTHER READING

For detailed discussions of Herodotus' historical methods see especially Darbo-Peschanski (1987) and Lateiner (1989). Lloyd's commentary on Book 2 is also helpful. Jacoby's works (1913, 1949) are still worth reading, not only for their influence on later scholarship. Murray (2001a) remains the best study of Herodotus in the light of research on oral tradition; see also his retrospective comments, Murray (2001b). For an illuminating case-study see Forsdyke (1999). Research on oral tradition and the diffusion of knowledge about the past in societies ancient and modern have gone a long way after Vansina; see especially Fentress and Wickham (1992) and Assmann (1992), and the essays collected in von Ungern-Sternberg and Reinau (1988). On the circulation of information in Greek society see Lewis (1996). Herodotus' use of written sources is a matter for controversy, because of his own silence

on this point and general lack of parallel evidence. Parallels in Book 2 with fragments of Hecataeus have long since convinced most scholars that he did indeed use written sources of different kinds, but the extent of such usage is hard to assess. Fowler (2001) gives a sense of the amount of evidence that would have been available to Herodotus. Recent works by Giangiulio (2001 and forthcoming) show by way of sophisticated case-studies how we can imagine Herodotus weaving together a plurality of written and oral sources, generally undisclosed. Calame (1986) offers a rigorous framework to investigate Herodotus' presence in his text. Finding the bugs in the extremely subtle arguments of Fehling (1989) is a very instructive exercise.

NOTES

1. Throughout this chapter, 'the narrator' or 'the Herodotean narrator' refers to the textual *persona* of the author of the *Histories*. On Herodotus' authorial *persona* see especially Dewald (1987), (2002) with further references in n. 13.
2. Fowler (1996) 76; Marincola (1997) 10.
3. The disposition to read Herodotus for what he says, instead of interpreting his work in the light of categories derived from a scrutiny of ancient historiography as a genre, has often marked the dividing line between historians and philologists – a dividing line across which communication has not always been easy. As is always the case, lack of communication has damaged both sides.
4. Marincola (1997) 8.
5. On the meaning of this word see Fowler's contribution to this volume.
6. It is noteworthy that most translations cancel this oddity with renderings such as 'up to this point I have spoken based on, etc'. See Schepens (1975) 260–1.
7. The meaning of this announcement is explained by Bakker (2002) 20–8. See the discussion of 2.99.1 by Lloyd (1975–88) 1.81–2.
8. On *opsis* and its limits see Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 84–90; on its use to confirm odd pieces of information, Dewald (2002) 278–9.
9. The term 'iconatroph' was coined by Jan Vansina; see Vansina (1985) 10. See pp. 80–82 for the relationship of Herodotean method and oral tradition.
10. Herodotean *gnōmē* is a key topic of Darbo-Peschanski (1987). The fact that for Herodotus *gnōmē* carries more weight than *akoē* is highlighted in Luraghi (2001b) 142–3. The superiority of the historian's reasoning over tradition comes strikingly to the fore in the first line of Hecataeus' *Genealogies*, *FGH Hist* 1 F 1a: 'Hecataeus the Milesian says thus: I write what follows according to what I think is the truth, for the stories of the Greeks are many and ridiculous, in my opinion.' On Hecataeus' rationalism see Corcella (1984) 48–54 and Bertelli (2001).
11. On analogy in Herodotus see Corcella (1984) and Thomas (2000) 200–11, who shows connections between Herodotus' reasoning and contemporary trends in philosophy and medicine.
12. The other passage is 2.123.1, on which see below. Compare also 3.9.2: after giving what seems to him the most credible version of how Cambyses was able to cross the Arabian desert with his army, Herodotus adds a second version, that