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HERODOTUS
HISTORIES

BOOK I

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In memory of our teachers

Martin Ostwald (1922–2010) and Ronald S. Stroud (1933–2021)

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PREFACE

In the *Histories*, which could loosely be translated as ‘Investigations’ or ‘Researches’, Herodotus (henceforth H.) sets out to tell how the Persian Empire began, grew, and then met defeat in Greece in his parents’ generation. Book 1 begins that story. It introduces both the world in which the Persian imperial war machine began to operate and then expanded, and also H.’s own procedures in undertaking the ambitious task he has set himself.

The commentary supplied here offers several different foci that together try to honor the multifaceted nature of the *Histories*: dialect, grammatical forms, syntax, and other properties of his language; literary interpretation and the qualities of H.’s prose; his value as a historian; his immense curiosity and the attention he devotes to the customs, beliefs, concrete realities, and myths of other cultures. When we translate a small portion of the text, we almost always do so to make the syntax clearer; readers are encouraged to find their own ways of changing H.’s Greek into lucid and attractive English. H. is an entertaining author; we read him in part for his gifts as a storyteller and his own delight in the story as it unfolds, and our comments attempt to acknowledge this quality too, pervasive in the narrative.

We have worked together on this project for almost two decades, and we have incurred more debts of gratitude than can be acknowledged here. Needing thanks for criticizing various parts of our work or supplying invaluable information are Emily Baragwanath, Sandra Blakely, David Branscome, Stanley Burstein, Paul Cartledge, Charles Chiasson, Robert Cioffi, John Dillery, Nancy Felson, Thomas Figueira, Michael Flower, Helene Foley, Jeffrey Henderson, Irene de Jong, Lisa Kallet, John Kroll, Jeremy Lefkowitz, Donald Mastrorarde, Kurt Raaflaub, Jeffrey Rusten, Seth Schein, Michael Sharp, Rosalind Thomas, William Turpin, Stephanie West, Roger Whidden, Nigel Wilson, and Roger Woodard. Deborah Boedeker, Simon Hornblower, Rachel Kitzinger, Donald Lateiner, John Marincola, and Chris Pelling have in addition provided much wise counsel throughout. David Branscome’s 2017 Florida State University graduate seminar gave useful feedback about the utility of the commentary to students. At Swarthmore College, the research efforts of William Beck, Marion Kudla, Isabel McClean, and Rebecca Posner-Hess have improved the project’s accuracy; Deborah Sloman has provided wonderfully efficient material support. Crawford Greenewalt gave us enthusiastic and learned help at the beginning of the project, as did George

Cawkwell and Martin West, at a later stage. John Dillery, Simo Parpola, Robert Rollinger, Marc Van De Mierop, and especially Amélie Kuhrt and Seth Richardson have explained many things about the Mesopotamian and Achaemenid worlds to us. In Britain, Elizabeth and Peter Garnsey, Richard Hunter, and Pat Easterling helped the project get seriously under way in the summer of 2007; we are grateful for Pat's mentoring in the project's initial stages. The staff at the McCabe Library at Swarthmore College and the Stevenson Library at Bard College (in particular, Carl Hoyt) have tirelessly made otherwise inaccessible reference materials available. Our colleagues and our students at Bard and Swarthmore have sustained our enthusiasm for this project; we particularly thank Swarthmore College, the Loeb Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies for generous financial support. Chris Pelling and Simon Hornblower made possible a remarkable visit to Oxford for Michaelmas term 2013; we want enthusiastically to thank them, the Fellows of All Souls College, and the members of the Classics community in Oxford (in particular, the participants in the Michaelmas term Herodotus seminar), for an extraordinary hospitality that expanded our scholarly horizons. We are very grateful to Jane Burkowski; her expert copy-editing has saved us from many errors, inconsistencies, and infelicities. Finally, our thanks and deep gratitude also go to Pat Easterling, Richard Hunter, and Neil Hopkinson, for their editorial acuity and for their patience in bearing with us as we finished this long project. We are fortunate that Neil was able to suggest many needed corrections to our final draft, but we would have very much wished to put the finished book into his hands.

ABBREVIATIONS

I. ANCIENT AUTHORS AND WORKS

Abbreviations of ancient authors and works are those of the *OCD*³.

II. TEXTS AND EDITIONS OF HERODOTUS

- Asheri (in app. crit.) D. Asheri 1988: *Erodoto, le Storie. Libro I: la Lidia e la Persia*, Milan.
- Hude C. Hude 1927: *Herodoti Historiae*, 2 vols., 3rd ed., Oxford.
- Legrand P.-E. Legrand 1932–54: *Hérodote: Histoires*, 11 vols., Paris.
- Rosén H. B. Rosén 1987–97: *Herodoti Historiae*, 2 vols., Stuttgart and Leipzig.
- Stein H. Stein 1881–1901: *Herodotos*, 5 vols., Berlin.
- Wilson N. G. Wilson 2015: *Herodoti Historiae*, 2 vols., Oxford.

III. OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

- Asheri (in Comm.) D. Asheri 2007: ‘Book I’, tr. B. Graziosi, in Murray and Moreno 2007: 1–218, tr. and rev. from Asheri 1988, Oxford; ‘Book III’, tr. M. Rossetti, in Murray and Moreno 2007: 379–527, tr. and rev. from Asheri 1990, Oxford.
- Bowie A. M. Bowie 2007: *Herodotus: Histories Book VII*, Cambridge.
- CAH *Cambridge Ancient History*
- CG E. van Emde Boas, A. Rijksbaron, L. Huitink, M. de Bakker 2019: *Cambridge grammar of classical Greek*, Cambridge.
- Denniston J. D. Denniston 1959: *The Greek particles*, 2nd ed., Oxford.
- DF M. Davies and P. J. Finglass (eds.) 2014: *Stesichorus: the poems*, Cambridge.
- DK H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.) 1952: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 3 vols., 6th ed., Berlin.

- FGrHist* F. Jacoby 1923–58: *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, 15 vols., Leiden.
- Flower/Marincola M. Flower and J. Marincola 2002: *Herodotus: Histories Book IX*, Cambridge.
- GGM* C. Müller 1855: *Geographi Graeci minores*, vol. 1, Paris.
- Goodwin W. W. Goodwin 1889: *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, London.
- H. Herodotus
- Hornblower S. Hornblower 2013: *Herodotus: Histories Book V*, Cambridge.
- Hornblower/
Pelling S. Hornblower and C. Pelling 2017: *Herodotus: Histories Book VI*, Cambridge.
- HW W. W. How and J. Wells 1936: *A commentary on Herodotus*, 2 vols., 3rd ed., Oxford.
- IACP* M. Hansen, T. H. Nielsen, et al. 2004: *An inventory of archaic and classical poleis*, Oxford.
- IG* *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin, 1873–.
- KA R. Kassel and C. Austin (eds.) 1983–2001: *Poetae comici Graeci*, 9 vols., Berlin.
- Lenfant D. Lenfant (ed.) 2004: *Ctésias de Cnide: la Perse, l'Inde, autres fragments*, Paris.
- LP E. Lobel and D. Page (eds.) 1955: *Poetarum Lesbiorum fragmenta*, Oxford.
- LSJ H. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. Jones 1996: *A Greek–English lexicon*, Oxford.
- Macan R. W. Macan 1908: *Herodotus: the seventh, eighth and ninth books*, 2 vols., London.
- ML R. Meiggs and D. Lewis (eds.) 1969: *A selection of Greek historical inscriptions to the end of the fifth century BC*, Oxford.
- MW R. Merkelbach and M. L. West 1967: *Fragmenta Hesiodica* Oxford.
- OCD*³ S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth 1996: *The Oxford classical dictionary*, 3rd ed., Oxford.
- P. Oxy. *Oxyrhynchus papyri*
- PMG* D. L. Page 1962: *Poetae melici Graeci*, Oxford.
- Powell J. E. Powell 1938: *A lexicon to Herodotus*, Cambridge; repr. 1950, Hildesheim.
- R.-E. A. F. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll 1894–1980: *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen*

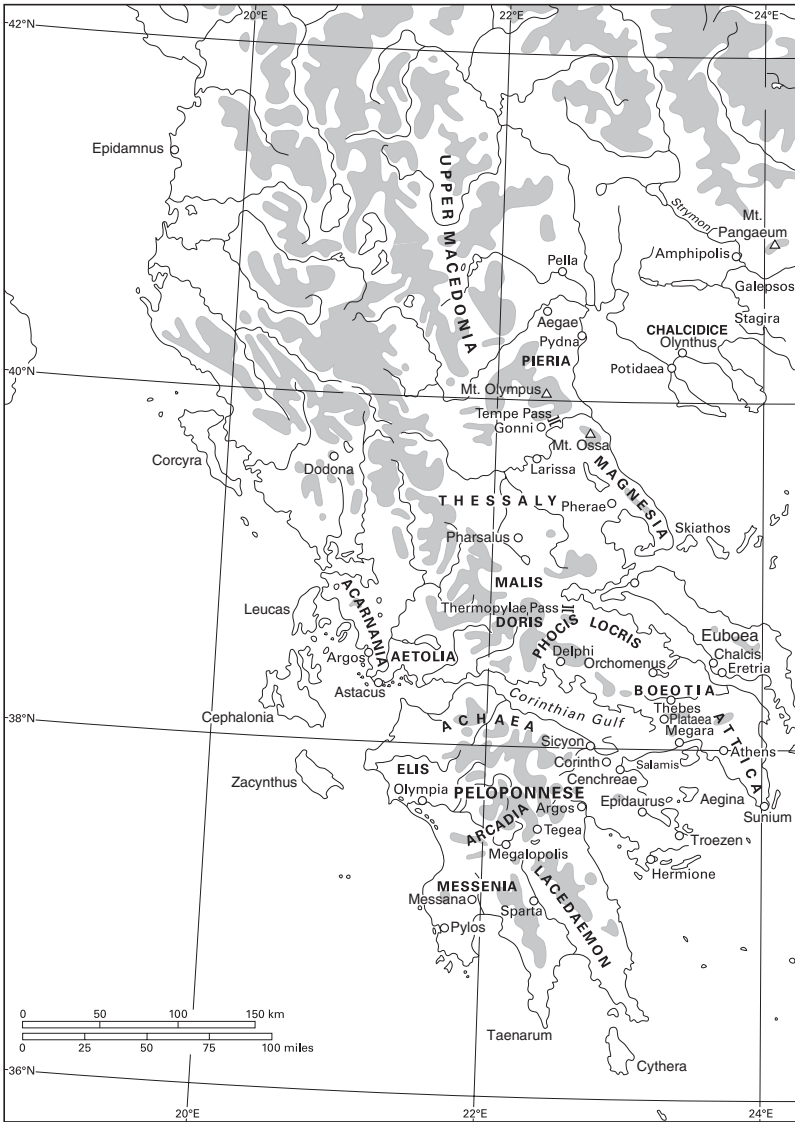
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

xiii

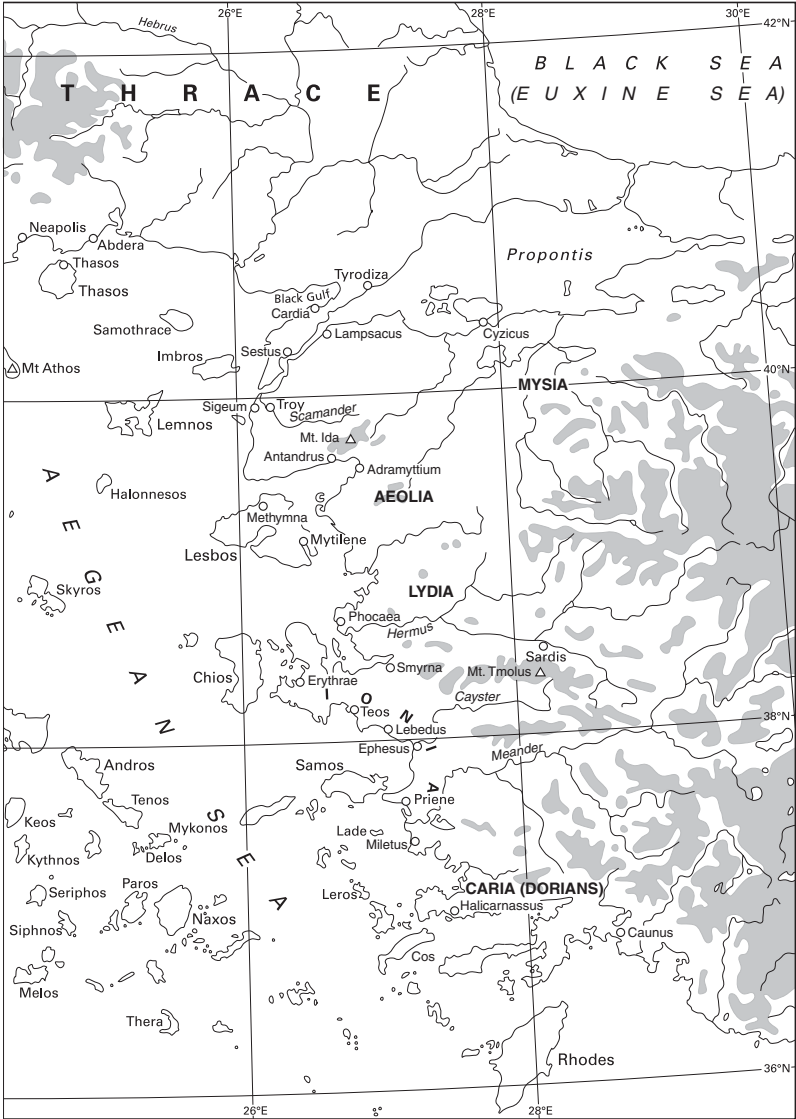
	<i>Altertumswissenschaft</i> , 66 vols. and 15 suppl., Stuttgart.
S	H. W. Smyth 1956: <i>Greek grammar</i> , rev. G. M. Messing, Cambridge, MA.
SEG	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum</i> , 1923–.
SGO	R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber (eds.) 1998: <i>Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten</i> , vol. 1, Stuttgart and Leipzig.
SM	B. Snell and H. Maehler 1987–9: <i>Pindari carminum fragmentis</i> , 8th ed., Leipzig.
Tod	M. N. Tod 1946: <i>A selection of Greek historical inscriptions</i> , vol. 1, Oxford.
TrGF	R. Kannicht and B. Snell 2007: <i>Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta</i> , vol. II: <i>Fragmenta adespota</i> , Göttingen.
Voigt	E.-M. Voigt (ed.) 1971: <i>Sappho et Alcaeus: fragmenta</i> , Amsterdam.
West	M. L. West (ed.) 1989–92: <i>Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati</i> , 2 vols., 2nd ed., Oxford.

Note: All dates are BCE unless otherwise noted. In the commentary, the conversion tables used for weights, measures, and distances are those found in Waterfield and Dewald 1998: 592–3.

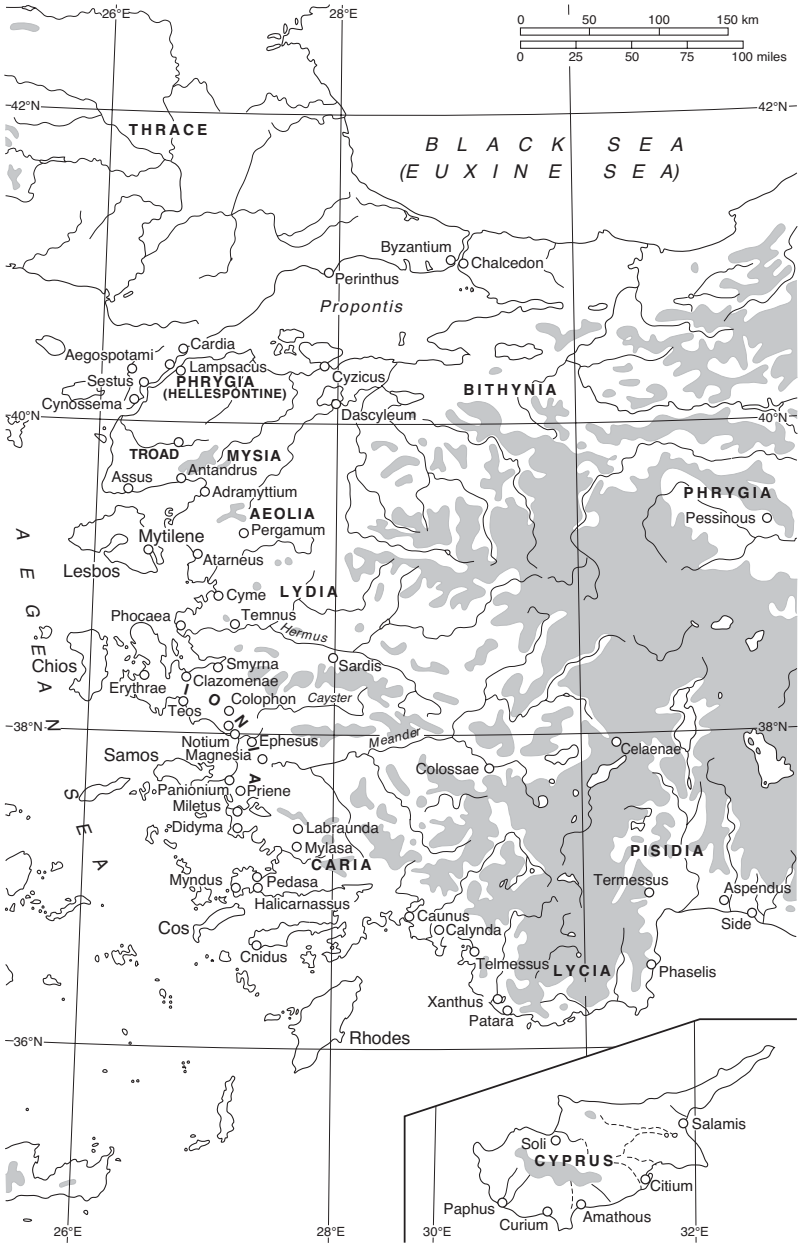
MAPS



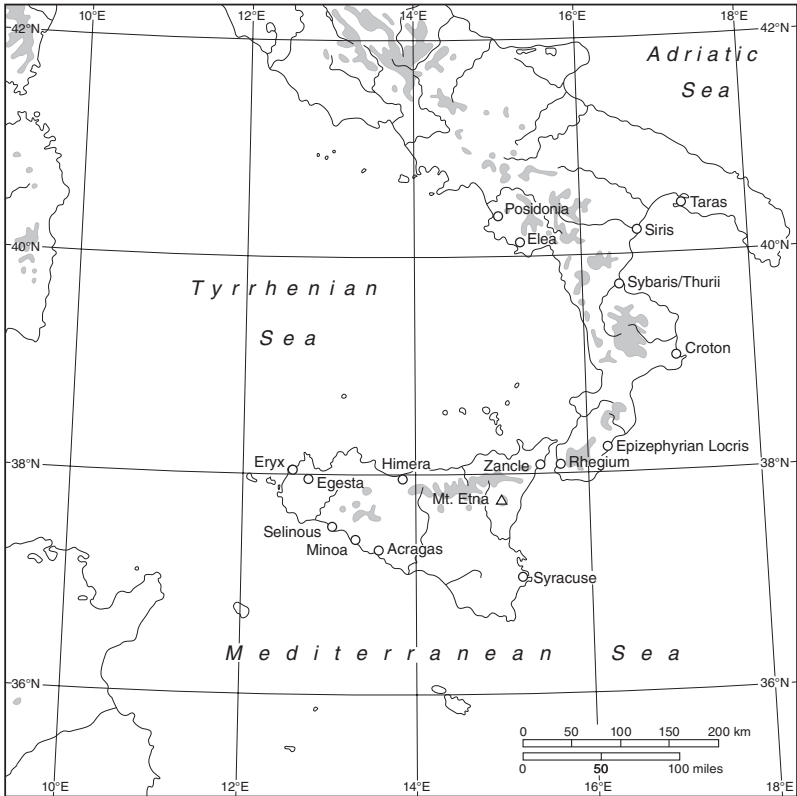
1 Greece and the Aegean (Hornblower/Pelling Book VI, Map 3, xviii–xix, somewhat revised)



1 Continued

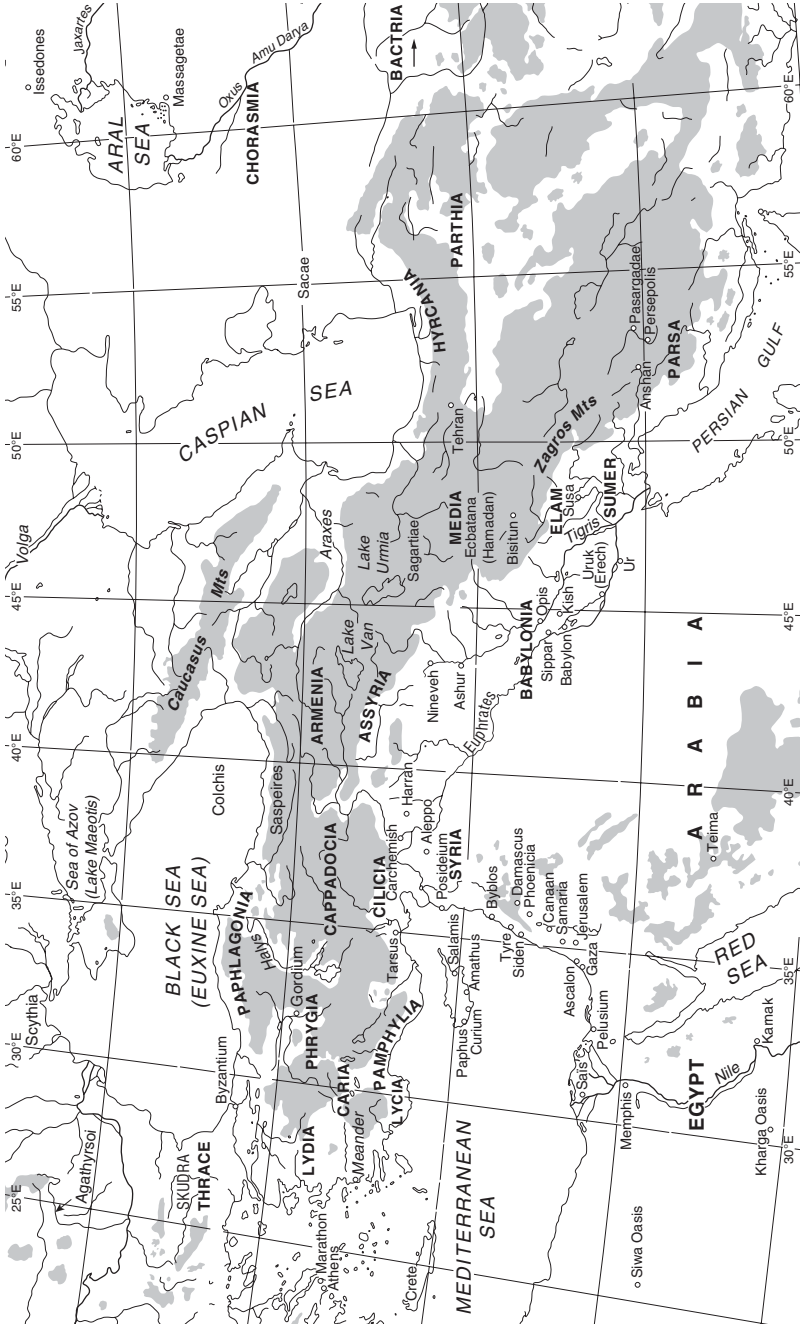


2 Asia Minor (Hornblower/Pelling Book VI, Map 1, xvi, somewhat revised)

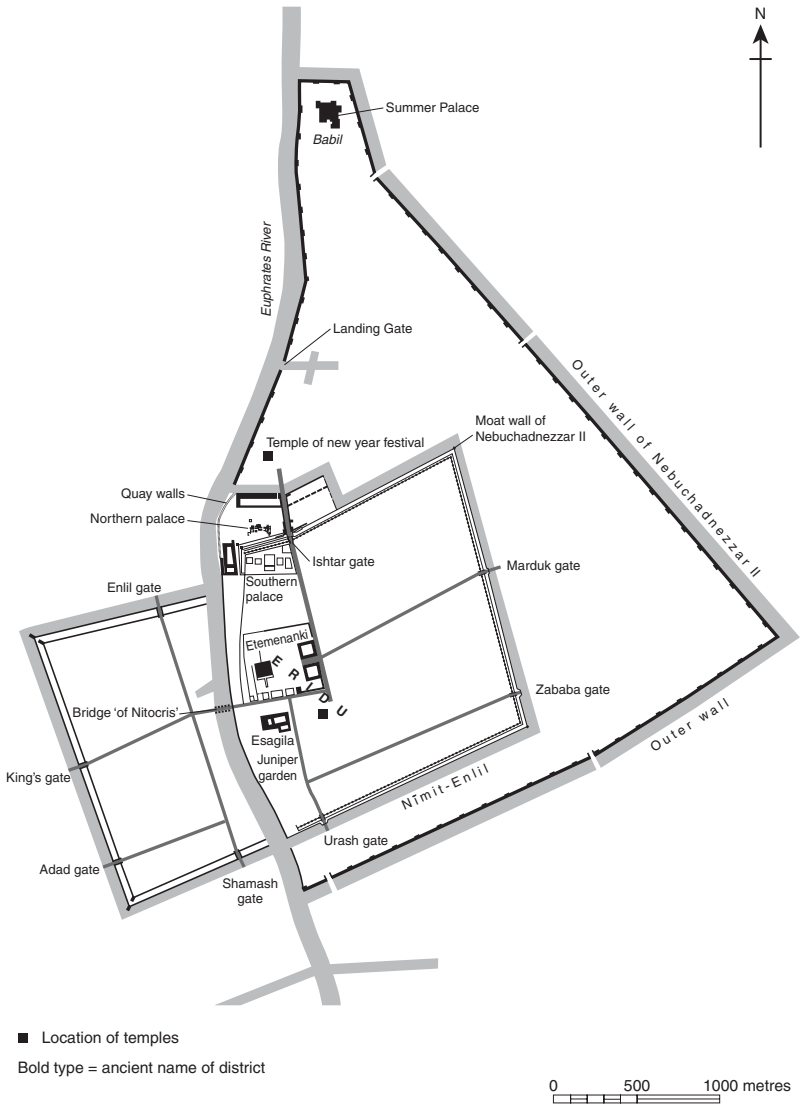


3 Sicily and south Italy (Hornblower/Pelling Book VI, Map 4, xxi, somewhat revised)

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4 The Achaemenid Empire (Bowie VIII, Map 1, xii–xiii, somewhat revised)



5 Babylon (showing the two wall systems, some major buildings)
 (S. Dalley 2021)