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**Ephorus, Ideal Communities, and Greece:
Philosophical Themes in a Universal History**

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by

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Dedication

To my parents.

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Abstract

Ephorus, Ideal Communities, and Greece: Philosophical Themes in a Universal History

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Ephorus was an historian held in high esteem by ancient authors, but his reputation has not fared as well among modern scholars. He has been accused of apolitical simplicity, lack of judgment in selecting sources, political bias, and, most damagingly, choosing or even distorting his material for the purpose of creating moral *exempla*. This characterization, however, is unfair to Ephorus and his *History*. Analysis of the fragments does not reveal an explicitly moral purpose to his work, thus he must be freed from the negative implications that such a purpose entails. Nevertheless, as this study will demonstrate, Ephorus did have a concept of ideal communities and how they functioned to ensure internal concord and external security, one that apparently approached historical reality in Scythia and Crete. Both communities, according to Ephorus, are characterized by an aversion to wealth, harmony amongst citizens, and shared communal ownership and responsibility. These themes appear again in Ephorus' narrative of the 5th and 4th centuries, most prominently in the histories of Athens, Sparta, and Thebes. Furthermore, these themes are related to philosophical and political

discourses of the 4th century found in the major philosophical schools. Thus, while Ephorus should not be considered a moral historian, his worldview was shaped by the philosophy of the 4th century, which helped in the creation of an organized, though possibly overly schematized, understanding of history.

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Introduction

Ephorus' reputation as an historian declined dramatically during the centuries separating the ancient world from the modern.¹ In ancient times he was generally, though not universally, held in high esteem, and, though not without acknowledged faults, he was considered a careful scholar and a reliable source of information and insight. As the first universal historian he held an important place in the development of ancient historiography, as evident from his continued use several hundred years into the Common Era. His *History*, a vast accumulation of sources ranging from complete and fragmentary historians to poets, political treatises, and epigraphic texts, represented much of the collected learning up to the middle of the 4th century BCE. Its complete survival would surely be an invaluable resource both for his own views and the views of his sources.

In modern times, however, his honored position was overturned by scholars of the 19th and early 20th centuries;² “No ancient writer could withstand the combined assaults of

¹ Schepens, 1977: 95-99.

² The primary documents used in the study of Ephorus are the roughly 270 testimonia and fragments collected by Jacoby (Jacoby, 1926: FGrH 70). These fragments come from a diverse group of authors beginning in the Hellenistic Period and continuing several hundred years into the Common Era. This paper will primarily confine itself to this material in its analysis of Ephorus, since in these cases Ephorus is cited by name and can therefore more reliably be attached to the content. Some scholars, additionally, have treated Books XI-XVI of Diodorus Siculus as a close rendering of Ephorus' account of the corresponding period, and thus material suitable for the reconstruction of the *History* (Barber, 1935: 21-22; Hudak, 2009: 74-86). There are indeed correspondences between the Ephoran narrative, which can be deduced from fragments contained in other authors, and the account of Diodorus. See Hudak (2009: 51-86) for a recent treatment of the correspondences. Hudak concludes: “...with the proper caution we should be able to gain a general sense of Ephorus' sentiments based on the narrative of books eleven through fifteen.” 86. In his 1994 study of hegemony in the works of the Greek historians, Wickersham (150-176) includes a section in which he draws conclusions about Ephorus on the assumption that Diodorus has reproduced his narrative, but refuses to definitively accept it. An influential study by Sacks (1991), however, has cast doubt on Diodorus' relationship to Ephorus and his perceived lack of originality. He shows that programmatic statements about history writing found in Diodorus do not match those that remain in the other fragments of Ephorus; thus Diodorus needs to be credited with more original thinking than he has previously been granted (1991: 33-36). Since then, scholars have been more skeptical about using the material from Diodorus to determine Ephorus' exact views (Wickersham, 1994: 150-177; Pownall, 2004: 117-119). I

Wilamowitz, Schwartz, and Jacoby, who made Ephorus the incarnation of all that was objectionable in Greek historiography,” writes Fornara.³ He has been accused of apolitical simplicity, lack of judgment in selecting sources, political bias, and, most damagingly, choosing or even distorting his material for the purpose of creating moral *exempla*. The latter criticism stems primarily from the supposed influence of Isocrates, who was purported to be Ephorus’ teacher in the ancient sources, a fact that colors the analysis of the fragments. In fact, modern judgments of Ephorus are often tangential assertions based on the works of other writers from whom Ephorus supposedly drew inspiration, like Isocrates, or who adopted the views of Ephorus wholesale, like Diodorus Siculus. Only slowly over the past 60 years, through more generous studies of Ephorus and these other writers, has his reputation begun to recover.

The earliest modern studies of Ephorus emphasized the personal biases and failings of Ephorus as an historian, particularly those that he supposedly acquired through the influence of Isocrates.⁴ Not only was Ephorus held to be inferior in his understanding of history, but it came to be assumed that he adopted a completely different purpose for historical inquiry compared to the earlier works of Herodotus and Thucydides. Instead of narration, explanation, and analysis of past events, Ephorus, scholars have suggested, believed that the purpose of history writing was the collection, and sometimes deliberate

will follow the more skeptical approach. While it seems likely that Diodorus followed Ephorus closely for much of his narrative of the 5th-4th centuries, it is too great a leap to assume that any particular sentiment can be attributed to Ephorus.

³ Fornara, 1983: 42, fn. 63.

⁴ For example: Laquer, 1911; Jacoby, 1923; Barber, 1935.

manipulation, of moral examples for the benefit of readers.⁵ This interpretation has been challenged but still exerts a powerful influence on Ephoran scholarship and the consequences of such a view of history writing are significant.⁶ Rather than recording events as they occurred, Ephorus would have shaped his *History* to promote a particular moral understanding of events and spoiled the works of subsequent historians, like Diodorus Siculus, who followed his example. Those who argue against this dominant tradition do so in part to rehabilitate Ephorus' reputation as an historian and to free him from the negative implications of deliberate moralizing.

Both sides of this debate, however, provide an overly simplified and schematized interpretation of Ephorus. The aim of this study is to analyse and challenge some of the assumptions that have been made about Ephorus through a close examination of the fragments that remain of his *History*. The belief that Ephorus was a moralizing historian or an historian overly concerned with providing moral examples for his readers' benefit is unsupportable given the extant evidence. No doubt Ephorus was aware of the instructional benefit of history, but there is no reason to believe that providing this benefit was the main purpose of his *History*. Yet Ephorus did have a view of historical causality that was based on the character of individuals and states. In his discussions of the Scythians and the Cretans, Ephorus depicts communities that are successful because they avoid wealth, promote equality among citizens, and maintain internal harmony. This view is similar to ideas seen in the works of Plato, Aristotle, and indeed Isocrates. Thus

⁵ Pownall, 2004, is the most recent full articulation of this view.

⁶ Challengers include Fornara, 1983; Flower, 1994, though with a greater emphasis on Ephorus' contemporary Theopompus; Hudak, 2009.

while he cannot be considered a moral historian, he was aware of and taking part in political and philosophical discourses of the 4th century, which were concerned with the form and creation of the ideal state, a fact which has implications for our understanding of Ephorus and his *History*. But before we examine Ephorus' own views, it is necessary to establish what assumptions critics, both ancient and modern, have made about him.

Chapter 1: Ephorus: The Man and the Historian

As is frequently the case, the biographical information about Ephorus is regrettably thin and much of what is actually attested in ancient sources is dubious.⁷ The testimonia and fragments collected by Jacoby suggest the following basic facts: he was a native of Cyme in Aeolia, he lived and worked from the end of the 5th century into the third quarter of the 4th century, and, along with Theopompus, he was a student of Isocrates. The *Suda* states that he was born in the 93rd Olympiad, 408-405, and Diodorus Siculus reports that his history ended after the Battle of Perinthus; a tentative lifetime of c. 405-330 BCE for Ephorus was adopted by Barber.⁸ Neither date is certain, however, which complicates attempts to identify his influences.⁹

Those who cited Ephorus frequently praised him for his reliability and his insight. Strabo says that he uses Ephorus more than any other source *διὰ τὴν περὶ ταῦτα ἐπιμέλειαν* (*περὶ ταῦτα* meaning his historical investigations), a sentiment that he claims to share with Polybius; and despite his errors, Strabo says that Ephorus is better than most historians (F31b; T28a). Another frequent borrower, Diodorus Siculus, whose account of 5th-4th century Greece has long been believed to rely heavily on Ephorus, adds that Ephorus is successful both in his style (*κατὰ τὴν λέξιν*) and in the arrangement (*κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν*) of his work.¹⁰ Polybius himself says of Ephorus:

⁷ The following will be a short treatment of the evidence; for more extensive discussion and criticism of the sources on Ephorus' biography see Barber, 1935: 1-16; Hudak, 2009: 1-29.

⁸ T1 = *Suda* s.v. Ehippos; T10 = D.S. XVI 76.2-5; Barber, 1935: 2-3.

⁹ Jacoby records various other birth years that have been ventured, ranging down into the 380's. FGh IIC: 22; Hudak questions the testimony of the *Suda* 2008: 5-7.

¹⁰ T11 = D.S. 5.1.4. Diodorus says that Ephorus arranged his work *kata genos tas praxeis*, most likely meaning according to geographical region. See Drews, 1963, 1976. The extent to which Diodorus can

ὁ γὰρ Ἐφορος παρ' ὅλην τὴν πραγματείαν θαυμάσιος ὢν καὶ κατὰ τὴν φράσιν καὶ κατὰ τὸν χειρισμὸν καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν τῶν λημμάτων, δεινότατός ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς παρεκβάσει καὶ ταῖς ἀφ' αὐτοῦ γνωμολογίαις, καὶ συλλήβδην ὅταν πού τὸν ἐπιμετροῦντα λόγον διατίθεται: κατὰ δέ τινα συντυχίαν εὐχαριστότατα καὶ πιθανώτατα περὶ τῆς συγκρίσεως εἶρηκε τῆς τῶν ἱστοριογράφων καὶ λογογράφων.

For Ephorus, being admirable throughout his whole historical work in regards to his style and the handling and conception of his material, is most clever in his digressions, in the maxims from himself, and, in sum, whenever in some place he sets forth an argument adding to the account; as a matter of fact, he has said the most agreeable and most persuasive things concerning the comparison of writers of history and writers of speeches.¹¹ (T23 = Polybius 12.28.10-11)

Usually critical of his predecessors,¹² especially Timaeus in this section, Polybius praises Ephorus' work as a whole for its style, handling of the material, and well thought out arguments; further, Ephorus is most clever in his digressions and in the insertion of his own thoughts into the narrative. Polybius considers him the only person truly to have written universal history before himself and strongly defends him against Timaeus, one of the few ancient historians who seems to have had a generally negative opinion of Ephorus.¹³ Timaeus apparently questioned both Ephorus' methods and his persuasiveness. For example, on a particular point about the superiority of history writing over oratorical skill, Timaeus did not disagree with Ephorus, but claimed that his argument was unsuccessful and needed restating. Polybius, on the contrary, in reference to this point, says that in matters of persuasiveness Ephorus is at his best. Josephus was

reasonably be treated as a source for Ephoran content and thought, even when not cited, will be discussed below.

¹¹ All translations are mine.

¹² Meister, 1975; Schepens, 1977: 95.

¹³ T7 = Polybius 5.33.2; T23 = Polybius 12.28; T30b = Polybius 12.23.1.

also critical of Ephorus, but not for individual failings; rather Josephus accuses the whole field of ancient historians for contradicting one another and being careless in their handling of ethnographic material (T14a).

Besides individual points of disagreement, the one area in which Polybius criticizes Ephorus is his ignorance of military affairs. Polybius says that Ephorus, though a capable reporter of naval battles, is laughable (*γελοῖος*) in his description and presentation of land tactics; he seems never even to have seen a battle (T20). He offers Ephorus' account of Mantinea as an example, saying that an actual examination of the terrain proves that the maneuvers Ephorus describes cannot be accurate. This criticism reveals a methodological dilemma in Ephorus' work.¹⁴ At least as far back as the time of Herodotus, Greek historiography demonstrated a strong preference for autopsy and personal inquiry;¹⁵ if the historian could not be present at an event himself, he hoped, at least, to be able to find an eyewitness. This required great effort and extensive travel on the part of the historian both to gain firsthand knowledge of the locales he described and to seek out sources to interrogate. Even for historians like Herodotus and Thucydides, whose main narratives were more-or-less contained spatially and temporally, this was difficult, but for Ephorus, who proposed to write a history of the whole world from the return of the Heracleidae, it was downright impossible. His work relied, to a much

¹⁴ For a full discussion of this see Schepens, 1977: 104-114.

¹⁵ Schepens, 1977: 105; Hartog, 1988: 261-273.

greater extent, on textual material of various kinds, including, but not limited to, the historical literature of his predecessors.¹⁶

Polybius does report, in the midst of criticizing Timaeus for being an armchair historian, that Ephorus acknowledged the superiority of autopsy; if possible, the best way for an historian to gain knowledge of events, he believed, was for him be present at them (*ὁ μὲν γὰρ Ἐφορός φησιν, εἰ δυνατὸν ἦν αὐτοῦς παρεῖναι πᾶσι τοῖς πράγμασι, ταύτην ἂν διαφέρειν πολὺ τῶν ἐμπειριῶν*. F110). Accordingly, he was skeptical about his ability to reconstruct the distant past. He chose to begin his history after the return of the Heracleidae, because there were too many difficulties in establishing the truth of the mythological period (F31b, T8) and said that those who write with great precision about recent events are believable, while those who do the same for ancient events should not be trusted.¹⁷ But he was still left with a period of some 750 years and the space of the whole known world to cover. The ability to analyze and critique written material, in addition to determining the truthfulness of oral sources, was thus an important part of Ephorus' task, one that he did not always demonstrate. In addition to Polybius' remark about Ephorus' apparent inexperience of land battles, Diodorus criticizes Ephorus' account of the origins of the Nile specifically because it is not based on firsthand experience. Additionally, Ephorus tells a story about the Cimbri battling the tides and allowing their homes to be destroyed to practice their fearlessness, which Strabo

¹⁶ On the sources of Ephorus see Barber, 1935: 113-137; Schepens, 1977: 102-103; Hudak, 2009: 92-151 and 266-288. There is debate about his use of Xenophon primarily based on the divergences between the history of Diodorus Siculus and Xenophon in the post-Thucydides history of the Peloponnesian War and the beginning of the 4th century. Barber and Hudak both argue that this is due to a political disagreement with Xenophon, either Ephorus' pro-Athenian and/or anti-Spartan stance.

¹⁷ Schepens, 1977, cites this fact as evidence that Ephorus was not as naïve about the practice of history as scholars like Barber, 1935, have suggested.

dismisses as ridiculous (F132), and another about the Cimmerians living underground, which Strabo says was proven false by Agrippa's conquest of the area (F134a). Furthermore, despite Ephorus' claims to the contrary, he could not hold back from handling some mythical material; Strabo remarks that Ephorus allowed myth to enter his narrative when he attempted to rationalize the story of Apollo's establishment of the oracle at Delphi (F31b, F32). What is more, besides bad information, a further problem arose for Ephorus from his written sources. Sifting through the now extensive, and ever-increasing, written record, he was confronted with, and subsequently drew from, material of an ostensibly historical nature, that in fact had ahistorical purposes. For example, as we shall see, Ephorus' account of the Cretans was based on discussions about statecraft that emanated from the philosophical schools of the 4th century. Such material was not historically accurate, nor was it intended to be. Ephorus' use of other genres, like philosophy, therefore, must be factored into evaluations of both the methods and aims of his *History*.

One other ancient criticism worth noting here, since it points to a potential bias in Ephorus' worldview, is his tendency to insert his hometown, Cyme, in places where it is not relevant. According to Strabo:

σκόπεται δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἐφορος, διότι τῆς πατρίδος ἔργα οὐκ ἔχων φράζειν ἐν τῇ διαριθμῆσει τῶν ἄλλων πράξεων, οὐ μὴν οὐδ' ἀμνημόνευτον αὐτὴν εἶναι θέλων, οὕτως ἐπιφωνεῖ, κατὰ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν Κυμαῖοι τὰς ἡσυχίας ἤγον.

And Ephorus is mocked, since even when he does not have any deeds of his country to report in the reckoning of other events, nevertheless, not wishing it to be unmentioned, he brings it up in this way: "At that time the Cymeans passed the time in peace." (T2 = Strabo 13.3.6)

On the one hand, this could be dismissed as the quaint patriotism of an historian who, despite the overall grandeur of his universal history, could not let go of his personal sentiments. In a similar vein, he also tried to claim Homer for Cyme (F1; F99). Barber, however, goes on to accuse Ephorus of perverting the truth in order to include his town in the main narrative.¹⁸ His claim rests on a comparison of the account of the 5th-4th century in Diodorus, who, Barber believes, copied Ephorus both in word and spirit, with other accounts of the same time. He notes that the Diodoran narrative includes several instances of prominent Cymeian involvement in events that have no parallels in the other sources.¹⁹ A more detailed study of the relevant material made by Samuel several decades later, however, found no evidence that Diodorus actually contradicted the other narratives. Instead, she concludes, these passages merely reflect Ephorus' overemphasis of the importance of Cyme in Greek history.²⁰ Hudak, meanwhile, agrees with this conclusion of Samuel, but goes a step further in describing the effect of Ephorus' Cymeian origins on the narrative.²¹ Barber had argued that Ephorus displayed a clear pro-Athenian bias, one that he adopted from his tutor Isocrates.²² This, Barber argued, accounted for his harsh treatment of Sparta throughout the parts of the *History* represented by Diodorus. Hudak, however, argues that the anti-Spartan ethos stems from causes much closer to home for Ephorus. He claims that the portrayal of individual cities

¹⁸ Barber, 1935: 86.

¹⁹ Barber, 1935: 86-87. For Barber's views on the relationship between Diodorus and Ephorus see 21-22, 102-103.

²⁰ Samuel, 1968: 387-388 for conclusions.

²¹ See Hudak, 2009: 234-240 for his primary discussion of Samuel.

²² Barber, 1935: 84-105. For Barber on the relationship between Isocrates and Ephorus see below.

or empires depends on their relationship, friendly or hostile, to Cyme.²³ Persia, not surprisingly, is treated harshly because of its abuse of the Greek cities of Asia Minor, Cyme in particular; the imperialistic Athens of the 5th century is cast in a negative light, but redeems itself through more democratic treatment of its allies in the 4th century; the Spartans suffer the opposite fate. They are never fully praised by Ephorus and their imperialistic actions in Asia Minor during the 4th century lead to an increasingly negative portrayal. The important point here is that Ephorus did not let go of his local sympathies even after he was exposed to the wider Greek world and did not attach himself wholeheartedly to the Athenian cause as Barber suggested. He was a product of his time and place.

Hudak's emphasis on Ephorus' local origins in his interpretation of the *History* begins with a rejection of the connection between Ephorus and Isocrates as well as the overall moralizing nature of the work that might have originated with Isocrates.²⁴ In brief, the theory is that Ephorus developed his ideas about history writing during his studies with Isocrates, who would have urged the embellishment of history for artistic purposes and emphasized the use of moral *exempla* to the point of altering the "facts" to suit the morals.²⁵ The question of the pupil-teacher relationship has long been central to the study of Ephorus, but its existence and importance have too often been accepted and exaggerated without due criticism. Thus before moving to a more detailed analysis of

²³ Hudak, 2009: 241-255. Specific locations discussed: Persia, 241-244; Athens, 244-249; Sparta, 244-255.

²⁴ Hudak, 2009: 152-228.

²⁵ See Schepens, 1977: 101 and Flower, 43 (fn. 4 for sources).

Ephorus' treatment of the peoples that make up his world, it is necessary to examine the scholarship on this potential relationship.

Chapter 2: Ephorus, Isocrates, and Moral History

While modern scholars have generally taken the supposed association with Isocrates as a corrupting influence, the ancients considered it to be to Ephorus' benefit. An anecdote appearing in several sources claims that Ephorus was *lenissimus, cunctans, verecundans* (Cicero T28b⁺), *ὑπιος*, and *νοθρός* (Suda, T28) so that he required the whip from Isocrates, as opposed to Theopompus who required the spur. Because of this personalized attention, he became an honored pupil of Isocrates, though T4 claims that it took two visits to the school, as the first was not enough to overcome Ephorus' *ἀπρακτος* character.

Many ancient sources reported the pedagogical association of Ephorus and Isocrates without question, though none survives prior to the 1st century BCE, a fact that has understandably caused modern skepticism about the tradition. Schwartz was the earliest to challenge it, arguing that Hellenistic scholars invented the tradition due to the stylistic similarities between the orator and the historian, similarities that could be attributed to the intellectual climate in which they both worked.²⁶ Yet his thesis was largely rejected and as recently as 1994 Wickersham could write, "The reaction (to Schwartz) was successful, and the pupilship is not now doubted."²⁷ Yet Schwartz' argument was given new life in the same year by Flower in his monograph on Theopompus and more recently by Hudak (2009). They both refer to or cite the research of Lefkowitz²⁸, which shows that ancient biographers constructed the "lives" of poets

²⁶ Schwartz, 1907: Col 8-9.

²⁷ Wickersham, 1994: 136.

²⁸ Lefkowitz, 1981.

based on their works, as useful comparanda.²⁹ The testimonia themselves, thus, should be read with caution.

Modern scholars, countering Schwartz and by extension his supporters, have defended the tradition by arguing that Isocrates had a major effect on Ephorus, which can be seen not only in the style, but also in the content and goals of the *History*.³⁰ For example, some attribute the very task of writing a universal history to Isocrates: his Panhellenism made it necessary to examine Greece as a whole;³¹ as mentioned above, Barber argues that Ephorus took a pro-Athenian stance from Isocrates; and Wickersham ties Ephorus' thoughts about hegemony and the qualities of a good hegemon to Isocrates' *Panegyricus*.³² Barber, however, only cites two fragments of Ephorus, F116 and F149, that "might possibly show some connection with Isocrates either in thought or language."³³ Instead, he takes his evidence from Diodorus Siculus; he assumes that Diodorus is a conduit for the opinions of Ephorus so that when he sees Athenian bias in Diodorus he attributes it to Ephorus; when Diodorus refrains from censuring the

²⁹ On the similar style: Flower, 1994: 43-48; Hudak, 2009: 204-208; on Lefkowitz: Flower, 1994: 44; Hudak, 2005: 154.

³⁰ There is, however, debate amongst these scholars about the full extent of Isocratean influence. Laquer represents the extreme view: "Ein ephorisches Buch ist ein ins Detail ausgearbeiteter historisch-epideiktischer Exkurs des Isocrates." Barber approaches but does not quite go as far as Laquer. Other more recent studies suggest an influence that is discernible but less than total. Still others either reject or remain agnostic about the pupil-teacher relationship but still acknowledge the influence. Yet all these scholars argue that elements of an Isocratean ideology can be seen in Ephorus. Laquer, 1911: 345; Pownall, 2004, 141-142; Schepens, 1977: 100. Interestingly, contra Hudak, Pownall aligns Ephorus with pro-Spartan Athenians, specifically Xenophon, against whom Hudak says Ephorus was reacting; Nickel, 1991: 234; Sacks, 1990: 25-33.

³¹ Barber, 1935: 77-78; Hudak: 2009: 225 fn. 6.

³² Wickersham, 1994: 135-150.

³³ Barber, 1935: 75. Barber says of the two that "the first eight lines of the latter (F149) have an Isocratean flavour" yet Perlman has argued that the whole fragment, on the Cretan Constitution, is part of a broader philosophical discourse of the late classical period, of which both Plato and Aristotle were a part. Perlman, 2005.

Athenians it is because Ephorus did not do so.³⁴ Sacks, however, argues that there are differences between “Diodorus’ understanding of moral utility” and Ephorus’.³⁵ This should perhaps be amended to the understanding of moral utility that is attributed to Ephorus. Wickersham is more convincing, demonstrating that Isocrates and Ephorus had similar thoughts about hegemony; but he also mentions similarities on this topic among Ephorus, Xenophon, and Demosthenes.³⁶ Thus, Ephorus’ views on hegemony may be attributable to the broader, 4th-century discussion of this subject, which included Isocrates, rather than a personal connection to him.

Critics of the tradition have challenged these individual markers of Isocratean influence: Flower cites the *Antidosis* and the *Panathenaicus* as evidence that Isocrates would not offer instruction on history writing because he himself claims not to be interested in it, and, as stated above, Hudak challenges the pro-Athenian bias noted by Barber.³⁷ Likewise Hudak sees differences in Isocratean and Ephoran ideology that challenge the association. For example, he argues that they differ in their treatment of barbarians, since Ephorus shows signs of idealizing barbarian cultures (not including the Persians of course) that are unprecedented in Isocrates.³⁸ Hudak can be challenged on two points here: first, in regards to the barbarians, he ignores the high praise Isocrates gives to

³⁴ Barber, 1935: 84-105. Barber’s argument also depends on a firm trust in Thucydides. Any differences between Diodorus (meaning for Barber Ephorus) and Thucydides must be fabrications of Ephorus meant to paint the Athenians in a more positive light. Somewhat tellingly, he finds the most evidence of bias during the *Pentekonteia*; during the Peloponnesian Wars, the bias declines, and almost disappears after Thucydides’ history ends.

³⁵ Sacks, 1991: 23-56.

³⁶ Wickersham, 1994: 143-144.

³⁷ Flower, 1994: 51. *Ant.* 45-46; *Panath.* 1-2.

³⁸ Hudak, 2009: 186-189. According to F90, Ephorus referred to the Mundones, a Libyan tribe as *plousiotatoi* and *eugnomotatoi*, and F42 refers to *dikaiostatoi* Scythians.

Busiris. Though he was an Egyptian rather than a member of a peripheral tribe, he was a barbarian nonetheless; and Isocrates does not just praise Busiris himself, but the well ordered Egyptian society that he created and which Isocrates claims is superior to Sparta's (*Busiris*, 15-19). Second, Hudak seeks to disprove the pupilship by demonstrating ideological differences between Ephorus and Isocrates; but Ephorus need not subscribe to all of Isocrates' beliefs even if he were his student. Individual points of difference between Isocrates and Ephorus need not dissolve their relationship completely; pupils rarely leave school believing everything their teachers say.

Clearly there is reason to be skeptical about the ancient testimonia, and the verdict is not as certain as Wickersham claimed, though there do seem to be concerns and ideas common to the pair. As mentioned above, Wickersham demonstrated a similar concern for hegemony in the works of the two. Additionally, Isocrates' comments about Egyptian vs. Spartan society resemble the comparison between Cretan and Spartan society in Ephorus. In both cases, the relationship of the citizens to private property is a central to the good order of the state. Nevertheless, these similarities may reflect nothing more than Ephorus' familiarity with the works of Isocrates and their common participation in certain discourses of the 4th century. Once the testimonia are disregarded, the evidence for a personal relationship between the two becomes very tenuous. Without more biographical information about the life of Ephorus we cannot conclude decisively that Ephorus and Isocrates knew each other, therefore it is misleading to look for Isocratean influence in the fragments of Ephorus rather than simply analyzing what the fragments say themselves.

Though the truth about the relationship has some value in terms of Ephorus' biography by itself, what is at stake is the assumption that Isocrates made him into a rhetorical and moral historian. The title "moral historian" has frequently led to overly dismissive judgments about Ephorus' abilities and led to broad assumptions about the content and aims of his work. Isocrates has frequently been associated with this aspect of Ephorus' *History*, but the purported connection between the two is not the only evidence cited. We have discussed why it is necessary to be skeptical about the Isocrates/Ephorus connection, but now we must look at this other evidence to determine whether Ephorus can be considered, especially in comparison to his predecessors, a "moral historian".

Before turning to Ephorus himself, however, it is necessary to examine what scholars mean when they call him a rhetorical or moral historian.³⁹ Rhetorical history refers to the significant influence 4th-century oratorical practice had on the writing of history. The argument goes that historians like Ephorus were overly concerned with the rhetorical and stylistic flare of their works at the expense of truthful history: rhetoric came first, the truth second. Moralizing history on the other hand refers to the increased concern with morality in the writing of history, its impact on historical figures and events, and the possible selective reporting or alteration of history in order to provide a specific lesson or to conform to a particular moral vision of the world. The two are distinct, though no doubt related, and often conflated, both being concerned with the effect of the history on the reader, the one aiming at an emotive response the other at the moral compass of the reader. One might be surprised that this should be such a contentious

³⁹ This paragraph follows Marincola's discussion of these trends in his 2001 study of Greek historiography. Marincola, 2001: 110-111.

issue in regards to Ephorus. As Marincola has observed, “all narrative histories are rhetorical creations, even those that pretend to present ‘just the facts’”, and scholarship has shown that rhetoric was central to many more ancient historians than just Ephorus.⁴⁰ Focus has centered on him, however, because of the belief that he, under the influence of Isocrates, was the first writer to make moralizing the primary goal of his history, rather than simply producing a record of past events. Again, whether Ephorus is unique in this, at least compared to his predecessors, is questionable, especially given the paucity of surviving fragments, but it is possible that intellectual developments of the 4th century steered him in a new direction. Nevertheless, a proscriptive intent should not necessarily be attributed to descriptive analysis.

The use of historical paradigms in oratory was typical of Isocrates.⁴¹ Such paradigms were used for a particular rhetorical purpose in his speeches, quite often to compel listeners to virtue.⁴² For example, Isocrates begins his eulogy to *Evagoras* by claiming that above all the goal of his speech is to ensure that Evagoras’ virtues are remembered in order that the younger generation be more desirous of honor from their own virtue; he then praises Evagoras for living up to his own *παράδειγματα* and near the conclusion tells Nicocles that he has presented him with a *παράδειγμα* from his own family to emulate (*Evagoras* 4-5, 12, 77). Isocrates was not interested in history with what we would consider the eye of an historian, but used it for the rhetorical and/or moral benefit that it could provide. As mentioned above, Isocrates declared that he was

⁴⁰ Marincola, 2001: 3-8, 111.

⁴¹ Johnson, 1959: 29-30; Nickel, 1991: 234-235.

⁴² *Panath.* 136-137 and *Ant.* 277.

not interested in writing history and this fact must be acknowledged if one wants to attribute to him any personal instruction of Ephorus on the subject of history writing.⁴³ But perhaps he thought it would be useful if someone, ideally a student of his who shared his ideology, compiled a *History* with rhetoric and morality in mind, and produced a sourcebook of historical *παραδείγματα* for his teaching and oratory. If Isocrates really encouraged Ephorus in the writing of history, he would seem to be a likely candidate. Perhaps this focus on morality accounts for the existence of a work, mentioned by the *Suda*, by Ephorus entitled *Περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν βιβλία*. (T1) Rather than a separate treatise, scholars have assumed that this is a compilation of excerpts from the *History* and thus an indication that moral *παραδείγματα* were prominent in Ephorus.⁴⁴ This argument, however, is mere speculation. As no part of the work survives, we must be careful not to base broad conclusions about the contents of the *History* on it; even if a later compiler found stories that he believed could serve as moral *παραδείγματα*, it does not mean that Ephorus included them in his work for such a purpose or that his main aim in writing history was the compilation of moral *παραδείγματα*. Again, it is safer to see what evidence can be found from the fragments themselves.

Central to the issue is the question of Ephorus' "main purpose" in writing his history. Without more material it is hard, perhaps impossible, to know. Pownall analyzed the fragments of Ephorus and found many examples of moral lessons within them, concluding, "Ephorus's primary purpose in writing his *History* seems to have been

⁴³ Flower, 1994: 51.

⁴⁴ Hudak, 2009: 209; Pownall, 2004: 119; Sacks, 1990: 26, Fn. 7; Schwartz, 1907: 1-16.

the moral instruction of his readers”.⁴⁵ Yet with so little of Ephorus remaining it is dangerous to extrapolate based on so few examples, some of which do not even provide clear evidence of a moral agenda. For example, Seneca says that Ephorus, reporting on a comet that was believed to foreshadow the destruction of Helice and Bura, falsely claimed that the comet split in two, a fact that Seneca says was only reported by Ephorus (F212).⁴⁶ This destruction is linked in other sources to certain acts of sacrilege, so Pownall inferred that Ephorus included the story to point out the moral lesson inherent in the cause of the destruction and further invented the split to provide a clearer connection to the two cities and more definitive proof of the heaven-sent punishment.⁴⁷ Hudak rightly counters that Pownall sees morality here where none exists.⁴⁸ There is in fact no definitive evidence that Ephorus himself linked the destruction of the cities to sacrilegious behavior. It is true that Diodorus Siculus did so, but as stated above, we must be careful about conflating the attitudes of the two.⁴⁹ It is curious that the story of the splitting of the comet only appears in Ephorus, and the desire to tighten the connection to the two cities is a possible explanation for Ephorus’ account. Furthermore, the fact that Herakleides of Pontus attributes the destruction of the cities to the wrath of Poseidon shows that a moral explanation was not a later invention but was in fact floating around the Greek world in the 4th century BCE. But despite this indirect evidence for a

⁴⁵ Pownall, 204: 113-142.

⁴⁶ *sicut hunc cometen, qui omnium mortalium oculis custoditus est, quia ingentis rei traxit eventum, cum Helicen et Burin ortu suo merserit, ait illum discessisse in duas stellas, quod praeter illum nemo tradidit. Quaest. nat. 7.16.2.*

⁴⁷ Diodorus Siculus 15.49.3; Strabo 8.7.2; Pausanias 7.24.6; Aelian NA 11.19.

⁴⁸ Pownall, 2004: 125-126. Hudak, 2009: 210-211.

⁴⁹ Notably Diodorus Siculus does not associate the comet with their destruction; he reports a comet in the following year (15.50.2).

moral purpose to the story, without more context for the fragment there is no way to say definitively that it was Ephorus' purpose.

To address the preeminence of a moral agenda in Ephorus, scholars have examined two passages, T23 and F42, which may include evidence of a more programmatic nature. First, Polybius' comment, quoted above, about Ephorus' personal judgments indicates that Ephorus was in the habit of inserting his own critical opinions into his narrative; and, if we are to believe Polybius, they were quite insightful. Barber, on the other hand, called this tendency "the chief cause of the failure of his good intentions" because "it enables him to deepen the colours of his contrasts, to grant unmerited heroism to his heroes and to deprive his enemies of their just desserts." This is especially true in the case of an historian, like Ephorus, who "believes in his ability to provide moral edification."⁵⁰ For Barber, editorial commentary in Ephorus is associated with exaggerated praise and blame of his subjects and thus a detriment to his history. As evidence of Ephorus' praise of individuals Pownall includes remarks made about Jason of Pherae (F214) and Philistus (F220), and Fornara attributes Diodorus' praise of Epaminondas to Ephorus (D.S. 15.88.1).⁵¹ Pownall gives as examples of Ephorus' use of blame: the trickery of Lysander (F206) and Pericles' involvement in the beginning of the Peloponnesian War (F196). Furthermore, she points out, Ephorus also praises cities and peoples such as the Scythians (F42), Aetolians (F122a), and Cretans (F149) for their character and customs.

⁵⁰ Barber, 135: 85.

⁵¹ Pownall, 2004: 133-135; Fornara, 1983: 108 fn. 26. Though Ephorus is mentioned in the passage about Jason, Diodorus does not actually say that the praise came from him.

Such praise and blame can be compared to Isocratean works like the *Busiris* and *Evagoras*, but the Polybius fragment need not imply gross alteration, nor is it clear that all or even most of the digressions Polybius refers to are instances of praise and blame.⁵² Rather, Polybius is defending Ephorus against Timaeus on the charge that his argument on behalf of history writing in comparison to rhetoric was insufficient; the point is that Ephorus is convincing in the context of a literary debate. His judgments and editorial comments included, but were not confined to, examples of or commentary on good and bad characters. Furthermore, the praise of these individual figures does not suggest excessive concern with morality. The comment about Jason is quite brief, merely a remark that he was known to have been ruling fairly (*δοκῶν ἐπεικῶς ἄρχειν τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων*); and Plutarch says that Ephorus praises Philistus but does not say why. This is in contrast to Timaeus, who, Plutarch says, used Philistus' zeal for tyranny as an excuse to slander him (*ἀλλὰ Τίμαιος οὐκ ἄδικον λαβὼν πρόφασιν τὴν ὑπὲρ τῆς τυραννίδος τοῦ Φιλίστου σπουδὴν καὶ πίστιν ἐμπίπλαται τῶν κατ' αὐτοῦ βλασφημιῶν*. Plutarch, *Dion* 36). Pownall suggests that Ephorus may have praised Philistus for committing suicide after a naval defeat rather than being captured, in contrast to Timonides who reports that he was taken alive.⁵³ Again, however, this is speculation on Pownall's part. Plutarch gives no indication that Ephorus praised Philistus for this particular act; he admits to Philistus' extraordinary cleverness, which may indicate that it was the cleverness that Ephorus praised, but claims that it was of a less

⁵² Fornara, 1983: 108-109.

⁵³ Pownall, 2004: 133.

than wholesome nature.⁵⁴ Ephorus may simply have wanted to contradict excessively negative depictions of Philistus, as we shall see he did in the case of the Scythians. Rather than a moralizing purpose, this would reflect a desire for accurate historical analysis.

The passage praising Epaminondas is far more laudatory, and set apart in the kind of digression to which Polybius was likely referring, but cannot reliably be attributed *in toto* to Ephorus, since Diodorus does not cite him. Furthermore, even if Diodorus did follow Ephorus closely in his eulogy to Epaminondas, it is not clear from this passage that Ephorus was overly concerned that his readers emulate him. The concluding analysis of the Theban does highlight his good character, but it is still a digression. Even if such digressions were a regular part of Ephorus' work, it is a stretch to say that they indicate a moralizing purpose in Ephorus, and not simply a summation following the death of a prominent character. Certainly Ephorus wanted to draw the reader's attention to the man's excellence or depravity as the case may be, but this focus does not indicate an overarching purpose to his work.

Pownall's claim that the accounts of Pericles and Lysander are examples of Ephorus' desire to use blame to encourage moral virtue in his readers is also problematic.⁵⁵ Certainly, as will be seen, both men demonstrate conduct contrary to Ephorus' ideal statesman and encourage behavior, however unintentionally, that is

⁵⁴ Plutarch writes about Philistus: *καίπερ ὦν δεινότατος ἀδίκους πράγμασι καὶ πονηροῖς ἦθεσιν εὐσχήμονας αἰτίας περιβαλεῖν καὶ λόγους ἔχοντας κόσμον ἐξευρεῖν, αὐτὸς αὐτὸν οὐ δύναται πάντα μηχανώμενος ἐξελέσθαι τῆς γραφῆς, ὡς οὐ φιλοτυραννότατος ἀνθρώπων γένοιτο καὶ μάλιστα πάντων ἀεὶ ζηλώσας καὶ θαυμάσας τρυφήν καὶ δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτους καὶ γάμους τοὺς τῶν τυράννων.* As will be discussed below, Ephorus was quite wary of wealth (*τρυφήν* and *πλοῦτους*) and its effect on society, thus it would be surprising for Ephorus to make a moral *παράδειγμα* out of him.

⁵⁵ Pownall, 2004: 133.

detrimental to their cities. But even if Ephorus did hold them responsible for the disasters that befell their cities, why should this blame be given a moralizing purpose for the benefit of his readers, and not simply regarded as Ephorus' analysis of the historical events? Of course the line between the two of these alternatives is very thin; as soon as blame is attached to a person for a particular event, he becomes an example of bad behavior for those who learn about him. The substantive difference that is important for this discussion is whether Ephorus' main purpose was to analyze and assess the past for his readers or to affect their future behavior. So far, the evidence argues primarily for the former.⁵⁶

There is more conclusive evidence of an exemplary purpose for Ephorus' material in his remarks on the practices of the Scythians, but they too must be handled carefully. In this passage, found in Book 7 of Strabo, Ephorus challenges a popular portrayal of the nomadic society:

Ἐφορος δ' ἐν τῇ τετάρτῃ μὲν τῆς ἱστορίας Εὐρώπῃ δ' ἐπιγραφομένη βίβλῳ, περιοδεύσας τὴν Εὐρώπην μέχρι Σκυθῶν ἐπὶ τέλει φησὶν εἶναι τῶν τε ἄλλων Σκυθῶν καὶ τῶν Σαυροματῶν τοὺς βίους ἀνομοίους: τοὺς μὲν γὰρ εἶναι χαλεποὺς ὥστε καὶ ἀνθρωποφαγεῖν, τοὺς δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζῶων ἀπέχεσθαι. οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄλλοι, φησί, τὰ περὶ τῆς ὀμότητος αὐτῶν λέγουσιν, εἰδότες τὸ δεινόν τε καὶ τὸ θαυμαστόν ἐκπληκτικὸν ὄν: δεῖν δὲ τάναντία καὶ λέγειν καὶ παραδείγματα ποιεῖσθαι: καὶ αὐτὸς οὖν περὶ τῶν δικαιωτάτοις ἤθεσι χρωμένων ποιήσεσθαι τοὺς λόγους: εἶναι γὰρ τινὰς τῶν νομάδων Σκυθῶν γάλακτι τρεφομένους ἵππων τῇ τε δικαιοσύνῃ πάντων διαφέρειν: μεμνήσθαι δ' αὐτῶν τοὺς ποιητάς.

Ephorus, in the fourth book of his history, entitled *Europe*, having traced Europe as far as the Scythians, at the end says that the lives of the

⁵⁶ Ephorus could, of course, have had both purposes in mind, and likely did. But this fact would not make his historical methodology different from his predecessors'. The point here is that the evidence does not support the claim that moral instruction was his primary purpose in writing history.

Sauromatians and the other Scythians are different; for the former are harsh to the point that they even eat other men, while the latter even abstain from other living creatures. Others, he says, report things about their savagery, knowing that the terrible and the marvelous are striking; but he says it is necessary to speak about them and to make models of them in a way opposite to the others. He himself, he says, will make reports about those using the most just customs; for, he says, there are some of the pasturing Scythians who, being nourished by the milk of horses, excel everyone in justice; the poets do commemorate these. (F42 = Strabo, 7.3.9)

Ephorus observes that while other writers have treated the Scythians as a single group of savage cannibals, there is in fact a wide gap between the customs of individual tribes; while there are some who are so savage that they eat other humans, there are others who refrain from eating the flesh of any living creature. The *Androphagoi* were of course a tribe in Herodotus, a neighbor of the Scythians, whom Herodotus calls the most savage of all men, who knew nothing of justice nor used any law (*Ἀνδροφάγοι δὲ ἀγριώτατα πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἔχουσι ἤθεα, οὔτε δίκην νομίζοντες οὔτε νόμῳ οὐδενὶ χρεώμενοι*; *Histories* 4.106). Other writers, it seems, have depicted all the Scythians like this because of the startling effect of such stories; tabloid material was popular in antiquity just as it is now. But according to Ephorus it is necessary to report the opposite things and, most critical for this discussion, make them into *παράδειγματα*. Thus, he says, he will make reports of those using the most just customs, the type of people who could serve as a positive *παράδειγμα* for his readers.⁵⁷ Ephorus explicitly made sure to include the well-behaved Scythians in his *History*, but to what end it remains to be seen.

⁵⁷ The word *παράδειγμα* can of course refer to negative examples as well (the compilation of passages from Ephorus was titled *Περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν βιβλία* after all) but the surviving fragments contain more evidence for Ephorus' praise of individuals in his digressions, and thus deliberate positive examples, than blame. Sacks, 1991: 28-36; Pownall, 2004: 133-138.

H. J. Jones in his Loeb translation has Ephorus claim that he will *only* make reports about the most just Scythians, suggesting an attempt to whitewash or censor inappropriate material from his *History*.⁵⁸ The “only”, however, is not in the Greek; Ephorus neither denies the existence of the savage Scythians nor says that he will ignore them. Fornara challenged the interpretation of *παραδείγματα* as models, instead translating the line: “But (Ephorus) says that it is necessary both to report the opposite and *to give examples (of these opposites)*.”⁵⁹ The reading has met with little favor. F.W. Walbank, in his review of Fornara, argued that *τάναντία* must be the subject of both *λέγειν* and *ποιεῖσθαι* making *παραδείγματα* its complement, concluding that the traditional reading, that the Scythians serve as models because of their most just behavior, should be maintained.⁶⁰ One of the two other instances of Ephorus’ use of the word supports this conclusion.⁶¹ In F149, Ephorus answers a charge that the constitution of the Cretans predates that of the Spartans by saying that Spartans settled on Crete before the time of Lycurgus and thus could not have brought the Spartan constitution with them because *τὰ δὲ μιμήματα μὴ εἶναι πρότερα τῶν παραδειγμάτων μηδὲ τὰ*

⁵⁸ “Now the other writers, he says, tell only about their savagery, because they know that the terrible and the marvellous are startling, but one should tell the opposite facts too and make them patterns of conduct, and he himself, therefore, will tell only about those who follow “most just” habits.” Jones, 1924: 204-205.

⁵⁹ Fornara, 1983: 110. My emphasis.

⁶⁰ Walbank, 1985: 211. Supported by Sacks, 1990: 28 fn. 15; Pownall, 2004: 128. In actuality it is better to take *τάναντία* adverbially as I have done in my translation

⁶¹ The third instance does suggest a translation of “example” for *paradeigma* but it is not set in indirect speech and thus cannot reliably be attributed to Ephorus. Writing on a disagreement about the sources of the Nile, Aelius Aristides, who agrees with Ephorus, says: *καίτοι πρὸς γε οὗς αὐτὸς ἀντιλέγει, καὶ ἐν ποιησάμενος παράδειγμα ἀπαλλάττεται: ἔστι δ’ οὐ μὴδ’ ὄνομα ἐπενεγκὸν, ὥστε γινώσκειν ἢ τὸν ποταμὸν ἢ τὴν γῆν, ὁμῶς ἀξιοὶ νικᾶν. ἀραιὰ γὰρ ἢ Αἴγυπτος καὶ ῥαδία λιβάδας διαδοῦναι. Oratio 48, Jebb page 352. It is thus Aristides who says that Ephorus makes a *paradeigma*, not Ephorus himself.*

νεώτερα τῶν πρεσβυτέρων.⁶² Here a *παράδειγμα* is definitely something that is imitated, not simply an example. Notably, in both cases, the imitation is at the level of states, not individuals; Ephorus does not make a *παράδειγματα* out of good behavior, as Isocrates did with Evagoras, but praises the customs of an entire people, which can only serve as a *παράδειγμα* for other groups. He is thinking about good behavior on the level of the community. Thus Ephorus included personal judgments of individuals and surely recognized the benefit of historical examples for his readers; yet in the only instance that he expressly creates *παράδειγματα*, he does so not for the moral improvement of an individual but to demonstrate a well-ordered state.⁶³ This seemingly “moral” example in fact shows similar concerns to discussions of ideal states in the Academy and the Lyceum. But what kind of a model did the Scythians provide?

Strabo tells us that Ephorus claimed that the Scythians were the most just of all men and cited passages from both Homer and Hesiod to support him. He then gives Ephorus’ justification for the claim:

*εἶτ' αἰτιολογεῖ διότι ταῖς διαίταις εὐτελεῖς ὄντες καὶ οὐ χρηματισταὶ
πρὸς τε ἀλλήλους εὐνομοῦνται, κοινὰ πάντα ἔχοντες τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ
τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τέκνα καὶ τὴν ὅλην συγγένειαν, πρὸς τε τοὺς
ἐκτὸς ἄμαχοί εἰσι καὶ ἀνίκητοι, οὐδὲν ἔχοντες ὑπὲρ οὗ δουλεύουσιν.*

⁶² Strabo 10.4.18. Strabo gives the line in indirect discourse suggesting that he is following Ephorus closely and the fact that he is quoting a rhetorical point from Ephorus makes this all the more likely.

⁶³ Ephorus does mention Anacharsis as an exemplary Scythian. Ephorus includes him among the seven sages because of his moderation and intelligence: *καὶ τὸν Ἀνάχαρσιν δὲ σοφὸν καλῶν ὁ Ἐφορος τούτου τοῦ γένους φησὶν εἶναι: νομισθῆναι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἑπτὰ σοφῶν ἐπ' εὐτελείᾳ σωφροσύνη καὶ συνέσει.* (F42) Strabo faults Ephorus for attributing the invention of the potter’s wheel to Anacharsis since it was known to Homer. Pownall argues that Ephorus follows a similar tradition to Herodotus in his treatment of Anacharsis, presenting him as a cultural hero who brought *technai* to the barbarians. Pownall, 2004:126-127. For Anacharsis in Herodotus see Hartog, 1988: 61-84. Yet the presentation of Anacharsis here, and in F158 (*καὶ τὸν σοφὸν δὲ Ἀνάχαρσιν ἐκ τῶν Νομαδικῶν φησὶ γενέσθαι τῶν σφόδρα εὐσεβεστάτων*) suggests that Anacharsis was a member of an admirable tribe, not the cause of its excellence. Hudak, 2008: 191.

Ephorus reasons that it is because, being frugal in their way of life and not money-getters, they behave in a well-ordered way with each other, having everything in common: their other possessions, their wives, their children, and their whole family; and against those from outside they are invincible and unconquered, having nothing for which they will be enslaved. (F42 = 7.3.9)

First of all, the reason that they behave in a well-ordered way towards each other, Ephorus claims, is that their lifestyle is frugal and they are not business men/money people; furthermore they hold everything in common, including wives, children, family, etc. (Cf. F158 on the Scythian nomads: *ζῶσι δὲ τὴν τε κτήσιν ἀναδεδειχότες κοινήν ἀπάντων τὴν τε ὅλην οὐσίαν*.) Apparently private property was non-existent in Scythian society to the betterment of civic relations. While these practices may at first seem too un-Greek to warrant Ephorus' praise, Greeks at least as far back as Herodotus recognized a benefit in the barbarian practice of the communal sharing of women.⁶⁴

About the Agathyrsi, another neighbor of the Scythians, Herodotus writes:

Ἀγάθυρσοι δὲ ἀβρότατοι ἀνδρῶν εἰσι καὶ χρυσοφόροι τὰ μάλιστα, ἐπίκοινον δὲ τῶν γυναικῶν τὴν μίξιν ποιεῦνται, ἵνα κασίγνητοι τε ἀλλήλων ἔωσι καὶ οἰκῆμοι ἐόντες πάντες μήτε φθόνῳ μήτε ἔχθει χρέωνται ἐς ἀλλήλους.

The Agathyrsi are the most luxurious of men, particularly in the wearing of gold, and they make sexual unions promiscuously, in order that they all become brothers of one another, and since all are related they do not treat each other with jealousy or hatred. (*Histories*, 4.104)

The communal sharing of women turns the whole tribe into a giant family, thus eliminating envy and hatred. Ephorus reports the same state of affairs amongst the Scythians and, though he is not explicit, he is certainly envisioning the same effect. A

⁶⁴ Christesen (2010: 233-236) shows that Ephorus relied heavily on Herodotus for his depiction of the Scythians though with some changes.

Greek could certainly appreciate this; shielding women from illicit relationships was a major concern for the Greeks as can be seen from their myths and court trials like the speech of Lysias against Eratosthenes. Furthermore, competition over women was central to the events of the Trojan War and the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles in the *Iliad*. Herodotus also included the back and forth abduction of women by Greeks and Asians in his discussion of the origins of hostilities between east and west in his *Histories*, though he himself was skeptical about the truth of the stories.

There is a key difference between the Agathyrsi of Herodotus and the Scythians of Ephorus, however. According to Herodotus, the Agathyrsi are the most luxurious of all men and are especially in the habit of wearing gold, quite the opposite of Ephorus' Scythians. If Herodotus' account of the Agathyrsi, or some report like it, was a model for Ephorus here, the difference may suggest a moralizing change on Ephorus' part, or at least an eagerness to subscribe to a more praiseworthy version of the Scythians.⁶⁵ Indeed the archaeological record demonstrates that gold was a well-known commodity among the Scythians.⁶⁶ Though it is impossible to say whether Ephorus altered or withheld information about the Scythians, it is important to note that the difference is significant for Ephorus' *παράδειγμα*. As will be seen in Ephorus' *History*, the presence of wealth in a state has a detrimental effect on its internal harmony and by extension external success. Wealth leads to greed and envy, and from there to civil discord. Thus its absence from Scythian society was essential for the maintenance of good relations among its members.

⁶⁵ Pownall, 2004: 128.

⁶⁶ Reeder, Ed. 1999.

Furthemore, Ephorus says that the customs of the Scythians have an effect on external security as well internal harmony. Having neither property nor wealth they have nothing for which they can be enslaved, thus no other group would be envious or greedy towards them, and therefore wish to conquer them.⁶⁷ For the same reasons that their citizens treat each other well, other nations are not hostile towards them, and Ephorus concludes by saying that the Scythians are invincible and unconquered. Thus the frugal lifestyle of the Scythians not only prevents internal strife, but it deters the greed of potential invaders. While Ephorus' initial concern when looking at their customs is internal harmony, these customs also have a notable effect on external affairs.

All the cultural traits that Ephorus reports among the Scythians, their simple life and communal lifestyle, have the same beneficial effect: they promote harmony within society by eliminating envy and hatred. Fornara, however, argues that Ephorus could not have used a barbarian tribe like the Scythians as a model and at first glance his suggestion seems plausible.⁶⁸ Would Ephorus really have expected Greeks to emulate barbarians? This hardly seems likely in the case of the communal treatment of women: such a practice is antithetical to the great efforts seen in Greek society to guard against contamination of the male lineage. But although barbarians were frequently known for their savage practices, as Ephorus acknowledged, another *topos* of ancient ethnography set the peoples of the peripheries in a quasi-Golden Age existence, which was at least worthy of admiration if not emulation. Thus it is possible for the Scythians to serve as

⁶⁷ Herodotus says that Sardanis the Lydian questions Croesus' desire to conquer the Persians for this same reason: *τοῦτο μὲν δὴ, εἰ νικήσεις, τί σφέας ἀπαιρήσεται, τοῖσί γε μὴ ἔστι μηδέν.* (*Histories*, 1.71)

⁶⁸ Fornara, 1983: 111. Fornara does acknowledge the possibility that Ephorus could have used individual or collective Scythians to critique Greek customs.

models of behavior for the Greeks, but not necessarily “*in toto*” as Walbank notes in his review of Fornara.⁶⁹ Indeed the communal love of the Agathyrsi, which creates universal brotherhood, and the sharing of children among the Scythians closely resemble the ideal state in the *Republic* in which all children of a particular generation consider themselves siblings.⁷⁰ Additionally, Socrates proposes a regulation for the guardians that they possess no private property (*πρῶτον μὲν οὐσίαν κεκτημένον μηδεμίαν μηδένα ἰδίαν. Rep., 416d*). Likewise Christesen points out that in the *Laws* Plato’s Athenian stranger attributes many characteristics reminiscent of Ephorus’ Scythians to the early Greeks who survived the great flood.⁷¹ These men, the Athenian stranger says, must have been inexperienced in the devices men use on account of greed (*πλεονεξία*) and rivalry (*φιλονικίας*) (*Laws, 677b*), as well as civil strife (*στάσις*) and war (*Laws, 678e*). Moreover, these men were not so excessively poor that they were forced to fight each other for basic necessities nor were they able to become rich because of the absence of gold and silver (*Rep., 679b*). In such a society, the Athenian stranger concludes, the noblest character would arise (*σχεδὸν ἐν ταύτῃ γενναιότατα ἦθη γίγνοιτ’ ἄν. Rep., 679b*). The similarities to the Scythians are obvious: absence of strife and wealth, and the presence of noble citizens.⁷²

⁶⁹ Walbank, 1985: 211.

⁷⁰ Pembroke, 1967: 10. *Rep.* 461B; Hubbard, 1998: 24-25. The eating practices of the fringe groups also reflect a Golden Age period when food was provided by the gods; they live on meat and milk and do not sow the earth. Kartunnen, 2002: 462.

⁷¹ Christesen, 2010: 236-237. The remainder of this paragraph follows his discussion of the similarities.

⁷² Takhtadz’an (2003: 80-82) suggests that Ephorus was specifically thinking about Plato in his discussion of the Scythians.

Ephorus' Scythians, thus, presented a model for his readers of an ideal community. It was, however, at first glance a very un-Greek model. Wealth, hatred, and warfare were a part of Greek life, as were societies based on clearly identifiable hierarchies. The latter point can even be treated on the inter-city level; by the 5th and 4th centuries there were leagues of Greek city-states led by Athens, Sparta, and Thebes creating hierarchies among the Greek communities.⁷³ Likewise it is unlikely that the majority of the Greeks would be comfortable with the communal sharing of women and children that was a key part of Scythian society.⁷⁴ This does not mean, however, that Scythian society was just something to be admired. In fact, as the next section will show, Ephorus' Cretans live in a society that resembles the lifestyle of the Scythians in a number of ways, even though it is bound by the realities of the Greek world. Furthermore, as will be seen later on, the ideas about wealth and internal harmony that are seen among the Scythians are reflected in Ephorus' account of the events of the 5th and 4th centuries. Thus even though it is unlikely that Ephorus expected Greeks to emulate the Scythians, the virtues of their society are instructive for understanding Ephorus' view of the Greek world.

⁷³ Furthermore, Wickersham (1994: 119-177), as well be discussed below, argues that the existence of a single hegemonic city-state (Sparta for most the historical period but later Thebes) is an important part of Ephorus' narrative of Greek history. Thus, in a sense, Greece itself becomes a single community on the macro-level with the same potential for abuse of power and jealousy emanating from the hegemon as there was at the micro-level.

⁷⁴ The one notable exception, as will be seen, was Sparta, or at least the idealized Sparta of 4th century literature.

Chapter 3: Scythian Themes and the Ideal Constitution of Crete

The exemplary use of an alleged Cretan constitution is a *topos* of discussions of the ideal state in 4th-century Greek literature, most notably in Plato's *Laws*, Aristotle's *Politeia*, and the epitome of the Lyceum's Cretan *Politeia* by Herakleides. The constitution is compared to or connected with the Spartan state in Ephorus, Plato, and Aristotle, and credited as its inspiration (though apparently there were some who made the Spartan constitution the original and the Cretan the copy).⁷⁵ The connection stems largely from Spartan colonies on Crete, such as Lyktos, which were taken to be conduits for the transmission of Cretan customs to the mainland through the efforts of Lycurgus.

Perlman has argued against the historical validity of these accounts on several grounds: there is no evidence that any of these writers visited Crete, there is no evidence of a Doric culture of the kind they describe, and, even if one existed somewhere on Crete, there is no evidence of a monolithic Cretan culture that would in turn yield a monolithic Cretan constitution.⁷⁶ Thus it is possible to see this *topos* as an invention or distortion for philosophical inquiry in the schools of the 4th century, rather than an accurate record of observed customs. Perhaps for this very reason Polybius was surprised by and critical of Ephorus' discussion of the Cretan constitution. He completely rejected the similarity between the Cretan and Spartan constitutions, and criticizes Ephorus, among others, for praising the Cretans (F148). In fact, Polybius says, the two are quite opposite; though, in defense of Ephorus, Pownall points out his acknowledgment that many contemporary

⁷⁵ F149 = Strabo 10.4.17-19. Ephorus criticizes those who say that the Cretans borrowed from the Spartans.

⁷⁶ Perlman, 2005: 282-287. Willets (1955) generally viewed Ephorus as a reliable source for the customs of Crete, though in his later (1991: 170) work he was more skeptical.

Cretans have abandoned their traditional lifestyle and undergone a reversal of fortune with Sparta.⁷⁷ The point remains, however, that the constitution does not reflect actual practice in the time of Ephorus, though it may have been intended to depict a bygone era.

Perlman analyses the structure of the accounts and, based on their similarities, hypothesizes a “Cretan *Politeia*”, a lost work from the Platonic Academy, upon which all the extant material, Ephorus included, is based.⁷⁸ This hypothesis has important implications for the study of Ephorus. First of all, it suggests that the rhetoric of Isocrates was not the only influence on Ephorus; he would also be interested in the discussions that were occurring in the Academy and the Lyceum. It also suggests that he was using philosophical material in the construction of his *History*. But did he consider such a philosophical text an accurate report of Cretan customs or did he select it for the theoretical concepts that it contained? Does it reflect a lack of critical judgment on his part or an ideological bent that conformed with his view of the world? The limited survival of Ephorus makes it difficult to answer these questions, but we will see that the content of the Cretan constitution is consistent with other fragments of a more historical nature in Ephorus’ *History*.

The sections taken by Strabo from Ephorus on the Cretan constitution represent one of the longest continuous fragments of Ephorus and an uncharacteristically detailed description of the inner-workings of a society in a work that is primarily concerned with geography. On the inclusion of it Strabo remarks: *ἀξίαν δ’ ἀναγραφῆς τὴν τῶν Κρητῶν πολιτείαν ὑπέλαβον διὰ τε τὴν ιδιότητα καὶ τὴν δόξαν* (F149 = Strabo

⁷⁷ Pownall, 2004: 130-131.

⁷⁸ Perlman, 2005: 287.

10.4.22). The importance of the constitution in the 4th-century philosophical texts we have discussed above likely accounts for its fame. It is worth noting, however, that Strabo only cites Ephorus in this section and repeatedly reminds the reader that he is taking the material from Ephorus. The passage is rendered primarily in indirect discourse, indicating that Strabo is following Ephorus closely. Yet this account, Strabo says, is but a “running through” of the most important matters of the Cretan constitution, raising doubts about direct quotation in parts or all of the passage.⁷⁹ The original was likely more detailed, but how much more so it is impossible to say.

Strabo begins his “quotation” of Ephorus with the aims of the lawgiver:

δοκεῖ δέ, φησίν, ὁ νομοθέτης μέγιστον ὑποθέσθαι ταῖς πόλεσιν ἀγαθὸν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν· μόνην γὰρ ταύτην ἴδια ποιεῖν τῶν κτησαμένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ, τὰ δ' ἐν δουλείᾳ τῶν ἀρχόντων, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων εἶναι. τοῖς δ' ἔχουσι ταύτην φυλακῆς δεῖν. τὴν μὲν οὖν ὁμόνοιαν διχοστασίας αἰρομένης ἀπαντᾶν, ἣ γίνεται διὰ πλεονεξίαν καὶ τρυφῆν· σωφρόνως γὰρ καὶ λιπῶς ζῶσιν ἅπαντες οὔτε φθόνον οὔθ' ὕβριν οὔτε μῖσος ἀπαντᾶν πρὸς τοὺς ὁμοίους.

It seems, he says, that the lawgiver assumed that the greatest good within cities is freedom, for this alone makes good things the personal property of those who acquired them for themselves, while those things are the property of the rulers in a state of slavery and not of the ruled. So for those having freedom there is need of protection for it. Now concord occurs with the removal of dissension, which comes into being because of greed and wealth; for all those living moderately and frugally neither jealousy, nor violence, nor hatred occurs among them towards those who are of an equal status. (F149 = Strabo 10.4.16)

According to the lawgiver, the greatest good for cities is freedom (*ἐλευθερίαν*) because it alone allows those who have acquired good things for themselves to keep them for themselves, as opposed to a state of slavery in which they belong to the rulers. The

⁷⁹ τῆς δὲ πολιτείας ἧς Ἐφορος ἀνέγραψε τὰ κυριώτατα ἐπιδραμεῖν ἀποχρώντως ἂν ἔχοι. Strabo 10.4.16.

emphasis, then, is on the ability to enjoy the fruits of one's labor rather than working for someone else. Freedom must be protected, which, by implication, is the goal of the laws. The lawgiver does not reject the rulers themselves (Strabo/Ephorus tells us that they choose ten Archons for their regular business and a select group, the *Gerontes*, for more important matters), but is concerned about how they conduct themselves towards those who are ruled. They should not treat τὰ ἀγαθὰ of the ruled as their own. This marks a difference from the account of the Scythians: since there does not seem to be a hierarchy in Scythian society and they share everything in common, their customs obviously do not reflect a need to protect themselves from other members of their own society or from outsiders. After all, they have nothing for which they can be enslaved and have never been conquered. Their communal lifestyle and their frugality are their greatest defenses.⁸⁰

The situation was different in Crete; τὰ ἀγαθὰ had to be protected. But what is it to which Ephorus refers here? A traditional reading, found in Jones' Loeb translation, is that τὰ ἀγαθὰ refer to physical property.⁸¹ However, Christesen argues that τὰ ἀγαθὰ should not be taken as property or wealth alone, but all of the "blessings or "good things" that made up Cretan society, of which property and wealth are but a small part.⁸² He notes that the use of τὰ ἀγαθὰ rather than a term like τὰ κτήματα, which would indicate property, is significant. Additionally, since the Spartan constitution was said to have been modeled on the Cretan constitution by many ancient writers, the existence of

⁸⁰ See Hartog, 1988: 34-60 for the nomadic nature of the Scythians as the trait that makes them unconquerable.

⁸¹ Jones, 1924: 145.

⁸² Christesen, 2010: 218-222.

private property as a “foundational element” of the Cretan constitution “would run counter to much of the relevant ancient literature, which, starting with Xenophon (*Lak. Pol.* 6), emphasized the unusual extent to which property was communally held in Sparta.”⁸³ While Christesen is right that private property is not a dominant part of the Cretan constitution, for reasons that will be seen, it is important not to ignore it completely. First of all, with regards to the language of the passage, though it is true that *τὰ ἀγαθὰ* do not indicate physical property as clearly as *τὰ κτήματα*, Christesen ignores the fact that they belong to *τῶν κτησαμένων*, those who acquired them; the verb adds an aspect of personal possession that the object leaves out. Secondly, unlike Scythian society, there are both rich and poor people in Crete (F149 = Strabo 10.4.16); though the lawgiver sought to downplay the differences between these groups, as will be seen in the next paragraph, their existence implies that some Cretans possessed more than others. Furthermore, ritualized gift-giving is an important part of Cretan pederasty (F149 = Strabo 10.4.21); the younger man is given a shield and a cup by his *erastes* as part of a ceremony that recognized his excellence. He was then able to wear a special cloak that singled him out among the Cretans as having taken part in the ritual. Thus personal property was a part of Cretan society and valued as a status symbol. The lawgiver could not eliminate it, but had to instruct the citizens not to let it interfere with the proper functioning of the state.

Thus, the next concern for the lawgiver is concord (*ὁμόνοια*), an ideal that is reminiscent of the *εὐνομία* of Scythian society. Ephorus says that concord occurs in a

⁸³ Christesen, 2010: 218-219.

state with the removal of *stasis*, which is itself the end result of the presence of greed (*πλεονεξία*) and wealth (*τρυφή*). These two vices in turn cause envy (*φθόνος*), violence (*ὑβρις*), and hatred (*μίσος*) among the citizens against those of an equal status. The solution for the lawgiver is a moderate and frugal lifestyle like that of the Scythians, for they also avoid the pursuit of wealth and live a simple life. The transition from freedom to concord is awkward, as noted by Perlman, since the connection between the two is not made explicit; yet they are both concerned with the creation of equality and harmonious conduct among the citizens.⁸⁴ Though the Cretan lawgiver does not impose communal possession of all things, as is the practice among the Scythians (*τὰ ἀγαθὰ* should be *ἴδια* after all), he seeks to imbue the *polis* with a pretense of equality that resembles the state of the Scythians. First, it is clear that the ideal state does not leave the ruled at the mercy of the rulers: good things should not be collected or monopolized by those in charge. Second, if certain individuals were allowed to accumulate vast amounts of wealth, the differences among citizens would become obvious and cause civic discord. Thus, by eliminating *πλεονεξία* and *τρυφή* the lawgiver seeks to avoid the jealousy and ill will that lead citizens who are equal to compete with and ultimately dominate one another. The *πρὸς τοὺς ὁμοίους* is significant here; it emphasizes the equality of the citizens. Even though inequality in wealth remains, by living a simple life-style the citizens create a semblance of equality: differences are minimized and similarities promoted to create concord.

⁸⁴ Perlman, 2005: 289.

It is with these goals in mind, freedom and concord, that the lawgiver created the customs of the Cretans. The first of these given by Strabo/Ephorus is the institution of communal groups for boys and men:

διόπερ τοὺς μὲν παῖδας εἰς τὰς ὀνομαζομένας ἀγέλας κελεύσαι φοιτᾶν, τοὺς δὲ τελείους ἐν τοῖς συσσιτίοις ἃ καλοῦσιν ἀνδρεία συσσιτεῖν, ὅπως τῶν ἴσων μετάσχοιεν τοῖς εὐπόροις οἱ πενέστεροι δημοσίᾳ τρεφόμενοι.

For this reason the lawgiver ordered the boys to go about in the so-called *Agelai* (herds or companies), and the grown-men to eat together in the communal messes, which they call *Andreia*, in order that the poorer citizens, nourished at the public expense, might partake of an equal share to the wealthy. (F149 = Strabo 10.4.16)

The boys are organized into *agelai*, men into *sussitia*, which are called *andreia* by the Cretans. Both organizations are fed at the public expense, in order that the poor may be on an equal level with the rich. In a way, this practice resembles the communism of the Scythians; by placing publicly funded meals at the center of communal life, the lawgiver creates a setting in which the influence of private property is eliminated. The communal organizations minimize the differences between rich and poor and promote harmony among their members. The passage from Plato's *Laws*, discussed above, in which the Athenian stranger claims that the noblest societies emerge when there is an absence of both extreme poverty and the potential for affluence, is also relevant here, highlighting another similarity between ideal societies in Plato and Ephorus. Furthermore, this organization is the basis of the military structure, for the members of the *andreia* fight together as units (F149 = Strabo 10.4.20). Similarly, the guardians in Plato's *Republic* were arranged in *sussitia* (*Rep.* 416e). The very young attend the *andreia*, but eat their meals on the ground, clad in shabby clothes both winter and summer, serving both the

men and each other. The communal organizations also serve as a mechanism for promoting the rejection of luxury and the tolerance of hardship, which the lawgiver believed would lead to harmony and courage.

Another important element of the Cretan constitution is the education in the *agelai* that inculcated the values of the community in the young men of Crete and developed their tolerance of hardship and war. This was important for the Greeks since, unlike the Scythians, they had to worry about the greed of outsiders as well as those within their own societies. Tolerance of hardship was effective for discouraging a luxurious and enviable lifestyle, while military training helped to ward off greedy outsiders. Like the Cretan constitution of Plato's laws, many, if not all, of the Cretan customs in Ephorus were designed with warfare in mind, like the use of the *sussitia* to create harmonious military units.⁸⁵ The lawgiver instructed the Cretans from a young age to accustom themselves to arms and toil (*πόνος*), so that they would be scornful of heat, cold, difficult marches, and wounds in the gym or on the battlefield. Their sport included archery and the war dance, activities specifically cited as useful for warfare; further the lawgiver instructed that they should wear military clothes and shoes, and regard military arms as the greatest gifts. Each troop was organized by one of the most distinguished and capable boys whose father would lead the troop in hunting and racing exercises and would punish those who misbehaved. Part of their training involved mock battles (complete with the accustomed marching music) that left them with permanent scars. A curious aspect of troop life is the custom surrounding marriage:

⁸⁵ Perlman, 2005: 290.

γαμεῖν μὲν ἅμα πάντες ἀναγκάζονται παρ' αὐτοῖς οἱ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον ἐκ τῆς τῶν παίδων ἀγέλης ἐκκριθέντες, οὐκ εὐθὺς δ' ἄγονται παρ' ἑαυτοῦς τὰς γαμηθείσας παῖδας, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ ἤδη διοικεῖν ἱκαναὶ ὥσι τὰ περὶ τοὺς οἴκους.

All those who are selected out of a “Company” of boys at the same time are compelled to marry at the same time; but they do not lead off the young girls they have married straightaway, but after they are sufficiently able to conduct the business of their households. (F149 = Strabo 10.4.20)

When certain members of the group are separated from the rest for reasons not explained by Ephorus (most likely the oldest when they reach a certain age), they are all forced to marry at the same time. They do not, however, live with their new brides until the girls are capable of taking care of the house. Perlman connects this to Aristotle’s claim that the lawgiver advocated the separation of men and women and pederasty for the purpose of birth control.⁸⁶ Yet the two are not equivalent: Aristotle’s account suggests a regularized separation, Ephorus’ simply a delay before permanent cohabitation. What can be stressed here is the common treatment of the boys: they are selected out and forced to marry as a group. Like the elimination of envy and wealth, this marriage custom creates the impression that all members of society are equal.

At its core, the Cretan education in the *agelai* aims at good warriors. But it also reinforces the civic ideals of community, acceptance of a hard life, and equality that prevents strife within the state. Yet there is also an opportunity for distinction exemplified by the promotion of the most distinguished boys to lead the troops. Cretan society does not eliminate hierarchy completely, but encourages a particular kind of distinction according to the institutions proscribed by the lawgiver. No explicit

⁸⁶ Perlman, 2005: 314, citing Politics 1272a21-25. Further discussion below in regards to Cretan pederasty.

connection is made, but many of these themes reappear in the custom of Cretan pederasty, a ritual practice that serves to identify and recognize the best young men. Thus this practice, the penultimate piece of the constitution cited by Strabo, serves to reinforce and conclude the important points of the constitution.

The Cretan pederasty described in Strabo 10.4.21 has attracted much attention due to the unique nature of the practice. Unlike Athenian pederasty, especially as it is portrayed in the Socratic circle, with its complicated procedures of seduction and promises of education, which obfuscate its more basic sexual nature, the Cretan custom is shockingly direct; it involves the physical pursuit and seizure of the *eromenos*, not metaphorical pursuit through persuasion.

ἴδιον δ' αὐτοῖς τὸ περὶ τοὺς ἔρωτας νόμιμον: οὐ γὰρ πειθοὶ κατεργάζονται τοὺς ἐρωμένους ἀλλ' ἀρπαγῆ: προλέγει τοῖς φίλοις πρὸ τριῶν ἢ πλειόνων ἡμερῶν ὁ ἐραστής ὅτι μέλλει τὴν ἀρπαγὴν ποιῆσθαι: τοῖς δ' ἀποκρύπτει μὲν τὸν παῖδα ἢ μὴ εἰάν πορεύεσθαι τὴν τεταγμένην ὁδὸν τῶν αἰσχίστων ἐστίν, ὡς ἐξομολογουμένοις ὅτι ἀνάξιος ὁ παῖς εἴη τοιοῦτου ἐραστοῦ τυγχάνειν: συνιόντες δ', ἂν μὲν τῶν ἴσων ἢ τῶν ὑπερεχόντων τις ἢ τοῦ παιδὸς τιμῆ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁ ἀρπάζων, ἐπιδιώκοντες ἀνθήψαντο μόνον μετρίως τὸ νόμιμον ἐκπληροῦντες, τἄλλα δ' ἐπατρέπουσιν ἄγειν χαίροντες: ἂν δ' ἀνάξιος, ἀφαιροῦνται: πέρασ δὲ τῆς ἐπιδιώξεώς ἐστιν ἕως ἂν ἀχθῆ ὁ παῖς εἰς τὸ τοῦ ἀρπάσαντος ἀνδρείον. ἐράσμιον δὲ νομίζουσιν οὐ τὸν κάλλει διαφέροντα, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀνδρεία καὶ κοσμιότητι.

There is a peculiar custom among them concerning matters of love: for they do not acquire their beloveds by persuasion but by abduction; the lover says to his friends three or more days before that he is about to make the abduction; and it is a thing of shame for them either to hide the boy or to prevent him from walking along the path that has been agreed upon, as if admitting that the boy is unworthy to acquire this sort of lover; but when they meet with the abductor, should he be someone equal to or surpassing the boy in honor and in other qualities, pursuing him they snatch the boy back with only a moderate amount of force, fulfilling the custom, and then, rejoicing, turn him over to the abductor to lead away; but should the

abductor be someone unworthy, they take him back for real; the end of the pursuit is when the boy is led to the communal mess of the one abducting him. They do not think it right for a boy who is exceptional in beauty to be desired but one who is exceptional in courage and orderly behavior. (F149 = Strabo 10.4.21)

According to Ephorus, the Cretans select their *eromenoi* not on the basis of looks but on their *andreia* and *kosmiotes*; thus the selection process reinforces the *paideia* established by the lawgiver. The *erastes* tells the boy's family and friends three or four days ahead of time about his plans to seize the target boy who will become the *eromenos*.⁸⁷ These friends are able to judge the *erastes*, but it is shameful for them to attempt to hide the target, as this would suggest that the boy is unworthy of a lover. Instead, when the *erastes* makes his attempt, if they consider him worthy, meaning he is equal to or surpasses the boy in honor or some other unspecified quality, they help the *erastes* catch the boy; if on the other hand they deem him unworthy, they help the boy escape. The account is careful to say that the group only defends the boy with moderate force, in fulfillment of the custom (*ἐπιδιώκοντες ἀνθήψαντο μόνον μετρίως τὸ νόμιμον ἐκπληροῦντες*), yet Dodd points out "there is a certain seriousness to it in that the *eromenos* was not warned in advance of the action, and so was certainly in a position to offer some real resistance."⁸⁸ The initial pursuit ends when the boy is driven to the *andreion* of the *erastes*. Thus the boy (along with his friends) is brought into the society of the *erastes*.

⁸⁷ The text is vague about the identity of the friends, whether they are the friends of the boy or the *erastes*, only referring to them in this place as *tois philois*. The most popular interpretation is that the *erastes* approaches the friends of the boy and attempts to enlist their aid in the ritual.

⁸⁸ Dodd, 2000: 35.

Next, after the *erastes* offers unspecified gifts to the boy, the two of them, along with those who were present at the initial abduction, depart into the countryside for up to two months of feasting and hunting. This group trip involving the *erastes*, the *eromenos*, and the friends of the *eromenos* is reminiscent of the hunting trips of the *agelai* led by the father of the head boy. The pederastic hunt, however, ends with a ritualized gift ceremony that has led scholars to explain the ritual as an initiatory rite.⁸⁹ Upon the return of the group to the city, the boy is presented with three, legally mandated gifts: a military cloak, an ox, and a drinking vessel. As noted above, the lawgiver sought to imbue his citizens with the belief that military arms are the greatest gift; thus this was a major present. Further, the gifts were so expensive that the *erastes* receives financial assistance from his friends. This sharing of cost recalls a more communal relationship towards property; it is not the elimination of private property, but it is another case of the shared public responsibility for a communal event, like the *sussitia*. After the gift-giving, the boy sacrifices an ox and holds a feast, during which he has the right to disassociate himself from the *erastes* if the affair was displeasing or force was used in the initial abduction. This then is the second opportunity for the *erastes* to be judged. Likewise the feast serves to make the pederastic ritual a communal affair. The citizens share in the approval and fulfillment of the relationship, promoting the harmony of the state.

Ephorus concludes the account by saying that it is disgraceful for a handsome young man or one from a good family not to have a lover, because it is taken to be an indication of his inferior character. Thus he again stresses that the *erastes* judges based

⁸⁹ Bremer, 1980: 284-287. Sergent, 1986: 7-54.

on character even when the boy is handsome and noble. The reward for selection is a distinguished position in dances and races as well as the right to wear clothing that singles out the *eromenoi*, both as boys and adults, as *kleinoi*, for this is the term given to *eromenoi*. This aspect of the custom implies a social hierarchy, but one that is sanctioned by the citizens and based on the good qualities of the *eromenos*, not his physical appearance.

Like the rest of the constitution, Perlman attributes the discussion of Cretan pederasty to the “Cretan *Politeia*”.⁹⁰ Yet Ephorus is the only one of the sources for the Cretan constitution that describes this practice in such detail. Plato, in the *Laws*, accuses the Cretans of inventing the story of Zeus’ abduction of Ganymede to serve as a divine precedent for pederasty, closely associating Crete with the origins of the custom.⁹¹ In this, he follows other sources that say that pederasty originated in Crete. Plato is critical of Cretan pederasty and other same-sex relationships, attributing them to a lack of self-control. No such explicit criticism is present in Ephorus. Aristotle, in the *Politics*, describes sexual relationships between Cretan men as a form of birth control, a subject that he promises to explore more in another place, which either did not survive or never came to fruition (*Politics*: 1272a21-25). Perlman concludes from Aristotle’s reference to same-sex relationships in the *Politics* and comments in Herakleides’ epitome that

⁹⁰ Perlman, 2005: 287.

⁹¹ *Laws*, 636c-d. The story, the Athenian stranger suggests, stems from the belief that Zeus was the generator of all Cretan laws, using Minos as his mouthpiece. Also F147 = Strabo 10.4.8

Aristotle was thinking of the same custom described by Ephorus.⁹² Indeed, Herakleides' epitome comes the closest to the Ephoran account. On the Cretans he writes:

ταῖς δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἄρρενας ἐρωτικαῖς ὁμιλίαις εἰκόμασι πρῶτοι κεχρησθαι, καὶ οὐκ αἰσχρὸν παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῦτο. ὅταν δὲ κρατήσωσιν, ἀπάγουσιν εἰς ὄρος ἢ τοὺς ἐαυτῶν χώρους κάκει ἐστιῶνται ἡμέρας ξ'· πλείους γὰρ οὐκ ἔξεστι.

They seem to have been the first to take part in erotic associations with men, and this is not a shameful thing about them. Whenever they overpower (their object of affection), they lead them into the mountains or to their own territories and then they feast themselves for sixty days; for a longer time is not permitted. (*Excerpta politiarum*, 15.7-10)

The Cretans were the first to engage in erotic unions with men and this is not believed to be shameful among them. When they overcome their targets (presumably younger boys) they lead them into the mountains or their own lands where they feast for 60 days. The account is vague, though the description in Ephorus helps to clarify. The important elements are: 1. the Cretans were the first to engage in this practice; 2. the practice involves or imitates the use of force (*κρατήσωσιν*); and 3. the initial act is followed by an extended trip into the countryside for a period of feasting. With the exception of a direct remark about Cretan primacy, these elements appear in Ephorus' description of Cretan pederasty, but with added details that connect the practice to the rest of the Cretan constitution. Herakleides says that the retreat into the countryside is for the purpose of feasting, but Ephorus says that hunting was also involved, no doubt to provide food for the feasts. In Ephorus' account, built into this period of celebration is continued training in the manly exploits necessary for survival and tolerance of a rougher lifestyle.

⁹² Perlman, 2005: 314.

Thus the tenets of Ephorus' Cretan constitution were designed by the lawgiver to create a state that shared many virtues with the Scythians of F42. Though a Greek society, Crete was bound by certain unalterable realities, i.e. private property and the competition that it caused, the effects of which the lawgiver aimed to minimize and in so doing bring about the kind of internal harmony that existed among the Scythians. He did this by abolishing greed and wealth, promoting a communal atmosphere through the *sussitia* provided at the public expense, and accustoming Cretan citizens to a more rugged style of life through training and time spent in the wilderness. Furthermore, the youths that were selected in the practice of pederasty were those who stood out most for their character, not their good looks, their *erastes* was constantly judged in front of the community for his conduct and could be rejected if he used too much force. Thus Ephorus attributes many of the same virtues to a barbarian tribe and a Greek society, so that a pattern begins to emerge, which reveals Ephorus' view of the ideal state. This pattern continues when we turn from these idealized communities to Ephorus' history of Greece.

Chapter 4: Harmony and Wealth in the Greek World of Ephorus

For Ephorus, a well-ordered society avoids luxury and wealth because they are the sources of greed and ill will among citizens that lead to civil strife, as is seen both in the customs of the Scythians, which Ephorus considers most just, and in the Cretan constitution, though they achieve their goals in different ways. The Scythians live a communal lifestyle, holding everything in common and possessing no private property; the Cretans on the other hand use particular civic institutions to simulate equality and promote harmony. Furthermore they strive to base their hierarchies on good character rather than wealth or beauty. An added benefit for the Scythians is that the avoidance of wealth and private property leaves them with nothing to be enslaved for, and thus they have never been conquered. But this aspect of Scythian life was an unattainable ideal for Greek communities like Crete, which could not escape inter-city and intra-city conflict. Thus the Cretan constitution makes military training an important part of its culture and laws, although it maintains equality amongst its soldiers. Turning to other Greek *poleis* and regions, we can see the thematic importance of these discussions of Scythia and Crete.

In brief remarks that survive from Ephorus' treatment of the Aetolians, we can see that he emphasized the importance of military training for the Greeks. In his discussion of the origins of the Curetes, whom he determines were the original inhabitants of Aetolia, Strabo includes a synopsis of Ephorus' judgment of the Aetolians themselves:

*Ἐφορος δὲ τοὺς Αἰτωλοὺς εἰπὼν ἔθνος εἶναι μηδεπώποτε
γεγεννημένον ὑφ' ἑτέροις, ἀλλὰ πάντα τὸν μνημονευόμενον χρόνον
μεμενηγὸς ἀπόρθητον διὰ τε τὰς δυσχωρίας τῶν τόπων καὶ διὰ τὴν*

περὶ τὸν πόλεμον ἄσκησιν, ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν φησιν ἅπασαν τὴν χώραν Κουρήτας κατασχεῖν.

Ephorus, having said that the Aetolians were a tribe that has never become subjected to others, but through all of recorded time has remained unravaged because of the ruggedness of their lands and their practice in warfare, says that in the beginning the Curetes possessed the whole country. (F122a = Strabo 10.3.2)

Ephorus, Strabo says, claimed that the Curetes were native to Aetolia but were driven into Acarnania by the arrival of Aetolus from Elis. Once settled there the Aetolians, in contrast to the Curetes, were never brought under the power of others, according to Ephorus, and because of the ruggedness of their lands and because of their practice in warfare remained unravaged in recorded memory. Like the Scythians, the Aetolians were unconquered, but this is not because of a lack of interest from their neighbors; rather they have a well-trained military like the Cretans. They are able to protect themselves.

Ephorus also says that the ruggedness of Aetolia was a factor in the defense of the region. It is not clear exactly what Ephorus means, but it is tempting to see Ephorus' thoughts about wealth here. Pownall infers that living in a harsh country means the rejection, or at least the absence, of a luxurious lifestyle, and thus the success of the Aetolian tribe was dependent upon its "valor and lack of concern for the comforts of life."⁹³ A similar account is given of the Pelasgians:

νομίζειν δέ φησιν Ἐφορος τὸ ἀνέκαθεν Ἀρκάδας ὄντας ἐλέσθαι στρατιωτικὸν βίον, εἰς δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγωγὴν προτρέποντας πολλοὺς ἅπασι τοῦ ὀνόματος μεταδοῦναι καὶ πολλὴν ἐπιφάνειαν κτήσασθαι καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησι καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις.

Ephorus says that he believes they, being Arcadians by origin, chose a military life, and turning many others to this same form of training they

⁹³ Pownall, 2004: 122.

gave their name to all and acquired much distinction, both among Greeks and others. (F113 = Strabo 5.2.4)

Like the Aetolians, Ephorus says that the Pelasgians dedicated themselves to military training and because of this they prospered, spreading their lifestyle throughout Greece. Christesen further suggests that Ephorus must have attributed an “austere lifestyle” to them since they originated in Arcadia, “a proverbially impoverished place.”⁹⁴ If Pownall and Christesen are right, then the accounts of the Aetolians and the Pelasgians would mirror each other and be related to Ephorus’ thoughts about the effects of the absence of wealth in Scythia and Crete. The connection to wealth relies largely on speculation, however, especially in the case of the Pelasgians. What can be concluded is that Ephorus recognized and emphasized that military training was important for the success of these two peoples. To this degree, the Aetolians and Pelasgians resemble the Cretan model, since military training was a central aspect of the Cretan constitution, rather than the Scythian model, even if they did not have the same regulations about wealth.

That Ephorus believed the presence or absence of wealth was important to the rise and fall of a Greek community is indicated in remarks he makes about the Milesians. Athenaeus, in a discussion of luxury in the *Deipnosophistae*, reports:

Μιλήσιοι δ' ἕως μὲν οὐκ ἐτρούφων, ἐνίκων Σκύθας, ὡς φησιν Ἐφορος, καὶ τὰς τε ἐφ' Ἑλλησπόντῳ πόλεις ἔκτισαν καὶ τὸν Εὐξείνου Πόντου κατώκισαν πόλεσι λαμπραῖς, καὶ πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν Μίλητον ἔθεον.

The Milesians, as long as they did not live luxuriously, routinely prevailed over the Scythians, as Ephorus says, and founded cities along the Hellespont and colonized the Black Sea with magnificent cities, and all

⁹⁴ Christesen, 2010: 228-229.

under the power of Miletus prospered. (F183 = Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 12.523e)

According to Ephorus, as long as the Milesians avoided luxury (*οὐκ ἐτρούφων*) they were able to overcome the Scythians.⁹⁵ Furthermore they founded cities on the Hellespont and colonized the Black Sea, and all who were under them prospered. In other words, they were benevolent hegemon of the Black Sea region. They were successful, expanded, and prospered because they avoided luxury. The implication from Ephorus is that this prosperity did not last. Indeed, the cities of Ionia were known for their more luxurious, eastern tastes, though Miletus did not have as bad a reputation as the rest.⁹⁶ Athenaeus does not record Ephorus' remarks on what happened to Miletus, however. Instead, he cites Aristotle and Heracleides of Pontus works on the effect of the introduction of luxury to the city. According to Athenaeus, Aristotle says that the courage of the city flowed out with the introduction of luxury and pleasure (*ὡς δὲ ὑπήχθησαν ἡδονῇ καὶ τροφῇ κατεροῦη τὸ τῆς πόλεως ἀνδρείον, φησὶν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης. Deipnosophistae, 12.523e*). Heracleides, on the other hand, says that the Milesians experienced disasters because of their luxurious lifestyle and civil animosity (*ἢ Μιλησίων πόλις περιπέπτωκεν ἀτυχίαις διὰ τροφὴν βίου καὶ πολιτικὰς ἔχθρας. Deipnosophistae, 12.523e*). He goes on to say that there was a conflict between the rich citizens and the rest of the *demos*, and when the rich finally got the upper hand, they

⁹⁵ Clearly these cannot be the unconquered Scythians of F42. Of course Ephorus did not say that all the Scythians followed the most just customs, so there were some who were either vulnerable to outside forces or perhaps undertook expeditions of conquest themselves.

⁹⁶ *ἀπεσχίσθησαν δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων Ἴωνων οὗτοι κατ' ἄλλο μὲν οὐδέν, ἀσθενέος δὲ ἐόντος τοῦ παντὸς τότε Ἑλληνικοῦ γένεος, πολλῶ δὴ ἦν ἀσθενέστατον τῶν ἐθνέων τὸ Ἴωνικὸν καὶ λόγου ἐλαχίστου.* Herodotus *Histories*, 1.143. Kurke, 1992: especially 93-94, 98.

tarred and burned (*κατεπίττωσαν*) all whom they captured along with their children. Animosity between the rich and poor tore the town apart. It is unfortunate that Athenaeus does not record Ephorus' story of the fate of Miletus, but it can be inferred that luxury reversed its previous successes: military supremacy over the Scythians and a prosperous life at home and among its dependent cities. His tale may not have been as graphic as Heracleides', but it is likely that the theme was the same. After all, Ephorus' Cretan lawgiver desired to eliminate wealth to encourage harmony and to promote unity amongst the rich and poor citizens, which is the reason that he had them eat together at the *sussitia*.

Another example of decline through the influence of wealth can be seen in Athens. When Diodorus Siculus cites Ephorus it is often to report his opinion on a particular point, though scholars will often attribute more to the citation than is evident from the Greek (as in the case of Pownall and Jason of Pherae above). There is one passage, however, where Diodorus makes clear that he has lifted a whole section from Ephorus: the origins of the Peloponnesian War (*αἰτίαι μὲν οὖν τοῦ Πελοποννησιακοῦ πολέμου τοιαῦταί τινες ὑπήρξαν, ὡς Ἐφορος ἀνέγραψε*. F196 = D.S. 12.40.1). Diodorus says that the causes of the Peloponnesian War in his narrative were such as Ephorus wrote them. This is very beneficial for the study of Ephorus, because it provides Ephorus' view of a crucial event in Greek history, one that differs from the main contemporary narrative of Thucydides. Rather than the *Realpolitik* of the *Peloponnesian War*, that Athenian power and Spartan fear of it was the truest cause, Ephorus' account is

a narrative of personal intrigue involving the great and troubled Athenian statesman, Pericles.

According to the Ephoran narrative the causes of the war start with the transfer of the treasury of the Delian League, nearly 8000 talents, to Athens and its entrustment to Pericles for safekeeping. Though he surpassed his fellow citizens in nobility of birth (*εὐγενεία*) and reputation (*δόξη*), as well as cleverness of speech (*λόγου δεινότης*), he could not avoid the temptation of his charge. He soon had spent a great deal of the money for his own use and was called to give an account of it (*μετὰ δέ τινα χρόνον ἀνηλωκῶς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἰδίᾳ πλήθος ἰκανὸν χρημάτων καὶ λόγον ἀπαιτούμενος εἰς ἀρρωσίαν ἐνέπεσεν*; D.S. 12.38.2). Pericles was at a loss how to acquit himself given the circumstances, until he was advised by the young Alcibiades not to look for a way to give account, but to look for a way to avoid giving account. Pericles accepted the advice and decided that the best way to protect himself was to distract the Athenians with a war.

At the same time, a scandal arose involving the constructing of the statue of Athena for the Parthenon that further tarnished Pericles' reputation (D.S. 12.39). Pericles had been appointed the overseer of Pheidias, the creator of the statue, and certain enemies of Pericles used this role as an opportunity to attack Pericles: they charged that Pheidias had taken personal possession of a great deal of the sacred funds with the help of Pericles. They then accused Pericles of stealing sacred property (*ἱεροσυλία*) as well as impiety towards the gods in connection with his teacher Anaxagoras. The reasons given by Diodorus for these acts are significant. They included him in their accusations

because they were jealous of his prominent position and reputation and wanted to take him down.⁹⁷ The point is immediately reinforced:

ὁ δὲ Περικλῆς, εἰδὼς τὸν δῆμον ἐν μὲν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς ἔργοις θαυμάζοντα τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας διὰ τὰς κατεπειγούσας χρείας, κατὰ δὲ τὴν εἰρήνην τοὺς αὐτοὺς συκοφαντοῦντα διὰ τὴν σχολὴν καὶ φθόνον, ἔκρινε συμφέρειν αὐτῷ τὴν πόλιν ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς μέγαν πόλεμον.

And Pericles, knowing that the people, though marveling at good men in deeds of war because of the urgent need, bring false charges against them during peacetime because their leisure and jealousy, decided that it would be best for him to engage the city in a great war. (F196 = D.S. 12.39.3)

Pericles knew that during peacetime, the time when the city is most concerned with internal affairs, many become jealous of the nobler citizens, spreading hostility throughout the population. Diodorus gives no indication that either he or his source disagree with this sentiment. Pericles thus sought to start a war so that the citizens would pay more heed to his usefulness than their own jealousies, and thus it was Pericles who convinced the Athenians to accept war with the Peloponnesians (D.S. 12.39.4-40.5). The Peloponnesian War, the war that tore the Greek world apart, started so that Pericles could preserve his personal reputation.

Not surprisingly, this analysis has not helped Ephorus' reputation among modern scholars, largely because it differs from the account of Thucydides. Barber, for example, whose trust in Thucydides is almost completely unwavering, treats this divergence from the Thucydidean narrative as a prime example of Ephorus' incompetence as an

⁹⁷ *συνέπλεκον δ' ἐν ταῖς κατηγορίαις καὶ διαβολαῖς τὸν Περικλέα, διὰ τὸν φθόνον σπεύδοντες διαβαλεῖν τὴν τάνδρῳς ὑπεροχὴν τε καὶ δόξαν.* D.S. 12.39.2.

historian.⁹⁸ But Ephorus is also criticized for presenting causes for the war that can be traced back to comedy. Diodorus, perhaps imitating Ephorus, includes two passages at the end of the narrative from Aristophanes' *Acharnians* and *Peace*, which attribute the Peloponnesian War to the personal machinations of Pericles. This led Dover to conclude that Ephorus, along with many other writers who did not live in classical Athens, did not understand the nature of Aristophanes' political comedy, and thus believed that he had found in Aristophanes a cause for the war, which Thucydides had overlooked.⁹⁹ In the passage from the *Peace*, Hermes tells the farmers that Pericles, fearing the natures (*τὰς φύσεις*) and the ferocious temper (*τὸν αὐτοδαῖξ τρόπον*) of the Athenians, kindled the war with the Megarian Decree (*Peace*, 603-614). Likewise in the *Acharnians*, Aristophanes attributes the origin of the Megarian Decree to the personal machinations of Pericles (*Acharnians*, 530-531). Barber also thought that Ephorus' acceptance of the story from Aristophanes reflected his inability "to distinguish gossip from history."¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, Barber argues, Ephorus failed to see a chronological problem that obviates his account; namely, the prosecution of Pheidias occurred too far in the past to be connected to the start of the war.¹⁰¹ Pownall, for her part, attributes Ephorus' account to his "alienation from politics."¹⁰² At first glance, especially compared to the analytical

⁹⁸ Barber, 1935: 106-112. On his trust of Thucydides: "The ancient writers, with the possible exception of Thucydides, who nearly succeeded in maintaining his avowed intention of bequeathing a true record to posterity, were especially liable to this fault: and if Thucydides was the first he was also the last scientific historian for a considerable time to come." Barber, 84. Thucydides' had his own biases that need to be accounted for, however, as will be discussed below.

⁹⁹ Dover, 1988: Vol. 2 45-52.

¹⁰⁰ Barber, 1935: 112.

¹⁰¹ Barber, 1935: 109, 111.

¹⁰² Pownall, 2004: 133-134.

Thucydides, Ephorus appears to be a naïve foreigner, unable to comprehend the urbane theater culture of Athens.

Yet this reading is an unfair estimation of Ephorus and his abilities as an historian. First of all, it is misleading to treat Thucydides as an objective historian with the same methodology as his modern counterparts. As early as 1907, Cornford claimed in his study that Thucydides' work was colored by "the tragic theory of human nature—a traditional psychology which Thucydides seems to me to have learnt from Aeschylus."¹⁰³ Furthermore, a closer analysis shows that Ephorus was not blindly following the comedic material. Though the Ephoran narrative and the passage from the *Peace* are very similar, the *Acharnians* story is quite different. There Aristophanes attributes Pericles' anger to a back and forth abduction of women, two coming from the house of Aspasia, very reminiscent of Herodotus' account of the beginning of hostilities between Europe and Asia (*Acharnians*, 523-528). Ephorus was not so clueless that he accepted this tale, which is far juicier as gossip. Instead, he chose the version that highlights political competition in the Athenian democracy and the mixed feelings Athenians had about the policies and actions of Pericles. Though it may not have the interstate scope of Thucydides' truest cause, this version is not a simple tabloid story. Even Thucydides would not deny that personal motivations and jealousies can have a major effect on history, as his account of Alcibiades and the Sicilian Expedition proves. Barber does acknowledge this fact, as well as the presence of an anti-Pericles party, but still dismisses Ephorus' narrative because of the chronological discrepancy between the trial of Pheidias

¹⁰³ Cornford, 1907: X. This includes Thucydides' account of the beginnings of the war (244-250).

and the beginning of the war.¹⁰⁴ Whatever problems Pericles had in the past, Barber implies that for Pericles to exert as much influence as he did in the preliminaries to the war, his position must have been secure enough that he would not feel the need to distract the Athenians. This judgment, however, ignores the very point of Pericles' efforts in Ephorus' narrative: he pushed the city towards war because he wanted to preserve his great reputation. By appealing to the masses, among whom he was still popular, he could prevent the sully of his name by enemies. The chronological difference is more problematic, but it is reasonable to suggest that while Ephorus was wrong to equate the trial of Pheidias so closely with the start of the war, it was a symptom of the troubles that motivated Pericles later on, not separate from them.

Furthermore, Hudak points out that though Ephorus may not report the broader narrative of Thucydides, he does not actually contradict it; in fact, he says, there are references in Thucydides to Athenian dissatisfaction with Pericles that suggest that he was aware of the "unsavory aspects" of the Athenian statesman, but tended to downplay them.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, it is widely accepted that Thucydides was an admirer of Pericles. Badian, in fact, argues that Thucydides obscures, as much as possible, the extent to which Pericles was personally responsible for driving Athens to war.¹⁰⁶ Thucydides, after all, introduces Pericles by saying that he was the most powerful man of his time, who led the affairs of the Athenian state, opposing the Spartans in everything and driving them to

¹⁰⁴ Barber, 1935: 109.

¹⁰⁵ Hudak, 2009: 112-113.

¹⁰⁶ Badian, 1993: 125-162.

war.¹⁰⁷ For Thucydides Pericles' actions may have been a cause of the war, but they were not the truest cause, which deserved more attention.

More significantly for this discussion, Thucydides says that the Athenian unrest, which precipitated Pericles' second speech in Book II, was directed against the statesman because the Athenians held him responsible for the war and their present misfortunes (Thucydides, 2.59.2). Clearly the blaming of Pericles for the Peloponnesian War was not just gossip extracted from the plays of Aristophanes, but a part of the contemporary public discourse; Aristophanes was responding to the sentiment, not inventing it. Thucydides seems to have been aware of the anti-Pericles faction, but chose to ignore its effect on the origins of the war in favor of macro-political causes.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps Ephorus should be faulted for believing the story (or rumor) that Pericles was motivated to start the war because of a desire to protect himself, as Aristophanes says in the *Peace*, instead of imperialistic ambition, for which there is evidence in Thucydides. It is hard to imagine how one could accurately obtain such an account.¹⁰⁹ But it is not completely unreasonable that Pericles would be greatly concerned for himself; he need only look back to the fates of Themistocles and Aristeides to justify his fear of the *demos* turning against him. Barber implied that Pericles' great influence at the time of the Peloponnesian War would have obviated such fears, but the trend of 5th-century Athens was that it was when statesmen were at the height of their power that they were in the

¹⁰⁷ ὢν γὰρ δυνατώτατος τῶν καθ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἄγων τὴν πολιτείαν ἠγναντιοῦτο πάντα τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις, καὶ οὐκ εἶα ὑπεῖκειν, ἀλλ' ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ὤρμα τοὺς Ἀθηναίους. Thucydides, 1.127.3. Cawkwell, 1997: 25-26.

¹⁰⁸ Hudak, 2009: 113. Barber did acknowledge that this "propaganda", as he calls it, did exist before Aristophanes, and in fact believed that it originated before the war, but he still think that Aristophanes was Ephorus' source for the material. Barber, 1935: 111.

¹⁰⁹ It is not clear what, if any, written evidence Ephorus had for this account besides Aristophanes.

greatest danger. Ephorus' account, thus, should not be so quickly dismissed out of hand. The main difference between Thucydides and Ephorus is more a matter of focus than astuteness vs. naïvete, and a close examination of the story will reveal why Ephorus chose his particular narrative.

Looking at these events through the eyes of the Cretan lawgiver, it is not surprising that trouble came to Athens. It all starts when Pericles treats the sacred funds as his own personal cash reserve. One particular example is given, the story of Pheidias and the Athena statue, but the implication from Diodorus/Ephorus is that it was part of a larger pattern, which highlights the first concern of the Cretan lawgiver: that those in power will act or try to act as if everything in the state is their personal property. In this sense he would be happy that the Athenian citizens were protecting themselves when they held Pericles accountable, but the motives and actions of the prosecutors would concern him. Pericles had achieved a position of power and respect at Athens, and Diodorus/Ephorus tells us that it was jealousy that turned many people against him, just as the Cretan lawgiver would have predicted. Even Pericles apparently realized this was the tendency of the citizens. The overreach of Pericles, combined with the jealousy it produced, led to civil disharmony, which in turn drove Pericles to push Athens towards war with Sparta. The initial conflict was personal, but it had very public ramifications; at the very start of the conflict was the transfer of the great wealth of the Delian League to Athens. It had made Athens, and Pericles in turn, powerful, but at the same time contributed to the greed and jealousy that made Athenian citizens act for their own benefit rather than that of the state. Ephorus' account certainly has a different focus from

the Thucydidean narrative, but it is not simply a failure to understand his sources; in fact, it conforms to his beliefs about well-functioning states. The war that undermined Athenian power and its 5th-century expansion began because the city's increased wealth caused Pericles, and subsequently his enemies, to act in a way that undermined communal unity and the proper functioning of the state. Sparta in comparison, up to this point, had preserved its more communal lifestyle.

Although the Cretan constitution in Ephorus likely never actually existed on Crete, Ephorus claims that it had a profound effect on the Spartan lawgiver Lycurgus, who, Ephorus says, visited Crete, as well as Egypt, during a self-imposed exile. While there he associated with Thaletas, a lawgiver, and upon his return to Sparta instituted laws based on what he had learned in his travels (Strabo, 10.4.19). The two constitutions were apparently so similar that some authors considered the Spartan to predate the Cretan. Nearly half of the account in Strabo in fact is Ephorus' refutation of this claim. The discussion of the Cretan constitution is tied to Sparta in Plato as well; the similarities between the two serve as an analysis of and commentary on Sparta, albeit an idealized Sparta.¹¹⁰ Thus scholars will often refer to the material in F149 as the Spartan constitution, not the Cretan constitution.¹¹¹ There are indeed a number of similarities with Spartan society as depicted by Xenophon in his *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*.¹¹² Besides eating in *sussitia* (5.5-7) Xenophon says the age of marriage was at a particular time (1.6); boys were put under the watch of an overseer (2.2) as well

¹¹⁰ Perlman, 2005: 286.

¹¹¹ Wickersham, 1994: 123; Pownall, 2004: 130.

¹¹² Wickersham, 1994: 123-124.

as a younger man (2.11), required to wear a single garment all year (2.4), and taught to endure heat, cold and hunger (2.4-2.6); and the lawgiver encouraged same-sex relationships based on the admiration of the younger man's soul and prohibited pederastic relationships in which the attraction was clearly based on outward beauty. It also had communistic tendencies, not seen in other Greek communities, similar to the customs of Ephorus' Scythians.¹¹³ For example, a woman could sleep with a man who was not her husband in order that she bear healthy children, any Spartan male could take on the fatherly role of punishing a boy for misconduct, and hunting dogs and horses were treated as common property (*Lak. Pol.* 1, 6). Thus the Spartan state, which Ephorus considered to be the most prominent and successful Greek community for most of the period of his *History*, resembled both the idealized Cretans, which it supposedly imitated, and the most just Scythians. Ephorus, however, does not claim that they are exactly the same; rather the practices were established by the Cretans and in fact perfected by the Spartans, likely accounting for their hegemony.¹¹⁴

Lycurgus was honored with a temple for establishing these laws, according to Ephorus (F118), and apparently as long as the Spartans followed them, their city prospered. Fragment 118 reports:

*οἱ δὲ κατασχόντες τὴν Λακωνικὴν κατ' ἀρχὰς μὲν ἐσωφρόνονν, ἐπεὶ
δ' οὖν Λυκούργῳ τὴν πολιτείαν ἐπέτρεψαν, τοσοῦτον ὑπερεβάλλοντο
τοὺς ἄλλους ὥστε μόνοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης*

¹¹³ Christesen, 2010: 240.

¹¹⁴ λέγεσθαι δ' ὑπὸ τινῶν ὡς Λακωνικὰ εἶη τὰ πολλὰ τῶν νομιζομένων Κρητικῶν, τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς εὐρησθαι μὲν ὑπ' ἐκείνων, ἠκριβωκέναι δὲ τοὺς Σπαρτιάτας. Strabo, 10.4.17.

ἐπῆρξαν, διετέλεσάν τε ἄρχοντες τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἕως ἀφείλοντο αὐτοὺς τὴν ἡγεμονίαν Θηβαῖοι.¹¹⁵

Those inhabiting Laconia behaved moderately from the beginning, but then after they turned over the constitution to Lycurgus they surpassed others by so much that they alone of all the Greeks ruled over the land and the sea, and they continued to rule over the Greeks until the Thebans took hegemony from them. (F118 = 8.5.5)

According to this passage the Spartans were a moderate group from the start but it was the constitution of Lycurgus that elevated the state to its greatest heights. Based on the comparison to the Cretan constitution we can infer that Ephorus attributed to Lycurgan Sparta internal harmony and communal cohesion coupled with a new, harsher upbringing that led to its famous military discipline.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Plutarch implies, possibly following Ephorus, that a concern for love of money and avarice motivated Lycurgus to forbid it, despite the fact that the traditional *floruit* of Lycurgus, during the reign of the Eurypontid king, Charilaus, for whom he served as guardian in the first half of the 8th century BCE, predated the introduction of coinage to Greece.¹¹⁷ Perhaps Ephorus also anachronistically attributed the exclusion of gold and silver currency to Lycurgus; scholars have argued that his *History* served as a standard, if not the standard, account of Greek history up to the time of Alexander, and thus played an important role in the formation of the later traditions about the *poleis* of Classical Period and Sparta in

¹¹⁵ The passage is from Strabo 8.5.5 and though Ephorus is not directly cited on this point Jacoby attributed the sentiment to him, a claim which subsequent scholars have accepted; for example Wickersham, 1994: 122. There is need for caution but the reading seems sound. Ephorus was cited at the beginning of the discussion as the source of the narrative and the other historian that Strabo cites in this section, Hellanicus, did not attribute the constitution to Lycurgus.

¹¹⁶ Wickersham, 1994: 122-124.

¹¹⁷ ὥσπερ τοῦ Λυκούργου τὸ νόμισμα φοβηθέντος, οὐ τὴν ἐπὶ τῷ νομίσματι φιλαργυρίαν... Plutarch, *Lysander* 17.4.

particular.¹¹⁸ At the very least, it is clear that Ephorus thought the introduction of gold and silver coins to Sparta was a major break from traditional Spartan practice (F205), which resembled the Cretan society of F149.¹¹⁹

This optimal state of affairs was not to last in Sparta, however, as Ephorus also notes that Sparta eventually lost its hegemony to Thebes after the battle of Leuctra (F118). Notably, as we know from Ephorus, not long before this battle Sparta introduced gold and silver coins into the city in the form of the war spoils of Lysander (Plutarch, *Lysander* 16-17).¹²⁰ This innovation immediately raised the concern of the most prudent (*φρονιμώτατοι*) of the Spartans, as Ephorus records (F205), but they could not overcome the support of the friends of Lysander. Plutarch records further, possibly following Ephorus, that the money was allowed to remain but only for public use; nevertheless those who established the new rule did not see to it that the Spartans would remain impervious to the lure of wealth, so they were soon corrupted.¹²¹ Lysander himself, according to Ephorus, later attempted to bribe the Pythia at Delphi, the oracle of Dodona, and the attendants of the Temple of Ammon in Egypt for a favorable response to his constitutional reforms, through which he hoped to seize for himself a spot in the Spartan monarchy (F207). He was angry that he was unable to achieve this position despite all his service to the Spartan state and hoped that an oracular decree would

¹¹⁸ Schepens, 1977: 96-97; Christesen, 2010: 241-243.

¹¹⁹ Christesen, 2010: 222.

¹²⁰ Pownall, 2004: 130-131; Wickersham, 1994: 145-150.

¹²¹ οἱ δὲ ταῖς μὲν οἰκίαις τῶν πολιτῶν, ὅπως οὐ πάρεισιν εἰς αὐτὰς νόμισμα, τὸν φόβον ἐπέστησαν φύλακα καὶ τὸν νόμον, αὐτὰς δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ἀνεκπλήκτους καὶ ἀπαθείς πρὸς ἀργύριον οὐ διετήρησαν, ἐμβαλόντες εἰς ζήλον ὡς σεμνοῦ δὴ τινος καὶ μεγάλου τοῦ πλουτεῖν ἅπαντας. Plutarch, *Lysander* 17.6.

convince the public to support him (Plutarch, *Lysander* 24). Personal greed thus turned the champion of Sparta against the country he had formerly served. Wickersham shows that this narrative plays out in the history of Diodorus Siculus, including Pausanias' adoption of Persian luxury (*ἐπαρθεῖς γὰρ ταῖς εὐτυχίαις τὴν μὲν Λακωνικὴν ἀγωγὴν ἐστύγησε, τὴν δὲ τῶν Περσῶν ἀκολασίαν καὶ τρυφὴν ἐμμήσατο*. 11.46.3) and an oracle received by Lycurgus that love of money would destroy Sparta (*Ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς Λυκοῦργος ἤνεγκε χρησμὸν ἐκ Δελφῶν περὶ τῆς φιλαργυρίας τὸν ἐν παροιμίας μέρει μνημονευόμενον: ἂ φιλοχρηματία Σπάρταν ὀλεῖ, ἄλλο δὲ οὐδέν*. 7.12.5).¹²² He is hesitant to rely too much on the Diodoran material when Ephorus is not cited specifically, and rightfully so, but the similarity is suggestive. It is likely not a coincidence that Sparta lost its hegemony to Thebes at the same that Ephorus perceived its citizens were turning their backs on certain aspects of the Lycurgan constitution.

The number of surviving fragments concerning Thebes is unfortunately low, given that it was this city that was finally able to overcome Spartan hegemony (F118). But enough does survive to suggest that Ephorus' thoughts on the brief success of Thebes conform to the themes discussed above. According to Strabo, Ephorus considered the country of Boeotia naturally suited for hegemony (*καὶ φησι πρὸς ἡγεμονίαν εὐφύως ἔχειν*. F119 = Strabo 9.2.2). Particularly, he emphasizes that Thebes had easy access to the sea on both sides, and thus communities all across the Mediterranean, which created

¹²² Wickersham, 1994: 154-158.

the possibility for naval *dunamis*.¹²³ But Thebes was rarely able to make use of its natural advantages. Ephorus gives the following reasons:

ἀγωγή δὲ καὶ παιδεία μὴ χρησαμένους ἐπιμελεῖ τοὺς αἰεὶ προισταμένους αὐτῆς, εἰ καὶ τί ποτε κατώρθωσαν, ἐπὶ μικρὸν τὸν χρόνον συμμείναι, καθάπερ Ἐπαμεινώνδας ἔδειξε: τελευτήσαντος γὰρ ἐκείνου τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἀποβαλεῖν εὐθὺς τοὺς Θηβαίους γευσαμένους αὐτῆς μόνον: αἴτιον δὲ εἶναι τὸ λόγων καὶ ὁμιλίας τῆς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ὀλιγορῆσαι, μόνης δ' ἐπιμεληθῆναι τῆς κατὰ πόλεμον ἀρετῆς.

...not seeing to the care of training and education those governing it always, even if they at some point establish things prosperously, hold it together only for a short time, just as Epaminondas demonstrates: for after his death the Thebans immediately lost their hegemony having only tasted it; the reason for this is that they neglected reason and association with other men and instead only cared for the virtue of war. (F119 = Strabo 9.2.2)

For most of their history those governing Thebes did not provide their citizens with training and education, which had been so important to the constitutions of Crete and Sparta. Epaminondas seems to be a rare exception; by implication he encouraged a kind of education that allowed Thebes to achieve hegemony.¹²⁴ Then after he died, his particular innovations were abandoned for care of military virtue alone. The latter point is significant: a city cannot survive only through military training. The Aetolians, for example, preserved themselves through military training combined with the effects of their rugged homeland. Thebes on the other hand had no such natural advantages or disadvantages. Though Boeotia was suited for hegemony, it apparently did not naturally produce characters prepared to seize the opportunity. Crete and Sparta, by contrast, had achieved it through education, since in addition to military matters their laws and customs

¹²³ Wickersham, 1994: 127-133.

¹²⁴ Wickersham, 1994: 133.

promoted harmony. Perlman may be right that the chief aim of the Cretan *politeia* was military excellence, but it is clear that for Ephorus this cannot mean military training alone.¹²⁵

Ephorus says that after the death of Epaminondas the Thebans neglected *logoi* and associations with other men, thus returning to the traditional lifestyle he attributed to Boeotia. This negative view of Boeotian culture was not unique to Ephorus. A century before the *floruit* of Ephorus, the Theban Pindar, in *Olympian* 6, hoped to escape the old slander (*ἀρχαίων ὄνειδος*) of his homeland: “Boeotian swine” (*Βοιωτίαν ὕν*) (*Oly.* 6, 89-90). Also in the 5th century, Athenian drama, according to Zeitlin, presented Thebes, through the tragedies of the House of Kadmos, as “a negative model to Athens’ image of itself with regard to its notions of the proper management of city, society, and self”.¹²⁶ Perhaps more significantly for the study of Ephorus, given his familiarity with Plato, which has already been demonstrated, is the fact that Pausanias, in the *Symposium*, says that the Boeotians were not clever with words (*οὐ μὴ σοφοὶ λέγειν*) and therefore established simple rules about pederasty because they were unable to persuade young men themselves (182b). Clearly there was a long-standing prejudice against Boeotia and Thebes, one that was intensified by the Medizing of the region during the Persian Wars, which revealed their inhabitants as inferior in matters of bravery and statecraft.¹²⁷ Ephorus, however, perceived (or perhaps imagined) a change in Thebes during the time of Epaminondas, which caused their brief success.

¹²⁵ Perlman, 2005: 289-292.

¹²⁶ Zeitlin, 1992: 131.

¹²⁷ Demand, 1982: 26-27.

Unfortunately, the exact nature of the education that Ephorus believed Epaminondas instituted is not clear. Wickersham suggests that what has been lost because of the death of Epaminondas is the cultural excellence of Thebes.¹²⁸ He argues that Ephorus is following Isocratean ideas about education and taking Athens as a model.¹²⁹ A Pythagorean presence had established itself in Thebes during the second half of the 5th century BCE, led by Lysis of Tarentum, which might have had some effect on Theban education,¹³⁰ and a democratic, pro-Athenian faction did replace the pro-Spartan, oligarchic government of Thebes, but there is no evidence that Ephorus connected the new Thebes to Athens.¹³¹ Indeed, Ephorus said that Sparta was the sole hegemon for most of Greek history to the exclusion of 5th-century Athens. That Ephorus believed Thebes, during the time of Epaminondas, paid more attention to *logoi* suggests that the new education placed some emphasis on the liberal arts, but there is no indication that high culture was a cause or even a sign of success for Ephorus in this case or in any other. After all, the Thebans supplanted the rustic Spartans, not the urbane Athenians, as hegemon of Greece. In the Cretan society of F149 children were taught to read, but there is no indication of *philosophia* of the kind that existed in Athens. Of course Ephorus was not averse to *philosophia*; indeed as the Cretan constitution suggests, he was familiar with philosophical texts. But there is no reason to believe that Ephorus would associate the success of Thebes with an Athenian style of learning.

¹²⁸ Wickersham, 1994: 142.

¹²⁹ Wickersham, 1994: 135-140.

¹³⁰ Demand, 1982: 70-84. Additionally, Demand (72-77) notes the two Theban characters from Plato's *Phaedo*, Simmias and Cebe, whose general background was Pythagorean as evidence for the intellectual climate of Thebes during this period and its relation to the broader world of Greek philosophy.

¹³¹ Buckler, 1980: 34-45.

Ephorus must mean something else about the new education in Thebes; Wickersham himself points in a more compelling direction, noting, “it so happened that a decline in Spartan *agôgê* (sic) was identifiable shortly before the appearance of unusual *paideia* on the side of Thebes, in the person of Epameinondas (sic).”¹³² Rather than adopting an Athenian style education, it is more likely that Ephorus thought the Thebans imitated aspects of the Spartan constitution when they supplanted them. For example, the *ὁμιλίας τῆς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους*, which the Thebans later gave up to their detriment, recalls the emphasis on cultural harmony that was prominent in the accounts of the Scythians and the Cretan constitution.¹³³ Wickersham claims that it is not clear based on the surviving material how the lack of *ὁμόνοια* might have previously affected Thebes and that the quality itself “concerns internal matters mainly,” and thus would not have been a factor in Theban hegemony.¹³⁴ But the preceding discussion has shown that Ephorus actually did see a connection between internal harmony and external success. Its absence in Athens led the city into a disastrous war and contributed to the decline of Sparta. Thus Ephorus’ remarks on Theban hegemony can be connected to his thoughts on well-functioning states.

Epaminondas himself was known in antiquity for virtues that resemble the themes of Ephorus we have discussed here. Diodorus Siculus says that he surpassed all others in the brilliance of his mind, contempt of money, fairness, and military courage and

¹³² Wickersham, 1994: 150.

¹³³ Pownall, 2004: 131-132.

¹³⁴ Wickersham, 1994: 2004.

cleverness.¹³⁵ Likewise Plutarch says that though Epaminondas was born poor, he refused to accept financial assistance from the wealthy Pelopidas. In fact, Epaminondas influenced Pelopidas so that the latter, despite his wealth, shared the poverty of the former, showing off the fact that he had adopted the simple clothing and food of the poorer man, while training himself to endure the hardships of military service.¹³⁶ These are, of course, very Spartan traits, and according to Ephorus very Cretan. Plutarch claims that Pelopidas even sought to hide the fact that he was richer than the poorest Thebans. In the ancient tradition Epaminondas was also associated with poverty, an aversion to wealth, and fairness, apparently even promoting these qualities in others.¹³⁷ If Epaminondas or the Theban leaders of his generation encouraged their fellow Thebans to adopt these qualities, or at least was perceived to have done so by Ephorus, then his aims can be compared to those of Ephorus' Cretan lawgiver.

One of the innovations Ephorus may have had in mind in this regard was the Sacred Band, the most well known institution of 4th-century Thebes. Epaminondas was a close friend to Gorgidas, the actual founder of the Band, and Hieronymus of Rhodes even attributed its foundation to him (F34 = Athenaeus 13.602e). Plutarch records that the Sacred Band was trained and fed by the city, recalling the *sussitia* of Crete and Sparta (Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 18). Additionally, the principle of basing the unit on pairs of lovers

¹³⁵ πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ψυχῆς λαμπρότητι καὶ μισαργυρίᾳ καὶ ἐπεικειᾳ, καὶ τὸ μέγιστον, ἀνδρεία καὶ στρατηγικῇ συνέσει πολὺ διήνεγκε πάντων. D.S. 15.88.1. As mentioned above, the sentiment of this passage has been attributed to Ephorus.

¹³⁶ αὐτὸς μέντοι μετεῖχε τῆς ἐκείνου πενίας, ἐσθῆτος ἀφελείᾳ καὶ τραπέζης λιτότητι καὶ τῷ πρὸς τοὺς πόνους ἀόκνῳ καὶ κατὰ στρατείας ἀδόλῳ καλλωπιζόμενος. Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 3.

¹³⁷ Shrimpton argues that Ephorus, using material from Callisthenes, had a major influence on the positive portrayal of the 4th century Thebans and was one of the first to pay particular attention to the exploits of Epaminondas. Because of this he was largely responsible for the later tradition Shrimpton, 1971: 310-318, particularly 315-318.

aimed at an extreme version of the cohesion that arose from the *sussitia*.¹³⁸ Plutarch also says, in his *Amatorius*, that it was a Theban custom for a lover to give his beloved a full suit of armor when he came of age, much like the Cretan gift-giving ceremony (*Amat.* 761b). The more organized form of pederasty also recalls the Cretan institution. In both cases it promoted excellence and singled out the best young men to prepare them for service to the state. By contrast, Pausanias, in Plato's *Symposium*, says that Boeotian pederasty was a simple institution in which it was established by law that it was good to please the *erastes*.¹³⁹ This is likely a rhetorical, rather than factual point, but it may reflect an actual bias about Boeotian pederasty. An innovation like the Sacred Band, which aimed at a more practical and beneficial purpose for pederasty, may have indicated to Ephorus the establishment of internal cohesion in Thebes that reminded him of the most just Scythians and the Cretan constitution.

Leitao (2002) has challenged the historicity of the Sacred Band as pairs of pederastic lovers. Rather, he argues, "The legend of the Sacred Band seems to have begun in the early fourth century as a fanciful real-world analogy that initially supported and ultimately replaced a utopian proposal to build a city or army on the ennobling bond between lover and beloved."¹⁴⁰ Additionally, he connects the tales of the Sacred Band to other stories about the role of pederastic couples in the downfall of tyranny and philosophical discussions, taking place around the time of Ephorus in the 4th century or

¹³⁸ DeVoto, 1992: 6-7. Cf. Phaedrus' remarks in Plato's *Symposium* in which he imagines the excellence of a unit based on pairs of lovers. 178e3.

¹³⁹ For more on Boeotian homosexuality see Davidson, 2007: 349-354, 468-469. Also see 345-349 on the Eleans with whom Pausanias compares the Thebans

¹⁴⁰ Leitao, 2002: 162.

shortly thereafter, about the benefits to civic unity of personal ties based on erotic relationships; Phaedrus, for example, in Plato's *Symposium*, remarks what a great thing it would be for an army to be made out of lovers, since neither of the pair would want to seem shameful or cowardly in the others' eye (178e-179a). Notably, Leitao writes, "the tradition of the Sacred Band focused on just three battles in which the man-loving Thebans fought tyrants on Boeotian soil: Tegyra and Leuctra, where the Thebans toppled the Spartan hegemony and restored freedom to Boeotia and Greece, and Chaeronea, where they fell bravely to the tyrannical Philip, who brought Greek liberty to an end."¹⁴¹ Just like the new education that emerged in Thebes through the leadership of Epaminondas, the Sacred Band was closely associated with Thebes' overthrow of the Spartan hegemony. As we have seen, Ephorus allowed material and ideas from philosophical discourses to enter his *History* in (what seems to be) the guise of historical fact. It is therefore possible that even if the Sacred Band never existed as pairs of lovers as described by later authors, Ephorus' account of Thebes was influenced by the philosophical discourses that would eventually become the well-known tradition about the Sacred Band.

Throughout the fragments of Ephorus the themes from the discussions of Scythia and Crete appear in relation to the histories of individual Greek regions and city-states, including the big three Athens, Sparta, and Thebes. These three city-states succeeded, and in the case of the latter two held hegemony over Greece, when they followed practice

¹⁴¹ Leitao, 2002:157-162.

that resembled the customs of Scythia and Crete, but faced discord and decline when they ignored them.

Conclusion

With so little of Ephorus' *History* surviving, any conclusions about the form, content, or themes of his work must be treated as tentative. To extrapolate broad trends from individual fragments is especially dangerous. Even when patterns can be seen across several fragments, it is not certain that they hold true throughout the whole work. Thus, when drawing conclusions about Ephorus, it is easier to start with the negatives.

First of all, except for the assertions of the testimonia, there is little evidence to support the tradition that Ephorus was a pupil of Isocrates. There are similarities in their works, such as their thoughts about hegemony and their interests in the Spartan state, but these are not so exclusive to the pair so as to prove a personal relationship. Indeed Ephorus seems to have been aware of and influenced by the work of many of the most prominent 4th century writers and thinkers, including Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon. Except for the testimonia, there is no reason to believe that Ephorus' relationship to Isocrates was any more direct than with the others.

Once the certainty of this relationship is removed, the evidence for the moral purpose of Ephorus' work also becomes much weaker. Since it cannot be concluded that Isocrates instructed Ephorus in the writing of history, let alone that he instructed him to do so for a moral purpose, we are left with only the fragments themselves to make such a case. While it is clear that Ephorus was in the habit of praising individuals and communities in his work, he may have done so in order to provide an analysis of events rather than for the explicit purpose of creating moral examples. Additionally, even if he

had such a purpose in individual cases, this fact does not indicate that it was the purpose of his entire work.

Nevertheless, Ephorus does seem to have had consistent ideas about ideal communities that can be seen in his accounts of the Scythians and the Cretans. Both communities share an aversion to wealth, harmony amongst citizens, and shared communal ownership or responsibility. In the case of the Scythians, Ephorus actually calls them *παραδείγματα*, indicating that he was aware of the exemplary nature of his *History*. Rather than serving as a model for the creation of future states, however, the Scythians seem to be a key for understanding Ephorus' views of developments in Greek history, one that is reinforced by the passage on the Cretans. The Cretan constitution of Ephorus was modeled on an idealized version of Sparta, which held hegemony over Greece for the majority of Ephorus' *History*. When the Spartans abandoned this model, they lost the hegemony to Thebes. Similarly, internal discord in Athens, according to Ephorus, caused by Pericles' greed and jealousy directed at him, led to its entry into the disastrous Peloponnesian War. There is a moral dimension to this view, but not one that can easily be separated from Ephorus' analysis of history in order to understand his broader purpose.

This analysis also allows us to see certain fragments that have primarily been handled in isolation in their contexts, which aids in our understanding of them. The account of Cretan pederasty, for example, has been treated as evidence of an old, Indo-European initiatory rite, which later became the more prevalent Greek practice. In context, however, we see that the practice mirrors the Cretan constitution as a whole in a

number of ways; and the Cretan constitution itself is a *topos* of 4th-century philosophical discourse on the ideal state (with similarities to an idealized Sparta), whose virtues either influenced or confirmed Ephorus' own worldview. Rather than reflecting a real initiatory practice, therefore, Cretan pederasty should be read as a construct, which reinforces the important elements of the constitution, promotion of good character over financial resources, communalized responsibility for Cretan customs, and endurance of hardship, that Ephorus valued and believed led to a successful state. Likewise Ephorus' account of the origins of the Peloponnesian War, which has often been dismissed as gossip, reflecting his inability to do real historical research, conforms to his views about the negative influence of wealth and its potential to create internal discord.

It is significant that Ephorus' work shows evidence of his awareness of 4th-century philosophical discourses, a fact that helps to create a fuller picture of the man as an historian. To create a universal history, Ephorus compiled a broad range of sources, some of which clearly were not of an historical nature, though, as in the case of the Cretan constitution, they resembled genres like history and ethnography; the similarity of Ephorus' account of the Scythians to discussions in Plato's works is another case in point. It is impossible to say what Ephorus thought of the historical validity of this material, but he did think it worthy to include in his *History*, and it either shaped or reinforced his personal views of statehood and historical causality. Ephorus took the ideas that were circulating among the top thinkers of his time and applied them to the past. While this inclusion of philosophical material might reflect Ephorus' naïveté and misunderstanding of his sources, and at times it may have led Ephorus to include material

that was less than accurate, it demonstrates a depth of understanding and interest in political history that has often been denied to him. Ephorus was a product of his time, but one that should be studied for this fact, not dismissed as a corrupted historian.

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