

TIRÉ À PART DE :

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Le corpus lucanien (Luc-Actes)
et l'historiographie ancienne
Quels rapports ?

LIT

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Prophetic Historiography as Subgenre and Research Tool: Definition and Relevance for Herodotean and Lukan Research

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He is neither bard nor soothsayer but between the two; he is Herodotus. (François Hartog)¹

Introduction²

In 1977, during the 28th Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense whose theme was the Acts of the Apostles, W. C. van Unnik exhorted biblical exegetes to observe Luke as a historian of antiquity and to enter his world as much as possible. To do this, he said, “. . . we shall have to walk with him along

¹ François Hartog, “The Invention of History: The Pre-History of a Concept from Homer to Herodotus,” *History and Theory* 39 (2000): 384–95, here 395.

² Part of this contribution will be included in Chapter 2 of my book project that compares Herodotus and Luke as historians who—despite their different worldviews and times—explored the influence of divine activity on human history. Hence, the introduction in this essay displays some parts of the conference paper, which sought to situate our colloquium in 2017 within the stream of research and to show how the essay’s theme is indebted to many significant contributions from biblical and classical studies. In this respect, I paid tribute to the late John Moles, who had encouraged me in my research and planned to contribute a paper to our colloquium, but sadly passed away in 2015. Fortunately, I have been able to benefit from some generous and constructive critique on earlier versions of this essay by historians Cédric Brélaz and Christopher Pelling, and biblical exegetes Steve Walton, Markus Lau, and David Miller.

his roads, to see and hear with his eyes and those of his contemporaries.”³ Since that year, and certainly thanks in part to van Unnik’s charge, many valuable contributions were produced on Luke’s writings as history.⁴ But let us move forward to 1997, to another colloquium, this time in Lausanne, under the direction of Daniel Marguerat. There the theme concerned both of Luke’s works, “Luke-Acts between Jerusalem and Rome.” Van Unnik’s appeal was fully met there, and the result was highly productive. Shortly thereafter some key contributions were published, for example, Loveday Alexander’s article “Marathon or Jericho? Reading Acts in Dialogue with Biblical and Greek Historiography” (1998),⁵ and Daniel Marguerat’s influential book *La première histoire du christianisme. Les Actes des Apôtres* (1999).⁶ Similar to van Unnik’s expression above, Marguerat also uses road

³ W. C. van Unnik, “Luke’s Second Book and the Rules of Hellenistic Historiography,” in *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie*, ed. Jacob Kremer, BETL 48 (Gembloux: Duculot, 1979), 37–60, here 60.

⁴ For example, Martin Hengel, *Zur urchristlichen Geschichtsschreibung* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1979); Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, ed. Conrad H. Gempf, WUNT 49 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1989); Bruce W. Winter, ed., *The Book of Acts in Its First-Century Setting*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993–1997); Gregory E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts and Apologetic Historiography*, ed. D. P. Moessner and A. J. Malherbe, NovTSup 64 (Leiden: Brill, 1992); Knut Backhaus, “Lukas der Maler: Die Apostelgeschichte als intentionale Geschichte der christlichen Erstepoche,” in *Historiographie und fiktionales Erzählen. Zur Konstruktivität in Geschichtstheorie und Exegese*, ed. Knut Backhaus and Gerd Häfner, Biblisch-Theologische Studien 86 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2009); and Jörg Frey, Clare K. Rothschild, and Jens Schröter, ed., *Die Apostelgeschichte im Kontext antiker und frühchristlicher Historiographie*, BZNW 162 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009). Of course, several seminal works set the stage for contemporary research on Luke *qua* historian such as Henry J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts*, 2nd ed. (Hendrickson, 1958; repr., 1999); Martin Dibelius, *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte*, ed. Heinrich Greeven, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953); C. K. Barrett, *Luke the Historian in Recent Study* (London: Epworth, 1961); and Eckhard Plümacher, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller. Studien zur Apostelgeschichte*, SUNT 9 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972).

⁵ Loveday Alexander, “Marathon or Jericho? Reading Acts in Dialogue with Biblical and Greek Historiography,” in *Auguries: The Jubilee Volume of the Sheffield Department of Biblical Studies*, ed. D. J. A. Clines and S. D. Moore (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 92–105.

⁶ Daniel Marguerat, *La première histoire du christianisme. Les Actes des Apôtres*, *Lectio divina* (Paris: Cerf, 1999). The first edition was published in English in 2002, and a second edition in French quickly followed in 2003, which was then published

imagery, namely, that Luke is at the *crossroads* of two historiographies, Jewish and Greek.⁷ Twenty years later, the present article fully accepts this assertion and attempts to extend it. Indeed, if Luke had a foot on both roads, it may be said that he also helped to clear a new road of historiography, which is both Greek and Jewish *and* without any apparent complex about it. In fact, the way Luke brings these two roads together is multidimensional. One key aspect is through his representation of the divine in a fresh way that brings the two roads together in order to make sense of the past, for the interest and benefit of an international audience. This manner of writing history may be considered a subgenre, ‘prophetic historiography’, one that includes the divine from the historian’s own worldview as a central part of the narrative’s argumentation. The present article then proposes this subgenre as a research tool for exploring historians with a retrospective, prophetic role in their own societies. This conceptual link is a key part of a broader writing project that explores this history-writing *sans complexe* as manifest in the writings of two fathers of historiography, Herodotus and Luke. In the latter part of the article, it will be suggested that Luke sought not only to imitate the tradition that Herodotus established, but also to culminate effectively Jewish and Greek historiographical traditions.

Before moving to the essence of this article, I signal here a few advances in biblical and classical studies that have helped to shape our understanding of Luke’s writings (and Gospels research in general) and that are highly pertinent to this discussion about prophetic historiography. Since van Unnik’s brilliant article, “Luke’s Second Book and the Rules of Hellenistic Historiography” until now, many contributions have focused on Luke’s writings in relation to Jewish and Greco-Roman historiography (see note 4). One reason for this activity, which is a significant advance in research, has been the contributions by classicists and biblical scholars with classical training (e.g., F. F. Bruce, C. K. Barrett, and Loveday C. A. Alexander). Among classicists, I would like to single out the late John Moles, professor of Newcastle University, and his contribution to the study of Luke-Acts as well as to the Gospels. In 1996, while professor at the Uni-

in German in 2011 (*Lukas, der erste christliche Historiker: Eine Studie zur Apostelgeschichte*, trans. Elisabeth Mainberger-Ruh, ATANT 92 [Zurich: TVZ, 2011]).

⁷ *The First Christian Historian: Writing the “Acts of the Apostles”*, trans. Ken McKinney, Gregory J. Laughery, and Richard Bauckham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); idem, *La première histoire*, 42.

versity of Durham, Moles founded the online journal *Histos* whose focus was, and still is, ancient historiography.⁸ In 2010, Moles (who had moved to Newcastle University in 2000) was joined by the prolific historian, John Marincola (Florida State University). A unique aspect of this journal is the inclusion of articles and reviews on ancient Jewish and Christian historiography. The editors' decision to include them is a confirmation of the progress that has been made in historiographical research. John Moles had no doubt that Luke intended to write his history within the Greek tradition, which he convincingly demonstrated in various articles, generally in "Jesus the Healer in the Gospels," and especially in "Luke's Preface: The Greek Decree, Classical Historiography and Christian Redefinitions."⁹

Directly related to this development is the recognition that ancient historiography displayed various forms and methods. John Marincola's seminal work *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* shows—mainly in reaction to Felix Jacoby's classification of ancient history-writing¹⁰—that Greek historiography should not be reduced to a fixed generic type nor a linear development (neither as progression nor regression). Ancient historians were aware of their predecessors' works and composed their own histories with two values in mind: tradition and innovation. Historians imitated and criticized their predecessors, and thus showed their intent to be read as writers of history. While they wanted to stay within the tradition, their aim was to go beyond their predecessors, by doing better, offering something new in content or form. Hence, various types of

⁸ As per the description of *Histos*, http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/Histos_AboutHistos.html.

⁹ John Moles, "Jesus the Healer in the Gospels, the *Acts of the Apostles*, and Early Christianity," *Histos* 5 (2011): 117–82, and "Luke's Preface: The Greek Decree, Classical Historiography and Christian Redefinitions," *NTS* 57 (2011): 461–82. Other contributions on Luke's writings include: "Jesus and Dionysus in 'The Acts of the Apostles' and early Christianity," *Hermathena* 180 (2006): 65–104, and "Time and Space Travel in Luke-Acts," in *Engaging Early Christian History: Reading Acts in the Second Century*, ed. Rubén R. Dupertius and Todd Penner (Durham: Acumen, 2013), 101–22.

¹⁰ Felix Jacoby, *Abhandlungen zur griechischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Herbert Bloch (Leiden: Brill, 1956). John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). In addition, see John Marincola, *On Writing History from Herodotus to Herodian*, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2017) for an excellent introduction (pp. xxix–lxxi) that helpfully summarizes the main points of freshly-translated, ancient texts that shed light on their authors' understanding of historiographical theory.

history-writing can be subsumed under the general expression *historiography*. It seems judicious then to follow Marincola by maintaining the general contours of the historiographical genre, and by allowing for a plurality of approaches and innovative features. This allows room for ‘prophetic historiography’; an additional link between the Herodotean tradition and Luke’s writings.

Parallel to Marincola’s research is Richard Burridge’s watershed publication, *What are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, in which he has plausibly argued that Luke’s Gospel and his Acts can be considered expressions of the literary genre *bios* (biography).¹¹ Both flow out of the broad stream of Greco-Roman historiography, and they should be read, not as two distinct historiographical genres, but as two parts of a single literary work having two different but intrinsically related themes. The first volume concentrates on Jesus accompanied by his disciples, while the second focuses on the disciples under the direction of their resurrected Lord.

Another significant development that is pertinent to our discussion concerns interpretative methods. As in the field of biblical exegesis, especially since the 1970s, various exegetical approaches were also being explored in the field of Classics. Focusing less on the referential value of historiographical works (e.g., their authors and historical contexts, etc.), newer literary theories placed greater attention on the works themselves. Thus, various aspects of *historical poetics* were further developed that elucidate the mechanics of historical works, i.e., how they are constructed and how they function. This includes, for example, their narrative strategies and features, such as plot, characterization, point of view, and motifs. This leads directly to this article’s question as an example of this development in contemporary studies. Obviously, the divine in Luke’s writings has long been studied, and interest in the divine and religion in Herodotus’s *Histories* are also nothing new to researchers. One can, however, trace a recent increase in research on this singular aspect of Herodotus’s composition.

¹¹ In the aforementioned book, Burridge suggests the possibility for a common genre for Luke and Acts. See Richard A. Burridge, *What are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, ed. Astrid B. Beck and David Noel Freedman, 2nd ed., Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 236–39 and *passim*. Then he makes this statement more explicit in his article, “The Genre of Acts—Revisited,” in *Reading Acts Today: Essays in Honour of Loveday C. A. Alexander*, ed. Steve Walton, et al., LNTS 427 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 3–28, here 27–28.

Indeed, almost every recent book on Herodotus includes either a chapter or a section on his interest in the divine and/or religion, even in Jennifer Roberts's volume dedicated to Herodotus in the Very Short Introductions series.¹² Among the most significant research on aspects of the divine in the *Histories* are: Lachenaud (1978), Elayi (1978), Shimron (1989), Burkert (1990), Flower (1990), Gould (1994), Harrison (1997, 2000, 2003), Mikalson (2003), Niskanen (2004), Boëldieu-Trévet and Gondicas (2005), Kindt (2006), Scullion (2006), and Hollmann (2011).¹³

¹² Jennifer T. Roberts, *Herodotus: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 76–88.

¹³ Before this, of course, other scholars noticed the strong presence of the divine in the *Histories* (e.g., Roland Crahay, *La littérature oraculaire chez Hérodote* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1956); A. H. McDonald, "Herodotus on the Miraculous," in *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in Their Philosophy and History*, ed. C. F. D. Moule (London: Mowbray, 1965), 81–92. From the 1970s until present: Guy Lachenaud, *Mythologies, religion et philosophie de l'histoire dans Hérodote* (Lille: Atelier reproduction des thèses Université de Lille III; Paris: Diffusion Librairie Honore Champion, 1978); J. Élayi, "Le rôle de l'oracle de Delphes dans le conflit gréco-perse d'après les *Histoires* d'Hérodote (2e partie)," *Iranica Antiqua* 14 (1979): 67–151; Binyamin Shimron, *Politics and Belief in Herodotus*, *Historia: Einzelschriften* 58 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1989); Walter Burkert, "Herodot als Historiker fremder Religionen," in *Hérodote et les peuples non grecs* (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1990), 1–39; H. I. Flower, "Herodotus and the Delphic traditions about Croesus," in *Georgica: Greek Studies in honour of George Cawkwell*, ed. Michael A. Flower and Mark Toher, *Bulletin supplement/University of London, Institute of Classical Studies* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 1991), 57–77; John Gould, "Herodotus and Religion," in *Greek Historiography*, ed. Simon Hornblower (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 91–106; Thomas Harrison, "Herodotus and the Certainty of Divine Retribution," in *What Is a God? Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 1997), 101–22; Thomas Harrison, *Divinity and History: The Religion of Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jon D. Mikalson, *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Paul Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History: Herodotus and the Book of Daniel*, *JSOTSup* 396 (London: T&T Clark International, 2004); Jeannine Boëldieu-Trévet and Daphné Gondicas, *Lire Hérodote* (Rosny-sous-Bois: Bréal, 2005), 227–80; Julia Kindt, "Delphic Oracle Stories and the Beginning of Historiography: Herodotus' *Croesus Logos*," *Classical Philology* 101 (2006): 34–51; Scott Scullion, "Herodotus and Greek Religion," in *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, ed. Carolyn Dewald and John Marincola (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 192–208; and Alexander Hollmann, *The Master of Signs: Signs and the Interpretation of Signs in Herodotus' Histories*, *Hellenic Studies* (Washington: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011).

Parallel to this research on the divine in Herodotus is the study of Luke's writings against the general backdrop of the divine in Greek historiography. For the limits and interests of this article, I mention here a few biblical scholars who have also explored the divine in Greco-Roman historiography in relation to Luke's writings: James McConnell's *The topos of Divine Testimony in Luke-Acts* (2014)¹⁴ and Scott Shauf's *The Divine in Acts and in Ancient Historiography* (2015).¹⁵ The present contribution then investigates similar questions to these studies by focusing on Herodotus's legacy for history-writing in antiquity and in particular for Luke's writings. With this introduction, we will now turn to the proposed conceptual link between the two historians, the subgenre 'prophetic historiography' with its unique nature and pragmatic force.

Prophetic historiography as a subgenre

Towards a definition

Here I review some occurrences of the expression *prophetic historiography* (and similar ones) in Biblical Studies, and then I propose a working definition in view of performing research on classical and biblical historiography. Various expressions have been used to describe divine-human interaction in ancient historiography: theological historiography,¹⁶ sacred or divine history,¹⁷ apologetic historiography,¹⁸ revealed history,¹⁹ kerygmatic history,²⁰ etc. These terms have their own nuances and limits and do not

¹⁴ James R. McConnell, *The topos of Divine Testimony in Luke-Acts* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2014). For a review of this fine work, see James Morgan, Review of James R. McConnell, *The topos of Divine Testimony in Luke-Acts*, *Histos* 10 (2016): 35–40, <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/documents/2016RR07MorganonMcConnell.pdf>

¹⁵ Scott Shauf, *The Divine in Acts and in Ancient Historiography* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015).

¹⁶ Roland Deines, *Acts of God in History: Studies towards Recovering a Theological Historiography*, WUNT 2/317 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 20–26.

¹⁷ Scott W. Hahn, "Liturgy and Empire: Prophetic Historiography and Faith in Exile in 1–2 Chronicles," *Letter and Spirit* 5 (2009): 13–50, here 17.

¹⁸ Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition*, 16–19.

¹⁹ Robert G. Hall, *Revealed Histories: Techniques for Ancient Jewish and Christian Historiography*, JSPSup 6 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1991).

²⁰ Fearghus Ó Fearghail, *The Introduction to Luke-Acts: A Study of the Role of Lk 1, 1–4, 44 in the Composition of Luke's Two-volume Work*, AnBib 126 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1991), 183.

necessarily conflict with each other, nor with prophetic historiography.²¹ They can be placed in the broad category of ideological literature in that a specific worldview is assumed and at times explicitly contended. This, of course, raises the question: what historical writing is *not* ideological, privy of some stance, preference, or underlying worldview? The point here is that narratives with a *significant* interest in the divine typically assume (and possibly argue for) a worldview or religious heritage. The representation of the divine sphere may be explicit to various degrees, and one that readers may or may not share.

To my knowledge, the expression *prophetic historiography* has not been used in the field of classical historiography, but it is occasionally applied in biblical research as we will see below. This fact seems quite normal, given the nature of ancient Jewish literature. However, a point that may be overlooked by biblical scholars is that the Greeks had their own oracular/prophetic tradition, and its presence pervades various types of Greek literature, including historiography. Granted, prophetic/oracular activity was practiced in various ways in the Mediterranean basin, so differences should certainly be recognized. Even so, prophets and other types of mediators of divine communication were well-known to the Greeks.²² For these reasons, my application of the concept of prophetic historiography consciously seeks to avoid the imposition of the Hebrew tradition on the Greek tradition, as it also respects native Greek cultural categories. Indeed, I wish to clarify, and it will be fleshed out below, that by ‘prophetic historiography’ I *generally* do not mean a predictive act, but rather a retrospective, interpretative (explicative) act, bringing in the divine with hindsight to explain the past. A predictive element may be present for ancient readers regarding future events (to them), but it is (I think) generally assumed by way of analogy such as “the same outcome could happen to you (whether good or bad) if you do (not do) this or that.”²³ In this way, the

²¹ Other possible expressions with different nuances could be ‘scribal historiography’ and ‘oracular historiography’.

²² Another point worth exploring is whether the ‘prophetic voice’—as one may describe within the Jewish literary tradition—was also manifest or recognized in other literary genres (tragedies, philosophical treatises, etc.). In other words, did the Greeks recognize the Muses’s inspiration in other types of literary activity? A fitting example, though certainly introduced much later, is the naming of the nine volumes of Herodotus’s *Histories*, one to each Muse.

²³ For example, how Herodotus seems to warn the Athenians of their growing power and

juncture of prophecy and historiography can be a constructive heuristic for exploring parallels in Hebrew and Greek traditions. That said, we can now turn to uses of prophetic historiography and similar expressions in biblical research.

In research on the Hebrew Bible, the connection between prophets and history-writing is certainly not a recent development. This aspect could even be considered an essential part of the DNA of Jewish historiography. For example, Jewish tradition attributes the title of ‘former prophets’ (נביאים ראשונים *nevi'im rishonim*) to a block of narratives often called the ‘historical books’ (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings). In addition, Flavius Josephus makes the claim that only prophets could write history, and this, owing to divine inspiration.²⁴

In line with these historical references that link prophets to history-writing, David Petersen proposes the expression prophetic historiography as one of several literary types within prophetic prose accounts (distinct from prophetic forms of *poetic speech*). He defines the term then, not as a macro-narrative (such as Herodotus’s *Histories*), but as a smaller literary type: “Prophetic historiography is a prose literature that recounts events in the world of public affairs and the ways in which prophets are related to them.”²⁵ It is helpful to note that overlapping narrative accounts exist in ‘prophetic’ and ‘historical’ books in which prophets are sometimes explicitly mentioned (e.g., Isa 36–39 and 2 Kgs 18:13–19:37; and Jer 52 and 2 Kgs 24:18–25:30).²⁶ Consequently, Petersen states: “What appears in the

abuse, by implicitly comparing them to the Persians in the *Histories*. For aspects of this question, see these contributions: John Moles, “Herodotus Warns the Athenians,” *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar* 9 (1996): 259–84; Carolyn Dewald, “Pickled Heroes, Wanton Kings, and Gnostic Founding Fathers: Reading the End of Herodotus’ *Histories*,” in *Classical Closure: Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature*, ed. by D. H. Roberts, F. M. Dunn and D. Fowler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 62–82; and Thomas Harrison, “Herodotus on the American Empire,” *The Classical World* 102, no. 4 (2009): 383–93.

²⁴ See *C. Ap.* 1. 37, 40 (where Moses is specifically mentioned). For this reason and other superior qualities (archives, reliability, etc. as in *C. Ap.* 1. 28, 56), Josephus places the Jewish (and generally eastern) tradition over the Greek tradition (*C. Ap.* 1. 6–27).

²⁵ David L. Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 22.

²⁶ Petersen, like A. Rofé, distinguishes prophetic historiography from prophetic biography in that the former represents the prophets’ activities vis-à-vis Israel, her kings, and other nations, whereas the latter concentrates more on the prophets themselves.

historical books can appear in a prophetic book as well.”²⁷ This helps to understand the interplay between historical contexts and the events addressed by prophets through various types of prophetic literature. The passages indicated above illustrate how prophets performed a critical role in times of national crisis. In fact, an element that is occasionally overlooked is that Jewish prophetic activity performed a strong moral/didactic service for the Jewish nation, perhaps even more so than their predictive role. Thus, whether a prophet wrote down his thoughts or not (writing was not requisite for being a prophet), Petersen is right that prophetic expression through various forms played an important role in the historical process, which one can perceive in summary statements, for example, “... as he [God] had foretold through all his servants the prophets” (2 Kgs 17:23; see also 24:2). Petersen’s discussion underlines well the importance of prophetic activity in Israel’s history, and its claim to divine direction in relation to written historical narratives.

Another substantial example (on the macro level) of prophetic historiography is the book of Chronicles (in two volumes). Without defining the term, Scott Hahn uses prophetic historiography throughout his suggestive article to describe how the Chronicler retold the covenantal history between God and Israel. In Jewish tradition, the Chronicles evince *zakhôr*, a *remembrance* of this divinely-established relationship. The Chronicler’s fusion of history and prophecy is “characterized by the author’s profound assimilation and interpretation of the covenantal and liturgical worldview of the Hebrew Bible.”²⁸ Thus, Chronicles can be rightly considered *haggadic*, or homiletic, in that its purpose goes beyond the mere communication of historical information. Rather, these texts seek to lead readers to attentive reflection on their own part in this sacred history.²⁹ Hahn’s con-

Ibid., 120. See Alexander Rofé, *The Prophetic Stories: The Narratives about the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible, their Literary Types and History*, 2nd corr. and rev. ed. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1986), 109–10.

²⁷ Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature*, 23.

²⁸ Hahn, “Liturgy and Empire,” 14.

²⁹ Hahn, “Liturgy and Empire,” 45. Jewish tradition generally considers two types of prophets: those in the classical sense (Moses, Isaiah, Elijah, etc.), and those who are also divinely inspired interpreters and scribes (e.g., Josephus implicitly claimed this for himself *B.J.* 3. 399–408). For further research on Jewish historiography, see Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhôr: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, The Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press,

tribution is constructive in highlighting the form as well as the pragmatic aspect of prophetic historiography to which we will return in a later section.

In the study of Christian historiography, in light of Jewish literature and history, scholars have also employed *prophetic historiography* or *prophetic history*. We will consider the reflections of two scholars, Robert Hall and Gregory Sterling, who regard Josephus as an essential parallel for studying Luke's writings within the Hellenistic Jewish milieu. Hall's book, *Revealed Histories: Techniques for Ancient Jewish and Christian Historiography*, published in 1991, should be integrated more amply in discussion on biblical literary genres, in that Hall provides useful definitions and nuances of 'revealed history', and applies them to several Jewish and Christian writings. He uses various terms interchangeably, but the expression that most directly concerns our discussion is 'prophetic history', which he further qualifies with the adjectives 'interpretative' and 'inspired'.³⁰ For example, Hall considers the book of *Jubilees* as an 'inspired prophetic history', because an angel reveals events and their interpretation.³¹ On the other hand, Josephus's *Jewish War* is an example of interpretative prophetic history, because the author interprets events through his experiences and prophetic calling rather than through direct divine revelation of those events. Likewise, Hall's assessment of Luke-Acts follows the same logic:

1996). Two recent collections of essays explore aspects of this subject: Mark J. Boda and Lissa M. Wray Beal, ed., *Prophets, Prophecy, and Ancient Israelite Historiography* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2013), and Philip R. Davies and Thomas Römer, eds., *Writing the Bible: Scribes, Scribalism and Script* (Durham: Acumen, 2013). Regarding some features of the 'former prophets' and their link with the book of Deuteronomy, see Richard D. Nelson, "The Former Prophets and historiography," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, ed. Stephen B. Chapman and Marvin A. Sweeney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 215–32, and V. Philips Long, ed., *Israel's Past in Present Research: Essays on Ancient Israelite Historiography*, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study Old Testament Series (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999).

³⁰ He describes, for example, the following expressions: "I have used the terms 'revealed history', 'historical revelation', 'historical prophecy', 'revelation of the past', 'inspiration directed toward the past', and 'inspired history' virtually interchangeably. All of them refer to accounts of the past which are based on information received from gods or their messengers. On the other hand, 'prophetic history', 'historical sermon', and 'apocalyptic history' are technical terms naming specified genera of revealed history." Hall, *Revealed Histories*, 18–19.

³¹ Hall, *Revealed Histories*, 31.

Luke claims for his work a carefully maintained connection with the events which he himself has certified and the revelation necessary to interpret the events correctly. In doing so he ranks his work with the best historians according to the standard attested by Josephus. Luke–Acts is an interpretative prophetic history.³²

The following year (1992), Gregory Sterling published his dissertation on *apologetic historiography*, as displayed mainly in the writings of Flavius Josephus and Luke.³³ This study, among others, sheds light on Josephus’s self-understanding within the line of Jewish prophet-historians, particularly through the parallel with Jeremiah the prophet.³⁴ Sterling asserts this about Josephus’s awareness as a historian: “It is his prophetic status that allows him to write a definitive history of the Jewish people. His work thus has direct ties to the OT tradition of historiography in the sense that it is prophetic history, i.e., history written by a prophet.”³⁵ Sterling demonstrates this point throughout his work and shows how Josephus’s works are a critical linchpin for Lukan historiography:

It is intriguing that just as the Rabbis withdrew from the larger world, Hellenistic Jewish historiography came to an end. At the same time, just as Christianity established itself throughout the Roman world, Hellenistic Christian historiography began. The apex of Hellenistic Jewish historiography reached in the *Antiquitates Judaicae* of Josephus is complemented by Luke–Acts which not only marks the end of the same tradition, but serves as the beginning of another.³⁶

Sterling’s conclusion underlines well the continuity and discontinuity between Luke–Acts and Jewish writings. The point is well taken. However, the author of Luke and Acts probably did not consider his writings as marking the end of the Hellenistic Jewish tradition; rather, he wished to extend

³² Hall, *Revealed Histories*, 208. Hall recognizes that *Luke–Acts* contains inspired prophetic histories (via direct divine revelation), but Luke’s work as a whole is better considered ‘interpretative prophetic history’. In short, Hall concludes, “Luke–Acts is based on revealed history; it is prophetic history” (191).

³³ Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition*.

³⁴ Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition*, 237–38.

³⁵ Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition*, 238.

³⁶ Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition*, 393.

it.³⁷ Likewise, it appears that Luke wished to extend the Greek historiographical tradition as well, so one can plausibly argue for continuity with both traditions.

Nonetheless, compared to Hall's definitions, Sterling's use of "prophetic history" raises the question whether a historiographical writing can be considered prophetic even when the author does not identify himself as a prophet. It will be argued that the author's role can also be implicitly prophetic, exercising prophetic activity retrospectively without being called prophet in the traditional sense by himself or by others. Hall and Sterling's works and many other works have provided solid arguments to locate Luke-Acts within the Jewish historiographical tradition.³⁸ But what would allow us to connect Luke's writings to Greek historiography with a prophetic emphasis, and, consequently, to connect Luke to Herodotus? The subgenre of prophetic historiography allows us to explore both historians performing a prophetic role in their own contexts and through their own worldviews. To do this, the concept requires further description.

Working criteria towards a definition. Bearing in mind previous uses of prophetic historiography or prophetic history in biblical exegesis, I offer here the following points about prophetic historiography as a subgenre. I prefer the expression 'prophetic historiography' to 'prophetic history' in that the former can encompass the process of writing *and* the final product (a 'history').³⁹ Accordingly, which nuances does prophetic historiography express that distinguish it from other types of historiography? It will be clear that I insist on the pragmatic aspect as being crucial for the description of prophetic historiography. This reflects two assertions: (1) general definitions of historiography often include a pragmatic perspective, that is, how societies can benefit from the service of history-writing; and (2) the adjective *prophetic* underlines the pragmatic aspect displayed in the explanatory and proclamatory role of historians in various societies.

³⁷ For a persuasive defense of this assertion, see, for example, Christfried Böttrich, "Das lukanische Doppelwerk im Kontext frühjüdischer Literatur," *ZNW* 106 (2015): 151–83.

³⁸ For example, a recent study: Samson Uytanlet, *Luke-Acts and Jewish Historiography: A Study on the Theology, Literature, and Ideology of Luke-Acts*, WUNT 2/366 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014). See also Steve Walton's essay in this volume.

³⁹ For a helpful discussion on nuances of 'historiography' and 'history', see Jeremy D. Popkin, *From Herodotus to H-Net: The Story of Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3–5.

In relation to Hall's distinctions of revealed history as a subgenre, I suggest the following supplementary elements for prophetic historiography:

1. *The divine within narrative argumentation.* Prophetic historiography distinguishes itself from other types of historiography in that it deploys the divine as a part of the narrative argumentation (rhetorical strategy), stressing the interaction between the divine and human spheres, which can be displayed in both directions, divine intervention in human history as well as human action towards the divine sphere.
2. *Prophetic voice.* In this manner, the text, as the inscribed voice of the historian, plays a prophetic function in society by announcing the acts of their gods (or other gods), extending and connecting local and intermittent divine interventions, and interpreting their relevance for their readers (and possibly for a much broader audience). By assuming a divine perspective (and thus claiming divine support in interpretation), the author's voice is charged with greater authority (than without it) and consequently possesses more potential for pragmatic impact. This illustrates in a unique way the didactic/moral role that ancient historians played in society.
3. *Divine epistemological source(s).* This type of interpretative activity implies an understanding of the divine sphere, which is implicitly or explicitly claimed, as the result of direct or indirect reception of divine communication. Indeed, this type of history cannot be written except through some type of (or claim of) understanding of the divine-human interrelationship.
4. *Existential pragmatic aims.* As a textual link between events, the divine, people of the past and subsequent generations, prophetic historiography has the potential to shape their readers' moral and spiritual understanding of the world, thus also their identity and behavior (individual and collective) within it. Humanity is always between the past and the future, and prophetic history-writing, being retrospective *and* teleological, provides a bridge for them to live in harmony within the narrative's conveyed worldview.
5. *Grounding in a spiritual heritage.* Finally, an additional element that *may* be present is the explicit use of a religious metanarrative to ground the recounted history.⁴⁰ Consequently, it *extends* a spiritual/religious

⁴⁰ Alternatively, an historian might also assume their readers' understanding of the his-

heritage, from one generation to the next, and it *substantiates* the recounted history. As a result, narrative techniques such as intertextuality and exemplarity, drawn from earlier writings, are often features of this grounding.⁴¹

Thus, an historiographical work can be considered *prophetic* to the degree that it exhibits one or more of the above elements, namely, that the interaction between the divine and the human spheres emerges often enough in the narration, as a singular part of the historian's representation of the past. The strength of a narrator's prophetic voice depends on his or her relation to the divine and to divinely imparted knowledge, and to the degree that he or she rhetorically uses the divine to explore the narrative's questions. Through the first three elements (in the list above) and often the fifth, readers are invited to explore history from a divine/spiritual perspective and to consider their own existence within this extended metanarrative (point 4). Additionally, all of these elements are strengthened when historians address a general audience, not only a local group of enthusiasts, as it reveals their desire to reach a broader readership without boundaries. In sum, historiographical texts can display the above prophetic features to different degrees; thus, prophetic force can vary from one text to another.

In its own nuanced way, prophetic historiography exhibits various aspects of historical poetics, that is, the referential and poetic aspects of historiographical communication, from composition to reception and the text that connects them: the mimetic (context), expressive (author), objective (text) and pragmatic (audience).⁴² By exploring the historian's prophetic role as one who bequeaths religious/spiritual knowledge of the past, such historiography is thus not limited to the mere communication of information, but also includes a specific pragmatic element that links historians and readers.

torian's worldview and *implicitly* inscribe their history within a larger metanarrative without explaining it. The author might invite readers to perceive subtle signals that evoke their common worldview, including divine acts and communication.

⁴¹ This point could be omitted in a work of prophetic historiography that narrates events without depending on an existing tradition (e.g., an author from an innovative religious movement without particular historical roots).

⁴² M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th ed. (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 51–52.

The specific pragmatic force of prophetic historiography

In general, scholars recognize the pragmatic functions of history-writing. Does prophetic historiography add a particular pragmatic nuance that other types of historiography do not have? To explore this question, it is helpful, even in cursory form, to consider the processes involved in historical writing and reading (before, during and after). Three complementary terms help to visualize what takes place during these moments: emplotment, plot, and exploitment.⁴³

Emplotment. The analysis of prophetic historiography attempts to explore how historian-prophets composed their histories, imagining their workshops and tools, as well as the implied audience for their compositions. As a type of ideological literature, the characteristics of prophetic historiography can help to elucidate this interpretative process of ‘emplotment’ or *mise en intrigue*, that Hayden White and Paul Ricoeur respectively have expressed with great profundity. These complementary theories call attention to the fact that a work of history does not fall into place mechanically, as if the choice of events and their sequence (and especially their interpretation!) line up in precise order, as in a complex chain of dominos. As Christopher Pelling expresses: “So any historiography is an act of optimism, assuming that the past can be tamed into *some* sort of order.”⁴⁴ This *ordering* and *making sense* of the past is only one way of depicting events, time, and people, since choosing and organizing material into a comprehensive work can be influenced by personal convictions concerning worldview, religious heritage, and divine presence within the story, even within an author’s life. White summarizes this process and its latent properties: “By emplotment, sets of [historical] events can be transformed into stories with beginnings, middles, and ends and thereby provided with positive or negative moral or ideological valences.”⁴⁵ The anal-

⁴³ For a fuller discussion on these expressions, see James M. Morgan, “Emplotment, Plot and Exploitment: Refining Plot Analysis of Biblical Narratives from the Reader’s Perspective,” *BibInt* 21 (2013): 64–98.

⁴⁴ Christopher Pelling, “Epilogue,” in *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, ed. Christina S. Kraus (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 325–60, here 351.

⁴⁵ Hayden White, “Emplotment,” in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, ed. David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan (London: Routledge, 2008), 137. For Ricoeur’s *mise en intrigue* in the original: Paul Ricoeur, *Temps et récit*, 3 vols (Paris: Seuil, 1983), 1:66–104.

ysis of prophetic historiography then explores how the divine plays a role in the author's attempt to bring the past into some sort of order. In other words, how the divine in historiography can make sense of the past *for their readers*. For, in the end, the text becomes a performance of the past for them!⁴⁶

Plot. Indeed, the result of this intellectual and creative process is a text, a *history*, through which readers encounter the central questions raised, explored, and (perhaps) resolved. This exploratory encounter, a cognitive and experiential process, may be called *plot* (or *intrigue*). The readers' necessary participation becomes the motor that activates and drives the narrative, moving progressively from beginning to end. Thus, rather than reduce the concept of plot to a static thing (e.g., narrative structure, central problem, etc.), it seems logical to include readers in the definition of plot as a dynamic process.⁴⁷ During the reading event, readers experience not only the events, questions, and people involved, but also explore the "moral and ideological valences," conveyed by historians. Thus, these valences (or principles, values) become *existential* links between historians, their historical texts, and their readers. One way of describing this pragmatic aspect is 'moralizing' (or 'moral didacticism' or 'exemplary historiography'⁴⁸). Lisa Irene Hau, in a recent, original work, has demonstrated its significance for ancient historiography: "Moralising in historiography was not an isolated genre feature, then, but was part of what connected historiography with its society, a way of creating a fellow-feeling between author and reader by placing them in a common world of well-known and generally accepted values."⁴⁹ It follows then that plot can be considered, even for factual histo-

⁴⁶ This narrative act is necessarily experienced by historians beforehand, a key point in the tension between experience and teleology, as demonstrated by Jonas Grethlein, *Experience and Teleology in Ancient Historiography: 'Futures Past' from Herodotus to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1–19.

⁴⁷ For the role of readers in theoretical discussions on 'sujet', see Boris Tomachevsky, "Thématique" in *Théorie de la littérature. Textes des Formalistes russes réunis, présentés et traduits par Tzvetan Todorov*, ed. Tzvetan Todorov (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 263–307, here 272; "Intrigue" in Raphaël Baroni, *La tension narrative. Suspense, curiosité, surprise* (Paris: Seuil, 2007), 40–41; and "Narrative Progression" in Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 302.

⁴⁸ Moles, "Luke's Preface," 473.

⁴⁹ Lisa Irene Hau, *Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 18.

ries, as a dynamic process through which readers encounter, progressively and cumulatively, central questions and instilled values expressed by historians.

Explotment. After the reading event (which may be repeated), readers or listeners choose whether to accept or reject the representation of the questions explored, along with the implicit and explicit valences communicated through them. Indeed, prophetic historiography not only focuses on the past, it also aims at the readers' life and world, acceptance and implementation of those moral and ideological valences, thereby promoting ways of thinking and living. This actualizing process may be described as *explotment*. In other words, historical composition envisages—on the other side of the reading event—an appropriation of the produced history, that is, an unpacking of it in a new context, so that it is relived afresh, extended as it were in another period. In fact, this moralizing element, argues Hau, was not at all a novelty in later stages of history-writing, but rather “an integral feature of the genre from its very inception.”⁵⁰ This is significant for any discussion on ancient historiography as it sheds light on the pragmatic aspect in the cycle of literary reception and production, and it provides another link for the understanding of prophetic historiography.

This pragmatic link between historians and their readers shows how the subgenre of prophetic historiography contributes to the exploration of composition and reception. For this reason, it is reasonable to ask *for whom* and *why* historians want to bring order to the past and to make some sense of it. Further, why is the divine sphere used in this process? If history may be considered as *prophecy in reverse*, then how does the use of the divine sphere bolster this pragmatic aspect in the historiographical process?⁵¹ This discussion on the pragmatic aspect of prophetic historiography boils down to the essential question for all types of history-writing: what difference does a history seek to make for readers?⁵² As a medium of the past, it can allow readers to appropriate and actualize the history in their own

⁵⁰ Hau, *Moral History*, 18.

⁵¹ Inspired by Friedrich Schlegel's aphorism: “Der Historiker ist ein rückwärts gekehrter Prophet.” (“The historian is a prophet looking backwards.”) in Friedrich Schlegel, “Fragmente,” *Athenaeum* 1, no. 2 (1798): 3–146, fragment 80, <http://www.zbk-online.de/texte/A0060.htm>.

⁵² For good reasons justifying the study of the past, see Popkin, *From Herodotus to H-Net*, 15–18.

contexts.⁵³ Its pragmatic force then depends in part on the main actors of historical production and reception, historians and their readers. For historians, this pragmatic perspective underlines their responsibility for writing history as well as their authority and credibility.⁵⁴ This relationship between historians and their readers will be explored briefly below by means of the prefaces in Herodotus's *Histories* and Luke-Acts, which offer a glimpse of the authors' claims and intentions for their audiences.

In the final section, I summarize how the subgenre of prophetic historiography as a research tool can help in the analysis of historiographical narratives in general, and then suggest its application in Herodotean and Lukan research.

The value of 'prophetic historiography' for Herodotean and Lukan research

General value for historiography. This treatment on prophetic historiography has fleshed out previous definitions and discussions of historiography. In this way, it contributes to the development of historical poetics by supplementing existing generic studies in historiography. It does this by examining those theological elements used in historical argumentation for pragmatic aims. This approach then explores the referential and poetic aspects of historiographical communication.

This subgenre does not necessarily conflict with or contradict other generic classes. It is a subgenre, one among others, that underlines a forceful rhetorical practice in ancient narratives. Accordingly, prophetic historiography can be helpful in the analysis of macro-narratives, and the micro-narratives that those full-scale narratives often display (e.g., apparitions, miracles, oracles, dreams, omens, portents, sacrifices, prayers, hymns, etc.). One additional advantage is that this approach can be applied to historical texts from various traditions and eras that represent descriptions (telling) and portrayals (showing) of divine intervention.

⁵³ On the potential effects that historiography can have on readers, see the thought-provoking chapter "Narrative and Truth" in H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 145–59.

⁵⁴ See Marincola's discussion on the relationship between the historians' authority and their audiences in Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 1–33.

For example, as regards Herodotean research, despite the risk, this subgenre need not be anachronistic, because it joins two native traditions in Greek culture, history and prophecy. In this way, as a research tool, it can focus on historians in their own historical contexts and worldviews. Their compositions are studied in their own right. Thus, this subgenre helps to investigate examples of this type of ideological literature—irrespective of their religious tradition or historical period—without judging them *a priori* as non-historiographical writings (according to modern criteria).⁵⁵

Value for Herodotean and Lukan research. Concerning the histories of Herodotus and Luke, by exploring the juncture of prophecy and history as native categories, which is of interest for my current research and is proposed here as a brief example, we can study Herodotus and Luke in their own contexts, allowing their prophetic voices to be heard. Anachronistic evaluations, as mentioned, are to be avoided, for example, forcing Herodotus into the mold of Hesiod or Luke, or Luke into the forge of Herodotus. Neither one claims *direct* revelation, and yet both narratives are supported by a strong causality of divine nature. It is history and prophecy together *without any apparent complex*. These authors describe past events, and by that means, they extend and announce a religious heritage. Moreover, both writings function as a proclamation to an international readership. It follows then, for the analysis of *Histories* and Luke-Acts, researchers can explore these main points: (1) Where and how do these prophetic characteristics come to the fore in their narrative strategies?;⁵⁶ (2) how do Herodotus and Luke display their self-awareness and authority as historians via their relation to the divine?; (3) how do they use their religious metanarratives/heritages in view of grounding their own historical representations for their implied audiences (e.g., via intertextual features)?; and (4) how might the divine in history shape their readers' moral and the-

⁵⁵ Similar to the maxim that "history is prophecy in reverse," the junction of prophetic and historical roles continues to be used in contemporary literature. See, for example, Joseph Pearce, "Thomas Storck: Historian and Prophet: Review of *From Christendom to Americanism and Beyond* by Thomas Storck (Angelico Press, 2015)," *The Imaginative Conservative* (2016), <http://www.theimaginativeconservative.org/2016/02/thomas-storck-historian-and-prophet.html>.

⁵⁶ In other words, how do these elements contribute to the exploration and (possibly) resolution of the narrative's central questions? Further, which literary forms represent them, for example, narrative asides, description (telling), portrayal (showing), etc.?

ological understanding, and contribute to the creation, development, and (re)definition of their readers' identity (individual and collective)?

This type of research can be performed separately on one or the other texts. The advantage of placing Herodotus and Luke side by side is that it serves to explore both their similarities and their differences. This historiographical *synkrisis* brings to light the continuity and the discontinuity within the prophetic traditions that they represent, within the time-frame of approximately five hundred years. This raises three questions: which historians, between Herodotus and Luke, included the divine in their histories? How and to what end did they do this? Moreover, what influence might they have had on Luke? These questions go beyond the scope of this essay, but one can mention three Greek historians who made recourse, albeit to different degrees, to the divine in their narratives. Xenophon's piety orients and underlies his works *Anabasis* and *Hellenica*.⁵⁷ Polybius, despite his criticism of Timaeus's interest and use of myths, also supports his narrative through the notion of *Tyche* in the sense of fate or divine providence to explain the ultimate design for the emergence of Rome as a world power. Diodorus of Sicily equally evokes *Tyche* and divine forces in his universal history.⁵⁸ Yet, what is particularly striking is his eloquent praise of historians and history and their indispensable roles for society (1.1.1–1.2.8). There he stresses the link between historians and the divine by calling them “ministers of Divine Providence” (ὑπουργοὶ τῆς θείας προνοίας 1.1.3 [LCL, Oldfather]). By this expression, he likens historians' principles of selection, organization, and educational prowess to the work of providence, which brought order to the natural and human spheres, and continues to oversee their courses through time eternal (1.1.3). Likewise, through this inspired work of historians, Diodorus qualifies history by using metaphors of divine communication. History, he says, is “the prophetess of truth” (τὴν προφητὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἱστορίαν, 1.2.2 [LCL, Oldfather]), and its role in immortalizing the deeds of the virtuous, which are “heralded abroad by history's voice most divine” (διαβώμεναι τῷ θειοτάτῳ τῆς ἱστορίας στόματι, 1.2.3 [LCL, Oldfather]). This association

⁵⁷ For the divine in *Anabasis*, see Jan Haywood, “Divine Narratives in Xenophon's *Anabasis*,” *Histos* 10 (2016): 85–110, <http://research.ncl.ac.uk/histos/documents/2016AA06HaywoodDivineNarrativesinXenophon.pdf>.

⁵⁸ See Kenneth S. Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 36–37.

of historiography with figures of divine communication elucidates how Diodorus, and other historians of the first century BCE such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, perceived the prophetic/didactic role of historians and history for society. Although these are but a few examples between Herodotus and Luke, the notion of divine intervention and causation, although at times considered problematic for some historians, certainly continued from the fifth to the first century BCE.⁵⁹

Apart from the general conceptual links already noted between Herodotus and Luke's writings, some preliminary inferences between the two can be suggested at this point. Perhaps the most important connection is that our historians' works represent full-scale prophetic histories, since *the objectives mentioned in their prefaces* are accomplished in part through the aid of divine revelation. In other words, unlike other histories that mention, perhaps in passing, anecdotes or maxims about the divine-human relationship, the objectives and argumentation of Herodotus and Luke depend significantly on revelation, albeit indirectly, since neither one claims to have received *direct* revelation. Rather, they pass on information received from sources (often unnamed) that provide knowledge of divine communication and action.

A few examples suffice to show how Herodotus achieves one of his main objectives indicated in the preface, that is, to explain the cause(s) for which the Greeks and the "barbarians" entered into conflict (*Histories* 1. 1). In the beginning *logoi*, considered programmatic by many scholars, Herodotus elucidates the frailty of Croesus's status within the assumed worldview. This is shown through Croesus's meeting with the wise Solon (1. 29–33), who exposes the flimsy nature of the Lydian king's conception of the world: "Whoever passes through life with the most and then dies agreeably is the one who, in my opinion, O King, deserves to bear this name. It is necessary to see how the end of every affair turns out, for the

⁵⁹ To explore this question, see Scott Shauf's brief but very useful treatments on historians and the divine, from Herodotus to Plutarch and Arrian. Shauf, *The Divine in Acts*, 17–67. See also the brief discussion in Simon Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks*, Key Themes in Ancient History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 131–33. Although probably not read by Luke, Livy's *History of Rome* can also be considered as one of the clearest examples of recourse to divine causality for the historical investigation of Rome. For the question of the divine in Roman historiography, see Jason P. Davies, *Rome's Religious History: Livy, Tacitus, and Ammianus on their Gods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

god promises fortune to many people and then utterly ruins them” (1.32.9 [LCL, Godley]). Herodotus then confirms this theological principle by relating Croesus’s downfall by the hand of Cyrus. For instance, the geopolitical intrigues of Croesus and Cyrus are explored through an analysis of the exchanges between Croesus and the Delphic Oracle (1.46–56), how the two kings come into conflict, which leads to the fall of the Lydian kingdom (1.71–91) and to Persian expansion into Greek territory (1.161–173 and *passim*). Likewise, another key moment in the Greco-Persian conflict is related in Book 7 and in relation to another king, this time on the Persian side. Herodotus vividly displays how Xerxes decides to take revenge against the Greeks for his father (Darius) owing to repeated dreams of a menacing divine presence to Xerxes and his uncle Artabanus (7.12–19).

In addition to these key moments, other divine acts and oracles appear consistently and cumulatively throughout the nine books. For example, Herodotus evokes divine intervention for: (1) divine punishment, as inflicted on Croesus for his pride via death of his son Atys (1.34–43); (2) warnings, as in the omen through an earthquake in Delos as a warning of trouble to come (6.98); (3) restoring balance in the world, as in allowing for a fair battle through a storm off the island of Euboea reducing greatly the Persian fleet (8.13); (4) vengeance for religious sacrilege, as when Poseidon destroys only the guilty offenders of a Persian regiment crossing at low tide (8.129.3). Some events are even expressed through eyewitness reports, as in Philippides’s sighting of the god Pan who communicates his complaint of neglect by the Athenians and his help for them (6.105), and the Persians’ testimony of their vision of two hoplites of superhuman height whom the Delphians interpreted as local heroes, Phylacus and Autinous (8.38–39).

As for oracles, Herodotus reports roughly more than eighty oracular events and in all nine books.⁶⁰ For example, Herodotus reports Delphic oracles verbatim and public debate concerning Athens’ role against the Persians. That role was causing public concern, which was resolved in favor of Athenian resistance in the Straits of Salamis, in agreement with Themistocles’s interpretation of the oracles (7.140–143). Mikalson sums up the

⁶⁰ For a complete catalogue of Delphic oracles listed according to the book in which they appear in the *Histories*, see Joseph Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations with a Catalogue of Responses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 453–54.

importance of the Delphi oracle for Herodotus's inquiry: "Apollo's Delphic oracle was thus, to some degree, involved with *all the major battles* and events of the Persian invasion, except for the battle of Marathon."⁶¹ Through these reports of divine interventions, Herodotus leads his readers to explore the divine participation in the causes and incitement of the Greco-Persian conflicts.

Likewise, regarding Luke's narratives, immediately following his prologue, "one of the greatest of all Classical historiographical prefaces,"⁶² the historian quickly orients his readers' understanding of what he meant by the theologically charged phrase: "concerning the events that have been *accomplished* among us, just as the eyewitnesses from the beginning, who also became *servants of the word*" (Lk 1.1b–2a). Indeed, the very first passages after the preface, Gabriel's appearances and divine charges to Zechariah and Mary, remove any doubt that the readers might have about the preface's Christocentric orientation. These programmatic passages, and others in the first four chapters, also lucidly prepare readers for the experience and interpretation of divine acts and communication in Luke's two volumes.⁶³ For brevity, I leave out further evidence to support this point.⁶⁴

In sum, both Herodotus and Luke offer a significant interpretative key to their readers through the inclusion of divine acts and communication towards the realization of their narratives' goals as set out in their prefaces. Additionally, both authors extend the religious heritages of their own traditions: Herodotus, the oracular tradition (not only Delphic), and Luke, the Jewish prophetic tradition. They thus write with authority, and their readers can resonate with their histories against the backdrop of those religious heritages. To this end, both texts exhibit significant intertextuality

⁶¹ Mikalson, *Herodotus and Religion*, 120 (my italics). Mikalson suggests that the Greeks hardly had time to consult the oracle for the battle of Marathon (224 n. 34).

⁶² Moles, "Luke's Preface," 482.

⁶³ One may consider, for example, in the opening chapters: Zechariah's prophecy (1:67–79); angelic appearance and communication to the shepherds (2:8–20); Simeon's prophecy (2:25–38); John the Baptist's role as Jesus's precursor (3:1–20); and confirmation of Jesus's divine identity via audible voice, genealogy (3:21–38) and temptation (4:1–13); culminating in Jesus's announcement of his Messianic mandate (4:16–30).

⁶⁴ To explore this point, among other excellent studies available, Robert C. Tannehill's successfully examines Luke's theological construction within the narrative's argumentation in *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986–1990).

with previous literature. In this way, readers are connected to the past as well as encouraged to live in the present, considering the pious and impious examples provided.

Another significant element is that both historians infer general audiences with an international perspective, demonstrated through content and consequences. By writing unified histories on international events, Herodotus and Luke *connect* and *extend* local, punctual divine interventions to demonstrate their existential relevance for their international audiences.⁶⁵ This fact then supports the position that Luke who “targets as wide a ‘public’ as possible”⁶⁶—by inserting his double work in the two historiographical traditions and with prophetic voice—wishes to improve on, propose an alternative view of, or probably even supplant, previous historical explanations of the divine-human relationship.⁶⁷ In short, Luke wants to demonstrate the theological and historical continuity between the Jewish people and the Jesus movement, and, at the same time, to provide an alternative vision to Herodotus’s polytheistic, universal, prophetic history (as well as other histories that followed). Could then the father of Christian historiography wish to supplant the father of historiography?

Reading Luke’s writings in the light of Jewish historiography is an established approach, owing to their striking continuity with Jewish history, theology, and literature. Reading Luke in the light of Herodotus (and subsequent tradition) illustrates well the fact that the Greeks had their own prophetic tradition, which was expressed through various types of literature, including historiography. Luke had a foot in both traditions and made no excuses about it. He certainly knew both, and he used these literary traditions in the service of his theological project.⁶⁸ Conversely, reading

⁶⁵ For this aspect in relation to Luke’s claims in his preface, see Moles, “Luke’s Preface,” 469, 474–75.

⁶⁶ Moles, “Luke’s Preface,” 469.

⁶⁷ This is supported by multiple episodes in Acts where pagan practices or philosophy are challenged and depicted as obsolete in comparison to faith in Jesus, for example: pagan reaction to healing (14:8–18); liberation of demon-possessed slave girl and reaction (16:16–40); and renouncement of magic arts and subsequent burning of related literature (19:17–20).

⁶⁸ For the reception of Herodotus up until the end of the first century CE (approximately the end limit for the Lukan writings), see the relevant chapters in Jessica Priestly and Vasiliki Zali, ed., *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Herodotus in Antiquity and Beyond*, Brill’s Companions to Classical Reception (Leiden: Brill, 2016);

Herodotus in light of Luke highlights another link in the chain of historiographical tradition that Herodotus bequeathed.⁶⁹ In this line of interest in the divine as a part of historical investigation, such as Xenophon and Diodorus, could not Luke also be considered one of Herodotus's successors?⁷⁰ In both authors, the values of tradition and innovation are fostered through the use of the divine in explaining human history. In their eyes, human history cannot be explained without the divine, ever present as the gods (or God) are. This is the essence of prophetic historiography.

This assertion can be taken further by going beyond mere imitation of the Herodotean tradition and by stressing Luke's unique contribution to it (innovation). For this aspect, let us return to François Hartog's observation (cited at the beginning of the article) in context: "Through this investigation and designation, Herodotus is certainly not a seer, but he arrogates to himself a type of *oracular authority* . . . He is neither bard nor soothsayer but between the two; he is Herodotus."⁷¹ Indeed, Herodotus is a bit of a *tertium quid*; he assumes the role of historian-prophet in his own times. Luke has also been considered many things: historian, theologian, evangelist (!), storyteller, etc. Historian-prophet brings these various aspects together. Like Herodotus, Luke proclaims a history with the divine as a central element in his narrative strategy. If then he can be considered a rightful successor of Herodotus's legacy, perhaps he was aspiring to be his greatest supplanter? From the perspective of prophetic historiography, this history-writing *sans complexe* in the two traditions, I suggest that Luke's works are not only at

as well as Herodotus's influence on historiography and culture: Simon Hornblower, "Herodotus' Influence in Antiquity," in *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, ed. Carolyn Dewald and John Marincola, Cambridge Companions to Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 306–18; Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography," *History* 43 (1958): 1–13; Oswyn Murray, "Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture," *Classical Quarterly* 22 (1972): 200–13; Felix Jacoby, "Herodotos," in *PW*² (1913), esp. cols. 504–20; and Lynn Mitchel Sawlivich, "The Reception of Herodotus from Cicero to Plutarch" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1991).

⁶⁹ Again, this assertion is mainly based on the conceptual level ('prophetic historiography'), the strong reception of Herodotus up until Luke's lifetime, and the intertextuality in Luke's preface that engages with Herodotean elements. The best description of this last element is Moles, "Luke's Preface," 463, 468, 473, 475, 478–79.

⁷⁰ As regards the use of the divine in historical argumentation, we may contrast Herodotus with Thucydides and Polybius who preferred to locate cause and effect explanations within the human sphere.

⁷¹ Hartog, "Invention of History," 395 (my italics).

the crossroads of Jewish and Greco-Roman historiography, but that they also seek to be the culmination of both.

