Herodotus Introduction Information

Excerpt from How to Read a Book by Adler & Van Doren:

“In tackling a difficult book for the first time, read it through without ever stopping to look up or ponder the things you do not understand right away” (p. 36)

How I read the first five chapters of Herodotus Book I: The Greek grammar shows that Herodotus is using the ‘indirect statement’ form of narration in the first five chapters. This means that he is not necessarily vouching for this information the same way that he does for the rest of his History, which is told mostly in a direct fashion. Herodotus changes the form of his narration in the original Greek with chapter 6, the story of Gyges. Before this, Herodotus is dealing with a time of legend and mythology in the first five chapters and has no primary evidence to help support these assertions. As such, he attributes this information to either the Persian ‘wise men’ or to the Greeks in general as hearsay.

A convergence of dynasties – Herodotus Book I (dates are an approximation of reigns BCE, information taken from various authors including Herodotus, Grene, Morkot, DeWald & Marincola).

**Lydia**

Mermnadae

Gyges 678-652

Ardys 651-603

Sadyattes 602-590

Alyattes 589-559

Croesus 560-546

**Media**

Medes

Deioces 704-647

Phraortes 647-625

Cyaxeres 625-585

Astyages 585-550

**Persia**

Persians

Cyrus II 559-530

Cambyses 529-522

Darius I 521-486

Xerxes 485-465