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Effie N. Coughanowr (ed., tr.). *Herodoti Vita Homeri*. Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1990. Pp. 92. \$8.00.

This edition of the *Vita Homeri Herodotea* offers, besides the Greek text and apparatus of T. W. Allen (OCT), a new English translation (though Mary Lefkowitz produced one as recently as 1981 in her *Lives of the Greek Poets*), a twenty-five page introduction, twelve pages of commentary, and a selected bibliography.

The introduction is a brief for authenticity—something almost no one has argued for in the past century and a half. Coughanowr states that “it was my sense of Greek, acquired over more than fifty years of close acquaintance with it, that led to my tentative conclusions.” While her linguistic assessment of the *Life* does demonstrate a general congruity with the dialect and vocabulary of Herodotus’ *History*, it does not rule out meticulous archaizing. Nor are the arguments of J. Schmidt, Wilamowitz, or L. Radermacher (among others) regarding the author’s use of Ephorus and Heraclides Ponticus as easily disposed of as Coughanowr suggests.

The commentary is spare but very helpful (*à la* Bryn Mawr editions); it is directed mainly to problems of construing, with occasional indications of *loci similes*, and one or two longer notes on geographic questions.

The intrinsic interest of the material in this, our longest extant ancient biography of Homer (whatever its ultimate source), can only make us grateful that Coughanowr has acted on her conviction that it “must be brought again out of its obscurity into the foreground.”

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J. A. S. Evans. *Herodotus, Explorer of the Past: Three Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. Pp. xi, 166. \$24.95. ISBN 0-691-06871-2.

Imperialism, with the many-faceted role it plays in Herodotus’ *Histories*, is the thread that binds together the three essays. In “The Imperialist Impulse” Evans examines the way in which Herodotus presents Xerxes’ expedition against Greece as motivated by a Persian *nomos* of growth and domination, initiated by Cyrus and implemented variously by Cambyses, Darius, and Mardonius. Herodotus has Xerxes himself express that inherited *nomos* but then deprives him of choice by making of it an inescapable fate, divinely ordered.

“Individuals in Herodotus” retells Herodotus’ accounts of the non-Greeks (Croesus, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and Mardonius), pointing up common elements through which Herodotus emphasizes the theme of imperialism, taking care to distinguish the historical Xerxes from Aeschylus’ tragic hero. The full biographies of these are contrasted with the incidental sketches of various Greek leaders (the difference between skeleton and fleshing-out?). More important, Evans sees the account of Greeks as subject to the “denigration of special interest groups that have warped the historical tradition,” while in his accounts of the Persians he “for the most part seems to have relied upon his own imagination.” Chief of the Greek sketches are