

Lessons from the Past



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*The Moral Use of History
in Fourth-Century Prose*

Frances Pownall

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Preface



This book began in 1990, when I commenced the research for my doctoral dissertation (completed in 1993), an examination of the tendency of certain Greek historians of the fourth century B.C. to sacrifice accuracy, relevance, and impartiality to the presentation of moral exempla. I focused my study upon Xenophon's *Hellenica*, Ephorus's *History*, and Theopompus's *Philippica* because these works all interpret the past in such a way as to provide the most effective moral exemplum, and are in a good enough state of preservation to allow us to form an impression of their general character and methodology. Moreover, the comparatively scant scholarly attention which they received until that time left much terrain for future study.

Since 1990, important new works have appeared. To supplement Vivienne Gray's excellent *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica* of 1989, one can now turn to Jean-Claude Riedinger's *Étude sur les Helléniques*, Christopher Tuplin's *The Failings of Empire*, and John Dillery's *Xenophon and the History of His Times*. Theopompus has been the subject of two new monographs, Gordon Shrimpton's *Theopompus the Historian* and Michael Flower's *Theopompus of Chios*, effectively depriving him of the title that he received in Paul Pédech's monograph of 1989, *Trois historiens méconnus*:

Théopompe—Duris—Phylarche. Only Ephorus now lacks a thorough and up-to-date re-examination.

Of course, others have noted the presence of moral elements in the works of Xenophon, Ephorus, and Theopompus, but each historian has generally been considered independently of the others. To my knowledge, there has not yet been a systematic examination of the interpretation of the past as moral exempla in fourth-century historians or the intellectual conditions that brought it about. It is my hope that the present study will fill this gap. Moreover, during the process of revisions, I gradually realized that what began as a relatively narrow study of fourth-century historiography also has a wider contribution to make to current debates on literacy and orality, the literary resistance to democratic ideology, and the education of the elite in Athens.

As one might expect of any work of scholarship with such a long gestation, my debts are many. The largest is owed to Malcolm B. Wallace, my supervisor and now friend, without whose unstinting advice and encouragement I could not have completed either dissertation or book. I should also like to thank the members of my supervisory committee at the University of Toronto, Joan Bigwood, Brad Inwood, Catherine Rubincam, and John Traill, as well as the internal and external examiners, Doug Hutchinson and Iain Bruce, for their useful suggestions and general encouragement. John Wickersham kindly gave me permission to use his unpublished translation of the Ephorus *testimonia* and fragments, along with his best wishes.

I must also acknowledge the University of Toronto, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Crake Foundation for their generous financial support in the various stages of the completion of my doctorate. For practical assistance of all kinds during the writing of my dissertation, I owe much thanks to my friends and colleagues in the Departments of Classics at the University of Toronto, Mount Allison University, and the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

I began the long journey of transforming the dissertation into a book in the most pleasant and stimulating surroundings imaginable, at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, D.C.; I am grateful to the Advisory and Selection Committee for choosing me as one of the inaugural Summer Scholars, to the University of Alberta for providing me with funding to attend, to Deborah Boedeker and Kurt Raaflaub for creating an atmosphere of friendly scholarship, and to my fellow participants, especially Celia Luschnig, for their friendship and support.

I am the grateful recipient of support and encouragement throughout the many years of revisions from various friends and colleagues; in addition to those listed above, I should like to thank Gordon Shrimpton, with whom it is always a pleasure to discuss fourth-century Greek historiography, my colleagues past and present at the University of Alberta, especially Bob Buck, Chris Mackay, and John Wilson, and my graduate students, Theresa Fuller, Ron Kroeker, and Kelly MacFarlane. I should also like to thank my previous editor, Ellen Bauerle, who first encouraged me to send my manuscript to the University of Michigan Press, and her successor, Collin Ganio, for seeing the manuscript through later stages. The anonymous referees of the press made many useful criticisms and gave me much food for further thought. Any errors or omissions that remain should be attributed to my own obduracy rather than to these scholars.

I owe the largest debt of all to my husband, Joe, who has provided me with love and friendship, sensible advice, and much computer knowledge since this work was in its infancy; to my parents and parents-in-law, Anne and Henry Skoczylas and Gertrude and Malcolm Pownall, who have provided both moral and financial support; and to my daughters, Katy and Molly, who have tolerated an often distracted mother in the final stages of this book and who daily remind me of what is truly important in life.

For most of the authors mentioned in this book, citations are to the most recent Oxford Classical Text. For the fragmentary historians, reference is to F. Jacoby's *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (*FGrHist*), under the fragment (F) or *testimonium* (T) number. A complete translation of the Jacoby corpus of Theopompus can be found in Gordon Shrimpton's *Theopompus the Historian*; a translation of some of the fragments of Ephorus (not using Jacoby's numbering system) has been included in the new edition of G. L. Barber's *The Historian Ephorus*. The fragments of the sophists have been collected in the authoritative work by Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Greek and German), henceforth abbreviated as DK; English translations can be found in Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, and Rosamond Kent Sprague, *The Older Sophists*. The abbreviation LSJ is to H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Dictionary*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940).

Versions of portions of chapters 3 and 5 have appeared in print: "Condemnation of the Impious in Xenophon's *Hellenica*," *HTR* 91 (1998): 251–77, and "Theopompus' View of Demosthenes," in *In Altum: Seventy-Five*

Years of Classical Studies in Newfoundland, ed. Mark Joyal (St. John's, NF: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2001), 63–71. Permission to reprint is gratefully acknowledged. I completed researching and writing this book in the fall of 2000 and, for the most part, have been unable to take into account scholarship published thereafter.