INTRODUCTION

1 STRUCTURAL QUESTIONS

(a) Book divisions

Bks. 5 and 6 of Hdt., which contain the narratives of the Ionian revolt
and the Marathon campaign, are central to the *Histories*. The present sec-
tion will, after some remarks about book divisions, discuss the structure of
bks. 5 and 6, both internally and in relation to the *Histories* as a whole.

The first requirement is to think away the conventional book divisions
altogether; such divisions seem generally to be a fourth-century innova-
tion.[1] There is no good reason[2] to think that Herodotus divided his own
work into nine books (unlike, say, Polybius, he does not use them himself
to cross-refer or rather back-refer).[3] The Herodotean division is probably
Alexandrian i.e. Hellenistic, perhaps third or fourth century BC. We must
distinguish two questions: who first says that Hdt.'s work was in nine books,
and who first cited him by book number.

The 'chronographic' source of Diodorus, which provided him with
some good-quality historiographic and poetic dates, as well as king lists
and dates of city-foundations and mergers (synoikisms), tells us that Hdt.'s
work was in nine books.[4] Diodorus himself wrote in the time of Julius
Caesar or the early years of Augustus' principate, but the chronographer
worked in perhaps the second century BC, the time of Apollodoros the
Chronicler (*FGrHist* 244). Apollodoros is, however, an unlikely candidate
himself, as is Kastor of Rhodes (*FGrHist* 250), whose chronicle ended with
Pompey's triumph in 61 BC. It is better to leave the Diodoran chronogra-
pher without a name.[5]

The first scholarly text to use Hdt.'s book-numbers as a means to
cite him is the inscribed Lindian *anagraphe* from Rhodes (the so-called

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[1] At any rate, Polybius (8.9.5) cites Theopompos by 'the beginning of his forty-
ninth book'. See generally Higbie 2010.

[2] Irwin and Greenwood 2007: 14 n. 31 say there is 'room to challenge the ortho-
doxy' that the conventional book divisions are not the work of Hdt. himself, though
they hesitate between the opposite claim that they really were his work, and the
weaker and more plausible position that it is legitimate for modern scholarly pur-
poses to treat Herodotean books as units. It is unlikely that book divisions were
established as early as the fifth century, whether for Hdt. or Homer or anyone else.

[3] See e.g. Polyb. 3.1.1 'in my first book', 4.1.4 'in my second book', 7.13.2 'in my
fifth book', 11.1 'in my first six books', 18.28.1 'as I promised in my sixth book'. It
will be noticed that all these are retrospective.

[4] Schwartz 1959: 43. See Diod. 11.37.6, giving Hdt.'s terminal point as 479/8.

[5] Schwartz 1959: 39, and Jacoby's introd. to Kastor. But we shall see below that
the nine-book division of Hdt. was established well before 61, at least as early as
99 BC.

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'Lindian Chronicle') in 99 BC, by which time the book-numbers were pre-
sumably well established.[6] After that Plutarch, two hundred years later,
around 100 AD, cites by it half-a-dozen times in his *On the malice of
Herodotus*.[7] Lucian, a few decades later than Plutarch, was aware of the divi-
sion of the *Histories* according to the nine Muses,[8] and a generation earlier
than Lucian, a writer called Kephalio wrote a history in Ionic dialect and
called it after the Muses, in obvious imitation of Hdt.[9] That Pausanias, writ-
ing later than Plutarch, cites Hdt. without book-numbers does not mean
that he was unaware of the book divisions;[10] he does the same with every
author, Thucydides and Homer included, and the reason is presumably
stylistic, a desire for uncluttered elegance.

Once the nine-book division of Hdt. had been established, there was no
rival division. Contrast Th., of whom there were nine-book and thirteen-
book divisions in antiquity, as well as the usual and now canonical eight-
book division.[11]

The chapter divisions have even less claim to respect. One cannot
feel gratitude towards Jungermann,[12] who in 1608 divided Hdt.'s text
into chapters and inflicted on posterity the monster ch. **92**, with subdi-
visions involving letters of the Greek alphabet and further paragraphing
by numerals. The reason for this awkwardness was evidently a bad deci-
sion that no speech should be allowed to run for more than one chapter;
6.86, 7.8–10 and 8.140 are also affected by this 'rule', though less absurdly
(2.121, the main Rhampsinitos story, is also so affected, but that is at best
indirect speech, a tale told by the priests). Imagine the seven OCT pages
of Th.'s funeral speech as one long chapter! But it is too late to change
the traditional chapter divisions of Hdt. now.

[6] See *FGrHist* 532 C 29 (Amasis) lines 38–9, Ἡρόδοτος [ὁ Θ]ούριος ἐν τᾶι Β /τᾶν
ἱστοριᾶν; Higbie 2003: 35 and 117. The importance of this ref. (which is to 2.182.1)
for the date of the book divisions was seen by Myres 1953: 65.

[7] Bauer 1878: 5 n. 1. See Plut. *On the malice of Hdt.* chs. 12 (bk. 2), 21 (bk. 3),
23 (bk. 5), 25 (bk. 6), 34 (bk. 8), 41 (bk. 9) = *Mor.* 857a, 859b, 86oc, 861d, 867b,
871d. It will be noticed that these book-citations are in correct Herodotean order,
but in fact the treatise jumps around a good deal.

[8] Lucian: *Hist. conscr.* ch. 41 is aware that Hdt.'s books were called after the
(nine) Muses; this is repeated at *Her.* ch. 1, but here the number nine is explic-
itly mentioned.

[9] *FGrHist* 93 T1; cf. Jones 1986: 61 and n. 14.

[10] As is argued by Bauer 1878: 5 n. 1; 10 and nn. 2 and 3.

[11] Diodorus' chronographic source, for which see above, says at 12.37.2
(repeated at 13.42.5 about Th.'s closural point in 411) that Th. began his history in
432/2, and 'wrote up twenty-two years in eight books, or as some divide it, in nine'.
See, again, Schwartz 1959: 43. For the thirteen-book division, see the Th. scholia
on 3.116 and esp. 4.135. Dionysios of Halikarnassos, in the time of Augustus, cites
Th. correctly but not systematically by book-numbers (on the eight-book scheme)
in his treatise *On Thucydides*, from ch. 8 onwards.

[12] See Myres 1953: 19 and 64.

The main thread of narration in 5 and 6 runs through the ten years
500–490 BC, from the outbreak of the Ionian revolt to the Parian and
Lemnian aftermath of Marathon. In particular, the Ionian revolt[13] narra-
tive straddles the two books, with virtually no break in between; the death
of Aristagores closes bk. 5, but the first ch. of 6 immediately addresses the
question, focalised through Artaphrenes, of who was the more respon-
sible for the revolt, Aristagores or Histiaios. The revolt is prepared for
in various ways in the early chapters of bk. 5, most obviously by the bio-
graphical material about Histiaios of Miletos (**11** and **23–5**), but in subtler
ways too, such as the forward-looking handling of the Paionians (**1**.1 and
15.1nn.; cf. **98**). Indeed, the Ionian, Aiolian and Hellespontine tyrants
whose deposition inaugurates the revolt (**37–8**) were introduced already
in bk. 4 (mostly at 4.137–8, but see also 4.97 for Koes of Mytilene). But
the Ionian revolt narrative proper begins at 5.**28**,[14] and after many excur-
suses (some of them snaking back a couple of centuries)[15] it ends when
bk. 6 is well advanced. There is more than one candidate for the precise
closural point. One of them is the final sentence of 6.32, 'so for the third
time the Ionians were enslaved, Ἴωνες κατεδουλώθησαν, the first time by
the Lydians, and then twice by the Persians'; cf. 1.92.1 and then 1.169.2,
οὕτω δὴ τὸ δεύτερον Ἰωνίη ἐδεδούλωτο. But a good case could also be made
for a later moment, the political settlement of Ionia by Mardonios, who in
493 'suppressed all Ionian tyrannies and established democracies in the
cities' (6.43.3). This recalls, with verbal as well as thematic closeness, the
abolition, κατάπαυσις, of tyrannies in the cities at the start of the revolt
(5.**38**.2).

In some ways bk. 6 is a structural unit: for example, it begins and ends
with a prominent man being wounded in the thigh (Histiaios at 6.5.2; Mil-
tiades at 6.134.2). But more than perhaps any other two books of Hdt.,
5 and 6 together form a unit or block. To be sure, bk. 5 resumes bk. 4 the-
matically, actually picking up the story from 4.144, so to that important
extent it is true that 'Book V 1–27 are the sequel of the Scythian story in
Book IV'.[16] But that was a long time ago in Hdt.'s text, and bk. 4 actu-
ally ends (ch. 205) with Pheretime's death, which forms the frightening

[13] This brief expression is used for convenience, although (see the detailed
comm. below) it ignores the Karian, Hellespontine and Cypriot aspects of the
revolt.

[14] Myres repeatedly used the 'remission, ἄνεσις, of troubles' at **28**.1 as evidence
for a definite break (e.g. twice at Myres 1953: 100), but the text is not secure.
See n.

[15] The Bacchiads (**92**β) and the Lelantine War (**99**.1) both take us back to
c. 700 BC.

[16] Myres 1953: 65 and 100. For the motif of thigh-wounds, see Harder 2012:
1023.

closure of the very long section about Libya and Kyrene.[17] At the other
end of the block, the main Persian War narrative and the reign of Xerxes
begin very soon after bk. 7 begins, in fact at 7.4; three years are covered
in the very first ch. of the book, after the discursive slow-motion narrative
which began at 6.43 and culminated in the battle of Marathon.

(b) Books 5 and 6 in relation to the Histories as a whole

A striking feature of bk. 5 and the early part of bk. 6 is the frequent occur-
rence of more or less explicit back-references to bk. 1. A list of these is
provided as an Annex to the present section, in the hope of showing that
the density of parallels is unusual.[18] Only once (**36**.4, about the rich offer-
ings at Branchidai near Miletos) does Hdt. actually use an explicit cross-
referring formula: ὡς δεδήλωταί μοι ἐν τῶι πρώτωι τῶν λόγων, where the ref-
erence is to 1.92.1. 'In the first λόγος' does not mean 'in bk. 1' (see §1 (a)
above), but it is nevertheless of great interest as showing that in Hdt.'s
mind the work was organised into units, and that 1.92 fell within the first
of those units.

   Some of the other back-references are almost as explicit as this, but
they are differently achieved, by the Homeric technique of identity, or very
close similarity, of phrasing. Sometimes Hdt. is 'merely' repeating material
already given in bk. 1 (such repetitions should not be assumed to be the
result of mere absent-mindedness, but may well be there for a purpose).
Thus **101**.2 reminds us, in closely similar words to 1.93.1, of the gold dust
which comes down from Mt Tmolos in the waters of the River Paktolos.

   In other verbally parallel pairs, a comparison may be effected between
two items whose subject matter is not identical in the 'Paktolos' manner
(so that we are not being reminded of anything we have been told already).
To take one example from early in bk. 5, the good-looking multi-tasking
sister of the Paionian brothers is described in exactly the same words as
Phye, whom Peisistratos passed off as Athena; and the same participle is
used for the way in which Peisistratos and the Paionian brothers dressed
up their respective women (**12**.1–2 and 1.60.4).

   A common-sense or reductive explanation of these reminiscences will
insist that they are no more than a function of the similarity or identity

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[17] But from the Persian angle there is no break here because the reign of Dareios
more than fills all three bks. 4–6.
[18] To prove the point properly, it needs to be accompanied by a list of places in
bk. 5–early bk. 6 which refer to, or resume themes from, bks. 2, 3 or 4. A list of
these is therefore provided in the Annex, underneath the list of parallels between
bk. 5–early bk. 6 and bk. 1. Naturally, there are also a few correspondences between
bk. 1 and bks. 7, 8, 9 and the latter part of 6, but these are not numerous enough
to be worth listing.

of subject matter. Hdt. has not had much to say about Asia Minor since bk. 1, so it is only natural that he should now remind us that Miletos was colonised by the Athenians (**97**.2 and 6.21.2 recall 1.170); and so on for several of the Asia Minor parallels. And – it can be argued – it is only now that the Athenians and Spartans begin to be important players again. Sometimes, a bk. 1 item helps the reader in a straightforward way to cope with the detail of the much later narrative. For instance, the unexplained mention of the small Ionian *polis* of Myous as the destination of Ietragores' mission (**36**.4 with **37**.1) is more intelligible if we have long memories and can recall the information about its geographical position, and proximity to Miletos, supplied in bk. 1 (142.3).

But this will not quite do as an explanation. At least one of the parallels goes well beyond the requirements of factual reminder, and involves significant thematic repetition. It concerns Dionysios of Phokaia, who tried to train the Greek sailors in preparation for the battle of Lade (when we hear his ethnic at 6.11.1, we may recall 1.163.1, the Phokaians as naval pioneers). Hdt. closes the account of the Greek naval defeat in 494 by recounting briefly and proleptically what happened to Dionysios after it (6.17). He went to the western Mediterranean, because he knew that his home city would be enslaved along with the rest of Ionia. When he got there, he became a pirate and attacked Carthaginian and Etruscan ships only, sparing all Greeks. No explanation of this selective plundering policy is given (perhaps we merely reflect, 'well, he's a Greek so he would, wouldn't he?'). But a reading of the much longer and structurally very important Phokaian narrative of bk. 1 reveals several interesting correspondences (see 1.163–7, a famously sad passage, drawn on by Horace in *Epode* 16 lines 17ff.).[19] In 546, the Phokaians, or some of them, went west to avoid slavery: 1.164.2, with the strong word περιημεκτέοντες, they were 'incensed' at the prospect. Dionysios must in fact have been descended from one of the families who broke their oath (ψευδόρκιοι γενόμενοι) never to return to Phokaia, 1.165.3. Those Phokaians who did go west based themselves for a while on Corsica, and from there plundered their neighbours by sea (1.166.1). This got them into trouble with the Etruscans and Carthaginians, who attacked them and stoned some of their Phokaian prisoners to death. Now it is a curious detail that the combination 'Carthaginians and Etruscans' or *vice versa* is found nowhere in the *Histories* except in these two sections of narrative, namely the Phokaian section of bk. 1 and the short chapter about Dionysios of Phokaia in bk. 6. Surely we are meant to put the two widely-separated passages together and conclude that Dionysios' special piratical treatment of the Carthaginians and

[19] Myres 1953: 94 argued that the expulsion of the Phokaians and Teians to new homes stands at the centre of a large 'pedimental' composition.

Etruscans was in reprisal for the horrible deaths of his fellow-countrymen half a century before – deaths which were in turn reprisal for piratical activity by Phokaians.[20] These parallels are no mere coincidences generated by Hdt.'s need, not felt since bk. 1, to speak about Phokaia and Phokaians. Hdt. wishes us to think about a pattern of oppression, escape, and revenge, repeated with variations after fifty years.

That was an example of a passage in bk. 6 which might well seem inconsequential, though not actually unintelligible, without the benefit of the narrative in bk. 1. Something like the converse is true of the Kylonian curse which affected the Alkmaionids of Athens. Here the three-word statement in bk. 1 that the Alkmaionids were 'said to be under a curse', λεγομένων ἐναγέων εἶναι (1.61.1), is intriguing but completely baffling on its own: there is no mention of Kylon. Not until the middle of bk. 5 will it be explained, and Kylon's story given in full (**71**). Four books is a remarkably long time to wait for an explanation of a curse which affected the family down to the time of Perikles (Th. 1.126). It does not seem a satisfactory solution to say that Hdt. took for granted knowledge in his contemporaries and his audience (not all of whom were Athenians) of so well-known a taint of pollution.

Elsewhere in bk. 5 and the early part of bk. 6 we have simpler forms of resumption. The material about the Athenian Peisistratids and about Sparta almost continues where the bk. 1 narratives left off. Thus at **39**.1 we are told that Anaxandrides of Sparta was 'no longer living and ruling but had died', οὐκέτι περιεὼν ἐβασίλευε ἀλλὰ ἐτετελευτήκεε. This is elaborate and emphatic, and οὐκέτι ('no longer') resumes a passage in bk. 1 (67.1), where Anaxandrides and Ariston were said to have been the kings of Sparta when in about 550 Kroisos sent his messengers with gifts to ask for an alliance (69.1). Actually, we could have inferred from 3.148.1 – the attempted bribe of 'Kleomenes son of Anaxandrides' by Maiandrios of Samos – that Anaxandrides had died by 520 BC. But Hdt. waits until bk. 5 before spelling out the fact. This might suggest that he wanted bk. 5 to function as the new start, and for that reason held back the explicit statement of Anaxandrides' death. To be sure, there is a further reason for this delay. Anaxandrides is, in narrative terms, not dead at all at **39**.1, but is brought back to life (**39–41**, the story of his two wives) because Hdt. wants to explain in detail how Kleomenes, not Dorieus, came to be king. That story, which takes Dorieus across the Adriatic, fits very well in bk. 5 because of the way it tracks the Ionian revolt thematically, in particular by the parallel between Miletos and the Italian polis of Sybaris (see introd. n. to **39–48**).

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[20] Dionysios was evidently not impressed by the hero-cult accorded to the victims of the stoning, on the instructions of the Pythia (1.167.2).

Similarly the story of the Peisistratids and Alkmaionids is resumed from bk. 1, and here there are no intervening mentions of either family at all. Of particular importance is the brief early statement (i.e. in bk. 1) that the Alkmaionids went into exile together with other defeated survivors of the battle of Pallene in 546, by which Peisistratos finally established himself securely (1.64.3, οἱ δὲ αὐτῶν μετ᾽ Ἀλκμεωνιδέων ἔφευγον ἐκ τῆς οἰκηίης). This exiling of the Alkmaionids will crucially recur (**62**.2, γένος ἐόντες Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ φεύγοντες Πεισιστρατίδας) as part of the narrative of the final phase of the tyranny.

The resumptions and echoes of bk. 1 in bk. 5 and the early part of bk. 6 are there for a purpose which goes beyond factual reminder. We are starting again. The narrative which begins in 500 BC is both a new narrative beginning, and a near-repetition of a pattern of human behaviour and human response. We have already seen that the handling of Anaxandrides of Sparta and of Dionysios of Phokaia invite us to think of bks. 5 and 6 in this sort of way. We can go further and say that the opening of the second half of the *Histories* is to be thought of as, more generally, a second beginning. If so, there is an obvious comparison with Th., who seems in important ways to start again at the beginning of bk. 6 (out of eight books, but there would have been a good deal more text if Th. had taken the story down to 404, as he surely intended: perhaps the equivalent of ten books in all,[21] so that the start of 6 would be at an approximate half-way point).[22]

There are obvious limits to the analogy with Th. For instance, the *Histories* of Hdt. open with a series of mythical female abductions, which have no exact counterpart in his bk. 5. Contrast the structural balancing of Th.'s *Archaeology* by his *Sikelika*, above. And Th.'s work is incomplete in the sense that the narrative would have continued beyond its present terminal point in 411 BC (n. 22 below), whereas there is no reason to doubt that Hdt.'s is complete,[23] and ends where he meant it to end. This actually makes it easier, or at any rate more legitimate, to speculate about the architecture of Hdt.'s whole work than about Th.'s.

[21] But Liberman 2011: 627, suggests that Th.'s eight books should be thought of as nine (the Muses) minus one. The 'one' would have contained the unwritten history of the last phase of the war.

[22] The *Sikelika*, the account of early barbarian and Greek settlement on Sicily (6.2–5), corresponds to the *Archaeology* (1.1–19), and there is other, smaller-scale but important, thematic near-repetition. In particular, the celebrated and paradoxical phrase ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις at 1.23.6 recurs at 6.6.1 but nowhere else in Th.; on both occasions it refers to the realities of Athenian ambition, as opposed to a pretext or what was said in public.

[23] Except perhaps for the 'Assyrian *logos*' promised at 1.184 but not extant, and perhaps lost after the 4th cent. BC (Aristotle apparently knew it, see *Hist. An.* 601b4 for a detailed citation of Hdt. on the 'siege of Nineveh', cf. Myres 1953: 18 and n. 1).

One feature shared between bk. 1 of Hdt. and bk. 1 of Th. is the preparatory or introductory function performed by the material about Athenians and Spartans; and this arguably happens in Hdt. bk. 5 as well. (See further below, introd. n. to **39–97**.1.) The essential narrative device in bk. 5 is similar to that used in bk. 1: an inquiry or a visit by a man from the east (Kroisos; Aristagores) is the peg from which is hung a pair of excursuses, one about Athens, the other about Sparta. But in bk. 1, the order of treatment is Athens, then Sparta (1.59.1 and 65.1), whereas in bk. 5 it is Sparta then Athens. In both bks., the excursuses enable the feeding in of much explanatory and background information about the two great powers, Ionian and Dorian (and there is further Spartan material, of a quasi-ethnographic sort, at 6.56–60). The device of the double introduction was re-used by Th. in his bk. 1 (the Pausanias and Themistokles material), but he dispenses with the 'man from the east', as does Xenophon, in whose *Hellenika* the Arginousai trial (1.7) and the Kinadon affair (3.3) introduce us in like manner to Athenian and Spartan ways as exhibited in times of crisis.

We must also ask how bks. 5 and 6 relate to the Persian War narrative of bks. 7–9. Climactically placed near the end of the entire main narrative, after the battle of Mykale, is the obviously backward-looking statement 'so for the second time Ionia revolted from the Persians', οὕτω δὴ τὸ δεύτερον Ἰωνίη ἀπὸ Περσέων ἀπέστη (9.104), where the implied first revolt is that in bks. 5-early 6; but the closural comment is also forward-looking ('false closure') in that it invites us to contemplate the fifth-century future of Ionia as well.

The three large-scale Ionian narratives can be seen as a kind of triptych separated by large quantities of intervening material: first, the conquest in 546 (actually a conquest, revolt and then reconquest); second, the Ionian revolt; and third, the liberation of Ionia after the Persian Wars are over.[24] One place seems to stand as a signifier for each of the three panels: Mykale. In bk. 1, Mykale features as the location of the Panionion (1.148.1, where geographical indicators are provided). After bk. 1 the Panionion itself will not be mentioned again until shortly before Lade in 494, where it is the location of the Ionian political gathering which debated resistance policy (6.7), and then after the battle, and a few chapters later, the Chians flee to Mykale, which is now named (6.16.1). Then in bk. 9, Mykale is the scene of the final battle between Greeks and Persians in 479 (9.96–104).

So far, we have looked at the structure of the *Histories* in purely Greek terms, and this, as we saw, invites treatment of 5 and 6 as a unit. If,

[24] The general approach here owes a debt to Myres 1953, but his scheme is different.

however, we look at the *Histories* as a series of Persian reigns (an approach encouraged by Hdt. himself at 6.98.2 where he speaks of the ills suffered by Greeks and barbarians in the three most recent Persian reigns), we find another sort of triptych.[25] We saw above that Xerxes' reign almost exactly fills bks. 7–9, which we may call the third panel of the triptych on this scheme, and that Hdt. gallops through the last four years of Dareios' reign in as many short chapters. Very crudely, we can assign the first triptych to Kyros and Kambyses, and the second and central triptych to Dareios. This works only very approximately in terms of book divisions (Kambyses dies at 3.66, and Babylon is captured by Dareios in a lengthy narrative, all of which is inside bk. 3), but we have seen that these divisions are not Herodotean anyway. In any case, bks. 4–6 certainly belong to Dareios alone, so that the break between 4 and 5, commented on above, is thus softened.

Let us now put aside consideration of large subdivisions and think instead of themes, in particular the requital and reciprocity which John Gould in 1989 identified as the governing and organising principle of the *Histories*. From this point of view, the most important sentence in the whole Ionian revolt narrative is a proleptic authorial comment positioned just after the accidental burning of Sardis and of the temple of Kybebe. The Persians, says Hdt., used this as an excuse for their counter-burning of the temples in Greece (**102**.1). The word for 'counter-burning' ('burn in revenge': Powell, 'set on fire in return': LSJ) is ἀντενεπίμπρασαν. Hdt. here adopts or reports a Persian line of explanation, one which presented the Ionian revolt as Greek aggression, to which the Persians then replied in kind. The 'orientalising' theme of Persian temple-burning in 480 was important long after Hdt.'s own time, because it was used (as Polybius noted, 3.6.13) as the pretext for Alexander the Great's invasion of Asia. Hdt.'s opposite point about Sardis was naturally forgotten, or at any rate not followed up, in later accounts and later propaganda. But that was outside Hdt.'s lifetime and knowledge. Within his *History*, the burning of Sardis explains the unsuccessful assault on Delphi and, above all, the burning of the Athenian acropolis (8.53.2, ἐνέπρησαν πᾶσαν τὴν ἀκρόπολιν). The historical cycle of revenge and reciprocity, Greek aggression alternating with Persian, does after all take us back to the opening chapters and the abductions and counter-abductions of women. And yet, there was no inevitability about this: the burning of Sardis was contingent, because the city would not have burnt except for the accident that the houses were made of a certain type of material (**101**.1).

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[25] But though that passage arranges Persian history according to a sequence of three, the three are Dareios, Xerxes and (proleptically) Artaxerxes rather than the three regnal blocks here suggested, viz. Kyros+Kambyses, Dareios, Xerxes.

(c) The structure of books 5 and 6

Let us move on to internal structure, that is the architecture of bks. 5 and 6.
In the opening section (1–16) we have a tripartite arrangement: Paionian
story – Thracian ethnography – Paionian story; then follows Macedonian
material (**17–27**), the full point of which will not become clear until the
last part of bk. 8, where Alexandros will play a lead part.

   The long Ionian revolt section (5.**28** – 6.43.3) seems at first sprawling
and confusing in the number and range of its excursuses and lesser inser-
tions. In bk. 5 alone, we encounter important material about mainland
and west Greek *poleis*, presented in a leisurely way, and on a scale not easy
to parallel elsewhere in the *Histories*: Sybaris and Kroton in south Italy,
Thebes (sometimes called 'the Boiotians'),[26] Sikyon, Aigina, Korinth, and
the two main cities of Euboia (Chalkis and Eretria) – quite apart from
the chief *poleis* Sparta, Athens, and Athens' daughter city Miletos. In addi-
tion, Thessalians (**63** and **94**, part of the Peisistratid story) and Epidaurians
(**82–4**, part of the Aiginetan story) enjoy brief prominence.

   We have seen already, when considering the parallels with bk. 1,
that one main organisational principle is the help-raising itinerary of
Aristagores. It is this which enables Hdt. to update us, in a balanced
arrangement, about first Sparta at **39–54**, then Athens at **55–97**.[27] (For
the possibility that he deliberately passed over a visit of Aristagores to
Argos, see **55**n. At any rate, Hdt. has decided to postpone a full-on treat-
ment of Argive history until bks. 6 and 7.)[28] He was evidently aware of
the complexity of what he was doing, and felt the need for some signpost-
ing: the announcement at **65**.5 is unusually explicit and helpful. He there
says that before returning to the Ionian revolt he will first relate, ταῦτα
πρῶτα φράσω, everything that the Athenians did or experienced between
getting rid of their tyrants and the revolt.[29] The west Greek material at
42–8 (Sicily, Sybaris, Kroton) is occasioned by the need to explain how
Kleomenes came to be king. The excursus about Kleisthenes of Sikyon is
attached to the story of his homonymous grandson of Athens, the politi-
cal reformer (**67–8**). The first Theban section (**59–61**) is an antiquarian
appendage to the account of the origins of the Gephyraioi, the *genos* to
which the Athenian tyrannicides belonged, but the second is a contempo-
rary clash between the Boiotians/Thebans and the Chalkidians on the one
hand and the Athenians on the other. This leads neatly to the first (**80–9**)

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[26] See **77**.1 and **79**.1n. for the way 'the Boiotians' imperceptibly morph into 'the Thebans'.

[27] Myres 1953: 63.

[28] The Argives do feature in a minor way in bk. 5, for instance as the objects of the hostility of Kleisthenes of Sikyon (**67–8**) and in connection with Aigina (**86–8**).

[29] For this interpretation, see the n. on the passage.