

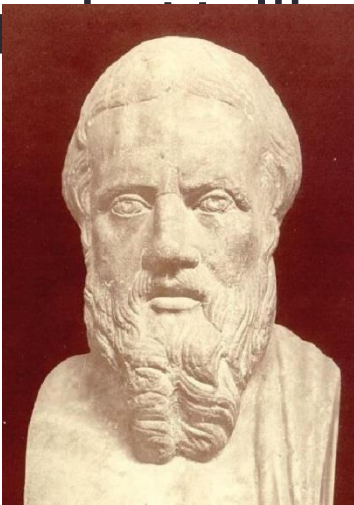
CLAH4007: DEFENDERS, CONQUERORS, VANQUISHED

The Persian Wars

HERODOTUS

Herodotus

- C485-424 BCE.
- Wrote after the Persian Wars.
- 1st historian = Father of History.
- Born in Halicarnassos.



- This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man **not be forgotten in time**, and that great and marvelous deeds, **some displayed by the Greeks, some by the non-Greeks**, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other. Herodotos 1.1

Long view of history

- Herodotos spends most of the books of the *Histories* covering not the Persian Wars per se but the events preceding them.
- The Ionian Revolt is not reached until Book 5 (of 9).
- In this way, the Persians say (and not as the Greeks), was how Io came to Egypt, and this, according to them, was the first wrong that was done. Next, according to their story, some Greeks (they cannot say who) landed at Tyre in Phoenicia and carried off the king's daughter Europa. These Greeks must, I suppose, have been Cretans. So far, then, the account between them was balanced. But after this (they say), it was the Greeks who were guilty of the second wrong. Herodotos 1.2

Sources and Witnesses

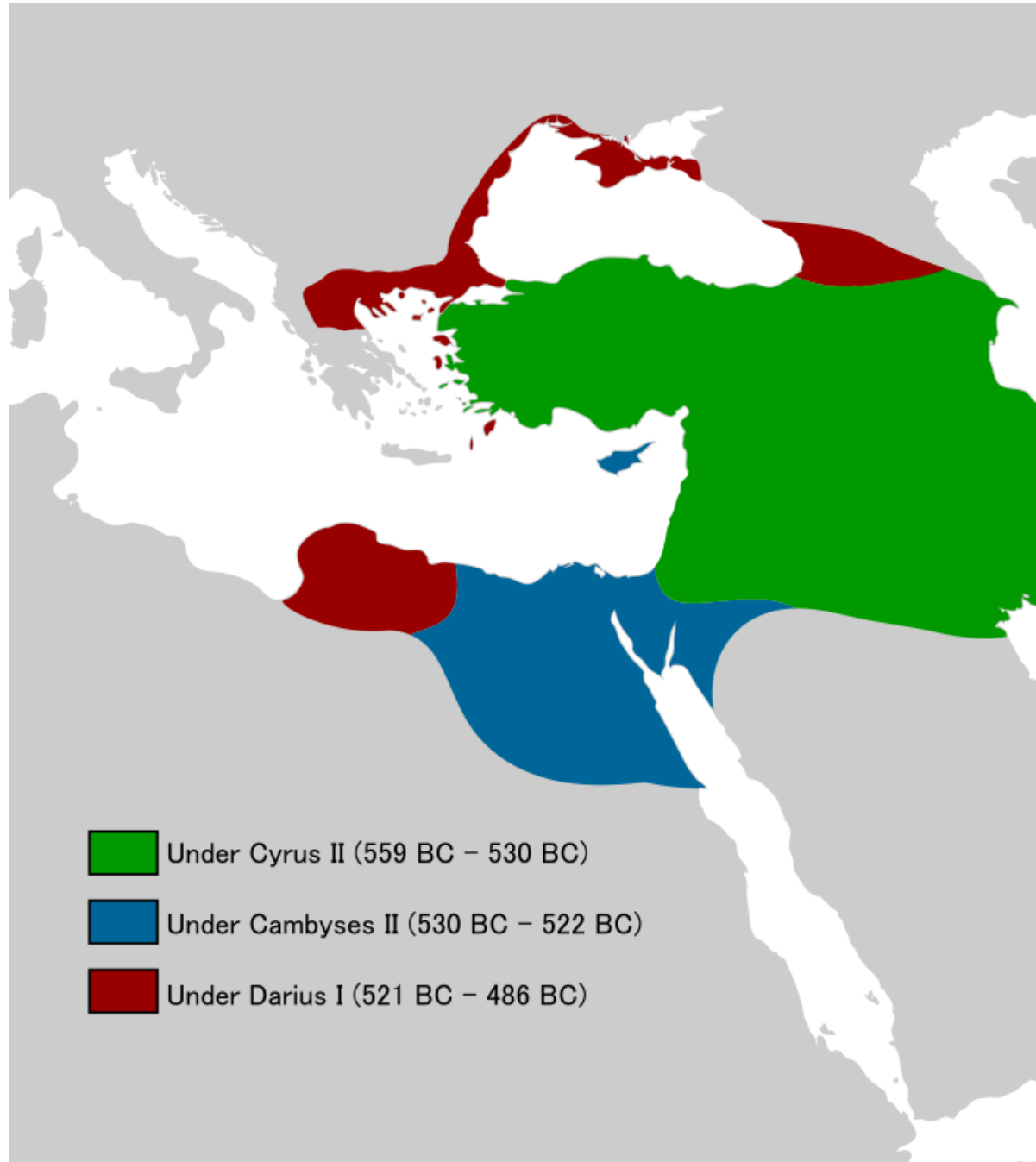
- Herodotos believes in presenting all views, rather than only his own.
- It is up to the reader to decide the truth, rather than up to the historian.
- **As for myself, although it is my business to set down that which is told me, to believe it is none at all of my business.** This I ask the reader to hold true for the whole of my history, for there is another tale current, according to which it would seem that it was the Argives who invited the Persian into Hellas, because the war with the Lacedaemonians was going badly, and they would prefer anything to their present distresses.
Herodotos 7.152

Gods, heroes and credibility

- Often Herodotos will include in his *Histories* tales that we would consider fantastic or supernatural.
- Now when the barbarians drew near and could see the temple, the prophet, whose name was Aceratus, **saw certain sacred arms, which no man might touch without sacrilege, brought out of the chamber within and laid before the shrine.** [2] So he went to tell the Delphians of this miracle, but when the barbarians came with all speed near to the temple of Athena Pronaea, they were visited by miracles yet greater than the aforesaid. Marvellous indeed it is, that weapons of war should of their own motion appear lying outside in front of the shrine, but the visitation which followed was more wondrous than anything else ever seen. [3] **When the barbarians were near to the temple of Athena Pronaea, they were struck by thunderbolts from the sky, and two peaks broken off from Parnassus came rushing among them with a mighty noise and overwhelmed many of them.** In addition to this a shout and a cry of triumph were heard from the temple of Athena. Herodotos 8.37

DARIUS' INVASION OF SCYTHIA AND THE IONIAN REVOLT

- The expansion of the Persian Empire
- Exponential from mid-6th cent onwards
- Power centre focused on the king
- Empire of satrapies



The Role of the Ionian Greeks

- Then the Ionians held a council. **Miltiades the Athenian**, general and sovereign of the Chersonesites of the Hellespont, **advised that they do as the Scythians said and set Ionia free.** [2] But Histiaeus of Miletus advised the opposite. He said, **“It is owing to Darius that each of us is sovereign of his city;** if Darius' power is overthrown, we shall no longer be able to rule, I in Miletus or any of you elsewhere; for all the cities will choose democracy rather than despotism.” [3] **When Histiaeus explained this, all of them at once inclined to his view,** although they had first sided with Miltiades. Hdt. 4.137

Expansionism vs. Revenge

- The kings of the aforesaid nations having gathered, then, the Scythian messengers came and laid everything before them, explaining how the Persian, now that the whole of the other continent was subject to him, had crossed over to their continent by a bridge thrown across the neck of the Bosphorus, and how having crossed it and subjugated the Thracians he was now bridging the Ister, so as to make that whole region subject to him like the others. [2] “By no means stand aside and let us be destroyed,” they said; “rather, let us unite and oppose this invader. If you will not, then we shall either be driven out of our country or stay and make terms. [3] For what is to become of us if you will not help us? And afterward it will not be easy for you, either; for the Persian has come to attack you no less than us, and when he has subjugated us he will not be content to leave you alone...(cont., Hdt. 4.118)

Expansionism vs Revenge

- ...[4] We will give you a convincing proof of what we say: if indeed the Persian were marching against us alone, wanting vengeance for our former enslavement of his country, he ought to leave others alone and make straight for us, and would show everyone that Scythia and no other country was his goal. [5] But as it is, from the day he crossed over to this continent, he has been taming all that come in his way, and he holds in subjection not only the rest of Thrace, but also our neighbours the Getae.” Hdt. 4.118

Expansionism vs. Revenge II

- When a great multitude of ships and a great army were assembled, the Persians crossed the Hellespont on shipboard and marched through Europe, with Eretria and Athens as their goal. **This was the stated end of their expedition, but they intended to subdue as many of the Greek cities as they could.** Hdt 6.43

WHY ERETREIA?

Why did Eretria support the Ionian Revolt?

Eretrian Settlements Abroad



Eretreian Wealth in the archaic period



Temple of Apollo Daphnephoros.
First built 8th Century BCE
Ionic Peripteral Temple early 6th
New Peripteral Temple late 6th

Eretreian Silver coinage
Bull and octopus



The Lelantine War (supposedly 8th century)

- The nearest approach to a coalition took place in the old war between Chalcis and Eretria; this was a quarrel in which the rest of the Hellenic name did to some extent take sides.
Thuc. 1.15
- The Athenians came with their twenty ships as well as five triremes of the Eretrians who came to the war to please not the Athenians but the Milesians themselves, thereby repaying their debt (for the Milesians had once been the allies of the Eretrians in the war against Chalcis, when the Samians came to aid the Chalcidians against the Eretrians and Milesians).

ATHENIAN ELITES, DEMOCRACY AND MARATHON

Basics of Athenian History to 490

- Aristocratic Government in the early archaic
- 7th century: Civil discord → Laws of Draco (aristocratic)
- Early 6th century: More civil discord → Laws of Solon (oligarchic, with some democratic elements)
- Most of the 6th century: Peisistratid Tyranny (several times)
- C. 511: Hippias (the last Peisistratid) expelled – Finds refuge in the Persian Court!
- C. 508: Another civil discord → Cleisthenes reforms (more democratic)

Miltiades at the Chersonnese



- The **sons of Pisistratus** sent **Miltiades**, son of **Cimon** and brother of the dead Stesagoras, in a trireme to the Chersonese to take control of the country; they had already treated him well at Athens, feigning that they had not been accessory to the death of Cimon his father, which I will relate in another place. [2] Reaching the Chersonese, Miltiades kept himself within his house, professing thus to honor the memory of his brother Stesagoras. When the people of the Chersonese learned this, their ruling men gathered together from all the cities on every side, and came together in a group to show fellow-feeling with his mourning; but he put them in bonds. **So Miltiades made himself master of the Chersonese; there he maintained a guard of five hundred men, and married Hegesipyle the daughter of Olorus, king of Thrace.** Hdt. 6.39

Miltiades and the Persians

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Miltiades and Marathon

- It was this Miltiades who was now the Athenian general, after coming from the Chersonese and escaping a two-fold death. The Phoenicians pursued him as far as Imbros, considering it of great importance to catch him and bring him to the king. [2] He escaped from them, but when he reached his own country and thought he was safe, then his enemies met him. They brought him to court and prosecuted him for tyranny in the Chersonese, but he was acquitted and appointed Athenian general, chosen by the people. Hdt. 6.104

Hippias and the Persians

- After subduing Eretria, the Persians waited a few days and **then sailed away to the land of Attica**, pressing ahead in expectation of doing to the Athenians exactly what they had done to the Eretrians. Marathon was the place in Attica **most suitable for riding horses** and closest to Eretria, so **Hippias son of Pisistratus led them there**. Hdt. 6.102

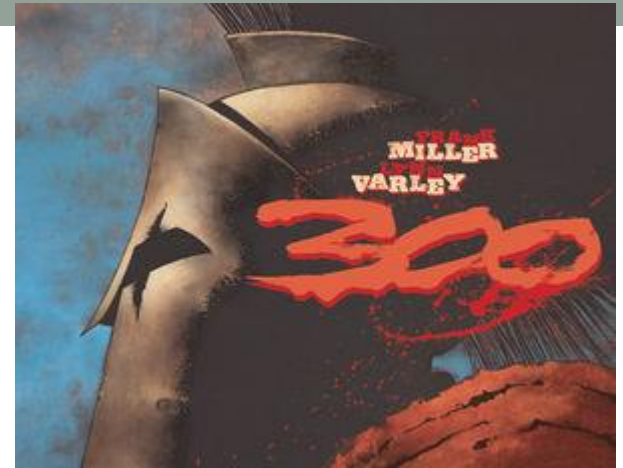
Battle of Marathon (490BCE)

- Persian army crosses the Hellespont.
- Athenian and Plateian force meet them at Marathon (Hdt. 6.111).
- Victory over Persian forces on their way to attack Athens.
- Turns back first Persian expedition in mainland Greece.

IMAGINING THERMOPYLAE



300



- Published 1998-1999
- By Frank Miller
- Won 3 [Eisner Awards](#) in 1999

300



Film adaptation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdNn5TZu6R8>

300. Zack Snyder. 2006. USA: Warner Bros..

others of Miller's works





J.L. David, Leonidas at Thermopylae, 1814

ISSUES OF LEADERSHIP AND UNITY

The combined Greek fleet at Artemision

- The Greeks appointed to serve in the fleet were these: the **Athenians furnished a hundred and twenty-seven ships**; the Plataeans manned these ships with the Athenians, not that they had any knowledge of seamanship, but because of mere valor and zeal. The Corinthians furnished **forty** ships and the Megarians **twenty**; [2] the Chalcidians manned **twenty**, the Athenians furnishing the ships; the Aeginetans **eighteen**, the Sicyonians **twelve**, the Lacedaemonians **ten**, the Epidaurians **eight**, the Eretrians **seven**, the Troezenians **five**, the Styrians **two**, and the Ceans **two**, and two fifty-oared barks; the Opuntian Locrians brought seven fifty-oared barks to their aid. Hdt. 8.1

Athenian ambition

- In the first days, before the sending to Sicily for alliance, there **had been talk of entrusting the command at sea to the Athenians**. However, when **the allies resisted, the Athenians waived their claim**, considering the safety of Hellas of prime importance and seeing that if they quarrelled over the leadership, Hellas must perish. In this they judged rightly, for civil strife is as much worse than united war as war is worse than peace. [2] Knowing that, they gave ground and waived their claim, **but only so long as they had great need of the others**. This is clear, **for when they had driven the Persian back and the battle was no longer for their territory but for his, they made a pretext of Pausanias' highhandedness and took the command away from the Lacedaemonians**. All that, however, took place later. Hdt. 8.3

Each on his own?

- When Themistocles returned to his ship, Mnesiphilus, an Athenian, asked him what had been decided. Learning from him that **they had resolved to sail to the Isthmus** and fight for the Peloponnese, he said, [2] “If they depart from Salamis, **you will no longer be fighting for one country. Each will make his way to his own city**, and neither Eurybiades nor any other man will be able to keep them from disbanding the army. **Hellas will be destroyed by bad planning.** If there is any way at all that you could persuade Eurybiades to change his decision and remain here, go try to undo this resolution.” Hdt. 8.57

Same as before?

- **The Spartans sent the men with Leonidas on ahead so that the rest of the allies would see them and march, instead of medizing like the others if they learned that the Spartans were delaying.** At present the Carneia was in their way, but once they had completed the festival, they intended to leave a garrison at Sparta and march out in full force with all speed. [2] The rest of the allies planned to do likewise, for the Olympiad coincided with these events. They accordingly sent their advance guard, not expecting the war at Thermopylae to be decided so quickly. Hdt. 7.206

A man with no polis?

- As Themistocles said this, Adeimantus the Corinthian attacked him again, **advising that a man without a city should keep quiet and that Eurybiades should not ask the vote of a man without a city.** He advised Themistocles to contribute his opinion when he provided a city—attacking him in this way because Athens was captured and occupied. [2] This time Themistocles said many things against him and the Corinthians, **declaring that so long as they had two hundred manned ships, the Athenians had both a city and a land greater than theirs, and that none of the Hellenes could repel them if they attacked.** Hdt. 8.61

Threats and power

- Next he turned his argument to Eurybiades, saying more vehemently than before, “If you remain here, you will be an noble man. If not, you will ruin Hellas. All our strength for war is in our ships, so listen to me. [2] **If you do not do this, we will immediately gather up our households and travel to Siris in Italy, which has been ours since ancient times, and the prophecies say we must found a colony there.** You will remember these words when you are without such allies.” **63.**
- When Themistocles said this, **Eurybiades changed his mind.** I think he did so chiefly out of fear that the Athenians might desert them if they set sail for the Isthmus. If the Athenians left, the rest would be no match for the enemy, so he made the choice to remain there and fight. Hdt 8.62-3

Help from the West?

- Read the text on the handout
 - Who is Gelon and why is he important?
 - Why do the Spartans and Athenians not want to give him leadership?
 - What does this mean for our understanding of the Hellenic League?