

ARISTIDES, PUBLIUS AELIUS (117–c. 180)

Aristides was the most famous of the Greek orators who flourished in the period known as the Second Sophistic (c. 60–230).

Aristides was born in Hadrianotherae in Mysia (Asia Minor). After his education in Athens and Pergamum, he entered on a career as a writer and a “concert-orator.” He traveled widely during lecture tours, mainly in the Greek-speaking world, including Egypt. He visited Rome, whose civilization he admired and celebrated in his oration *To Rome*. Chronic ill health precluded a fully active public career. He resided most of his life in Smyrna, with frequent stays at the shrine of the healing god Asclepius in Pergamum.

Aristides’ literary output was varied and voluminous, embracing both public and private orations, addresses on historical topics, argumentative essays, and hymns in prose to various gods. Six speeches on *The Sacred* attest to a fervent conviction of his special relationship with Asclepius, who he believed not only restored his physical health but also secured him fame in his chosen field.

Aristides’ work, like that of other figures in the Second Sophistic, is an early example of the close and largely successful emulation, in both style and content, of revered classical Attic models, especially *Isocrates.

Bibliography: D.A. Russell, ed., *Antonine Literature*, 1990.

James Holoka

ARISTAGORAS (fl. 499 B.C.)

Aristagoras, political leader of Miletus, instigated the revolt of Ionian Greek city-states that precipitated war between Greece and the Persian Empire.

In 499, Aristagoras was tyrant of the important city of Miletus in Asia Minor. While his co-ruler, Histiaeus, was under house arrest in the Persian capital, Susa, Aristagoras fomented a rebellion against Persian overlordship, first in Ionia, along the central portion of the west coast of Asia Minor, then as far afield as the Black Sea and the island of Cyprus. *Herodotus, our chief source for his career, says Aristagoras intended to make up for the Bay of Pigs-like fiasco of a failed attack on government forces on the island of Naxos. He was also likely seeking to exploit the Ionian Greek city-states' ripeness for insurrection to further plans for Milesian dominance in the Aegean region. Aristagoras seized the Persian ships stationed in Ionia, abjured his own autocratic powers as tyrant, and sought assistance in mainland Greece, winning help from the Athenians and the Eretrians (but not, significantly, from the Spartans). After initial successes, including the seizure and burning of the Persian provincial capital of Sardis, the Ionian alliance suffered from internal disputes, lack of financial resources, and the withdrawal of mainland support. In 496, Aristagoras was killed by Thracians during an attempt to consolidate his power in Myrcinus.

The Ionian revolt he had initiated was crushed at the Battle of Lade and the subsequent siege and fall of Miletus in 494.

Bibliography: A.R. Bum, *Persia and the Greeks: The Defense of the West, 546-478 B.C.*, 2nd ed., 1984.

James Holoka

ARISTARCHUS OF SAMOTHRACE (c. 216–144 B.C.)

Aristarchus, as head of the library at Alexandria, represents the epitome of the tradition of Hellenistic literary and linguistic scholarship.

Aristarchus, a native of Samothrace, after attending the school of *Aristophanes of Byzantium at Alexandria, became tutor of Ptolemy VII and then served as superintendent of the great Library (c. 153–145). His career marks the pinnacle of the Alexandrian scholarly tradition that included *Zenodotus, *Callimachus, and Aristophanes of Byzantium, among others.

Like his predecessors, Aristarchus produced critical recensions of major authors (especially epic and lyric poets). These—as we know of them from references in later scholars, especially the scholiasts—show remarkable learning and bold emendation. Aristarchus' exceptional interest in epic led to specialized treatises on Homeric topics as well as attacks on theories of authorship espoused by other scholars, in particular, those who ascribed composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to different authors. As a stated guiding principle, Aristarchus strove “to elucidate *Homer from Homer,” to adopt or emend a given reading based on its compatibility with the ethical and linguistic character of Homer's work. Besides producing critical texts, Aristarchus was the first to write extensive commentaries on Homer, *Hesiod, lyric and dramatic poets, and the historian *Herodotus.

Bibliography: R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, 1968.

James Holoka

ARISTOPHANES OF BYZANTIUM (c. 257–180 B.C.)

Aristophanes was head of the Alexandrian Library and a very learned scholar in the fields of textual criticism, linguistics, and science.

Aristophanes of Byzantium was the immediate successor of *Eratosthenes as the superintendent of the great research library at Alexandria. As a textual critic, he made distinct improvements on the work of his predecessor *Zenodotus in his editions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. He also produced the first proper critical editions of *Pindar, *Aristophanes, and *Menander. In the area of evaluating and classifying ancient poets, his tabulations (with those of his student and successor *Aristarchus of Samothrace) were instrumental in the evolution of the Alexandrian canon of writers. Shortened versions of his introductions to several tragedies by *Sophocles and *Euripides survive the “hypotheses” prefixed to later editions of these works.

In addition to his textual criticism, Aristophanes also compiled a lexicon canvassing vocabulary in both prose and verse works, drawing on and advancing earlier work in Zenodotus’ *Glossai* and *Callimachus’ *Onomastikon*. Finally, he was the author of a scientific treatise, “On Animals,” influenced by *Aristotle and *Theophrastus.

Bibliography: R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, 1968.

James Holoka

HERODES ATTICUS (Tiberius Claudius Atticus Herodes, c. 101–177)

Herodes, as orator, politician, and public benefactor, was a major figure in the rhetorical and philosophical movement known as the Second Sophistic.

Herodes Atticus lived at the height of the Second Sophistic during the prosperous second century. Schooled in rhetoric by prominent teachers, he himself tutored *Aelius Aristides and the young *Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. He was a wealthy man of great distinction who put his talents and resources to public purposes. He was consul in Rome in 143. His public benefactions included many buildings and monuments, particularly in his home city of Athens (he was born at Marathon). The theater or “Odeon” that he built on the south slope of the Acropolis survives in a good state of restoration and is still the scene of plays and concerts. Like his pupil Aelius Aristides, Herodes espoused a purely Attic style of rhetoric. His voluminous writings ranged from letters and diaries to lectures and set speeches. None survives except for a Latin rendition of a *fabula* (fictitious narrative). He figures importantly in the *Lives of the Sophists* by *Philostratus.

Bibliography: A. Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature*, 1966.

James Holoka

MILTIADES (c. 554–c. 489 B.C.)

Miltiades is best known to history as the victorious Athenian general at the Battle of Marathon.

Miltiades was a member of the wealthy, aristocratic Philaid family at Athens. He was archon, one of the nine chief magistrates, in the year 524/523. He spent some twenty years as governor representing Athenian interests in the Chersonesus area (modern Gallipoli), where he married the daughter of the Thracian king, Olorus. He participated in *Darius I's expedition into Scythian territory but later joined the Ionian revolt of 499–494. After the failure of the revolt, he returned to Athens and was elected to the panel of ten *strategoï* (generals) each year from 493 to 489. The historian *Herodotus credits him with the decision to make a stand at Marathon against the Persian invasion force led by Datis and Artaphemes in 490.

At Marathon, Miltiades, enjoying the confidence of his colleagues, made sev-

eral critical decisions regarding the timing and location of the battle, as well as Greek troop dispositions. He is thought by some modern historians to have arranged his forces, the famous 10,000 heavy infantrymen (hoplites), in a line that featured a thin center and extra depth on the wings as a shrewd offensive tactic. Others believe this arrangement was purely defensive, dictated by the need to avoid envelopment by the longer Persian battle line. In any case, the unorthodox deployment of forces enabled the Athenians to repulse the opposing lines of the numerically superior Persian army and then to turn on its center in a classic pincer movement. The battle ended in a spectacular Athenian victory (6,400 Persian dead as against 192 Athenians). The Persian forces abandoned their assault on Attica and did not return till the expedition led by King *Xerxes a decade later.

The following year (489), Miltiades was dispatched with a large fleet to conquer islands that had apparently sided with the Persians. In the course of an unsuccessful attack on the island of Paros, Miltiades was severely wounded in the leg. For his failure in this mission he was tried, convicted, and fined fifty talents, an enormous sum. He died of gangrene in prison not long afterward. Responsibility for payment of the fine was assumed by his son *Cimon, who was the leading military and civil leader at Athens for some fifteen years following the defeat of Xerxes' invasion force in 480/479.

Bibliography: R. Sealey, *A History of the Greek City-States, ca. 700–338 B.C.*, 1976.

James Holoka

PLINY THE YOUNGER (Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, c. 61–c. 112)

Pliny was a prominent Roman politician and man of letters in the early Roman Empire best known for his collection of correspondence.

Pliny was born into a wealthy family in the town of Comum in northern Italy. He was adopted and raised by his uncle, *Pliny the Elder, a well-known public official of equestrian social rank and author of the encyclopedic *Natural History*. He received a first-rate education at Rome; *Quintilian was one of his teachers. He followed a stint as a junior legionary staff officer with a distinguished, if unspectacular, career as lawyer, public official, and senator. Significant administrative posts included treasury prefectures, the Tiber drainage curatorship, and the governorship of Bithynia-Pontus, where he evidently died while still in office. In the course of his life, he was the friend of the historian *Tacitus and a trusted public servant under emperors as different as the autocratic, unstable *Domitian and the competent, fair-minded *Trajan (a contrast highlighted in Pliny's sole surviving public oration, the *Panegyric*).

Pliny's collection of *Letters*, published in ten books over the last decade or so of his life, is a valuable window into the lives of men and women of a specific social and political status in the early second century. Since they were prepared for publication by their author, the letters do not afford the sort of genuine and unguarded revelations to be found in *Cicero's letters. Nonetheless, they do illustrate the concerns and occupations of an educated, personally genial, sincerely well-intentioned Roman administrator. Subject matter includes: commentary on official and unofficial matters of politics, law, and the courts; personal advice to friends and associates concerning, for example, career and marriage plans; philanthropic measures, including matching-funds support for a school in Comum; and descriptions of topographical and natural phenomena, including an eyewitness account of the eruption of Vesuvius in 79, which took his uncle's life. Book 10 of the collection comprises exclusively correspondence between Pliny and the emperor Trajan, most notably an exchange regarding problems Pliny experienced in dealing with Christians in his province. Throughout, the impression given is of a man of high (more or less Stoic) moral standards and a genuinely strong sense of civic responsibility.

Bibliography: A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny: A Historical and Social Commentary*, 1966.

James Holoka

SALLUST (Gaius Sallustius Crispus, 86–35 B.C.)

Sallust was a public official and major Roman historian, author of monographs on the war with *Jugurtha and the conspiracy of *Catiline.

Gaius Sallustius Crispus was born at Amiterrium (San Vittorino), Italy. In the course of his political career, he sided with *Julius Caesar against *Pompey in the Civil War that broke out in 49. Though Sallust's service in governmental and military posts was undistinguished, Caesar did appoint him the first governor of the province of Africa Nova in 46. Afterward, Sallust was charged with (but not convicted of) extortion and embezzlement; the scandal forced him into an early retirement. The wealth Sallust had amassed in office bought him a palatial villa at Tivoli and, in Rome, an elegantly landscaped complex of parklands surrounding a fine mansion, later the possession of Roman emperors.

Sallust's firsthand knowledge of the gradual disintegration of the Roman political system in the late republican period informs the historical works he wrote in his retirement. The *War with Catiline* (c. 42) is devoted to the failed conspiracy of a disgruntled aristocrat who tried to recoup electoral and financial losses by an armed insurrection, quashed by *Cicero during his consulship in 63. *The War with Jugurtha* (c. 40) recounts the conflict between Rome and an upstart king of Numidia in 111–105. This was an apt subject because of Sallust's familiarity with north Africa and the opportunity it afforded to expose and dissect mismanagement and corruption among the ruling elite. Sallust's other major work, the *Histories* (begun c. 39), survives only in fragments.

Sallust has been most influential as a stylist and moralist. Forced out of an active political life, he became an analyst of the moral decline in the ruling elite of a great imperial power. *Tacitus emulated his terse and acerbic style of writing, and St. *Augustine's approval of his ethical stances ensured his popularity in the Middle Ages. Erasmus preferred Sallust to *Livy and Tacitus in recommending school curricula. More recently, Sallust has appealed to readers,

including many Marxists, who have found in his work a congenial indictment of a corrupted ruling aristocracy.

Bibliography: R. Syme, *Sallust*, 1964.

James Holoka

XENOPHANES OF COLOPHON (c. 570–c. 475 B.C.)

Xenophanes was a Greek poet and thinker. Though classified as an Ionian philosopher, he lived most of his life in various cities in Sicily and Magna Graecia.

Like that of other pre-Socratic philosophers, Xenophanes' work is known to us only in fragments. From these we know that he wrote in a variety of poetic meters rather than prose. Two fragments, best looked at as purely literary productions, deal with the rules of behavior for drinking parties (*symposia*) and with the greater civic value of poets as compared with athletes.

Xenophanes' importance as a thinker lies chiefly in his criticism of traditional Greek notions of the Olympian deities. In particular, he attacked the depiction

of the gods by *Homer and *Hesiod as immoral and in general utterly anthropomorphic in their physical and psychological makeup. He also observed that people of different cultures conceptualized their gods in ways peculiar to themselves and concluded that all such conceptions were subjective and, by implication, without any probative value. This sort of deduction from anthropological reflections on diverse societies anticipated an important strand of Greek thought, clearly evident in, for example, the *History* of *Herodotus. In the place of misguided customary ideas of the gods, Xenophanes substituted the notion of a single, nonanthropomorphic deity that in some sense pervaded and animated the physical universe.

Other fragments reveal Xenophanes' preoccupation with familiar subjects of pre-Socratic philosophy: the nature of the heavenly bodies; the extent of the earth; the importance of water and the sea as a basic element in the composition of physical objects, including human beings; and epistemological speculations about the nature and limitations of human knowledge.

Xenophanes was a poet who thought deeply about philosophical issues. His negative critiques of conventional religious thought and his often radical positive statements about the nature of the divine exerted a strong influence on such later thinkers and artists as *Heraclitus, *Aeschylus, *Euripides, *Plato, and *Aristotle.

Bibliography: J.H. Lesher, int. and trans., *Xenophanes of Colophon: Fragments. A Text and Translation with a Commentary*, 1992.

James Holoka

ZENODOTUS (fl. 280 B.C.)

Zenodotus was the first superintendent of the Library at Alexandria and an originator of the discipline of textual criticism.

Zenodotus of Ephesus (born c. 325) probably began work on an edition of *Homer while employed as the tutor of young *Ptolemy II. When the latter ascended the throne in 288, Zenodotus was put in charge of the state-financed research library affiliated with the think tank known as the “Museum.” He undoubtedly had a role in the acquiring and categorizing of books, though his system of classification is uncertain.

Zenodotus was known for his lexicographical work, a *Homeric Glossary*, and especially his critical editions. While direct evidence of the latter does not survive, some notion of their character emerges from the reactions of later scholars. We know that he devised the obelus as a symbol designating spurious lines and

that his efforts at emendation were not based on the considered critical principles espoused by such later Alexandrian scholars as *Aristarchus of Samothrace. Zenodotus seems to have usually adopted the reading of only one manuscript when editing a text, consulting others only when in doubt about the authenticity of particular lines.

Zenodotus' place in the history of textual scholarship is secured by the primacy rather than the high quality of his textual criticism.

Bibliography: R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, 1968.

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