

A glance at Herodotus' appearance in the Cambridge histories of *Greek Philosophy* (Guthrie) and *Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Winston) suffices to reflect the general tendency to place Herodotus almost entirely in the company of the sophists, and especially that of his contemporary, Protagoras. But as Raaflaub (*Brill's Companion to Herodotus*) reminds us, we must not forget Herodotus' debt to the influence of Ionian philosophy. Among possible Ionian influences, most critical might be that of Heraclitus, for whom "all human laws (*nomoi*) are sustained by one divine law" (fr.114).

The crucial passage for the study of *nomos* (custom, tradition, law, culture) in the *Histories*, 3.38, represents its complex usage by Herodotus as plural and singular, particular and universal, relative and absolute, human and divine. In its plural usage, the diverse particularity and relativity of human *nomoi*, whereby different peoples have different *nomoi*, and "each people prefers their own as by far the finest," is evidence of a relativist concept of *nomos* suggestive of sophistic (especially Protagorean) influence (Guthrie; Kerferd). Yet, Herodotus' citation of Pindar's famous line, '*Nomos*, king of all,' as a way of summing up this passage, arguably places the relative plurality of human *nomoi* in relation to an archaic concept of *nomos* as singular, absolute and divine—arguably, since the Herodotean citation of Pindar has been accorded the dubious distinction of introducing a relativist misinterpretation of Pindar's *nomos* that leads to its sophistic abuse at the hand of Plato's Callicles in the *Gorgias* (Gigante).

The Heraclitean concept of a single, universal, divine *nomos* that is the foundation of all human *nomoi* may be nearer the view of *nomos* in Herodotus than that of a sophistic view of *nomos* as human, conventional and relative. Another statement attributed to Heraclitus is that "the people should fight for their *nomos* as if for their city-wall" (fr. 44). Such a statement accords well with another important passage on *nomos* in Herodotus, 7.102-104, which defends the Greek way of life based on respect for *nomos* by coining the phrase '*nomos despotes*,' an allusion to the earlier citation of Pindar's *nomos basileus* at 3.38. Other passages suggest Heraclitean influence on the Herodotean sense of human life as subject to the natural constancy of endless change, and thus of Heraclitean influence on the Herodotean concept of nature or *phusis*.

It might be thought best to explain the possibility of Heraclitean influence on Herodotus by way of Protagoras, especially if one regards Herodotus as nearer to the sophistic teachings of the mid-fifth century than the Ionian philosophy of the late 6th and early 5th. This paper shall argue against that view in favour of the thesis that Herodotus and Protagoras represent *opposed* receptions of the Heraclitean *nomos*, in which Herodotus stands as holding to the original position of Heraclitus in which the plurality of human *nomoi* are grounded in a single universal divine *nomos*, a view which cannot be sustained by the subjective relativism of Protagoras, which paves the way for the sophistic view of *nomos* as mere human convention. How Herodotean *nomos* as possibly transcendent may differ from Heraclitean *nomos* as possibly immanent shall also be considered.