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Contextualizing Herodotus

Edited by
Julian Degen, Hilmar Klinkott,
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and Brigitte Truschnegg

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Introduction

Preface

With pleasure we are presenting the proceedings of the international conference "Herodot's World – The World of Herodotus" which took place in Innsbruck from the 1st December – 3rd December 2020. The conference that had to be organised as an online event due to the pandemic had as its aim to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Reinhold Bichler's highly acclaimed monograph *Herodots' World. Der Aufbau der Historie am Bild der fremden Länder und Völker, ihrer Zivilisation und ihrer Geschichte, Berlin 2000*. The anniversary was a welcome opportunity to discuss Herodotus' work and the state of recent research regarding the *Histories* along the paths established by Bichler. The idea for such an undertaking originated initially from Julian Degen, who was writing his doctoral thesis in Innsbruck at that time. The proposal was adopted immediately with a great deal of enthusiasm, whereby a further objective emerged relatively quickly in addition to the content-related and programmatic orientation. On the one hand, the aim of the conference was to specifically address scholars from different generations, and on the other hand, to gather long-standing colleagues, who not only felt particularly close to Reinhold Bichler, but who had also been notably influenced by his numerous studies. The long-standing contacts with Kai Ruffing play a special role here, as well as those with Kiel, which are characterized by Bichler's close friendship with Josef Wiesehöfer and his close association with Hilmar Klinkott. These associations, which are on a very personal level and are characterized by a special appreciation of Reinhold Bichler as a person and of his academic oeuvre, are expressed indisputably by the editorial board. In view of the above, it is not surprising that the focus of the conference was set on Herodotus' literary creative power and its impact on a modern assessment of his work as a source for the history of Eurasia. This central aspect was examined in a diverse number of ways during the conference and was debated in depth in fruitful discussions.

It is for us a particular pleasure that we have now succeeded in bringing the results of this fruitful conference to the attention of a broader academic public in the form of this publication. A variety of other tasks have delayed this undertaking somewhat, but good things take time. In order to be able to accomplish everything successfully, it was of course necessary to acquire appropriate financial support from various sources, without which the present volume could not have been realized. The University of Innsbruck, the University of Kiel (Professorship of Hilmar Klinkott) and the University of Kassel (Department of Ancient History, Kai Ruffing) deserve a special mention here. We should like to give our special thanks to these institutions.

Innsbruck 5th November 2023
Robert Rollinger and Brigitte Truschnegg