THE HERODOTOS PROJECT, IN 3 MINUTES

By

Christopher G. Brown & Brian D. Joseph
The Ohio State University
[brown.2583@osu.edu / joseph.1@osu.edu]
• *The Concept:* a web-based dedicated scholarly portal to ancient ethno-history

• *The Guiding Premise:* huge numbers of distinct peoples are mentioned in ancient sources, but what do we know about them and what remains to be known?
• Many current projects focus on geography of the ancient world; we want to draw attention to peoples; after all: “real participation in history [was] lived by extended groups”

• moreover, given that, as Tom Elliot has said, “Complexity in the historical record, combined with varying uncertainty in our ability to interpret it, necessitates a flexible approach sensitive to inherent ambiguity and the likelihood of changing and divergent interpretations”, we realized that something more than just a static repository of information is needed
• Hence, the *HERODOTOS PROJECT*, so named since we started with the “father of history” and the several hundred peoples he mentions

• Now in partnership with colleagues at the University of Ghent
Charting Ancient Ethnohistory: The Herodotos Project
• the central point of entry to the site will be *ethnonyms*, as gathered from Herodotos and from scraping electronic versions of other ancient sources (e.g. Strabo)

• we are now developing a database that will have 1000+ ancient ethnonyms (controlled for all the interpretative problems that working with such designations entails)
• the overall architecture of the project subsumes many parts
• schematic overview (= Slides6, in Brian Joseph Uploads)
we envision this ultimately as a Wiki environment and are building it in that way, so that this will be a portal to accumulated information as well as a forum for discussion of controversial aspects of interpretation of ancient material
• we focus here on the information clusters

• for each ethnonym that represents a distinct ancient peoples, we are assembling linked clusters of information about them:
Information clusters (for each ethnonym)

--Geographic classifier (moving in concentric circles from Greek starting point)

e.g. --Greeks
     --Pre-Greek peoples
     --Africans
     --Thracians, Scythians, and neighbors

etc.

+ --geographical notes
  --ancient description of locale
  --modern “translation” of locale
  --longitude & latitude (GIS)
  --map
  --neighbors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nomenclature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greek name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standard English name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disambiguation (as needed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genealogy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>descended-from (origins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descendants-of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Physical information
  -- size
  -- appearance
  -- dress

-- Biological information
  -- skeletal remains (cf. History of Health Project)
  -- DNA
  -- other genetic markers
--Cultural notes
  --lifestyle (e.g., sedentary/nomadic)
  --food
  --religion
  --sexual practices

--Language information
  --linguistic relations
  --inscriptional evidence (for Greek, dialect inscriptions, with GIS mapping as to where the inscriptions occur)

--Archaeological notes
  --relevant excavations (with maps)
Ancient testimony (cf. Perseus Project)

--citations in Herodotus
  --Greek
  --English

--citations in Strabo
  --Greek
  --English

--citations in Pausanias
  --Greek
  --English

--citations elsewhere (e.g. Pliny)
Modern commentary / secondary literature
+ discussion via Wiki forum

Bibliography

... + other fields to be added as needed
Schematic of Information Clusters:

[= “Slides7” in Brian Joseph’s Uploads]
Representation of Database Structure for Information Clusters:

[= “Slides8” under Brian Joseph’s Uploads]