

Discovering the hidden meaning of puppies in Herodotus' *Histories*

Scholars of Herodotus point to the passage detailing the events that led to Cambyses' murder of his wife as evidence that Cambyses is mad (Munson, 1991, McPhee, 2018). While Cambyses may have been crazy, this passage has much greater significance. I argue that the fable of the puppies and the lion cub (3.32.1-2) serves as a metaphor to foreshadow events appearing in later chapters of the *Histories*. The metaphor not only functioned within the text but also reminded Herodotus' readers that at a time of increasing tension and mistrust in the Greek world (Yates, 2015), it was essential that the Athenians and the Spartans remember that only with their united effort were they able to defeat the Persians. Using linguistic and iconographic evidence, this paper reveals the symbolic importance of animal imagery both in Herodotus and in Greek culture in his time.

Until recently, little scholastic study in the sciences and the classical world has focused on dogs. This paper fills in the gap in scholarship by illustrating the significance of canine imagery in Herodotus, as well as how this imagery resonates with animal metaphors in Homer. In order to investigate the role of the domestic dog in Herodotus' *Histories*, I examine his usage of canine related words. The word κύων (dog) is used periodically, more interestingly σκύλαξ (puppy) only appears in one place in the *Histories* (3.32). While somewhat rare in the corpus of Ancient Greek literature, σκύλαξ is used by Homer three times in the *Odyssey*, notably describing the slaughter of Odysseus' men "like puppies" by Polyphemos the Cyclops (9.289). The limited use of the word and the influence of the Homeric works on how Herodotus defines and characterizes both people and animals would have led to a common understanding of the nature of σκύλαξ, making it an ideal subject of a metaphor.

To explore the meaning and importance of the metaphor of the puppies and the lion cub, I first identify and analyze other examples of foreshadowing in the *Histories*. Scholars see both foreshadowing & opining as a major feature of Herodotus' work (Flower & Marincola, 2002). One prominent example is at 9.16.1-5, where the Thebans & Persians share couches, and the weeping Persian anecdote foreshadows the end of the Persian War. Next, I argue that there is a clear history of identification of animals with the Greeks and the Persians. To determine the animal/s with which the Ancient Greeks identified, I reviewed studies of physiognomonía (Gilhus, 2006) and animal perception (Kostuch, 2017) as well as how and when artistic motifs (Markoe, 1989) were used. My data support the idea that the σκύλαξ is representative of the Greeks (specifically Athens and Sparta) and the σκύμνος (lion cub) represents Persia. Finally, I have compared the language that Herodotus uses in 3.32.1-2 with the sections of the text the σκύλαξ section appears to foreshadow. The texts in 3.32.1-2 and 9.16.1-5 show a clear relationship in the use of δέω (tie, bind) and δακρύω (cry).

In combining physiognomic and iconographic studies, this paper models an innovative approach to understanding both the importance of the σκύλαξ fable in Herodotus' *Histories* and to recognize the role that it played in priming and reactivating the memories of a unified Greece in his readers.

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