

MARCELLO GIGANTE: *L'edera di Leonida*. Saggi Bibliopolis 108. Bibliopolis, Napoli 2011. ISBN 978-88-7088-591-0. 180 pp. EUR 25.

La benemerita casa editrice Bibliopolis offre una ristampa anastatica del saggio su Leonida di Taranto del noto umanista napoletano deceduto nel 2001 che l'autore di queste righe ha avuto il privilegio di chiamare un amico. Il volume è uscito nel 1971 ed è ora ristampato con una postfazione di Giulio Guidorizzi (pp. 153–159) e di una breve nota di ringraziamento dei familiari del Gigante. Anche se le tesi esposte dall'autore non sono state accolte con unanimità dagli studiosi, salutiamo con piacere la ristampa di un libro scritto in modo appassionato, che oltretutto non si trova facilmente sul mercato.

*Heikki Solin*

REINHOLD BICHLER: *Historiographie – Ethnographie – Utopie. Gesammelte Schriften, Teil 4: Studien zur griechischen Historiographie*. Philippika 18.4. Herausgegeben von ROBERT ROLLINGER – KAI RUFFING. Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2016. ISBN 978-3-447-10607-8. X, 271 S., 2 Tabellen. EUR 48.

Robert Rollinger and Kai Ruffing have continued their work of collecting Reinhold Bichler's already-published articles into more or less thematic volumes: this fourth one is dedicated to questions on Greek historiography. The first volume of the series dealt almost solely with Herodotus, but that does not mean that the one under review would by any means be devoid of *Herodoteana* because of that – to expect otherwise would be to overlook Bichler's remarkable contributions to our understanding of Herodotus, Ctesias, and the Alexander historians, in particular. As it stands, this necessarily diverse volume in fact benefits from Herodotus' prominent position, which fortuitously – though a tad circularly – mirrors his vast influence on the Greek historiographic tradition. Several of Bichler's articles also benefit from his ability to use his expert knowledge to mount comparative and diachronic reviews of certain aspects of the Greek tradition; examples include a very fine look into the portrayals of kingship among Indians, Arabs, and Aethiopians (83–101), and an article on the periodization of Greek history in historiography between Herodotus and Diodorus (103–132).

The editors have clearly paid suitable attention to the arrangement of the articles in the volume, and all pieces have been appropriately furnished with indications of their original paging at their first publication. The overall progression seems to be from well-defined and specific historiographical and philological contributions towards more wide-angled approaches dealing with images and perceptions. The first article of the volume, 'Die Datierung des Troianischen Krieges als Problem der griechischen Historie' (1–14) is a suitable way to begin – combining as it does a specific question with a diachronic review of testimonies, ranging from Homer to Clement of Alexandria. Bichler's approach is similar in a later article, 'Über die Periodisierung griechischer Geschichte in der griechischen Historie' (103–132); another thematic link is that, in defining historical epochs, the Greek historiographers found much use for the the epic material of 'heroic history'.

Herodotus is squarely the main topic in several of Bichler's articles selected for this volume, as noted already above, while the complicated relationship between Herodotus and Ctesias of Cnidus forms the backbone of several others. The conscious stance of Ctesias regarding his predecessor comes particularly clear in 'Der Lyder Inaros. Über die ägyptische Revolte des Ktesias von Knidos' (15–28), which takes as its starting point the résumé that Photios provided on the basis of Ctesias' *Persica*. Inaros (also known as Inaros II) was a Libyan noble whose 10-year rebellion against the Persians was supported by the Athenians until his eventual defeat in 454 BCE. Bichler explores the possibility that Ctesias had, in fact, called Inaros a 'Lydian', though the manuscript tradition makes this suggestion a mere possibility. The gruesome end of the rebellion, including the Persians' betrayal of the rebel's Greek allies left at their mercy, seems to reflect the events of Ctesias' own lifetime: the events after the battle of Cunaxa. The relationship between the accounts of Herodotus and Ctesias is also the salient question in 'General Datis' death at the battle of Marathon' (67–81). Ctesias' version is by no means more trustworthy or accurate than Herodotus' (which Bichler duly notes, adding to this a review of the discrepancies between – and within – the versions of many later authors), but both simply represent different politically invested variants among the Greeks jockeying for the moral high ground during the Peloponnesian Wars.

'Über die Rolle und das Schicksal siegreicher Athleten in Herodots *Historien*' (29–42) contributes to the volume by taking a very specific but nonetheless fruitful perspective on Herodotean narratology: the representation of victorious athletes within the *Histories*. Sports, a traditional elite (male) field of excellence, routinely compared to warfare, was naturally a field suited to polemics that were occasionally more oblique than, say, the somewhat obvious case of the Cylonian Affair. The conclusions Bichler draws in the piece reinforce, in many ways, the idea that Athenian internal narratives of a partisan nature influenced Herodotus' portrayal of not only certain individuals who were 'good to think with', but also many broader phenomena that had polysemic potential. The eighth article of the collection, 'Die analogen Strukturen in der Abstufung des Wissens über die Dimensionen von Raum und Zeit in Herodots *Historien*' (133–153), is the last with an explicitly Herodotean focus. It mounts a very inspiring comparative analysis of the ways in which Herodotus graded the reliability of his reports of events that were far removed either in time or in space. This double-barrelled look is an inspired choice from Bichler's side, and he manages to uncover clear and telling similarities between the two kinds of Herodotean epistemic projection. Both, for instance, exhibit signs of a 'floating gap' between the recent and more remote temporal foci, and between the 'edges of the earth' (cf. James Romm's 1992 monograph of the same name) and the great barbarian kingdoms of the Greek near-abroad (143–47).

Alexander histories and traditions (or perceptions) of the Macedonian form a block of their own in the book with three separate articles. 'Ein merkwürdiger Fall von *Euergetie* Alexander der Große und die Geschichte von Kyros und den Arimaspen' (157–167) reviews the mentions within the Alexander tradition of the conqueror-king's meeting the Arimaspoi. The Arimaspians had obtained the nickname *Euergetai* ('Do-Gooders' or 'Benefactors') at some point of this tradition (cf. Diod. Sic. 17,81,2) due to a story that they had saved Cyrus' army from starvation, for which reason the Great King had showed them great favour. Naturally, for the Macedonian king to miss out on the chance of encountering a people whom the Persian rulers of old had interacted with was unacceptable in the eyes of his historians. Bichler next turns to the question of 'Konnte Alexander wirklich nicht schwimmen?' (169–181). Turns out he probably did. Taking Plutarch's mention as his starting

point, Bichler searches the Alexander tradition for possible evidence of natatory capabilities while also cautioning against too much positivist weight on testimonies which are wholly permeated by normative and moralizing considerations.

'Die Wahrnehmung des Alexanderreichs: Ein Imperium der Imagination' (183–218) constitutes an engaging rumination on the imagery of Alexander's realm as a spatially expansive but temporally ephemeral horizon. The ancient writers tended to resort to a teleological-essentialist way of perceiving Alexander's motivations: Bichler notes that "Die Grenzenlosigkeit seines Eroberungsstrebens wurde schon relativ früh in das Bild Alexanders eingezeichnet" within the literary Alexander tradition (188). Other aspects of Alexander's strategy, similarly, were in the retroactive imagination constructed as seamless and clear from the beginning. Partly, of course, both the idea of 'opening the world' and a perception of a 'grand strategy' at work were ideas which appealed to the Roman image of Alexander since the development of the Roman empire itself was imagined in similar terms. Much remains to be written about the reception of Alexander imagery, especially in Late Antiquity (one could mention texts like *Excerpta Latina Barbari* or *Cosmographia Aethici* as some examples of creative re-imagining). Even so, Bichler's article is a very inspiring contribution nonetheless, and does address some more recent reinterpretations, as well – such as the debates on Alexander's empire in the midst of the Nazi anxieties about cultural and racial miscegenation in the 1920s and 1930s.

Another famous conqueror about whom many variant traditions were told – although one much more intractably shrouded in legend and orientalisising imagery – is approached in 'Semiramis and Her Rivals. An Essay' (219–235). It is well enough known that the traditions about Semiramis and Ninus do seem to retain individual details from the Archaic Greek information about Assyrian history (it is worth keeping in mind that the Neo-Assyrian state only collapsed between 627 and 612 BCE). In the course of the following millennium, however, with the increasing literary elaboration of many of the motifs connected with Semiramis, parallels, foreshadowings, and allusions to other, later rulers became possible. She was also a convenient early historical conqueror of India (as opposed to a mythical one, like Dionysius), paving the way for Alexander. Significantly, as Bichler shows, Semiramis' primary narratological application was through her varied male enemies – something which can hardly be a surprise considering Greek ideas about the desirability of female barbarian agency. The article even glimpses into the Medieval stages of the Latin tradition, in the form of Otto von Freising. Another interesting angle would have been to include a comparative view of how actual, historical female rulers such as Zenobia influenced the tradition about Semiramis: it could be surmised that a powerful 'Oriental' queen of the past would be a symbolically attractive template onto which later ingroup (Greco-Roman male) anxieties could be projected. In the case of Diodorus' Semiramis, Cleopatra's influence can already be detected, as Bichler notes (220).

Three articles selected for the volume cannot be easily placed within the previously described categories, although the above-mentioned commonalities and shared outlook do apply to them as well. 'Probleme und Grenzen der Rekonstruktion von Ereignissen am Beispiel antiker Schlachtenbeschreibungen' (43–66) addresses the limitations of our ancient evidence regarding battle narratives – a topic that has been receiving increased attention and is currently being studied, to give but one example, by the St Andrews-based project *Visualising War* (Alice König and Nicolas Wiater). 'Über das Königtum der Inder, Araber und Aithiopen in der griechischen Ethnographie' (83–101) constitutes a very valuable comparative look into Greek ideas about the rulership in three broad population groups of the south and east, which were frequently imagined as being connected

to each other ethnically or culturally. The confusion between Aethiopia and India (and their respective peoples) was, for instance, very frequent. The usefulness of all these far-away realms was, of course, that they could be imaginatively used as a heuristic tool to discuss the limits of societal and political organization models. Bichler is also able to point out divergences in the imagery of the three respective areas, especially in Augustan material like Diodorus. Finally, this enjoyable and insightful volume is brought to a close by 'Der Antagonismus von Asien und Europa – eine historiographische Konzeption aus Kleinasien?' (236–252), another diachronic and comparative look into a historiographical concept – this time one that has been studied by other scholars as well, especially in the case of Herodotus and the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places*. Yet the juxtaposition of Asia and Europe is such a vital one, not only for ancient Greek identity-building, but for the very foundations of later Western thought-patterns, that it behoves re-visiting. As in so many of the articles in this volume, Bichler's ability to follow the *longue durée* of the literary tradition enriches our understanding of the question in ways that are most welcome.

Antti Lampinen

*Herodots Quellen – Die Quellen Herodots*. Herausgegeben von BORIS DUNSCH – KAI RUFFING. *Classica et Orientalia* 6. Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2013. ISBN 978-3-447-06884-0. VIII, 352 S., 9 Tabellen, 4 Diagramme. EUR 58.

JOHANNES BREHM: *Generationenbeziehungen in den Historien Herodots*. *Classica et Orientalia* 8. Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2013. ISBN 978-3-447-06960-1. XIV, 285 S. 5 Abb. EUR 64.

The current reviewer does not particularly envy Herodotus specialists. An important, fascinating, and influential ancient writer quite naturally generates vast amounts of scholarship, but Herodotus studies are a particularly voluminous field – its edited volumes and conference proceedings often exhibiting a mixture of truly brilliant and utterly anodyne contributions commingled cheek-by-jowl. For someone who would need to go through most of the new scholarship as a point of professional practice, this could easily become frustrating. For scholars who, on the other hand, only need to dip into the steady stream of *Herodoteana* for their research purposes, the effect can be disorienting, and often results in voluminous excursions and much back-up reading. To be sure, there are approachable and concise introductions and companion-volumes to Herodotus – with academic publishers increasingly favouring such fast-profit formats ordered *en masse* to university libraries – but these can hardly be expected to correspond to the needs of most scholars. It is thus the edited volumes such as the two published in Harrassowitz's series *Classica et Orientalia* in 2013, that the average ancient historian with a need to read up on Herodotean themes will turn to.

Johannes Brehm's *Generationenbeziehungen in den Historien Herodots* is (to this reviewer's knowledge) the first study to expressly address the concept of inter- and intragenerational dynamics in Herodotus' work. It is this double viewpoint that makes the work particularly fascinating: on the one hand, Brehm is interested in Herodotean indications of feelings of commonality between members of the same generation, and on the other, in the descriptions of diachronic relationships between successive generations. This aim is not an unproblematic one, however, and leads Brehm