EXPERIENCE AND TELEOLOGY IN ANCIENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

The past is narrated in retrospect. Historians can either capitalize on the benefit of hindsight and give their narratives a strongly teleological design or they may try to render the past as it was experienced by historical agents and contemporaries. This book explores the fundamental tension between experience and teleology in major works of Greek and Roman historiography, biography and autobiography. The combination of theoretical reflections with close readings yields a new, often surprising assessment of the history of ancient historiography as well as a deeper understanding of such authors as Thucydides, Tacitus and Augustine. While much recent work has focused on how ancient historians use emplotment to generate historical meaning, Experience and Teleology in Ancient Historiography offers a new approach to narrative form as a mode of coming to grips with time.

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EXPERIENCE AND TELEOLOGY IN ANCIENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

‘Futures Past’ from Herodotus to Augustine

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Ihr alle kennt die wilde Schwermut, die uns bei der Erinnerung an Zeiten des Glückes ergreift. Wie unwiderruflich sind sie doch dahin, und unbarmherziger sind wir von ihnen getrennt als durch alle Entfernungen.

Ernst Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*
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My argument combines broad theoretical reflections on history and narrative with close readings of ancient texts. To make the argument accessible to readers with no Greek and Latin, I have added translations that, while forgoing elegance and sometimes even straining readability, attempt to convey the features crucial to my interpretation. I have consulted and used, with modifications, the following translations: Waterfield (1998) for Herodotus; Lattimore (1998) for Thucydides; Brownson (1998) [1922] for Xenophon; Paton (1922–7) for Polybius; Rolfe (1921) for Sallust; Usher (1974–85) for Dionysius; Russell (2001) for Quintilian; Woodman (2004) for Tacitus; Babitt (1936) and Perrin (1914–26) for Plutarch; Cary (1914–27) for Dio; Sheed (2011) for Augustine. As to Greek names, I tend to adopt Latinized forms, except where familiarity dictates otherwise. The abbreviations of journals follow the Année Philologique, those of ancient authors the Oxford Classical Dictionary.
Abbreviations


TLL  *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (1900– ) Leipzig.
