

“Artemisia and an Anti-Carian Bias in Herodotus”

Artemisia is one of the most notable figures in Herodotus' *Histories*. She is best known for her daring and treacherous naval maneuver at the Battle of Salamis, but also stands as one of the most complex female characters in Herodotus' work. While Artemisia is frequently discussed in Herodotean scholarship, not much attention has been paid to the ethnic implications of Artemisia's portrayal in relation to her homeland of Caria (Blok, 2002; Dewald, 1981; Munson, 1988). Overall, Herodotus does not portray the Carians in a favorable light, consistently depicting them as a group on the fringes of the Greek and Persian world, prone to piracy, self-centered loyalties, with a tendency toward betrayal. Upon close inspection, there are remarkable similarities between Herodotus' sweeping depictions of the Carians and the individual portrayal of Artemisia, suggesting that they are both viewed through the same cultural perceptions (Hartog, 1988; Pelling, 2013). Thus, this paper will show that Herodotus' description of Artemisia reveals an anti-Carian bias in Greek culture, and depicts both the inhabitants of Caria and Artemisia as having a predatory inclination toward piracy, showing egocentric loyalties, and displaying a tendency to betray their own allies. In order to demonstrate Herodotus' anti-Carian bias in his depiction of Artemisia, it will be necessary to analyze Herodotus' descriptions of the Carians and then to compare those themes with his description of Artemisia. While this picture of the Carians is incomplete, it does provide us with a reflection on how they were perceived in the fifth-century Aegean world, which itself is a reflection of Greek experiences with Caria.

Select Bibliography

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