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978-0-521-11077-8 - The Greeks and their Past: Poetry, Oratory and History in the Fifth Century BCE

Jonas Grethlein

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## THE GREEKS AND THEIR PAST

Ancient Greeks remembered their past before the rise of historiography, and after it poetry and oratory continued to serve commemorative functions. This book explores the field of literary memory in the fifth century BCE, juxtaposing the works of Herodotus and Thucydides with samples from epinician poetry, elegy, tragedy and oratory. Various socio-political contexts and narrative forms lent themselves to the expression of diverse attitudes towards the past. At the same time, a common gravitational centre can be observed, which is distinct from modern ideas of history. As well as presenting a broad overview on memory in various genres, Professor Grethlein sheds new light on the rise of Greek historiography. He views Herodotus and Thucydides against the background of memory in poetry and oratory and thereby elucidates the tension between tradition and continuity in which the shaping of historiography as a genre took place.

JONAS GRETHLEIN is Professor of Classics at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg. He studied at Göttingen, Oxford and Freiburg before spending two years as a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard and teaching at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In 2006 he received the prestigious Heinz-Maier-Leibnitz award. In addition to numerous articles he has published *Asyl und Athen. Die Konstruktion kollektiver Identität in der griechischen Tragödie* (2003), *Das Geschichtsbild der Ilias. Eine Untersuchung des Geschichtsbildes der Ilias aus phänomenologischer und narratologischer Perspektive* (2006) and *Littells Orestie. Mythos, Macht und Moral in Les Bienveillantes* (2009), and edited (with A. Rengakos) *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in Ancient Literature* (2009).

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JONAS GRETHLEIN

*Professor of Classics, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg*



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## *Preface*

This book has taken shape in several places, each with its own distinctive environment. It was written in Widener Library in Cambridge MA, at the foot of the Black Forest in Freiburg, on the sunny shores of Santa Barbara and, finally, at Heidelberg in view of the *Philosophenweg*. Although *The Greeks and their Past* is less about space than time, more specifically about how Greeks in the fifth century BCE envisaged their past, it has benefitted from the experience of very different environments. The moves have, if nothing else, sensitized me to the different temporalities reigning in the Western world which, at least in this regard, is less unified than the discourse of globalization would lead one to believe. California's infatuation with youth and the present as well as the nostalgia of Heidelberg, the capital of Romanticism, may be clichés, but, as many clichés, they are not without significance. While the primary goal of this book is to chart the gravitational field of literary memory in fifth-century Greece, tracing back both the differences in the genres and the common ground they share, it is contemporary interest in memory that has triggered this study and continuously serves as a point of comparison, explicitly in the introduction and epilogue as well as implicitly throughout the book.

My argument requires close readings, but all texts are translated to make the book fully accessible to readers without knowledge of ancient Greek. Quotations from the *Iliad* are taken, with slight adaptations, from Lattimore (1951). For the translations of other texts, which do not aim at elegance, but stay close to the Greek, I have consulted the following editions: Aeschylus: Hall (1996); Andocides: Edwards (1995); Herodotus: Waterfield (1998); Isocrates: Norlin (1966); Lysias: Lamb (1976); Pindar: Nisetich (1980); Race (1997); Verity (2007). Simonides fr. 11 W<sup>2</sup>: West in Boedeker and Sider (2001a), other elegiac poetry: Gerber (1999); Thucydides: Lattimore (1999). As to Greek names, I have taken latinized forms, except where familiarity dictates otherwise. The abbreviations of

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*Preface*

journals follow the *année philologique*, those of ancient authors the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

The following sections are revised versions of articles that have been published before: section 3.3: ‘Diomedes Redivivus. A New Reading of Mimnermus fr 14 W<sup>2</sup>’ *Mnemosyne* 60, 2007: 102–111; section 7.2.1: ‘The Manifold Uses of the Epic Past. The Embassy Scene in Hdt. 7.153–163’ *AJPh* 127, 2006: 485–509; section 8.2.1: ‘Gefahren des λόγος. Thukydides’ ‘Historien’ und die Grabrede des Perikles’ *Klio* 87, 2005: 41–71; parts of section 8.3.2 (b): ‘Eine herodoteische Deutung der Sizilischen Expedition (Thuc. 7.87.5f.)?’ *Hermes* 136, 2008: 129–142. I am grateful for permission to use these articles for this book.

I was very lucky in finding on both sides of the Atlantic people with whom I could fruitfully discuss my work. It would be impossible to name all those to whom I am indebted, but I nonetheless wish to thank here Apostolos Athanassakis, Carolyn Dewald, Francis Dunn, Renaud Gagné, Ralph Galluci, Hans-Joachim Gehrke, Tonio Hölscher, Ted Lendon, David Konstan, Greg Nagy, Robin Osborne, Randy Pogorzelski, Kurt Raaflaub, Matthias Steinhart, Bernhard Zimmermann. I am particularly grateful to Stefania Tutino, Sara Lindheim and Robert Morstein-Marx for giving me such a warm welcome in California and making my time there a wonderful experience. The book has gained a great deal from the comments made by friends who have unflinchingly taken upon themselves the task of reading the entire manuscript: Deborah Boedeker, Bill Furley, Marianne Hopman, Christopher Krebs, Antonios Rengakos. In Heidelberg, Sabine Hug, Matthias Becker, Dominic Meckel and Hans-Josef Merz have been an immense help in preparing the manuscript for publication. I wish to thank finally Michael Sharp for his interest and his support of this project, and, last but not least, the two readers for Cambridge University Press whose comments have been very useful. One report in particular has enriched the book through a wealth of suggestions at different levels.

I dedicate this book to my teacher, friend and father, Christian.

JONAS GRETHLEIN

*Heidelberg*



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ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, ed. H. Temporini. (1970–97). Berlin
Bergk	T. Bergk (ed.). (1877–82) <i>Poetae Lyrici Graeci. I–III</i> . (4th edn). Leipzig.
Blass-Thalheim	F. Blass and T. Thalheim (eds.). (1914) <i>Antiphontis Orationes et Fragmenta</i> . Leipzig.
CEG	P. A. Hansen (ed.). (1983–89) <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca. I–II</i> . Berlin.
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.). (1952) <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker. I–III</i> . (6th edn). Berlin.
FGrH	F. Jacoby (ed.). (1923–) <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin.
Gentili/Prato	B. Gentili and C. Prato (eds.). (1979) <sup>2</sup> 2002) <i>Poetae Elegiaci. Testimonia et Fragmenta. I–II</i> . (Leipzig)
GG	Brunner, O. (ed.) (1972–1997) <i>Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland. I–VIII</i> . Stuttgart.
IG	<i>Inscriptiones graecae</i> (1873–) Berlin.
K. A.	R. Kassel and C. Austin (eds.). (1983–2001) <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> . Berlin.
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones (eds.). (1996) <i>A Greek–English Lexicon</i> . With a revised supplement. (9th edn.) Oxford.
N <sup>2</sup>	A. Nauck (ed.). (1964) <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> (2nd edn). Hildesheim.
PMG	D. L. Page (ed.). (1962) <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> . Oxford.
PEG	A. Bernabé (ed.). (1988–2007) <i>Poetae Epici Graeci. I–II</i> . Leipzig/Berlin.
P. Oxy.	<i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> . (1898–) London.

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W. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll (eds.).  
(1893–1980) *Realenzyklopädie der classischen  
Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart/Munich.

SLG

D. L. Page (ed.). (1974) *Supplementum Lyricis Graecis*.  
Oxford.

TrGF

B. Snell, R. Kannicht and S. Radt (eds.). (1977–2005)  
*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta. I–V*. Göttingen.

V

E.-M. Voigt (ed.). (1971) *Sappho et Alcaeus. Fragmenta*.  
Amsterdam.W<sup>2</sup>M. L. West (ed.). (1992) *Iambi et Elegi Graeci. I–II*  
(2nd edn.). Oxford.