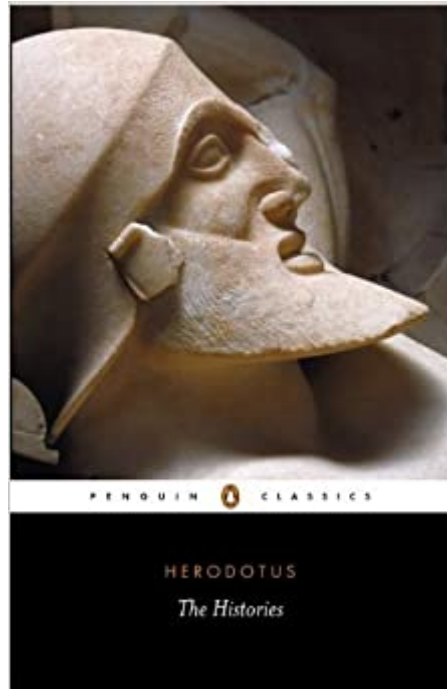


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The Histories



Synopsis

Translated by Aubrey de Selys-Longchamps with an introduction and Notes by John M. Marincola. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

“De Selys-Longchamps’ pacy, natural-sounding, rendering, as superbly revised and annotated by John Marincola—was a game-changer—still reads freshly and is a bestseller six decades after its first publication.—Edith Hall, [Times Literary Supplement](#)

Few facts are known about the life of Herodotus. He was born around 490 BC in Halicarnassus, on the south-west coast of Asia Minor. He seems to have travelled widely throughout the Mediterranean world, including Egypt, Africa, the area around the Black Sea and throughout many Greek city-states, of both the mainland and the islands. A sojourn in Athens is part of the traditional biography, and there he is said to have given public readings of his work and been friends with the playwright Sophocles. He is said also to have taken part in the founding of the colony of Thurii in Italy in 443 BC. He probably died at some time between 415 and 410 BC. His reputation has varied greatly, but for the ancients and many moderns he well deserves the title (first given to him by

Cicero) of Æœthe Father of HistoryÆœ John Marincola was born in Philadelphia in 1954, and was educated at Swarthmore College, the University of Pennsylvania, and Brown University. He has taught at the College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts, and at Union College in New York, and is currently an Associate Professor of Classics at New York University. From 1997 to 1999 he was Executive Director of the American Philological Association, and in 1999-2000 he was a Junior Fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, DC. He is the author of *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge, 1997), *Greek Historians (Greece and Rome New Surveys in the Classics 31, Oxford 2001)*, and of several articles on the Greek and Roman historians. He is currently at work on a book on Hellenistic historiography.

I thought that reading Herodotus would be daunting, but Mr. Waterfield's translation so far is making it fun to read. The prose is very accessible, which makes this history very intriguing and enjoyable to read. In a nut shell Herodotus writes about the causes of the ancient war between the Greek world and the Persian empire.

Excellent translation -- makes a prodigious work accessible in modern English. Herodotus provides the historical context for much of classical epics & plays, so it is interesting & illuminating. A very useful companion piece -- like the Oxford Companion to Classical Literature.

How is it that I have never read this classic. And the notes included with this version were extremely helpful. Herodotus has a great way of telling stories and I like how he jumps from topic to topic while explaining history. I felt like I was at my grandpa's feet hearing about the good old days with some lessons on life thrown in. I should have read this years ago!!!

It's interesting to hear what happened in the ancient world from people who lived then. Herodotus believed that the lessons we draw from history are more important than getting the facts exactly right, and he gives us a lot of insights. Herodotus was very, very scrupulous about not claiming this or that happened. He always is careful to say that "the people of this place believe" or "it is recorded that.". Plus (and this is a BIG plus if you're reading an ancient author), he rights with a great deal of witty skepticism. (And if the records were kind of racy, he didn't clean them up.) Often when reading this huge e-book, you find yourself wishing you'd known him personally; he would be a fun dinner guest.

This is a ~2500 year old book on history that was criticized right after it came out. It's often viewed as the less serious, less academic, inferior work when compared to Thucydides - the author who provided the template for future historians. For that reason, a modern reader may hesitate to look at it. They should not. It is a wonderful read - the stories are great, the sociological descriptions are wonderful, the deductive analysis (when placed into context) is remarkable. The book's engagement with real world events must be considered, and there are excellent footnotes to discuss it. Ultimately, this is the best and often only source for many of his subjects. As such it is well worth reading and engaging with. Afterwards you will probably spot many, many references to this book through the centuries. The Histories is critical to our modern day understanding of the classical world. I do think that reading it with a map of the ancient world would be helpful if you're not familiar with the landscape, but other than that, just go along with it.

Wonderful translation. I have a 14 year old who finished this. Started as an uninterested reader. Ended with much enjoyment.. and one liners of wisdom, lol.

While I generally like the older historians, the biggest issue I had with Herodotus is trying to put together a single time-flow for everything. I recognize that this is kind of my own problem, (flow-charts weren't even helping) I can't say that I liked the book as a historical premise. Anecdotes of awesome abound, however, so it's not entirely unreadable. It was just problematic for me when it came to citing for papers and locating myself in the timeline. Again, probably more my problem than a problem with Herodotus.-M

A voice from 2,500 years ago telling us one of the greatest stories of his time. Intrigue, incest, war heroes and villains, and giant gold digging ants. Who could ask for more?!?

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