On not forgetting the "Literatur" in "Literatur und Religion":

Representing the Mythic and the Divine in Roman Historiography

Version 1.0

March 2006

Denis Feeney

Princeton University

Against recent attempts to argue that generic distinctions between history and other forms are not particularly relevant to analysis of how the divine is represented, this paper argues that generic distinctions are important from Herodotus on. History has its own distinctive discursive practices, however inventively historians work on the margins with other genres such as epic and tragedy.

On not forgetting the "Literatur" in "Literatur und Religion":

Representing the Mythic and the Divine in Roman Historiography

"a little formalism turns one away from History,

but … a lot brings one back to it."

Roland Barthes[1]

As one of only two Latinists speaking at a conference on the interaction between literature and religion, I found myself reflecting on the historical differences in practice between the subdisciplines of Hellenists and Latinists. Generalisations on such large topics are difficult and suspect, yet my own attempts as a Latinist in a Hellenists' conference to negotiate between the claims of literature and religion made me very self-conscious about the disciplinary issues. I was left feeling isolated in some kind of middle ground, subject to a pincer movement from both flanks. On one side was Latin studies, where a historicising reaction against long-dominant formalism has been gathering momentum for some time, with cultural studies and anthropologically informed approaches making headway against supposedly solipsistic textual readings; on the other side was Greek studies, where the gravitational pull of sociological and anthropological models of great power has been in effect for so long that formalism is scarcely on the horizon at all, and is no longer perceived as a past threat, let alone as a present or future one. My feeling of being stranded in the middle comes from my belief that formalism and cultural studies need each other, and are inextricably involved with each other. My natural allies, then, are those Latinists who agree with Don

Fowler in thinking that we need "to deconstruct oppositions like 'formalism' vs.

'historicism'".[2] As Fowler puts it in his wide-ranging discussion of intertextuality:

"'Intertextuality' is often associated with a formalist approach to literature, and contrasted

with forms of cultural criticism that go outside the text. This seems to me to embody a narrow

view of text and a naivety about the way the things supposedly 'outside' the text are always

already textualized."[3]

The difficulty we all faced at our conference was how to read texts within the penumbra of

"literature and religion" without leaning so far to the formalist end of the scale that we shut

out the texts' social and religious ramifications, and without leaning so far to the historicist

end of the scale that we allow those other cultural discourses to suffocate the distinctive nature

of the texts. The danger with the formalism against which so many Latinists are reacting is

that it has in practice made it very difficult to take the religious (or social or cultural)

dimensions of literature at all seriously. The danger with an overweening historicism is that it

can smudge over important distinguishing features of literary discourses, operating as if

literary texts do nothing more than mimic or exemplify or reinforce what we already know

anyway from other contexts. Historicism is particularly prone to such tendencies when—as is

overwhelmingly the case with studies of ancient religion—it is associated with models

indebted to structuralism and symbolic anthropology.[4] Such models (including New

Historicism) share the tendency to regard societies as inter-related meaning systems—in

effect, as massive texts.[5] An important consequence is that the governing trope of these

approaches is synecdoche.[6] The part stands for the whole, which is always somehow already

there, and primary. Texts are accorded their own discursive status, but they are nonetheless

still regarded as fragments of a larger context "in which the terms are always set in advance

by conditions which are more primary or authentic or real".[7] When the referent of a literary

work is some religious, mythic, or ritual feature of the culture, with all the connotations of

primacy and foundation traditionally attached to such features both in anthropology and in

Classics, then the dominance of the synecdoche model will make it very difficult not to cast

the text as at best reflective and at worst parasitic.

One way of avoiding such a predicament is through a return to genre—not to a formalistic

pigeon-holing conception of genre, but to a more dynamic Contean model of genre, in which

genres mutate and interact, and in which they serve a mediating function, enabling culturally

coded perceptions to become part of literary perceptions, and vice versa: "Genre functions as

a mediator, permitting such models of selected reality to enter into the language of literature;

it gives them the possibility of being 'represented'."[8] It is hard to get this mediating function

of genre mobilised from within the subdiscipline of Greek studies, however, given that the

dominant tendency there is to see genres as arising from specific social practices and

remaining rooted in them: if epinician, for example, is supposedly a reflex of social practice,

to be explained by its performative function in an occasional setting, then how can religious

genres not likewise be bound in to a preexisting and predetermined cultural context which will

dictate the terms of interpretation?[9]

Yet the attempt to give power to literary texts by grounding them in a supposedly real base

depends upon an implausible correspondence theory of literature, and it will regularly end up

failing to do justice to the texts' actual capacities.[10] For literary texts have a certain

autonomy—in the particular sense of "autonomy" so productively introduced into our discussion at the conference by Renate Schlesier.[11] "Autonomous" in this sense does not mean "entirely in a realm of its own", for it is impossible to know what such an autonomous discourse would look like—a radically autonomous discourse would be incomprehensible. If literature did not have a certain kind of autonomy, however, it would be simply tautologous, for its functions would be served by some other discourse. And literature does have functions which are not symmetrical with or reducible to the functions of other discourses, as has been well argued by Lamarque and Olsen: "Literature is not merely a response to already defined existential problems, nor an expression of already felt and accepted moral and social values. It is one of the ways in which these existential problems, as well as social and moral values, are defined and developed for us."[12] From this perspective the polarisations between formalism and historicism look more and more suspect, since it is precisely the historically based formal features of texts which make it possible for them to perform within a society the kind of work identified by Lamarque and Olsen. As Glenn Most puts it: "Linguistics, anthropology, and social theory can cast helpful light on genre conceived not as a recipe from handbooks of poetics but rather as a social phenomenon. Genre is the *langue* that makes possible any literary *parole*."[13]

Paying serious attention to genre in this larger sense, then, is indispensable if we are to do justice to the texts and to the religious, ideological, and cultural work they are doing. In this paper, my test case will be the representation of mythic material and of divine action in Roman historiography, and I shall argue that we must pay attention to the distinctions which ancient historians drew between their procedures for representing myth or divinity and those

of other writers, particularly poets. Here I shall be debating with a recent paper by Peter Wiseman, in which he argues that in first century BC Rome "for many readers the distinction between the proper pursuits of poets and historians was far from clear-cut, and certainly not a simple matter of literary genre".[14] As my argument so far has shown, I do not regard "literary genre" as a "simple matter", and it is worth revisiting the question of what was at stake for historians in their engagements with other religious discourses.

Before coming to the texts of the first century BC which are my prime focus, we must begin with Herodotus, the father of the genre, who initiated procedures for the new discourse which had fundamental consequences.[15] One of Herodotus' first moves was to introduce a distinction between—to put it bluntly—history and myth, in terms of subject matter, and between history and epic, in terms of narrative mode. These two categories—of form and content, very roughly—are of course intermingled with each other, and we shall revisit the question of their inextricability. But from the opening pages of Herodotus' history the crucial demarcations are there, between history and epic and between what is going to count as myth or history. The demarcations are grounded in a claim to a new kind of knowledge, and in a foreswearing of the kind of knowledge which epic poetry claimed.[16] The opening of Herodotus' history is playing off a Homeric conception of the deep past as one inaccessible to normal human knowledge, a conception most crisply formulated by Homer when he invokes the Muses in *Iliad* 2.484-6. Here Homer says that the Muses do have knowledge (ἴστε) about this heroic past, whereas we hear only report (κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν), and do not know anything (οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν). Much of the force of this Homeric passage comes from the fact that

the Greek word to "know" is cognate with the word to "see", while the word κλέος, "report",

is cognate with the word to "hear". This is an antithesis of wide importance in Homer, one

referred to by characters as well: seeing something and knowing it for yourself is

incomparably superior to merely hearing about it from another source.[17] When Herodotus

rejects the Persian version of Io and turns to Croesus, he is playing on precisely this Homeric

antithesis, for he uses Homer's verb of knowledge, but positively (1.5.3). "We do not know

anything", Homer had said; "I know myself" (οἶδα αὐτός), says Herodotus, without a

negative, of his own sure knowledge, not of his ignorance. Homer cannot know for himself

about the distant past, and has to rely on the Muses to tell him; Herodotus cannot know for

himself about the distant past either, and so he will tell about the things that he *can* know, and

know for *himself*—αὐτός.

Throughout his history Herodotus is extremely scrupulous in marking what he will vouch for

and what he will not, on the basis of his claims to knowledge, maintaining systematically the

distinction of his second preface "between the myths that are 'said' and what 'we can

know'".[18] This point is regularly misunderstood by scholars, especially those who wish to

deny Herodotus a developed interest in making novel demarcations between his new "history"

and the old stories. Harrison, for example, claims that Herodotus treats "Minos

straightforwardly as a historical figure" in his account of Cretan participation in the Trojan

War, without any reference to the fact that the entire section is in reported speech, explaining

the reference of a Delphic Oracle.[19] I do not mean to associate myself with the view that

reported speech is an automatic sign of personal scepticism, a view well countered by

Harrison himself;[20] the issue here is the way in which Herodotus is setting out the terms for

the technology of his new form of rhetoric. In general, Harrison's discussion of this topic is vitiated by his failure to pay attention to such fundamental narratological questions as "Qui parle?", questions which have profound generic and discursive implications.

In the case of Herodotus we can see that his strategies in this sphere are part of a larger strategy for creating a new kind of authorial persona. This persona has many strong affinities with the new personae being moulded by his contemporaries in medicine and science, and much of what Geoffrey Lloyd has taught us about the new rhetorical strategies designed in those new discourses could be copied over directly for Herodotus' history.[21] Lloyd highlights the importance to the new scientific discourses of "the habit of scrutiny, and…the expectation of justification—of giving an account—and the premium set on rational methods of doing so";[22] he likewise picks out "the prominence of the authorial ego, the prizing of innovation both theoretical and practical, the possibility of engaging in explicit criticism of earlier authorities, even in the wholesale rejection (at times) of custom and tradition…".[23] The implications for Herodotus and Thucydides are obvious. What Herodotus begins is a project of carving out a new kind of discourse about the past which has powerful affinities in rhetorical method and authorial self-presentation with the new discourses about medicine and nature. His new discourse will enable him to compete not only with the body of inherited mythic story, but also, even more importantly, with the other discourses that had already evolved to compete with myth, above all the rationalising and cataloguing of Hecataeus and the other mythographers. A crucial part of this new project is the ability to stake out credible and authoritative knowledge claims; and a crucial part of that ability is the claim—however

arbitrarily grounded—to be able to demarcate what can be known in this τέχνη and what can

not be known.

The question of what can be known and what can not be known readily spills over into the

question of what can be narrated and what can not be narrated. Despite all his enormous debts

to Homer in terms of his understanding of how to narrate action, Herodotus marks an

irreducible line between his kind of narrative and Homer's in terms of representation of the

divine. Fundamentally, once he has created his new authoritative voice by demarcating how

far his knowledge claims extend, Herodotus does not lay claim to the privileged insight of a

Homer, and he does not introduce gods into his narrative as characters.[24] This is a crucial

distinction between his own practice and Homer's, one with many powerful ramifications, but

one that many readers overlook. Herodotus does not say that the god Pan appeared to

Philippides as he was running over the mountains to Sparta; he says that Philippides said that

the god appeared to him (6.105.1-2).[25] This may look like a trivial point, but it is not, for it

takes us to the heart of the kind of authority Herodotus is claiming, the kind of human-based

knowledge claims he feels entitled to assert, and so it takes us to the heart of the kind of

discourse this new form is. If we overlook or downplay the discursive boundaries Herodotus

is establishing, we are not just doing him an injustice in formal or "literary" terms, we are

missing the impact of his boldness in creating a new kind of representation of human

knowledge and action. At this level, the formal and historicising readings fold into each

other, for only a scrupulous formalism will allow us to appreciate fully how Herodotus' new

discourse situates itself in the cultural dialogues of its time.

Herodotus is in fact still using a Homeric demarcation when he rules out of court his own

merely human ability to narrate the gods' participation in the action. Herodotus adapts an

internal mode of epic and puts himself into exactly the position occupied by Odysseus, when

Odysseus tells his own story in the *Odyssey*. The inspired poet Homer can say "Aphrodite did

this, or Apollo did that", but the human character Odysseus can not; he consistently says just

θεός or δαίμων when he suspects some divine agency, since he is unable to vouch for it in

personal terms.[26] Herodotus' practice is very close indeed to this Homeric—or rather,

Odyseean—norm; in this respect, at least, Herodotus is really not a Homer, but an Odysseus.[27]

The kind of distinction we see at work in Herodotus is widely observed in both the Greek and

Roman worlds.[28] It is very similar to what Parker, discussing fifth and fourth century Athens,

calls the contrast between "the theological opacity of oratory and the transparency of

tragedy".[29] As he puts it: "Oratory never invites the listeners to believe that they can gaze at

Olympus and penetrate the counsels of the gods. The claims it makes about divine motivation

are almost invariably vague and general; they concern 'the gods', not named individuals, and

it would have been inconceivable for an orator to pretend, for instance, to describe a clash of

will between Poseidon and Athena. But insight of just that kind into the workings of Olympus

was claimed by tragedy."[30] Needless to say, observing such generic distinctions does not

entail claiming that any one of these genres correlates, to the exclusion of the others, with

what the Greeks or the Romans "really believed".[31]

Herodotus, then, will not vouch for the material of myth on his own account and he will not

give a homerically mimetic narrative of the gods. This is not to say, however, that he is not

interested in divine action or in what we call religion; let it suffice here to cite the two recent

studies of Herodotus and religion by Harrison 2000 and Mikalson 2003. Still, in any

discussion of these issues we must be very scrupulous about the terms we use and about

observing the generic distinctions at work. Pelling, for example, claims that the opening

sections of Herodotus' history are deliberately misleading in focusing on human actions,

giving the impression that the narrative will "leave the gods out", and that "this is not, it

seems, to be the world of Homer, where gods exercise…influence over events"; soon enough,

according to his argument, references to the gods, patterns of fate and oracular responses

make it clear that the "gods and the supernatural *cannot* be left out, try though author or

reader will; and the inevitability of a divine dimension is the clearer for the original attempt to

avoid it".[32] Yet it is crucial that Herodotus' techniques for the representation of the "divine

dimension" are not Homeric. Herodotus can perfectly well think that he can use evidence to

finds patterns of divine action in recent or contemporary history; this is very different from his

thinking that he can get information of the kind he wants from the material of myth, and it is

also very different from his using the kind of knowledge claims about specific deities in action

that can be advanced by authors in other genres, especially epic. Herodotus keeps his realm

of knowledge in the human realm, even though, like any other Greek, he is able to use his own

observation and intelligence to make inferences about possible divine agencies.[33] He will

report what people say about mythic stories, because he knows that what people say is as

important as what they do, but he will not narrate such stories on his own account, nor will he

rationalise them, as his predecessor and main rival, Hecataeus, had done. Again, he will

express his own surmises about the role of the divine in human history, but he will not give

narratives on his own authorial account about characterised deities operating in the homeric

manner. The formal definitions of epic given by the ancient scholarly tradition are a useful

reminder of what is at stake. According to Servius "epic consists of divine and human *characters*" (*constat ex diuinis humanisque personis*), and according to Posidonius poetry contains "a *mimesis* [i.e., a characterful representation] of things divine and human" (μίμησιν…θείων καὶ ἀνθρωπεών).[34] History, for all the interest which it can display in the inherited body of myth and in religious concerns, does not have both "divine and human characters", nor does it have "characterful representation of things divine as well as human", with gods part of the *mimesis* like humans.

These general issues have to be borne in mind when we are considering historical texts from the Roman period as well. The later historical tradition, including the Roman one, is remarkably faithful to Herodotus' pioneering prescriptions in the field of representing the divine: "from Herodotus on, the historians…refrained from following Homer into the narration of divine action on its own plane. Even epiphanies in historians are, after all, accounts of human experience. An ancient historian will describe a report of a deity appearing in battle, for example, but he will not narrate the decision of the deity to appear, or transcribe the god's conversation before he sets off for the battle-site."[35] Similarly, the later historians' approach to the inclusion or exclusion of mythic or miraculous material retains recognisably Herodotean features, although there was certainly more variety of treatment here, as we shall see.[36] Because the origin of this historiographical trope of demarcation from myth was not a technological or methodological advance but a new kind of rhetoric, the distinctions claimed between history and myth could vary considerably. Historians could use chronology, for example, to delimit their subject matter from "the times of myth", as Dionysius of Halicarnassus calls them, when he says that the Assyrian Empire reaches back

εἰς τοὺς μυθικοὺς χρόνους (*Ant. Rom.* 1.2.2). The Trojan war was regularly the chosen cut-off point;[37] but for Ephorus, writing a panhellenic history in the middle of the fourth century, the demarcation line was the return of the Heracleidae, 80 years after the Trojan war. Ephorus deliberately proclaims that he will not begin with the events of myth;[38] in a very Thucydidean passage he says that you cannot give an accurate account of ancient events, as opposed to contemporary ones, since deeds and speeches of the distant past cannot be remembered through such a long time.[39] One of the fullest discussions of this topic comes in Plutarch's Preface to the paired Lives of Theseus and Romulus, which has recently been the subject of a fine analysis by Pelling: in working on Theseus, Plutarch says, he has gone through that time "which can be reached by reasonable inference or where factual history can find a firm foothold", and has now reached a point where he might "say of those remoter ages, 'All that lies beyond are fables and tragic stories…'".[40]

Inevitably, these are broad generalisations about a very long, varied and contentious tradition, one including historians who narrated the exploits of Dionysus in India or Heracles in the West as prototypes of later Hellenic arrivals, or who invented charter myths for Greek colonies.[41] The case of Roman history is particularly challenging because it shares the characteristics both of a universal history and also of a local history, which had to account for origin stories of all kinds, including the fabulous: a narrative of the history of Rome from the origins will start off as a local history but end up as a universal history.[42] Still, Marincola is fundamentally correct to say that the historians ended up with three options when dealing with myth: leave it out, rationalise it, or report it noncommittally, leaving judgement up to the reader.[43] Of the first option, Ephorus may stand as a paradigm; of the second, Dionysius of

Halicarnassus; of the third, Diodorus Siculus, with his careful sequestration of six books of pre-Trojan War mythic material in a self-contained achronological bracket of their own (1.5.1).

The moments when historians confront the problem of myth can provide some of their most interesting moments of self-definition, as they manoeuvre on the boundaries of poetry, drama or philosophy in order to define their projects in the same way that epic or elegiac poets manoeuvre on *their* inter-generic boundaries in order to define *their* projects.[44] We observe an analogous technique already in Herodotus, as Susanne Gödde shows in her paper in this volume, referring to the passage in Book 2 where Herodotus pulls himself up short before he transgresses his self-imposed ban on talking about "divine things" ("which I particularly shun narrating", τὰ ἐγὼ φεύγω μάλιστα ἀπηγέεσθαι, 2.65.2). Livy's Preface is a famous case in point, for it engages throughout with the opposing modes of poetry, most spectacularly at the end, with his wish that he could begin his work, as poets do, with prayers and supplications to the gods and goddesses (*praef.* 13). As Woodman points out, this is "a device which he explicitly borrows from poetry but which serves only to underline the difference between two genres".[45] Earlier in the Preface Livy brushes against history's limits, exploiting the trope of chronological demarcation between history and myth in the process, when he acknowledges that much of the tradition concerning the foundation of the city is "more appropriate to the myths of poetry than to uncorrupted monuments of achievements" (*poeticis magis decora fabulis quam incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis*, *praef.* 6). Here he is following Herodotus and Thucydides in setting up a strategy of skirmishing with opposing genres which will carry on strongly into the first book.[46]

Livy comes close to transgressing into the norms of epic when he carries on from the passage just referred to (*praef.* 7):

> *datur haec uenia antiquitati ut miscendo humana diuinis primordia urbium augustiora faciat; et si cui populo licere oportet consecrare origines suas et ad deos referre auctores, ea belli gloria est populo Romano ut cum suum conditorisque sui parentem Martem potissimum ferat, tam et hoc gentes humanae patiantur aequo animo quam imperium patiuntur.*

> 'This indulgence is granted to antiquity that it makes the first stages of cities more august by mixing the human and divine. [47] And if it ought to be allowed to any people to hallow their origins and make the gods responsible for them, then the glory in war of the Roman people is such that when they say that Mars himself was their father and the father of their founder, the peoples of the earth should put up with this with as much equanimity as they put up with the empire.'

Here he is not saying, as Moles claims, that "it remains a plus if a historical work can include the mingling of human and divine".[48] Livy will report the myth of Romulus' divine parentage because it is in the tradition and has immense consequences, but he is not obliged to vouch for it: this is part of his general policy, carried on from Herodotus' example, of narrating miraculous or supernatural material with distancing formulae of report such as *dicitur*.[49] He acknowledges the power of these myths in bolstering Roman power, just as he understands

that the way the peoples of the empire have to acquiesce in the ideology is independent of the truth of the stories.[50] He knows that these myths are indispensable to the *auctoritas* of the Roman empire, but he also knows that vouching for them in his own right would undermine his own *auctoritas*: the acceptance of the myths is incumbent upon an indulgent Roman posterity and a compliant group of subjects, and Livy does not wish to identify himself with either category. It matters crucially to him, then, to maintain the differences between his genre and those in which such myths are at home. Otherwise he will not be able to sustain the persona necessary to enforce the practical utility that he hopes will come from his history's didactic and moral power, which he expounds in the following sections (9-10), directly addressing the reader as his fellow-citizen (*te…tibi tuaeque reipublicae*).[51] If his history fails to demonstrate in a plausible way what the "life, customs, and men" were like in the past (*quae uita, qui mores..., per quos uiros*, 9), then it will have failed in this objective. His demarcation between the old stories and his own educative project is part of his whole strategy at the beginning of the work.

In his actual narration of the fables surrounding the foundation of the city Livy manages to have his cake and eat it too. He is extremely careful to refrain from endorsing the tradition, but he does not wish to uncouple the beginning of Rome from the myths altogether. He contrives to let the glamour and power of the myths leak in to his narrative to some extent, even if he does not vouch for the details and is regularly rather sardonic in his reportage. A feeling that fate must somehow have been behind the emergence of Rome—the kind of view one can readily imagine a first-century BCE Herodotus expressing—is allowed expression in

his narrative of the conception of Romulus and Remus, even as he holds back from endorsing the divine parentage itself (1.4.1-2):

> *sed debebatur, ut opinor, fatis tantae origo urbis maximique secundum deorum opes imperii principium. ui compressa Vestalis cum geminum partum edidisset, seu ita rata seu quia deus auctor culpae honestior erat, Martem incertae stirpis patrem nuncupat.*

> 'But, so I think, fate made inevitable the origin of such a great city and the beginning of an empire that is the greatest after the power of the gods. When the raped Vestal had given birth to twins, either because she thought so, or else because a god was a more honourable source to put the blame on, she named Mars as the father of the doubtful children.'

After the birth of the twins, an artful word arrangement makes it look for a moment as if we are going to be offered alternative rationalising and supernatural explanations.[52] *seu ita rata seu quia deus*…"Either because she thought so, or else because a god"—here a supplement such as "really was responsible" is taken away from us, as we go on to read "was a more honourable source to put the blame on" (*auctor culpae honestior erat*). Either way, it is only what the priestess said.

The story of the foundation of the Ara Maxima is a related example of this kind of technique. In the Preface Livy said that he would not vouch for mythical events before the foundation of

the city, yet early on in Book 1 he does give us a famous aetiological tale from fable,

involving the demi-god Hercules, from the time before the foundation, even before the fall of

Troy. He artfully inserts it as a flashback in the Romulus narrative, so that it is made into a

subset of history. When he comes to discuss Romulus' religious practices, he tells us that

Romulus performed sacrifices to the other gods according to the Alban rite, but to Hercules

according to the Greek rite, following the way the sacrifices had been established by Evander

(1.7.3). At this point Livy introduces the myth with *memorant*, and proceeds to narrate the

whole colourful tale over the space of two OCT pages (1.7.4-15), including a quotation of

Evander's speech, in which the Arcadian king refers to his mother's prophecy of Hercules'

apotheosis and the cult of the Ara Maxima, to be tended by the nation that will in the future be

the most powerful on earth (1.7.10).[53] Two considerations in particular, both aetiological in

nature, make it important for Livy to bend his generic capacities in order to include this story.

Livy is very interested in aetiology and its contemporary uses, particularly in these early

sections of his work, and here he contrives to deliver two telling aetiological messages

through the medium of the myth without in the end compromising the overall status of his

narrative or his persona. First, he wishes to stress that Greek and Roman culture were

intermingled from the start, and he uses the case study of the *Graecus ritus* in cult: even

before the city was founded, according to this tale, the cult of the site of Rome involved Greek

cult.[54] Second, Livy tangentially suggests at the end of the digression that Romulus' fostering

of the cult of Hercules already anticipates the way that Augustus himself would be behaving

centuries later, in Livy's own day. The cult of Hercules, says Livy, was the only foreign cult

adopted by Romulus, who was 'even then a supporter of the immortality achieved by virtue to

which his own destiny was leading him' (*iam tum immortalitatis uirtute partae ad quam eum*

sua fata ducebant fautor, 1.7.15). In all kinds of ways Romulus is a prototype of Augustus, and one of the resemblances between the two is precisely this care over the cult of deified heroes as a template for their own eventual apotheosis.[55] The kind of pressure that Augustus is putting on the boundaries of contemporary Roman religious practice finds an echo in the pressure Livy puts here on the norms of his narrative.

Passages such as that in Livy's Preface have recently been reinterpreted by Peter Wiseman in a very different way, as a "partisan statement of philosophical scepticism": Wiseman sees Livy as being in a minority, and he argues for recovering a historiographical tradition that accepted "miracle stories and divine epiphanies as a proper part of their subject matter", arguing that the "issue was not one of literary convention but of theological belief".[56] "Even in the sophisticated Rome of the first century B.C.," he concludes, "for many readers the distinction between the proper pursuits of poets and historians was far from clear-cut, and certainly not a simple matter of literary genre."[57] Wiseman certainly presents a rich world of inherited stories about divine interventions and miraculous events, and this world is one with which any student of the period must become familiar; further, he makes an important case for the anomalous position of one historian (although it is not, I think, Livy). Yet the question of genre remains crucial, for the intellectual environment of the first century B.C. was one where different discourses were self-consciously competing with each other in pursuing different objectives and addressing different, though overlapping, audiences. The debates recovered by Wiseman over credulity and scepticism, rather than making generic analysis redundant, were precisely made possible by creative work with generic expectations: no expression of

"theological belief" was possible outside the context of a "literary convention", so that these apparently polarised terms are mutually defining, not mutually exclusive.

In regarding "literary genre" as a "simple matter", Wiseman can cloud the issues by not taking the discursive differences seriously enough. He adduces evidence from a range of different kinds of texts as if they all worked in the same way, and he can overlook fundamental narratological questions such as "Qui parle?" in rather the same way as scholars regularly do when they discuss Herodotus. Varro's *De Gente Populi Romani*, cited by Wiseman as the source of miraculous stories such as the Vestal carrying water in a sieve to vindicate her chastity, was not a work of history. Wiseman quotes Münzer's speculation that Varro lay behind the version of the Vestal story to be found in Pliny's *HN* 28.12, yet Münzer sees here a difference between antiquarianism and formal history: "Es liegt ohne Zweifel hier überall eine mehr antiquarisch als annalistische Überlieferung zugrunde."[58] Similarly, whatever Valerius Maximus' *Facta ac dicta memorabilia* was, and however indebted it may have been to historical and especially Livian sources, it was not a work of formal history in the tradition of Herodotus.[59] "Valerius was writing moral protreptic," comments Wiseman, "not philosophical argument."[60] And not history either.[61] Just as for the Atthidographers, who "did not accept a firm boundary between mythical and historical material, and passed within their works from one to the other",[62] so too for Varro, the material for the antiquarian was the inherited mass of tradition about the city, which it was the job of the scholar to organise and transmit. Valerius similarly sees it as his function to 'repeat what is in the tradition' (*tradita repetuntur*, 1.8.7). These projects have their own merits and their own roles to play within the debate over the past and the divine in the period, but they are not the same merits and roles as

those of formal history, with its political and utilitarian programmes.[63] It is somewhat

misleading to group such disparate authors together as "other historians" to point a contrast

with Livy, as Wiseman does in his concluding paragraph: "For Livy, divine intervention was

not appropriate to 'uncorrupted' history—but we know that other historians thought it was."[64]

Someone who does qualify as "another historian", and who approaches these questions in a

manner significantly different from Livy, is Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Wiseman's

discussion is highly instructive, showing how Dionysius repeatedly narrates myths at length

and foregrounds issues of how to interpret them.[65] Dionysius is to some extent drawn into this

realm by the whole theme of his work: to vindicate the Greek nature of the Romans and to

justify their hegemony to the Greek world, he needs to go far back into mythical time in order

to reach the point of divergence between Roman and Greek, thus involving himself constantly

in adjudicating the merits of the stories in the early mythical tradition.[66] In this way he bears

out the point we remarked on above, that a history of Roman origins will be more involved in

the fabulous material of origin narratives than histories of the later periods. Yet Dionysius'

accounts of apparently divine or miraculous manifestations and his discussions of how to

intrepret them extend down into the time of the Republic, and certainly reflect a different set

of priorities from Livy's. His closer involvement with the antiquarian tradition is partly

responsible for this difference in emphasis, for he can resemble a Varro at times.[67] It is also

helpful to see Dionysius as a self-consciously Herodotean historian: "Just as Dionysius'

model, Herodotus, had been forced to rely on native accounts—some of which would contain

the fanciful or marvellous—so too Dionysius needed to collect and preserve epichoric

traditions."[68] His stance as an outsider is important when we compare him to Livy. Livy too

must sift through his inherited historiographical tradition, but Dionysius is engaged in a different enterprise, reporting and assessing "what the natives say", from the oblique perspective of the non-native.

Dionysius' techniques, nonetheless, are recognisably responsive to the traditions of formal history, however boldly he pushes the envelope at times. His usual procedures are regularly not accommodating to accepting mythic or miraculous narratives on their own terms. Dionysius' procedure is normally as described by Marincola, consisting of "the contrast of a 'mythic' and 'historic' account, the two being separate and distinct, with no commerce between them".[69] Marincola gives the example of the narrative of Heracles in Book 1 (39-42). Here Dionysius first presents a 'mythic' account, with Geryon's cattle and Cacus, and then follows it with a 'truer' account, 'the one used by many of those who have narrated his deeds in the form of history' (1.41.1); this account rationalises the myth by accommodating it to the norms of likelihood and contemporary plausibility, turning Heracles into a conquering general and Cacus into a thuggish local chief.[70] In addition to this technique of pairing 'mythic' and 'truer/historic' versions, Dionysius repeatedly introduces stories of miracles or divine intervention with distancing devices of one kind or another, just like Livy and Herodotus, maintaining in the process a stance of report, of not vouching directly for the material.[71] Dionysius' use of these techniques differs at times, however, in that it can be coupled with reflections on the material which directly qualify the distancing in interesting ways. One of the most remarkable stories narrated by Dionysius exhibits this complex technique, and may stand as an example of how subtle Dionysius' procedures can be, and how fine can be the distinctions between his techniques and those of his Roman counterpart, Livy.

The story is a famous one, related in many other sources,[72] and it concerns the founding of

Alba Longa by Aeneas' son, Ascanius. Dionysius introduces the story by saying that during

the foundation 'a very big marvel is said to have occurred' (θαῦμα μέγιστον λέγεται

γενέσθαι, 1.67.1), and the narrative proceeds in *oratio obliqua* (1.67.1-4). The Penates

brought by Aeneas from Troy and settled in his city of Lavinium now need to be moved to the

new city, yet the night after they are transported to Alba Longa they miraculously move back

to Lavinium. Once more the images are brought back to Alba Longa, and once more they

migrate back to Lavinium. At this point the people leave the Penates where they are, in

Lavinium, and send six hundred of the men from the new city back to Lavinium to take care

of them there. Embedded in this myth we may detect some of the main concerns of the

Roman myth of Trojan origins, even though Dionysius' eventual elaboration will move the

focus somewhat. The Romans want a link back to Troy, but they do not want it to be too

direct: in the developed version of the foundation myth, Aeneas does not simply found Rome,

but founds Lavinium, and then from Lavinium is founded Alba Longa, and from Alba Longa

is founded Rome. Even this chain of connection feels too strong, it seems, with the result that

Alba is obliterated, so that the link in the chain is removed. The Penates cannot be destroyed

along with Alba, so they have to stay in Lavinium, after being temporarily housed in Alba.[73]

The story of the miraculously migrating Penates is partly meant to "explain" how the Penates

come to be still in Lavinium, but it is really there to help focus on the opposing poles of

transience and stability that are so important to the foundation myths: the Penates have to stop

moving eventually, and they have to stop before they come to be rooted in Rome itself. The

Trojan connection, then, is one that is mediated through the Latins to Rome, not directly from

Troy to Rome.[74] This perspective on the myth is further corroboration of the idea that it was

the settlement with the Latins in 338 BC—the year described by De Sanctis as "the turning

point of Roman history"[75]—which generated so much of the work on the Trojan myth in

Roman and Latium.[76] At this point in Roman history the Trojan myth is mainly about the

relations with the Latins: the Romans and Latins are having to renegotiate their relationship,

and the shared cults of the old Latin league are now being redescribed in a new teleological

story about Roman primacy.

The work which this myth is enabled to do in Dionysius is part of his larger interest in the way

the Romans share parts of their inheritance with other Italians and also evolve towards a

unique status as the only true fellow-Hellenes. His own attitude to the Roman links with the

Trojan *sacra* is subtly different from Livy's, for example. Livy has his Camillus stress that it

would have been a religious flaw for the rites of Alba and Lavinium to be transferred to the

city of Rome (5.52.8), yet Dionysius follows up his narrative with a lengthy discussion of the

images of the Penates which he says can actually be seen in the city of Rome, so that it

appears that some representations of the Penates found their way to the city in the end (1.68.1-

69.4): characteristically, he wishes these images to be "really" Greek, images of the Great

Gods worshipped on Samothrace (1.69.4). Further, when he is discussing what the images in

Lavinium and Rome look like, he blends discourses in a way that Roman historians do not.

After reporting what Timaeus said about the images in Lavinium (1.67.4), he uses language of

scrupulous piety to declare that 'in the case of those things which it is not lawful for all to see

I ought neither to hear about them from those who do see them nor to describe them'; he then

goes on to introduce his account of the images in Rome by describing them as 'the things

which I myself know by having seen and concerning which no scruple forbids me to write'.[77]
This is the self-policing pious language one sees in Pindar, for example, or especially in
Herodotus, where language of piety is mingled into language of generic appropriateness.[78]
The authority of the author is multiply overdetermined, as someone who knows how to speak
right about such things on many grounds. It is not a register one encounters in historians
within the Latin tradition.

Similarly, Dionysius is far more engaged than the Latin historians in explicit discussion of the
philosophical issues involved in adjudicating whether and how the gods intervene in human
affairs.[79] His readiness to engage in such discussions once again marks him off from his
counterparts in Latin historiography, as does his directly related interest in using the
traditional myths to endorse religious piety. His self-consciousness about his "Kreuzung der
Gattungen" in this sphere is very clear, for he regularly breaks off his quasi-philosophical
discussions with remarks such as 'this is not an opportune moment to consider the question'
(οὔτε καιρὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι διασκοπεῖν, 1.77.3).[80] His willingness to conduct such debates
by no means necessarily entails endorsing the myths. As we saw in the case of Herodotus,
there is no necessary contradiction between religious perspectives or expressions of piety and
a reluctance to endorse the matter of myth; indeed, as is shown by Dionysius' famous
discussion of the absence in Rome of Greek-style myths about divine misdeeds (2.19.1-2),
certain kinds of myth positively demanded disbelief from the pious.[81]

Still, on occasion Dionysius certainly does cross lines which we do not observe other
historians crossing. He never gives a narrative in his own voice of a characterised divinity in

action, and this represents a crucial continuity with the Herodotean tradition, but twice he does endorse miraculous tales, even if in both cases there is a nod in the direction of his generic allegiances. [82] Both stories involve the piety of Roman women being championed. In perhaps his most dramatic example of endorsing a miraculous tale (that of the statues which spoke to commend the piety of the women of Rome), he opens his narrative by saying that it would be 'fitting to the form of history' (εἴη δ' ἂν ἁρμόττον ἱστορίας σχήματι) and a corrective to the impious to give the account 'as the writings of the pontiffs have it'; he continues by expressing the hope that the pious will be confirmed by the story and the impious confounded (8.56.1). At the end of his narrative of the occurrence, he recalls himself with language reflecting on the appropriateness of his kind of history: 'but concerning this it was not right either to omit the local story (παρελθεῖν τὴν ἐπιχώριον ἱστορίαν) nor to spend too much time on it' (8.56.4). Here the Herodotean duty to report the epichoric accounts is certainly acknowledged, along with a sense of restored appropriateness as he moves out of the miraculous tale, but the powerful impetus of his protreptic purpose has taken historiography into a different area. Similarly, he introduces two miraculous stories about Vestals having their virginity vindicated: again, the fact that the Romans believe the stories and their historians have made much of them is adduced, but subordinated to the strong moral point that the gods are concerned with human goodness and wickedness (2.68.1-2). These stories are the most powerful weapons he deploys in his stated programmatic aim of convincing his Greek audience that the Romans have been from the start a people marked by piety and justice (1.5.3).

Rather than Livy, then, as argued by Wiseman, Dionysius looks more like the odd man out in terms of representing the divine in historiography. The two historians' practices share many distinctive features, as inherited ultimately from Herodotus, but the main explanation for the differences between them is to be sought in their different relationships to the Roman state. As a citizen addressing fellow citizens and narrating to them the past operations of the Senate and people of Rome, Livy is operating from within the web of Roman religious practices. Dionysius is a resident outsider who is addressing fellow Greeks. Livy's representation of things divine is focalised through the Roman state, whereas Dionysius' is focalised through the eyes of an individual from outside the system. Livy has a well developed interest in divine manifestations and the possible patterns of fate, but Livy's "perspective is that of the *human* unfolding of events: the intervention of the gods is no less documented here than it is in other genres and works, such as Virgil's epic. But it is represented from the point of view of the City's interests rather than any individual's, and by deduction rather than explicit identification."[83] Dionysius' perspective is not the same; he is a latter-day Herodotus rather than a native, giving reports to his peers of foreign traditions and endeavouring to make sense of those traditions with the resources available to him from within his own culture.

In fragmentary authors, such as the Latin annalists, we are almost always reliant on testimonia and indirect citation, and without a full text it is naturally very dangerous to judge how they told such stories as the migration of the Penates from Alba Longa to Lavinium.[84] After all, even in the fully preserved text of Herodotus, his very careful and intelligent procedures continue to be misunderstood by many scholars. Or else, imagine if Livy's first Book had not survived in the manuscript tradition, and that all we had was a report of the fact that he had

narrated Hercules' visit to the site of Rome and the foundation of the Ara Maxima. We would have no way of reconstructing the carefully ironic techniques he has used in order to incorporate this story into his narrative without compromising the status of his history as a document of political value. Further, in considering the actual or possible use of distancing techniques in reporting a marvellous event, we must remind ourselves that such distancing techniques are themselves by no means transparent to interpretation. In particular, reported speech does not automatically betoken either personal scepticism or the undermining of the credit or power of the reported story.[85]

The histories of the period, then, engage in serious reflection on the possibilities of divine intersection with human affairs, just as Herodotus did, even if Livy's reflection is more densely embedded in his narrative while Dionysius' is regularly more extrinsic, attached to the first person voice of the narrator. It is no part of my argument that historical texts had no role to play in the great debates about religion at the transition between Republic and Principate which Wiseman evokes so vividly. Yet we must pay attention to the specific practices of the texts if we are to do justice to the role they play, and we cannot do this without taking their self-conscious generic allegiances seriously: Dionysius' infringements, for example, lose some of their power if we do not register them against some kind of expectation of what historiography can tolerate. The differences between these forms of writing and other forms always potentially matter, and moments when writers talk about points of correspondence with other genres are proof that the issue was alive, not that it was dead. Wiseman adduces Diodorus Siculus' preface as evidence for "a world in which prophecy, poetry, history and moral exhortation were not always thought of as separate

conceptual categories",[86] yet Diodorus is playing up the separateness of the categories as much as softening them when he claims that his form of history is even better equipped to contribute to piety and justice than the poets' fictitious storytelling about things in Hades (1.2.2). As in this particular example, it is regularly the dialogue with alternative possibilities that sharpens the points at issue, just as the dialogue between epic and elegy or history defines what epic is, by confrontation and transgression. Historiography keeps reasserting its tradition and redefining itself as it flirts with the possibility of contamination.[87] In the case of Livy it is possible to imagine why he might be interested in the boundaries of representing the divine in history under the pressure of what Augustus was doing to rewrite the boundaries of representing the divine in Roman religion as he wrote. In the case of Dionysius, his occasional self-conscious daring in bringing philosophical discussion to bear on striking *miracula* gives dramatic power to his rhetoric as he tries to convince his fellow Greeks that the empire they inhabit is run by a pious people who have the sanction of the gods on their side.

In a sense my conclusion is a minimalist one: the strongest line of demarcation between formal history and other literary forms is that history does not introduce gods as characters into the narrative, while a strong but less watertight demarcation is to be found in historiography's regular distancing of other "fabulous" or "mythical" material. But I have been taking the norms of historiography as one example of a larger claim, that when we are considering any example of the interaction between what we call "literature" and what we call "religion", we must always be alert to the formal issues if we are to do justice to the social, political or religious work the texts may be doing. Only by paying

careful attention to the creative work of a Dionyius or a Livy with the forms of their genre can we see the distinctions between their kinds of authority and their relationships with their audiences. Generic analysis does not extrapolate these texts into an ethereal formalism, but enables us to recover the distinctive power of their interventions into the debates of the day. As in the case of the founder of the form of historiography, Herodotus, the formal and historicising readings fold into, and reinforce, each other.

<div align="right">

Denis Feeney

Princeton University

</div>

Bibliography

Bannet 1993, E.T.: *Postcultural Theory: Critical Theory after the Marxist Paradigm*, Basingstoke/London 1993.

Barthes 1972, R.: *Mythologies*, translated by A. Lavers, New York 1972.

Bruster 2003, D.: *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture: Early Modern Literature and the Cultural Turn*, New York 2003.

Calame 2003, C.: *Myth and History in Ancient Greece: The Symbolic Creation of a Colony*, translated by D.W. Berman, Princeton 2003.

Cartledge/Greenwood 2002, P./E: "Herodotus as a critic: truth, fiction, polarity", in: E.J. Bakker, I.J.F. de Jong and H. van Wees (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Herodotus*, Leiden 2002, 351-71.

Clay 1983, J.S.: *The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Men in the Odyssey*, Princeton 1983.

Conte 1994, G.B.: *Genres and Readers: Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny's Encyclopedia*, translated by G.W. Most, Baltimore/London 1994.

Cornell 1995, T.J.: *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000-264 BC)*, London 1995.

Csapo 2000, E.: "From Aristophanes to Menander? Genre transformation in Greek comedy", in: Depew/Obbink 2000, 115-33.

Davies 2004, J.P.: *Rome's Religious History: Livy, Tacitus and Ammianus on Their Gods*, Cambridge 2004.

De Sanctis 1907, G.: *Storia dei Romani I-II: La conquista del primato in Italia*, Florence 1960^2 (Turin 1907^1)

Depew/Obbink 2000, M./D. (edd.): *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society*, Cambridge, Mass./London 2000.

Derow/Forrest 1982, P.S../W.G.: "An inscription from Chios", *ABSA* 77, 1982, 79-92.

Dillery 2005, J.: "Greek sacred history", *AJPh* 126, 2005, 505-26.

Edgeworth 2001, R.J.E.: "Ascanius' mother", *Hermes* 129, 2001, 246-50.

Elliot 2005, J.: *Poetry and History in Ennius' Annales*, PhD. Columbia University 2005.

Feeney 1991, D.: *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition*, Oxford 1991.

Feeney 1998, D.: *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts, and Beliefs*, Cambridge 1998.

Feeney 2003, D.: Review of Depew/Obbink 2000, *JRS* 93, 2003, 337-9.

Feeney 2004, D.: "Interpreting sacrificial ritual in Roman poetry: Disciplines and their models", in: A. Barchiesi, J. Rüpke and S. Stephens (edd..), *Rituals in Ink: A Conference on Religion and Literary Production in Ancient Rome*, Stuttgart 2004, 1-21.

Feldherr 1998, A.: *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1998.

Flower 1994, M.A.: *Theopompus of Chios: History and Rhetoric in the Fourth Century BC*, Oxford 1994.

Ford 1992, A.: *Homer: The Poetry of the Past*, Ithaca/London 1992.

Forsythe 1999, G.: *Livy and Early Rome: A Study in Historical Method and Judgment*, Stuttgart 1999.

Fowler 2000, D.: *Roman Constructions: Readings in Postmodern Latin*, Oxford 2000.

Gallagher/Greenblatt 2000, C.S./S.: *Practicing New Historicism*, Chicago 2000.

Frier 1979, B.W.: *Libri Annales Pontificum Maximorum: The Origins of the Annalistic Tradition*, Rome 1979.

Gabba 1991, E.: *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford 1991.

Gerber 1982, D.E.: *Pindar's "Olympian One": A Commentary*, Toronto 1982.

Gould 1989, J.: *Herodotus*, New York 1989.

Gruen 1992, E.S.: *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*, Ithaca/London 1992.

Harrison 2000, T.: *Divinity and History: The Religion of Herodotus*, Oxford 2000.

Hillen 2003, H.J.: *Von Aeneas zu Romulus: die Legenden von der Gründung Roms*, Düsseldorf 2003.

Hinds 1987, S.: *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse*, Cambridge 1987.

Hornblower 2001, S.: "Epic and epiphanies: Simonides and the "New Simonides"", in: D. Boedeker and D. Sider (edd.), *The New Simonides: Contexts of Praise and Desire*, Oxford 2001, 135-47.

Huber 1965, L.: "Herodots Homerverständnis", in: H. Flashar und K. Gaiser (Hrsg..), *Synusia: Festgabe für Wolfgang Schadewaldt*, Pfullingen 1965, 29-52.

Jörgensen 1904, O.: "Das Auftreten der Götter in den Büchern ι—μ der Odysee", *Hermes* 39, 1904, 357-82.

Köhnken 1974, A.: "Pindar as innovator: Poseidon Hippios and the relevance of the Pelops story in *Olympian* 1", *CQ* 24, 1974, 199-206.

Kraus 1994, C.S.: *Livy Ab Urbe Condita Book VI*, Cambridge 1994.

Kraus/Woodman 1997, C.S./A.J.: *Latin Historians*, Oxford 1997.

Lamarque/Olsen 1994, P./S.H.: *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective*, Oxford 1994.

Levene 1993, D.S.: *Religion in Livy*, Leiden 1993.

Lloyd 1979, G.: *Magic, Reason and Experience: Studies in the Origins and Development of Greek Science*, Cambridge 1979.

Lloyd 1987, G.: *The Revolutions of Wisdom: Studies in the Claims and Practice of Ancient Greek Science*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1987.

Marincola 1997a, J.: *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography*, Cambridge 1997.

Marincola 1997b, J.: "Odysseus and the historians", *Histos* 1, 1997

(www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/1997/marincola.html).

Marincola 1999, J.: "Genre, convention, and innovation in Greco-Roman historiography"

in: C. Kraus (ed.), *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Texts*,

Leiden 1999, 281-324.

Mikalson 1983, J.D.: *Athenian Popular Religion*, Chapel Hill/London 1983.

Mikalson 1991, J.D.: *Honor Thy Gods: Popular Religion in Greek Tragedy*, Chapel

Hill/London 1991.

Mikalson 2003, J.D.: *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars*, Chapel Hill/London

2003.

Miles 1995, G.B.: *Livy: Reconstructing Early Rome*, Ithaca/London 1995.

Moles 1993a, J.: "Truth and untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides", in: C. Gill und T.P.

Wiseman (edd.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Exeter 1993, 88-121.

Moles 1993b, J.: "Livy's preface", *PCPhS* 39, 1993, 141-68.

Most 2000, G.: "Generating genres: the idea of the tragic", in: Depew/Obbink 2000, 15-

35.

Munson 2001, R.V.: *Telling Wonders: Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work*

of Herodotus, Michigan 2001.

Münzer 1937, F.: "Die römischen Vestalinnen bis zur Kaiserzeit", *Philologus* 92, 1937,

47-67, 199-222.

Ogilvie 1965, R.M.: *A Commentary on Livy Books 1-5*, Oxford 1965.

Parker 1997, R.: "Gods cruel and kind: tragic and civic ideology", in: C. Pelling (ed.), *Greek Tragedy and the Historian*, Oxford 1997, 143-60.

Pearson 1975, L.: "Myth and *archaeologia* in Italy and Sicily—Timaeus and his predecessors", *YCA* 24, 1975, 171-95.

Pelling 1999, C.: "Epilogue", in: C. Kraus (ed.), *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Texts*, Leiden 1999, 325-60.

Pelling 2002, C.: *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies*, London 2002.

Porter 2004, J.: "Homer: the history of an idea', in: R. Fowler (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, Cambridge 2004, 318-37.

Thomas 2000, R.: *Herodotus in Context: Ethnography, Science and the Art of Persuasion*, Cambridge 2000.

Veyne 1988, P.: *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths? An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination*, translated by P. Wissing, Chicago 1988.

Wardman 1960, A.E.: "Myth in Greek historiography", *Historia* 9, 1960, 403-13.

White 1978, H.: *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore/London 1978.

Wiseman 2002, T.P.: "History, poetry and *Annales*', in D.S. Levene and D.P. Nelis (edd.), *Clio and the Poets: Augustan Poetry and the Traditions of Ancient Historiography*, Leiden 2002, 331-62.

Woodman 1988, A.J.: *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies*, London/Sydney 1988.

Woodman 2003, A.J.: "Poems to historians: Catullus 1 and Horace *Odes* 2.1", in: D. Braund und C. Gill (edd.), *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome: Studies in Honour of T.P. Wiseman*, Exeter 2003, 191-216.

---

[2] Fowler 2000, 131.

[3] Fowler 2000, 111; cf. 120: "the opposition of textuality and history is a meaningless one since history is only accessible in discourse".

[4] Here I summarise points from Feeney 2004, 3-4, 18-20.

[5] Gallagher/Greenblatt 2000, 14-15: "If every trace of a culture is part of a massive text…"; "if an entire culture is regarded as a text". Cf. ibid., 26, for the debt of their New Historicism to the symbolic anthropology of Clifford Geertz.

[6] White 1978, 94-5 on synecdoche. Bruster 2003, 27, 33 and 43-4 against synecdoche in historicist models; cf. Bannet 1993, 41-4.

[7] Feeney 2004, 18; cf. White 1978, 94: "Nor is it unusual for literary theorists, when they are speaking about the 'context' of a literary work, to suppose that this context … has a concreteness and an accessibility that the work itself can never have, as if it were easier to perceive the reality of a past world put together from a thousand historical documents than it is to probe the depths of a single literary work that is present to the critic studying it."

[8] Conte 1994, 125; cf. Bruster 2003, who likewise highlights "the mediating roles of convention and praxis", particularly genre (61; cf. xvi). See Marincola 1999 for a powerful argument in favour of a more Contean conception of genre in the analysis of historiography.

[9] Here I reprise arguments from Feeney 2003, a review of Depew/Obbink 2000.

[10] For severe reservations about correspondence or reference theories of literature, see Lamarque/Olsen 1994, Chapter 5, 107-37.

[11] Cf. Csapo 2000, 128: "Artistic genres have a processual history of their own and a relative autonomy from other forms of cultural production" (with further references to discussions of the "'semi-autonomy' of art" in n.38).

[12] Lamarque/Olsen 1994, 451.

[13] Most 2000, 17. Cf. Feeney 2003, 339 on the papers in Depew/Obbink 2000 by Stephen Hinds and Don Fowler, which "show that the most apparently esoteric issues of genre-bending loop back into culturally-grounded readings, of Roman constructions of gender (Hinds) and of parental-filial relationships (Fowler)".

[14] Wiseman 2002, 362.

[15] It was a pleasure to see how much Susanne Gödde and I agreed in our independent approaches to Herodotus' representations of the divine; I learnt much from her presentation.

[16] Huber 1965 remains fundamental. I discuss Herodotus' new epistemology in more detail in Chapter 3 of a forthcoming book, *Charts of Roman Time* (California University Press).

[17] Clay 1983, 12-20; Ford 1992, 60-1. On the crucial importance of this distinction in the historiographical tradition from Herodotus on, see Marincola 1997a, 63-86.

[18] As Moles 1993a, 97 paraphrases 7.20.2-7.21.1; cf. Gould 1989, 125.

[19] Harrison 2000, 203, 205 on 7.170-1.

[20] Harrison 2000, 24-30, 82-3; cf. Mikalson 2003, 145.

[21] Lloyd 1979 and 1987; Thomas 2000 makes many important connections between the intellectual and performance environments of Herodotus and his peers in medicine and science.

[22] Lloyd 1979, 250; cf. Lloyd 1987, 99.

[23] Lloyd 1987, 70.

[24] Feeney 1991, 261-2; cf. Mikalson 2003, 144-55, and Susanne Gödde's paper in this volume.

[25] For interesting discussion of the way this report of Pan's epiphany is part of the larger narrative of Marathon, see Hornblower 2001, 143-5. Similarly (to give the example used by Hornblower 2001, 136), Thucydides does not say that Athena destroyed the Athenian defensive tower at Lecythus, but that Brasidas thought she did, or at least acted as if he did (4.116).

[26] This was clearly laid out by Jörgensen 1904; cf. Clay 1983, 21-5; Mikalson 1983, 112; Feeney 1991, 85-6.

[27] See Moles 1993a, 92-8 and Marincola 1997b for the importance of the persona of Odysseus to Herodotus, as a man who travels widely and observes the customs of different people.

[28] On the general language of "the gods" or "god" used by orators and historians, as opposed to poets, see Mikalson 1983, 63-8; cf. Feeney 1998, 81: "it holds broadly true that the ordinary human in the ordinary course of events, without privileged access to knowledge of divinity's action, must necessarily speak in this general manner".

[29] Parker 1997, 158.

[30] Parker 1997, 158; cf. Mikalson 1983, 66-73 and Mikalson 1991 *passim*.

[31] On the issues, Feeney 1998, 22-5; cf. Parker 1997, 159: "Tragedy expresses some part of what it was like to believe in the Greek gods no less than prose texts do."

[32] Pelling 1999, 334-5 (original emphasis).

[33] For a compelling and lucid account of Herodotus' perception of divine forces at work in his historical account, see Munson 2001, 183-206; cf. Cartledge/Greenwood 2002, 357-8: "Thus Herodotus claims to be able to infer divine involvement in human events, but he achieves these inferences through a process of independent inquiry based on the realm of human knowledge." Mikalson 2003 is very much in accord with such positions: note esp. 146.

[34] Serv. 1.4.4-6 Thilo/Hagen; Posidonius fr. 44 Edelstein/Kidd, 1972-88.

[35] Feeney 1991, 261; cf. Hornblower 2001.

[36] Important discussion in Calame 2003, 1-34; n.b. 26: "Difference in content forms the division less between myth and history than between historiography and poetry."

[37] Porter 2004, 320.

[38] *FGrH* 70 T 8 = Diod. Sic. 4.1.3.

[39] *FGrH* 70 F 9 = Harp. s.v. ἀρχαίως.

[40] *Thes*. 1, following the translation of Pelling 2002, 171.

[41] On such histories, see, conveniently, Pearson 1975. We return shortly to the question of how such historians may have reported matters of this kind.

[42] I thank Glenn Most for drawing my attention to this issue. Elliott 2005, 75-6 makes the point, appositely citing Frier 1979, 218: my thanks to her for allowing me to cite her as yet unpublished PhD dissertation.

[43] Marincola 1997a, 118, part of a very valuable discussion; cf. Wardman 1960, 410-12; Veyne 1988, 71-8, on the options of rationalising and *relata referre*, recounting the tradition, what people say, without necessarily vouching for it. On the important fragment of Theopompus about his strategy concerning myth (*FGrH* 115 F 381), see the decisive arguments of Flower 1994, 34-5, proving that Theopompus claims to be signalling explicitly when he incorporates myth, unlike his predecessors. Some might say that this shows the distinction did not matter, but of course it shows the reverse.

[44] On the generic interface between history and myth/epic, see Woodman 1988, index s.v. "historiography, ancient, and poetry"; Moles 1993a and 1993b. As Hornblower 2001, 146 remarks, in advancing a strong claim for Pan's role in Herodotus 6.105.1-2: "Generic crossover can be a very arresting device". For the analogy with epic and elegiac poets, see, conveniently, Hinds 1987, esp. 115-17. Woodman 2003, 213 intriguingly suggests, on the basis of Horace's allusions at the end of *C*. 2.1, that Pollio's Preface to his Histories ended with a transitional generic distinction between his former genre of tragedy and his new genre of history.

[45] Woodman 2003, 213; cf. Feldherr 1998, 78; see Moles 1993b, 156-8 for a full exploration of the engagement with poetry at this point in the Preface.

[46] A classic example of a process referred to by White 1987, 95: "The implication is that historians *constitute* their subjects as possible objects of narrative representation by the very language they use to *describe* them" (original emphasis). Feldherr 1998, 75-8 well brings out the power of the generic confrontations here. Moles 1993b, 149 demonstrates the Herodotean and Thucydidean force of Livy's approach to the distinction between myth and history, especially in his Herodotean declarations that he sets no store by how stories of this kind will be judged (*ea nec adfirmare nec refellere in animo est* §6; *haud in magno equidem ponam discrimine*, §8).

[47] As Tony Woodman points out to me, the first quoted sentence has a focus on the present that is regularly overlooked: as he puts it, *datur haec uenia antiquitati* etc. means (a) "we concede it to the ancients that *they* mingle human and divine and thereby make the origins of cities more august" and (b) "we concede to <the notion of> antiquity that, by mingling human and divine, *we* make the origins…"

[48] Moles 1993b, 149; his footnote 40 *ad loc*. refers to Cic. *Inv*. 1.23, where Cicero is making a quite different point, advising the orator to show that his case involves the whole *res publica*, including the immortal gods. I should say that this is practically the only sentence in Moles' important article with which I differ. See, rather, Feldherr 1998, 64-5.

[49] Levene 1993, 16-30; Feldherr 1998, 64-78; Forsythe 1999, 87-98.

[50] For the role of the Romulus and Remus story in relations with the Greek East, see the remarkable inscription from Chios (from the late third or early second century BCE) which speaks in language close to Livy's of how the story of the twins' parentage might be rightly considered true because of the courage of the Romans (following the interpretation of Derow/Forrest 1982, 86).

[51] Kraus in Kraus/Woodman 1997, 55-6; cf. Kraus 1994, 13-15.

[52] As indeed it is taken by Ogilvie 1965, 48, who sees here a "juxtaposition of a natural and a supernatural explanation"; I agree rather with Forsythe 1999, 92. My thanks to Julia Dyson for discussion of this point.

[53] See Forsythe 1999, 95 for a judicious analysis.

[54] The fact that this is the *single* such cult maintained by Romulus is part of a larger project of minimising, even while acknowledging, the degree of Greek penetration of Roman culture (*haec tum sacra Romulus una ex omnibus peregrina suscepit*, 1.7.15).

[55] On Livy's parallelisms between Romulus and Augustus, see Miles 1995, 164-6.

[56] Wiseman 2002, 353.

[57] Wiseman 2002, 362.

[58] Münzer 1937, 205, quoted by Wiseman 2002, 337 n.31.

[59] Wiseman 2002, 350-2 well brings out the intertextuality of Valerius' introduction with Livy's Preface, but while he says that "Valerius uses the idiom of historiography", referring to *omnis aeui gesta* and *historiae series*, these phrases actually refer to what Valerius says he is *not* going to write.

[60] Wiseman 2002, 352.

[61] Any more than was the biographer Plutarch, likewise adduced by Wiseman 2002, 347.

[62] Pelling 2002, 188.

[63] Marincola 1999, 307-8 well cautions against blunt demarcations between 'antiquarianism' and 'history', yet the differences between Varro's procedures and Livy's are tangible.

[64] Wiseman 2002, 362.

[65] Wiseman 2002, 343-7.

[66] Marincola 1997a, 121-2; cf. Gabba 1991, 117-18 on Dionysius' "demonstration of the political theory proclaiming Rome's Greekness. This is the basic reason why he could not follow Livy in eliminating the fables of a poetically coloured tradition that predated the foundation of Rome and described that very foundation."

[67] Gabba 1991, 97-8.

[68] Marincola 1997a, 123; cf. Gabba 1991, 96: "he was still subject to the principle elaborated by Herodotus: how could he not report what he found in the Roman sources?" For explicit references to epichoric versions, see 1.55.1, 8.56.4.

[69] Marincola 1997a, 122.

[70] Marincola 1997a, 122-3.

[71] Especially when introducing the "more mythical" of his paired versions of past events (e.g., 1.77.2, 2.56.2).

[72] Wiseman 2002, 352-3.

[73] The tradition capitalises on the idea of Alba as a temporary staging post for the Penates in the narrative of the Gallic sack of Rome, by choosing the significant name 'Albinius' for the man who makes his family get out of the cart to transport the Vestals and their cult objects to Caere out of the path of the marauding Gauls (Liv. 5.40.9-10, with Ogilvie 1965 *ad loc*. for the antiquity of the name).

[74] This interest in the degree to which the Trojan connection is mediated via the Latins provides the context for the ambiguity in Virgil and Livy over whether or not the son of Aeneas, the founder of Alba Longa, had a Trojan or a Latin woman for a mother: see Miles 1995, 39-40 on Liv. 1.3.2 and Edgeworth 2001 on Virg. *Aen*. 1.267-71 and 6.763-6.

[75] So Cornell 1995, 348, referring to De Sanctis 1907, 267.

[76] Gruen 1992, 28-9; Hillen 2003, 52.

[77] I give the Loeb translation of 1.67.4-68.1.

[78] On this blending in Pindar's *Olympian* 1, see Köhnken 1974, 203-4, Gerber 1982, 69-70; in Herodotus, see Mikalson 2003, 143-5 and Susanne Gödde's paper in this volume. Dionysius' language here is markedly Herodotean (cf. e.g. Hdt. 2.61.1, 170-171.1, 86.2).

[79] Note especially 1.77.3; 2.20.1-2, 61.3, 68.1-2.

[80] Cf. 2.21.1, 61.3.

[81] Feeney 1998, 48.

[82] Wiseman 2002, 345-6 on 2.68.1-2 and 8.56.

[83] Davies 2004, 141 (original emphasis). As he goes on to say: "These are matters of literary genre, not personal belief, or philosophical speculation." Levene 1993 likewise argues for the crucial artistic power of Livy's subtle representation of divine forces at work in human history: "He binds together great portions of

the history with a religious sub-text working consistently beneath the surface of what is ostensibly a largely secular narrative" (241).

[84] Wiseman 2002, 352-3 collects the sources for the Penates' migration. Note the caution of Marcinola 1999, 314 on the question of lumping together in "unitary tradition" the authors usually referred to as "the Latin annalists".

[85] Harrison 2000, 24-30; Mikalson 2003, 145; Davies 2004, 51-61.

[86] Wiseman 2002, 359.

[87] Cf. the dynamic, "Contean" view of genre espoused for the study of historiography by Marincola 1999, 282: "genre is not a static concept, functioning as a 'recipe' with a fixed set of ingredients that the work must contain, but rather is dynamic and should be seen as a 'strategy of literary composition'".