Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus

Hau, Lisa Irene

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Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus

Lisa Irene Hau

Hau deploys the overt moralising of the Hellenistic historians to illuminate the more implicit and thought-provoking moralising of their Classical forebears. Among other questions she asks: does moral didacticism make for bad historiography? Was it simply a lens for viewing events, or could it drive wholesale invention?

Emily Baragwanath, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

An investigation of moral-didactic techniques and messages in ancient Greek historiography

Why did human beings first begin to write history? Lisa Irene Hau argues that a driving force among Greek historians was the desire to use the past to teach lessons about the present and for the future. She uncovers the moral messages of the ancient Greek writers of history and the techniques they used to bring them across. Hau also shows how moral didacticism was an integral part of the writing of history from its inception in the 5th century BC, how it developed over the next 500 years in parallel with the development of historiography as a genre, and how the moral messages on display remained surprisingly stable across this period.

For the ancient Greek historiographers, moral didacticism was a way of making sense of the past and making it relevant to the present. But this does not mean that they falsified events: truth and morality were compatible and synergistic ends.

Lisa Irene Hau is Lecturer in Classics at the University of Glasgow.

Cover image: detail from Continence of Scipio, Pompeo Girolamo Batoni, c. 1771–72. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum/photo by Vladimir Terebenin

Cover design: Michael Chatfield

From: MACKENZIE Rebecca <Rebecca.MacKenzie@eup.ed.ac.uk>
Date: 23 March 2016 14:57:44 GMT
To: “Michael Chatfield (mc1942@btinternet.com)”
Subject: RE: Hau - title change

Hi again,
Actually, I should be able to send you the back cover copy as well in the next few days, so you could hold off on the cover front change for now.

Thanks,
Bekah

From: MACKENZIE Rebecca
Sent: 23 March 2016 14:56
To: Michael Chatfield (mc1942@btinternet.com)
Subject: Hau - title change

Hi Michael,
We’ve changed the Hau title slightly to: Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus. Would you mind sending a new front please?
I’ve got the high resolution version of the image as well now, so I’ll send that on via WeTransfer.

Thanks,
Bekah