

TRENDS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY  
MODULE I-EVOLUTION OF HISTORY AS A  
DISCIPLINE



**TOPIC:HERODOTUS**  
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# GREEK HISTORIOGRAPHY-HERODOTUS



- The earliest known systematic historical thought emerged in Ancient Greece
- Greek historians had greatly contributed to the development of historic methodology
- The earliest known critical historical works were “The Histories” composed by Helicarnassus during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, who later was appraised as the ‘Father of History’ by Cicero
- The word ‘History’ is derived from Greek, meaning enquiry or investigation
- History is a record of human experiences in the past, not a dateless past
- Gave importance to ‘Why’ in historical writing along with ‘What’ and ‘How’
- They treated history as a subject strictly related with human activities and



- -Not under the control of any type of divine powers
- The beginning of Greek historical writing could be traced back to the narrative poems called ‘Ballads’(sung in public or presented in the form of speech)
- References to true historical events of the contemporary period or of very recent past
- They were known as Logographers
- Logography could be considered as the transition stage from quasi-history to history proper
- It helped Herodotus to write the first historical work on the Greeco-Persian wars that took place during his life time
- Deals mainly with wars (Persian Wars)



- He provides interesting information about the people of the Mediterranean and Asiatic world
- Herodotus had travelled widely to collect first hand information
- His work is in nine books, each one of them named after nine Greek Goddesses who preside over different branches of knowledge, the first being ‘Clio’, the deity of history and poetry
- He lifted historical understanding from the position of logography to a separate discipline
- He adopted a rational approach to explain the causes of historical events
- The last two books of Herodotus were composed first in 456 to 445 BC prior to his travels to Egypt and Babylonia
- The unity of his writing is the first striking fact noticeable in his history



- There is consistency and continuity in his entire work
- The second feature is the vigorous spirit he displays and the powerful style he adopts which make his narrative most interesting
- His craze for style stood in the way of checking the accuracy of his data
- Father of prose composition