ON HISTORICAL FRAGMENTS AND EPITOMES[1]

The modern historian of Greece and Rome often depends for his information on writings whose reliability is no greater, though often much less, than that of the histories, now lost in whole or part, which their authors followed. The quality of these histories can sometimes be detected from the internal evidence of the extant derivative accounts, even when we cannot name the historians with any certainty. The contrast between the merits of the historians on whom Diodorus drew for the main parts at least of Book 17 on the one hand, and of Books 18–20 on the other, would be manifest, even if they could not be identified with Clitarchus and Hieronymus respectively; indeed, once these identifications are made, the narratives in Diodorus are our best evidence for the characteristics of these writers. In many other cases, however, the value of a statement in an extant work can be determined with some probability if we can identify the source as a historian whose scope and reliability can better be ascertained from other material. Moreover, the character of these lost works must shed light on the intellectual history of their own age, especially as some, like the histories of Ephorus or Theopompus, were long regarded as *chef d'œuvres*, though they perished because in later antiquity or in medieval times they were no longer prized for the stylistic virtues that preserved Thucydides or the monographs of Sallust. The importance of investigations of lost histories is thus beyond question.

Something can of course be learned from the judgements passed by ancient writers on their literary or strictly historical characteristics. But these judgements may themselves be prejudiced (p. 480). Our own assessment should rather be based on the surviving 'reliquiae', to use Peter's term, subject to the proviso that no valid assessment is possible, unless we know that these represent a fair sample of the lost works. I prefer the term 'reliquiae' to 'fragments', a term which most naturally suggests verbal quotations; in actual fact every collection of 'fragments' abounds in mere allusions, paraphrases, and condensations, which are often very inadequate mirrors of what the lost historians actually wrote. The title of this paper differentiates, rather too sharply, between epitomes and 'fragments'; for the former may include quotations or close paraphrases, and the latter, even when they are more than bare allusions and may look like quotations, may be nothing but resumés or at least be very far from verbal transcriptions. It is indeed obvious from comparison between different versions of the same passage of a lost work that not all so-called fragments are fully reliable. Sometimes these versions are in entire or almost entire accord; they may also be, or appear to be, supplementary to each other, in which case one version or all may be defective, though alternatively one may have intruded extraneous matter from a different source or from faulty recollection or careless copying; and they may be contradictory, so that it may be impossible to decide which version, if any, is correct. The reliability of ancient citations and summaries should in any case be tested by reference to the authors' practice in handling texts that still survive. It will be my contention that scholars have often been too precipitate in characterizing and evaluating lost histories on the basis of evidence that is irremediably insufficient, and that in particular too little account is commonly taken of the relevant

characteristics of the authors who preserve the 'reliquiae', their reliability in quoting or summarizing, and their own interests and purposes.

What follows is necessarily a mere sketch with a few illustrations of some habits of ancient writers in quoting, paraphrasing, or epitomizing earlier works, to which in my judgement too little attention is often given.

The *style* of a lost author can hardly be inferred from an epitome. Diodorus, for instance, is generally held to have been content to follow one source at a time, and Schwartz described his work as 'a series of excerpts', and Books 11–15 as 'a continuous excerpt' from Ephorus;[2] scholars are apt to say that he and his like 'write out' a particular historian. Such language is misleading. Ephorus' account of events from 480 to 359 BC filled some twenty books (Jacoby 70, F 63–92, cf. T 1 and 9 f.); Diodorus must have greatly compressed it in his five books covering the same period, even if the average length of his books was greater (which of course we do not know). It is true (as will appear later) that 'epitomators' might choose to repeat at full length parts of the narrative they followed and to omit other parts, and Pliny accuses many unnamed writers (not historians) of simply transcribing earlier works without acknowledgement (*NH*, *pr.* 22); but in general Classical authors were attached to the principle of unity of style, and Diodorus himself wrote throughout in the same smooth style, which Photius admired[3] and to which no doubt, as well as to the relatively compendious character of his history, the survival of so much of it can be ascribed. This is not to say that the diction of the sources left no traces on later summaries. A recent monograph has shown that the language of Hieronymus almost certainly influenced that of Diodorus in Books 18–20.[4] There are parallels between the accounts of the 50s and 40s given by Appian and Plutarch which show not only that they depended on a common source but that at times they could adopt its vocabulary.[5] This is the less surprising when we find that even so mannered a writer as Tacitus could borrow or improve on the phrases used by the historian of the civil wars of 68 to 69 whom both he and Plutarch used; famous epigrams such as 'cum timeret Otho, timebatur' (*Hist.* 1.81) and 'qui deliberant, desciverunt' (2.77) are reminiscences of the original.[6] However, we can make no reliable inferences in general about the literary quality of a lost historian from the writings of conscious stylists who drew upon his work. Livy, for instance, sometimes translates Polybius, but he not only omits and abbreviates part of what he found, but adds touches of his own for vividness or other effects, even when he is not contaminating Polybius from annalistic material.[7]

Verbal quotations are the only safe evidence for diction, and *fairly long*

[1] This article is based on a paper read to a seminar of Professor A. Momigliano and Dr O. Murray at Oxford in 1978. It does not profess to be in the least exhaustive and draws illustrative material chiefly from my investigations of other questions. I have, therefore, provided few bibliographical references.

[2] *RE* 5.669 f.; 679.

[3] *Bibiotheke*, cod. 70. See the Budé edition by R. Henry.

[4] Jane Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (shortly to appear). Schwartz had discerned the influence of the original writers on Diodorus' style, though not his diction, *RE* 5.669.

[5] Peter, *HRR* 2. LXXXVII; LXXXXIIII for the phrase ὥσπερ ἀθλητὴν ἀνθοβολοῦντες and rare verb διαμασγροπεύεσθαι.

[6] E. G. Hardy, *Studies in Roman History*, First Series 1910, pp. 317 ff. conveniently collected the verbal parallels. Tacitus transposed the second epigram, cf. Plut., *Galba* 4.4.

[7] P. G. Walsh, *Livy*, 1961, Chs. VII f., esp. pp. 186–90; 193 f.; 205–7; 209–12.

extracts are needed to reveal a writer's mode of composition. But the latter are rare in Classical writings, and verbal quotations are not easy to identify. To preserve unity of style, paraphrase was preferred, and professed quotations might be from memory. Thus Pausanias writes that he happened to recall the names of Locrian communities that Thucydides mentioned in his third book (6.19.5), and Plutarch tells of a man who loved to recite the whole of the seventh book, in and out of season (*Mor.* 513B). The abundance of his own citations of authors of every description[8] shows how his memory was stored from past reading, and often of course he is merely paraphrasing from recollection; his use of the word φησί or the like, followed by *oratio recta*, is no guarantee of verbal exactitude, though *oratio obliqua* may, on the other hand, include actual quotations. (He can sometimes indicate that he is giving the *ipsissima verba* by an introductory formula such as γραφεὶ κατὰ λέξιν and mark an omission by inserting the words μετ' ὀλίγα.) It is also often hard to see where quotation ends and turns into paraphrase, summary, comment by the author, or other extraneous material; the lack of devices to enclose quotations or mark omissions was crucial.[9] Both Dionysius and Didymus purport to quote Philochorus' account of Athenian action after Philip seized Elatea (Jacoby 328 F 56), and if Didymus' version were lost, we should have no clue to show us that Dionysius has lapsed into a resumé, which in fact carries the story further than Didymus' extract does; Jacoby prints the whole of Dionysius' version as if it were the *ipsissima verba* from first to last. As for faulty recollection, Plutarch tells that according to Polybius, the Gauls, after capturing Rome, made peace with Camillus because of the danger that barbarians would conquer their homeland (326 F), but Polybius speaks only of an invasion of their land by the Veneti, and does not name Camillus (2.18). In the *de malignitate Herodoti* Plutarch is erroneous in making Herodotus mention the Messenian hero Aristomenes (856F) repudiate the charge that Busiris was addicted to human sacrifice and the murder of foreigners (857A), and assert that the Phocians fought at Plataea (868F) and that it was proposed at Plataea not only that the Athenians should move to the right, but that they should relieve the Spartans of the command (872B).

These last mistakes are the more remarkable, because in this essay Plutarch expressly quotes, or purports to quote, from an ancient historian to a far greater extent than anywhere else in his writings. He must surely have had Herodotus at his elbow. No doubt he thought it necessary for his criticisms to quote extensively as a guarantee of his own good faith; just as he quotes much from Chrysippus to convict that philosopher of absurdity and self-contradiction from his own mouth,[10] so too in some places he uses one story in Herodotus to discredit another (e.g. 860 C). But he can also invoke rival testimony, and it would not always be possible, if Herodotus were lost, to be sure that material, which consciously or not Plutarch has actually imported from another source, does not come from Herodotus; for instance a saying by the Thessalians 'that until

[8] Thus in his *Aristides* he cites thirteen authors, chiefly philosophers; it should be obvious that most of these were not his 'sources', and that he did not turn up papyrus rolls to verify his references.

[9] For many examples see Plut., *de malign. Herodoti*, *passim*. Cf. *Them.* 25.2 f. with Thuc. 1.137; *Mor.* 1107A with Hdt. 7.46.

[10] On his probably similar treatment of Chrysippus see H. Cherniss, Loeb edn. of *Moralia* 13.2, 401–6.

recently we controlled Greece as far as Thespiae, but the Thebans defeated us and drove us back, killing our commander, Lattamyas', which is set between explicit citations from Herodotus with no indication of a different authority (866 F). Even in this treatise professed quotations are often paraphrases or summaries, which are indeed generally accurate. One kind of inaccuracy, which is common, Plutarch would have regarded not so much as venial as well justified. It is his thesis that Herodotus systematically maligned the Greeks by simply inventing discreditable stories about them and pretending that he was only reporting what he had been told. Plutarch does not scruple at times to treat these reports as statements made by Herodotus on his own authority, or when he does make it clear that they are given as reports, to allege without warrant in Herodotus' text that the historian endorsed them.[11] With as little justification, he normally takes utterances in speeches to represent the views of Herodotus, Thucydides, or other historians. What is most disturbing, however, in his essay is the unscrupulous selectiveness of the citations. For instance Plutarch claims that Herodotus has obscured the credit due to Themistocles for the plan to fight at Salamis, by transferring it to Mnesiphilus. To show this, he quotes liberally from the private conversations between Themistocles, Mnesiphilus, and Eurybiades, but has not a word of the arguments Themistocles used in the council of war, nor of his later message to Xerxes.[12] And it need hardly be said that this essay, which would have been the single chief source for our knowledge of Herodotus, if his history were not preserved, would tell us hardly anything of its range and diversity. It may, however, serve as a warning against putting entire confidence in the criticisms that one ancient historian makes of another. Few historians of any age are altogether faultless or could avoid discredit if their works were known mainly from censorious comments backed by a careful choice, or deliberate garbling, of extracts designed to illustrate their failings. Rather too much respect is given to Polybius' denigration of his predecessors, who should certainly not be condemned in the absence of sufficient evidence by which we can control his judgement.[13]

Quite unusual in his habit of quoting, sometimes at great length, is Athenaeus, though he too can paraphrase under the guise of quoting. Apart from fifteen merely lexicographical allusions, he quotes Herodotus in twelve passages more or less verbatim, and provides substantially accurate paraphrases in four others. In only three instances is he less exact; the errors are not very serious. Whereas Herodotus tells us that Psammetichus, for lack of a gold cup such as the Egyptian kings normally used for libations, used his bronze helmet, Athenaeus makes him say that at a sacrifice there were too few *silver* cups, and that Psammetichus was not given one because he was the youngest (an invention of Athenaeus) and

[11] e.g. 856E; 860CD; 863C. In Plutarch's view an author is malicious if he merely repeats a 'calumnious' story (856C) or even tempers praise with blame (856D); a historian must either set down the truth as he sees it, or in uncertainty record only the most credible version (855EF). Similarly Polybius reproaches Theopompus for describing the failings of Philip II and his *betairoi*, when he himself had said that Europe had never before produced so great a man (8. 10–13). Modern detraction of Tacitus follows the same line, and often indulges in misrepresentation of the author as malignant as Plutarch's distortions of Herodotus.

[12] 869 f. Contrast Herodotus 8.56–63; 74–6.

[13] I would go rather further than F. H. Walbank, *JRS* 1962, 1 ff. Cf. remarks in my forthcoming article, *Cicero and Historiography*, in *Miscellanea Manni*, and on Callisthenes my Loeb edn. of Arrian, *Anabasis* 1., Appendix III.

poured his libation from a bronze cup; here Athenaeus does not purport to be quoting, and presumably wrote from memory. Again it is evidently memory that leads him to state that according to Herodotus Cleomenes slashed himself to death when intoxicated; he has put together Herodotus' description of the suicide with a later allusion to Cleomenes' addiction to drink. In the third instance, where there is a lacuna in the text of Athenaeus, Herodotus is at worst telescoped.[14] All of Athenaeus' quotations from Xenophon's historical writings, and the one quotation from an extant part of Polybius, are also accurate.

We may then assume that in general Athenaeus is fairly reliable. On one occasion Polybius, who normally does not purport to do more than give the gist of a passage cited, professes to quote a page of Theopompus verbatim; Athenaeus also reproduces it, and his variations may be accepted.[15] His accuracy is reassuring, since his compilation is perhaps the chief repository of historical 'fragments'. Of those printed by Jacoby he is the source for Duris of 22 out of 96, for Phylarchus of 40 out of 85, for Agatharchides of 16 out of 22, and for Posidonius of 36 out of 123. Since a high proportion of other fragments are bare allusions, or summaries and paraphrases, these figures underrate the contribution made by Athenaeus. Again, one-quarter in bulk of the remains of Theopompus comes from his work, including most of the more substantial fragments. For Posidonius only Strabo is a more abundant source, but naturally enough for his geographical rather than for his historical writing. Moreover, Athenaeus transcribed a passage six pages long in Jacoby's text (Jacoby 87 F 36). This is not only the sole extensive specimen of Posidonius' historical narrative (except in so far as it is rewritten and abridged in extant excerpts of Diodorus), but it is by far the longest extract of any lost history preserved verbatim by a Classical author.

Even when a writer paraphrased or summarized on principle, the diction of the original might be reflected in his language (cf. nn. 4–6). Athenaeus reports Aristobulus as writing that Alexander on his way up against the Persians encamped in Anchiale which Sardanapalus built. So far this is plainly not a verbal quotation, but gives the context of what follows. Athenaeus proceeds: 'And not far distant was the tomb of Sardanapalus on which stood a stone figure with the fingers of the right hand brought close together as if the man were *snapping* them; on it was inscribed in Assyrian letters: "Sardanapalus son of Anacyndaraxes, built Anchiale and Tarsus in a single day. Eat, drink and play, for other things are not worth that", i.e. not a snap of the fingers.' There are parallel versions in Strabo and Arrian, the former also citing Aristobulus as source (Jacoby 139 F 9). Strabo, who does not profess to be quoting exactly, uses the same words, though not in just the same forms, as Athenaeus; and his version of

[14] Compare Athen. 231d; 436; 146ab with Herodotus 2.151; 6.84 (cf. 75), and 7.118–20 respectively.

[15] Jacoby comments on 115 T 225 that 'the fragment is important for the assessment of Athenaeus' accuracy in excerpting, since the concluding part [not in Polybius] shows how Theopompus goes off into protests of moral indignation and finally disregards all measure.' But we should not infer that Athenaeus is reliable because he preserves what we suppose to be a characteristic of Theopompus: it is the general reliability of Athenaeus determined by other criteria (and not by his accord with Polybius, whose own exactitude in transcription is not testable elsewhere) that should make us confident that Theopompus wrote in this manner.

the inscription is identical. Arrian is not so close, and in particular he speaks of the hands joined as if to *clap* and he makes the inscription read 'but *thou, stranger*, eat, drink and play, since other *human* things are not worth that' and explains 'referring darkly to the sound which the hands make in *clapping*'. Although he too must have drawn on Aristobulus, he has both elaborated and misunderstood the text, though I do not doubt that his observation that the word 'play' was a prudish translation also came from Aristobulus and was simply omitted in the parallel versions.

Arrian's own procedure as a historian can surely be inferred from a comparison between his *Tactica*, in most of which he simply follows Aelian, a writer of the previous generation, with some omissions and fewer additions; he substitutes his own words or if he uses those of Aelian he transposes them, no doubt for reasons of rhythm and euphony.[16] It is clear that he believed his reputation would rest on his literary skill. In his *Indica* he follows Megasthenes, with passages inset from Eratosthenes and Nearchus, on the land and peoples of India, but Nearchus alone for the coastal voyage. He says himself that his purpose was to record it in Greek.[17] By his standards Nearchus' stuff was not Greek at all. None the less, Nearchus' manner shines through, not only in the log-book character of much of the narrative, but in scenes more vivid than we find in the *Anabasis*, except perhaps for some incidents where once again Nearchus was probably his source. But Arrian is not 'writing out' Nearchus. There are certainly omissions; Strabo's much briefer record preserves some details in Nearchus' account which Arrian passed over. Moreover, Arrian does not transcribe all the data on the length of voyages and on place-names, which Nearchus must have provided systematically. Indeed 'transcribe' is not the right term: he summarizes and paraphrases, even giving two different versions of the same text.[18] He is also capable of careless error. In his account Nearchus found on the desolate island of Organa the tomb of the former ruler, Erythras, who had given his name to the Red Sea. But Strabo reports on the authority of both Nearchus and Orthagoras that Nearchus was told by a Persian noble, Mithropastes, that there was such a tomb on an island 2,000 stades to the south. It is very unlikely that Strabo was here silently preferring Orthagoras to Nearchus, of whose work he made much use, and he repeats later that Nearchus told the history of Mithropastes, of whom Arrian says nothing.[19] Other details in Nearchus' work are preserved only by Strabo. We cannot of course conclude that Strabo (another valuable source of 'fragments') is in general more accurate than Arrian. It would be particularly hard to determine Strabo's fidelity to his sources, although he often refers to extant works, which at first show might serve to test him; for, he can cite lost works indirectly from Eratosthenes or Posidonius; here of course was another possible origin of error in transmission, which we must often reckon with.[20]

So far as concerns fragments, as distinct from epitomes, we may perhaps venture on these conclusions. Quotations are rare and hard to distinguish from

[16] See the apparatus in Roos's edn. Aelianus: *RE* 1.482. For full discussion of Arrian and his sources see the second volume of my forthcoming Loeb edition of the *Anabasis* and *Indica*.

[17] *Anab.* 6.28.6, cf. 1.12 for his literary pretensions.

[18] *Anab.* 7.20.9 f. = *Ind.* 32.9–12.

[19] *Ind.* 37.3, cf. Strabo 15.3.5–7.

[20] Thus Strabo 15.1.12 and Arrian, *Anab.* 5.5.5 cite various authorities on the size of India in identical order, evidently from Eratosthenes. Cf. *RE* 4A.98 ff. (W. Aly).

paraphrases and summaries. Even the latter may echo the original text closely. But so-called quotations may be verbally incorrect. Whether or not citations preserve some of the original words, they may alter the original sense by omissions, additions, or other distortions, especially when they are made for polemical purposes.

Short extracts can in any case tell us little of the *scope*, *manner*, and *quality* of the historian cited. And even a single long excerpt, like that from Posidonius transcribed by Athenaeus, might in principle be uncharacteristic. We should get a very false impression of Thucydides, if the only substantial part of his work that survived were the stories of Cylon, Pausanias, and Themistocles in 1.126–38. It is true that if his history were lost but Dionysius' essay on it remained, we should have a very tolerable notion both of its scope and of his varied manners from the long extracts Dionysius wrote out, which include his programme (1.22 f.) and illustrate speeches of different kinds, analytic passages (e.g. 3.81–2), and both plain and highly-dramatized narratives (e.g. 2.27; 7.69–72). But Thucydides had by far the highest reputation of all Greek historians from the first century BC onwards, and no other historian received such treatment in any surviving work of Classical times.[21] Comparable excerpts of other works are only to be found in Byzantine compilations, especially those made in the tenth century by order of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

The preface to this collection explains that the bulk and complexity of the corpus of historical works still extant were too much for the readers of the day. It was therefore decided to compile a sort of Reader's Historical Digest, arranged by topics. Of the fifty volumes of this Digest only a few remain in whole or part, under the titles: *Embassies of the Romans to Foreign Peoples*, and *Embassies of Foreign Peoples to the Romans*, *Conspiracies against Kings*, *Virtue and Vice*, and *Gnomai*, under which heading we have not only what the compilers regarded as weighty utterances but sometimes the tales which they adorn, or in the case of Polybius long passages from Books I–V, which set out his views on history, on his own subject, and on the arts of war and statecraft, as well as isolated maxims.[22] There are a few extracts from Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon's *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*, and of course very copious excerpts from Polybius, providing something like half the remains of that author. Arrian's *Anabasis* and Josephus are represented, and excerpts from Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Appian, and Cassius Dio (to say nothing of later writers) overlap with or supplement what remains of their histories. Of Classical historians whose works are otherwise totally lost we have over eighty pages in Jacoby's edition of Nicolaus of Damascus and a few of Dexippus.

A comparison of excerpts with surviving texts shows that in principle they were intended to be verbatim quotations. Sometimes indeed passages were deliberately omitted as not being germane to the particular subject of the book.

[21] The apparatus in Hude's edition also shows how frequently Thucydides was quoted elsewhere.

[22] *Excerpta historiae iussu imperatoris Constantini Porphyrogeniti confecta*, ed. Boissevain, de Boor, and Büttner-Wobst; 1903–6; the apparatus shows how faithful the excerpts are to extant texts, though it is also necessary to refer to the context of the excerpts, to see how far they may be misleading without it. Preface: vol. 1, 1 f. Embassies of foreign peoples include some not sent to Rome (e.g. Polyb. 4.30, 34 and 36). See also J. M. Moore, *The Manuscript Tradition of Polybius*, pp. 129 ff. and generally Krumbacher, *Gesch. der byzant. Lit.*, p. 258.

If it was intended that they should be quoted in another context, the reader could be warned with a not very helpful note of the kind 'Search in the volume on Stratagems'; such notes may appear in the middle as well as at the end of an extract (e.g. vol. 2.2, p. 123). Some omissions occur without being signalized. They may well be the result of sheer carelessness on the part of the scribe. It would be only natural if, knowing that he was at best only required to preserve part of the original, he was less scrupulously exact than a copyist whose duty was to transcribe the whole. Material points may thus be lost. For instance Arrian writes that Callisthenes' speech on *proscynesis* occasioned great resentment in Alexander but pleased the Macedonians (4.12); the latter part of his statement has dropped out of the excerpt (vol. 4, p. 61). By ill luck an omission of this kind could be misleading. An excerpt from Thucydides (3.32) makes the Samians, not the Samians from Anaea, protest to Alcidas about his cruelty to the islanders in 438 (vol. 2.2, p. 38); no doubt false hypotheses on the relationship at the time between Athens and Samos would have been constructed from this testimony if the full text of Thucydides were lost. Occasionally paraphrase replaces the *ipsissima verba*, but this is not common except at the beginning of an excerpt, where on occasion an attempt is made to give the context of what is to follow. The beginnings and endings of excerpts are at times arbitrary and misleading. An excerpt from Thucydides 5.16–17 shows that in 421 peace was opposed by Cleon and Brasidas and favoured by Nicias and Plistoanax, but leaves out an initial line or two, from which alone the reader could know that Cleon and Brasidas were already dead (ibid., p. 39). A long extract from Josephus, (*AJ* 16.335–43), describing how Nicolaus represented Herod's interests at Rome against the Arab, Syllaeus, ends with the words 'but Augustus had decided to give Arabia to Herod', though Josephus goes on immediately to explain that he changed his mind (vol. 1, p. 373). As he draws to a close the excerptor may lose patience. Diodorus tells how Sesostris honoured the other gods for his unexpected deliverance from conspiracy, and Hephaestus most of all (1.57); the excerptor omits Hephaestus, manifestly stopping in the middle of a sentence (vol. 3, p. 191). He more or less writes out Diodorus' account of Psammetichus' rise to power (1.66) until he comes to the last sentence: 'Psammetichus sent for mercenaries from Caria and Ionia and won a victory, in a pitched battle by a city named Momemphis, etc.'; the excerptor omits 'Ionia' and everything after 'victory' (ibid.). At the end as well as the beginning he may resort to summary, with no warning that he is not quoting, and the summary may be incorrect. After transcribing Diodorus' story of Pelias and Medea (4.50), the excerptor ends by saying that 'Jason took the ancestral kingship' (ibid., p. 157), whereas Diodorus wrote that he handed it over to Pelias' son, Acastus.

It is evident that the longer an excerpt is, the better we can discern and perhaps evaluate the character of the historian's writing. Indeed a very short extract could easily be misleading. A single sentence more or less accurately taken from Josephus (*AJ* 15.124) tells us how (in 31 BC, but we should not know the date) the Arabians defeated Herod, killed envoys sent to treat for peace, and marched on his camp (vol. 1, p. 78). We are not informed that Herod then gained a great victory. Fortunately many of the excerpts are long, and at least in the books concerned with *Embassies* and *Conspiracies* relate to the political and military transactions which were normally the chief preoccupation of ancient historians, and not to those incidental matters with which a disproportionately large number of 'fragments' are concerned. To say nothing of

the Polybian excerpts, the substantial extracts from Nicolaus of Damascus (one passage from his *Life of Caesar* runs to 24 pages in Jacoby's text), mean, as we can depend on their accuracy, that no other lost historian of the Classical period is so well represented in remains.

The Constantinian excerpts are not the only specimens of their kind from Byzantine times. Two sets of excerpts on siege-warfare preserve *inter alia* long passages from Arrian's *Anabasis*; one of them is very accurate.[23] Photius too made extracts from ancient authors, including Diodorus, Josephus, Plutarch's Lives, and Philostratus' *Apollonius*; they are sometimes paraphrases but even then mostly correct in substance, and we can therefore rely on his reports of parts of Diodorus' work which do not survive elsewhere; unfortunately, they are mostly snippets.[24] In general Byzantine excerpts are incomparably the most valuable testimony we possess for histories wholly or partly lost.

But even excerpts, unless they are very numerous, substantial, and representative, cannot reveal the *scope* of an author's work. For instance the Constantinian excerpts from Arrian's *Anabasis* come chiefly from the volumes on *Virtue and Vice* and on *Gnomai* and overweight its moralizing and sententious elements. 'Fragments' of other kinds may convey serious distortions. Misleading as Plutarch's quotations from Herodotus are in regard to political and military history, they would also give us no conception of the range of his work, while from Athenaeus we should hardly be aware that he treated great events at all. No doubt Herodotus is cited so often in such varied contexts that even if his work had not survived we should know a great deal about it. But that is not the case with many lost historians. I have already pointed out how much our knowledge of some of them depends on Athenaeus. But his work is only a storehouse of amusing anecdotes and descriptions. The long historical narrative he transcribes from Posidonius is quite exceptional. Moreover, many of our other sources are equally interested not so much in historical material as in myths,[25] *bons mots*, sidelights on personalities, and the like. Plutarch is an abundant source, but it is for such matters that he generally cites his authorities, rather than for the main historical events recounted in his Lives. Earlier writers may also be cited, merely to confute their errors or at least to disavow responsibility for the stories they told. It may therefore be very rash for modern scholars to characterize the authors of what prima facie were substantial historical works as frivolous or anecdotal: these epithets may more properly belong to the writers who cited them. I will give one instance: Duris is surely another.[26]

Of nineteen fragments of the Alexander-historian, Chares, eleven come from Athenaeus, showing *inter alia* that he wrote at least ten books; we owe one apiece to the elder Pliny and to Gellius, and the rest to Plutarch's *Alexander*, one of his most anecdotal biographies. Such evidence seems to me inadequate

[23] See the Prolegomena, p. XL in the edition of Arrian's *Anabasis* by Roos and Wirth and the apparatus.

[24] Photius, *Cod.* 238, 241, 244, 245. Henry's apparatus notes divergencies from our texts. Cf. also the Loeb edn. of Diodorus vol. xi, ed. F. R. Walton, pp. 320–2; 336; 370–2; 444–6; vol. xii, 56–70; 148–52.

[25] Numerous 'fragments' come from *scholia* on poets.

[26] Cf. my article cited in n. 14. Whatever his predilection for marvels (Jacoby 76 T 7 f.) and desire to please his readers with vivid effects (F 1), he was for Cicero 'in historia diligens', and his Hellenic history, at least 23 books long (F 15; the book number is congruent with 13 f.), cannot have been filled simply or chiefly with the trivia of most of the 'fragments'.

for determining the character and range of Chares' work; Pearson is imprudent in classifying it under 'Reminiscence, Gossip and Propaganda'.[27] He supports his judgement by noting that its title was *historiai peri Alexandron*, which he translates 'Stories of Alexander'; in his view 'such a title does not suggest continuous narrative or a claim to exhaustive treatment, and it does not even follow that the stories will be narrated in chronological order' (p. 51). Yet Pearson himself acknowledges in a footnote that Clitarchus gave just the same title to a work which for all its demerits can be seen from Diodorus' epitome (though not from the 'fragments') to have provided a continuous narrative of Alexander's campaigns.

Again many 'fragments' consist of topographic or ethnographic notices, which were probably no more than incidental in the work cited (like Thuc. 1.24, 1–2). Strabo has much more extensive paraphrases and summaries of this kind of material in historical writers. From his numerous citations of Aristobulus we could hardly have guessed what Arrian's *Anabasis* proves,[28] that he too furnished a continuous narrative of Alexander's campaigns. Indeed the chief value of 'fragments' is often that they enable us to perceive that the history from which they are taken is the source, or one of the sources, of a history still extant. Thus we should hardly know anything of the character of Clitarchus' history unless it could thus be identified as the common source of Diodorus and Curtius.[29] Similarly, a quotation from Posidonius in Athenaeus (Jacoby 87 F 7) proves that Diodorus drew on him for his account of the first slave revolt in Sicily (F 108), and it is a reasonable hypothesis that it was his work that Diodorus abbreviated from the point where Polybius failed him, and where Posidonius is known to have begun (T 1); unfortunately, as we have only excerpts from the relevant books of Diodorus, we cannot be certain where Posidonius' history ended.[30] But where no such epitome exists, we cannot judge the scope and quality of a history which is cited only by writers who had little or no concern with war and politics, the staple subject-matter of ancient historians. Very many 'fragments' must be as unrepresentative of the works from which they are culled as, for instance, Polybius 2.17, 6.53 and 55 and 31.26–30 are untypical of the general character of his 'pragmatic' history.

It is something if we are told the chronological limits of a history, or its title. But a title may be misleading, for instance the *Philippica* of Theopompus, to say nothing of Trogus' like-named work. No one could have guessed that Theopompus composed long digressions on marvels, on Athenian demagogues back to the fifth century, on Etruscan customs, and much else unrelated to the achievements of Philip II. It is the accident that Photius summarized his twelfth book, because others supposed it to have perished, that shows that it was entirely devoted to matters anterior to Philip's accession, especially the affairs of Cyprus and Egypt down to 373 (Jacoby 115 F 103). We also know of course from other testimony that similar digressions were just as long.[31] Information that a

[27] *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, pp. 50 ff.

[28] I hope that any doubts will be removed by my edition of Arrian (n. 16).

[29] Jacoby, *RE* 11, 630 f. See most recently J. R. Hamilton in *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. K. H. Kinzl (1977), pp. 126 ff.

[30] Schwartz, *RE* 5.690 f. For Posidonius' history see esp. H. Strasburger, *JRS* 1965, 40 ff.

[31] The fragments hardly illustrate, however, what I see no reason to doubt, Theopompus' attempt to unveil the secrets of political actions (Dion. Hal. *ad Pomp.* 6.7), i.e. they are not at all representative.

history began and ended in certain years may conceal the fact that the historian allowed himself, like Thucydides, certain *Rückblicke*, or, like Polybius as well as Herodotus and Theopompus, large digressions; it also does not reveal the *scale* of the main narrative. For this purpose we need to know the number of books and something of the distribution of material between them. But since numbers are particularly liable to textual corruption, and since in any individual case the author himself may have carelessly cited the wrong book, we need a fair number of such book references to provide reciprocal confirmation (e.g. nn. 26 and 47). Boissevain sought to determine the chronological limits of the first 35 books of Cassius Dio on the basis of book references in the περὶ συντάξεως of Bekker's *Anecdota*, but he then admitted that in citations from the extant books such references were correct in 36 cases but wrong in 21.[32] Implicit faith in all book references is thus unwarranted.

It might seem that epitomes could be the most reliable evidence for the scope and scale of lost histories. But this need not be so. To take an extreme instance, Photius tells us in a few lines that Herodotus' history was in nine books, beginning with the origin, education, and accession of Cyrus, covering the reigns of Cambyses, the false Smerdis, and Darius, and ending with the expedition in which the Athenians put Xerxes to flight. Even if this summary were more accurate, so brief an account would have little value. Photius' epitome of Arrian's *Anabasis* is not much better, though taking it in conjunction with excerpts we should have a fair idea of the character of the history, and even know about his use of Ptolemy, Aristobulus, Nearchus, Eratosthenes, and their subjects. It occupies about a hundred lines of the Teubner text, of which nineteen suffice for the first three books; there is not even a mention of the siege of Tyre. By contrast Photius can list almost all the brides and bridegrooms at the Susa weddings. He distorts the whole economy of the work, but gives some clue to it by mentioning that there were seven books in all and roughly distinguishing the contents of the last three. Similarly in his account of Arrian's *Events after Alexander* he summarizes separately the first five and the last five books, so that we can at once see that the summaries in 1½ and 3½ pages respectively of Jacoby's edition do not preserve the original proportions. Once again full lists of the satraps appointed in 323 and 321 take up an astonishing part of the space allotted, and some incidents are related in detail that is quite disproportionate and that certainly or probably almost reproduces bits of the original text.[33] We may recall that Justin promised in the preface to his epitome of Trogus to excerpt whatever was most worth knowing and to omit what could give no pleasure or furnish no useful example; as by his account Trogus had done much the same, what Justin gives us is the epitome of an epitome. Epitomators in general seem to have aimed not at producing faithful resumés but at recording, sometimes at length, what they thought of most interest, and their principles of selection are at times impenetrable. They do not necessarily offer a faithful miniature of the original as a whole.

It is therefore of the greatest value if they at least preserve some account of

[32] Edition of Cassius Dio I, pp. LIV ff.

[33] *Cod.* 60; 90 f. Photius' summary of Josephus, *BJ*, in *Cod.* 47 is just as defective. Note that his summary of Memnon (Jacoby 434) has some two pages in Jacoby's text for Books 9–10, three for 11–12, seven for 14, ten for 15, and eight for 16. In my judgement its reliability will be roughly proportionate to length.

the distribution of material by books. This is the chief service rendered by the wretched *Periochae* of Livy. The author was clearly quite arbitrary in the space he allotted to different parts of Livy's history as well as inaccurate in summarizing what Livy wrote. There is no apparent cause why he should take up three times more space on the origins and first campaign of the Third Punic War than on those of the Second. The length of his *Periochae* varies from 96 lines for Book 49 to two apiece for 135 and 138; none are preserved for 136 and 137. Of course the length of a Livian book varied greatly, from 76 pages in the Teubner text (without apparatus) for Book 3, to 36 for Book 29; but it is not such disparity that is reflected in the *Periochae*, where we have 35 lines for 3 and 51 for 29. The principles (if any) of the abbreviator elude me. In Book 2 he gives an adequate summary of the first 13 chapters, but can find no more space for the next 44, although he can actually write Livy out on the burial alive of a Vestal virgin. No doubt this seemed a piquant incident, but the epitomator has no unerring eye for the bizarre and sensational, and can soberly record a treaty with Carthage which Livy himself notes in one laconic sentence (7.27). It hardly needs saying that we cannot count on him to record all such important matters, even when Livy dilates on them. Despite his manifest errors, some scholars can still cite his statements as if they had Livy's own authority. One mistake is particularly revealing of his carelessness. The *Perioche* of Book 103 puts Pompey's triumph of 61 BC in 58, mentioning the presence of the young Tigranes. No doubt in his account of that prince's escape from custody in 58 Livy had had occasion to refer back to the triumph.[34] None the less, in general the *Periochae* do attest the economy of Livy's work, and the order and division of material between books, though not within them.[35]

That is not true of an epitome, much fuller for the most part than the *Periochae*, that made of Cassius Dio by John Xiphilinus, jurist, monk, and ultimately Patriarch in the eleventh century, which I now propose to examine rather more closely, since not only can much of it be compared with the original, but the rest is one of our chief authorities, where the original is lost, and is therefore, *faute de mieux*, of real value to us.

Xiphilinus entitles his work 'Epitomes of Dio of Nicaea's Roman history made by John Xiphilinus, embracing the reigns of 25 Caesars from Pompeius Magnus to Alexander, son of Mamaea'.[36] Julius is first of the Caesars; his reign begins on Pompey's murder, and that of 'Octavius Caesar Augustus' on that of Julius, though he makes a new start under the heading 'monarchy of Augustus Caesar' after Actium, perhaps inspired by Dio's counting of Augustus' regnal years from that victory (56.30.5), which he quotes, and though he records the grant of the *nomen Augusti* in its due place. By slurring over the debate between Agrippa and Maecenas in Book 52, and omitting Dio's statements that in January 27 Augustus sought to have his monarchy confirmed by consent (53.2, 6), that the senators clamoured that he should rule monarchically, as he really desired (53.11), and that the monarchy truly began at this time (53.17), he has

[34] The errors are perhaps more explicable if the author never read Livy, but a somewhat fuller epitome, like that represented by the Oxyrhynchus fragments.

[35] So too Justin's summary of Trogus preserves the book division, but can vary in fullness from 675 lines in Seel's edition for Book 5 to 31 for Book 40.

[36] I cite the text, reprinted in Boissevain's edition of Dio, 3.480 ff., in the pagination of Dindorf (D.) or Robertus Stephanus (R.St.), given in the margin by Boissevain together with references to the relevant passages of Dio.

half-concealed Dio's own conception of the major significance of the settlement. On the other hand, by following his own account of it with the promise to 'tell in detail all that we need to remember to this very day, given that our own life and political system to a very large extent depend on those times' (87.2 D), as by justifying his omission of much in his original on Catiline's conspiracy, because it contained no novelty for the reader and nothing of use (10.15 D), he shows that his main interest was in imperial history; his narrative of the years 67 to 27 is a mere preliminary. Hence his summary of Books 36–52 averages in Boissevain's text just over 2½ pages per book, as against 8 for the rest; the shortest is that of Book 52, as he dismisses the debate between Agrippa and Maecenas in five lines, and the longest (11 pages) that of Book 68 (Nerva and Trajan). Thus he gives to the years AD 98 to 117 half the space accorded to the roughly equal period from 49 to 31 BC, to which Dio devoted not one book but ten. But the beginning in 67 BC is so abrupt that I think we must assume that it was forced on Xiphilinus, that he had no copies of the first 35 books, just as he lacked Books 70 and 71 (256 R.St.).

Even for the Principate, Xiphilinus' account is only a quarter of Dio's length, and for the Republic sometimes not more than a twentieth. None the less in all sections alike a great part consists of verbal quotation. Indeed the first person generally designates Dio and not Xiphilinus, so that on one of the few occasions on which the epitomator intrudes himself he feels it necessary to say 'I am no longer writing as Dio of Prusa (*sic*) who lived under the emperors Severus and Alexander, but as John Xiphilinus, nephew of John the patriarch, who made this summary of Dio's numerous books under the emperor Michael Ducas.' (87.6 D). The future Patriarch even transcribes without comment Dio's description of the Jewish Sabbath as 'the day of Cronus' (7.20 and 26 D), and his remark on the Jewish God: 'who he is and why he is so honoured, and how the Jews have come to feel such dread of him: these are matters of which there are many accounts, but they are irrelevant to this history' (8.14). On the other hand he could censure Dio for not accepting the Christian version of the Rain Miracle (260 ff. R.St.), and interpolate material from Eusebius in the gap left by the loss of Dio's 70th book (257 R.St.); more remarkably, he could contrast Dio's love of omens unfavourably with Polybius' indifference to them (51.6 ff., cf. 72.28 D), expressly prefer Plutarch's judgement on Brutus and Cassius to Dio's (31.5 ff.), and silently interpolate in Dio's narrative the observation that Augustus' nephew, Marcellus, was descended from the hero of the Hannibalic war (90.5 D), which he also doubtless got from Plutarch's *Marcellus* 30. Scattered throughout the epitome there are other statements of his views (mostly marked by Boissevain in the margin), which are indeed generally drawn from his reading of Dio.

Xiphilinus contrives to quote so much because at the same time he makes massive omissions. The only speeches he has are the debate between Augustus and Livia on the pardoning of Cinna, which makes his summary of Book 55 second only in length to that of Book 68, and harangues of Boudicca and Marcus Aurelius, which presumably he also transcribed verbatim. Down to 49 he takes little interest in politics, and less in wars in the west; what survives of Books 36–40 is largely concerned with the eastern campaigns of Pompey and Crassus,[37]

[37] Even here his excerpts or summaries do not do justice to Dio; cf. for instance 5.1–20 D. with Dio 36.44–9.

which were fought in lands more familiar to a Byzantine. I will give two specimens of his method of summarizing Republican history. The conspiracy of Catiline, which occupies Dio for thirteen chapters, is mentioned as 'designed for the destruction of the polity in the consulship of Cicero, who exposed it and punished the persons condemned, though a senator named A. Fulvius was put to death by his own father'; the one piquant detail is a verbal quotation (10.20 D). He records no incident at Rome between 55 and 49, and proceeds after his account of Carrhae as follows:

> thereafter the Romans were afflicted with the greatest civil wars because of the conflict between Pompey and Caesar. Many pretexts for the war are reported, but the truest cause was the desire for preeminence and dominion. Although Pompey had at first aggrandized Caesar, he began to be jealous of his good fortune and glory, and at first tried covertly to cut him down to size, but then went to war with him openly. Caesar, who would not tolerate inferiority and aimed at being the greatest of all, gave up Gaul (I may mention that its conquest has never been recorded by Xiphilinus), and marched on Rome with the object of taking Pompey still unprepared (15–16 D).

Sometimes he gives us isolated incidents in a story without its beginning or end: thus we learn that Ptolemy Auletes was expelled, but not why, nor that he was ever restored (12.4 D).

Although Xiphilinus provides more material for the Principate, his mixture of quotations, abbreviations, and omissions remains much the same. In general he keeps Dio's order of events but seldom gives consular years. However, after ignoring the plot of Murena in its proper place (91 D), he inserts his name among the conspirators to whose execution in 18 BC Dio refers vaguely (54.15.4); from Xiphilinus alone we should have to date his plot after the peace with Parthia (93.11 D). There are other careless errors, though not many. For instance Terentius Varro, whose Salassian campaign is ignored, is given a command in Spain (88.2 D); Julia becomes Augustus' sister (92.2; 95.16 D); and we are told that Augustus made C. and L. Caesar *autocratores* and his future successors before they reached manhood (95.17 D). When actually quoting, Xiphilinus can leave out part of the text, especially that which provides an explanation; thus he transcribes Dio's statement that Tiberius sent for king Archelaus nominally to answer a charge of treason but in fact because he was angry with him, but excises the reasons given by Dio for his anger (134.1 D). His cardinal sin is arbitrary omission on a much larger scale. He furnishes rather full excerpts from Dio's account in Book 53 of the settlement of 27 BC and of the institutions of the Principate, but passes over the changes in 23 and 19 BC, the *cura morum*, and the election as Pontifex Maximus. He mentions how *magistri vicorum* were charged with fire prevention in 7 BC (100.3 D), but not the establishment of the *vigiles* in AD 6 (55.26), though Dio stresses that this was permanent, and though Xiphilinus finds room to record some temporary administrative measures taken in the same year to alleviate famine (114.10 D). In general he does not share Dio's interest in administrative changes, which may explain why we hear of none under Hadrian. He writes out Dio's list of the Augustan legions still in service in Dio's day, but not the appended list of those raised later (113 D). Though his account of Augustus' attempts to provide for the succession is deficient and misleading, he transcribes almost verbatim Dio's description (56.28–46) of Augustus' last days and funeral, but omitting Tiberius' speech and part of Dio's own assessment of Augustus (117–24 D). Almost nothing of Dio's narrative of the rise and fall of Sejanus is lacking, presumably because it

made a good story. But military operations are scantily treated. However, though he disposes in a few lines of nearly all activity in the east under Augustus, not even mentioning Armenia (92.12 D), the Indian embassy does not escape notice, as it brought the first tigers to Rome (92.25 D), and not a word is lost of the campaign against Queen Candace (91.11 D); no doubt our monk found it piquant that a woman should be in command. Presumably for the same reason Boudicca's revolt, speech and all, is so fully reported, surely straight from Dio, whereas of Claudius' invasion of Britain we have little more than the incident of Narcissus addressing the troops (178 D). Indeed, Xiphilinus can virtually never resist a striking anecdote like this, or a *bon mot*. The Illyrian revolt of AD 6 is a mere backcloth for Bato's remark: 'you send as guardians of your flocks not dogs or shepherds but wolves' (115.15 D), and Agrippa's importance comes out chiefly in Maecenas' advice: 'you have made him so great that you must connect him to you by marriage or kill him' (92.3 D). Despite Xiphilinus' professed contempt for omens, he includes a good few, and marvels, unusual phenomena, apophthegms, entertaining tales like that of Vedius Pollio (95.11 D) fill half the four pages he allots to Book 54, while major military and political transactions in Dio's record are just ignored.[38]

Thus Xiphilinus fails to preserve the proportions of Dio's narrative or to make clear his interpretation of events, and though to an unexpectedly large extent his epitome is a series of excerpts, it simply omits much that Dio must have thought, and rightly, was of importance. At its best it is largely a string of isolated episodes. But this characteristic was also a necessary feature of the Byzantine collections discussed earlier. And of course there are Classical antecedents; one may think of Valerius Maximus, who planned to collect 'urbis Romae exterarumque gentium facta simul ac dicta memoratu digna, quae apud alios latius diffusa sunt quam ut brevius cognosci possint . . . ut documenta sumere volentibus longae inquisitionis labor absit' (*praef.*), of the *Stratagems* of Frontinus[39] and Polyaenus, or of the collections of apophthegms attributed to Plutarch; the author claims that they would be useful to a ruler like Trajan, too busy to get through the *Parallel Lives*.[40] Anecdotes and *bons mots*, which perhaps had a proper place in biography for the light they might cast on a man's personality, obtrude in the briefest history, like that of Florus, where they are tricked out with turgid rhetoric. So too Velleius' short account of the late Republic is little more than a series of comments on leading personalities, with a long excursus on Caesar's early life,[42] he also has a penchant for precise details

[38] It may then be due to Xiphilinus, not Dio, that the destruction of Thrasea Paetus and Barea Soranus in 66, and of an unnamed person, evidently Salvidienus Orfitus (171, 23 R.St. cf. Suet. *Nero* 37), whose death lies beyond the period covered in the extant part of Tacitus, and probably in 67, is sandwiched into the account of Piso's conspiracy in 65 (170, 4 ff. R.St. = Dio 62.24–7).

[39] He explains that his work will be useful for busy men: 'longum est enim singula et sparsa per immensum corpus historiarum persequi; et hi, qui notabilia excerpserunt, ipso velut acervo rerum confuderunt legentem'; he does not seek to be exhaustive: 'quis enim ad percensenda omnia monumenta, quae utraque lingua tradita sunt, sufficiat?' (*praef.*); his collection was clearly not the first of its kind and may be largely derivative from an earlier compilation.

[40] But see Loeb edn. of Plut. vol. xv (ed. F. H. Sandbach), pp. 324 ff. 172 D. F. C. Babbitt (Loeb edn., vol. iii.3 ff.) regards the work as authentic.

[42] Random instances: 1.28.9–16; 38.18–21; 46.10 f.

of violent deaths.[43] In Dio's own history, which is a serious attempt at interpretation, anecdotes are numerous, but they normally serve to illustrate matters which he thinks significant, like the power of Agrippa or Narcissus, and on which he can furnish more solid information. In his epitomator they are faithfully transcribed for mere entertainment. Thus Dio too appears as an anecdotal historian, though in his case the impression can be corrected from the surviving books.

The unevenness of late epitomes, like that of Xiphilinus, is not, I suggest, unexampled in earlier works. For example there is nothing to prevent us from assuming that in the first book on his *Civil Wars* Appian followed throughout an excellent historian whose qualities can be perceived in what may be a relatively full extract recounting the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus; elsewhere Appian has summarized ruthlessly and probably inaccurately, and simply omitted blocks of material, but in the manner of epitomators has extended himself at disproportionate length in more striking and vivid episodes, such as the deaths of Gaius Gracchus (1.26), Asellio (1.54), and some of Marius' victims (1.72–5), or Marius' escape at Minturnae (1.61 f.). It is our misfortune that for the history of Rome between 133 and 70 we depend so heavily on epitomes of this kind that scholars have sometimes supposed that the numerous contradictions in the evidence are due to real diversities in 'the tradition'. In fact the economy of Livy's history, which was never more detailed than for the 80s and devoted nearly a book to every three years for the period from 133 to 100,[45] and the knowledgeable allusions of Cicero to this period, should make it clear that it was once well recorded and that our uncertainties derive only from the meagreness and inaccuracy of the surviving accounts. We should be in not less continual doubt, and often fall into error, if we had to rely on Appian and his like for the 60s and 50s. Look for instance at Appian, *BC* 2.8–37 on events from 59 to 49. He tells us *inter alia* that Bibulus was elected consul by the senate, that for most of 59 the senate was not convened at all, as the consent of both consuls was required for it to meet, that Vatinius and Milo were Clodius' colleagues as tribune, and that Milo was hoping in 57 to be consul, that Pompey took Africa as well as Spain as province in 55 and that he postponed the *comitia* in 53; he fails to distinguish Caesar's two agrarian laws and jumbles the order of events in 59; he seems to date Clodius' *incestum* late in that year and supposes that Clodius had previously helped to secure Gaul for Caesar; he makes Pompey send Cato off to Cyprus in 52, and he puts Gabinius' condemnation in that year. Some at least of the chronological errors can be explained if we assume that Appian was rearranging material in his source, to deal with one subject at a time, for the purpose of brevity, or that he failed to notice that his source was describing an earlier event in a *Rückblick*, and in other cases we can guess that a perfectly correct statement lay behind his blunder; e.g. he probably read that Bibulus was the consul in 59 whose election was favoured by the senate. When he writes that 'Cicero had been exiled by Pompey's agency', he is evidently summarizing in a

[43] e.g. 2.29 (Pompey, cf. 30.3; 33.3; 53); 35 (Cato, cf. 45.4 f., 49.3); 41–3 (Caesar); 45.1 (Clodius); 46.2 (Crassus); 66 (Cicero); 68.1 (Caelius); 72 (Brutus and Cassius); 73 (Sextus Pompey).

[44] e.g. 2.4.5; 7.2; 14.1; 22; 30.1; 53.2; 64.1; 70.2–5.

[45] Like modern historians of the ancient world Livy evidently wrote at more length where he had more material. Of the years 99–92, covered in one book, there was little to say.

misleading way an account showing precisely how Pompey had connived in the banishment. And some more detailed parts of the narrative, especially on the preliminaries to the civil war, indicate that his authority was well informed and cannot be held responsible for most or all of his faults. Indeed, the fuller the narrative that an epitomator supplies, the more likely it is to represent its source correctly.

Similar failings can be detected in Diodorus. In 12.61–3 he recounts the fighting at Pylos and Sphacteria with reminiscences of Thucydides, presumably mediated through Ephorus. But he makes the Athenians starve the Spartans out on the island. It seems to me unlikely that Ephorus rejected Thucydides' detailed testimony; here we have a blunder by the tiring epitomator (Ephorus' own work was lengthy) analogous to that made by the Byzantine excerptor of Diodorus' own story of Jason (p. 484).[46] We must then be wary of taking it for granted that Diodorus fairly reproduces other lost historians he summarized. The exceptionally poor quality of his account of Alexander in Book 17 must indeed reflect on Clitarchus, especially when it is contrasted with the narrative of the next three books, where Hieronymus is his chief source (n. 4). It is fair to conclude that Clitarchus had a much stronger liking than Hieronymus for anecdotes, yet this is surely exaggerated by Diodorus; in Book 18 too he cannot resist inserting an account of the single combat between Eumenes and Neoptolemus (ch. 31) which Hieronymus can hardly have given in more detail. So too in Book 17 Clitarchus could scarcely have had much more to tell than Diodorus of Alexander's attack on the Marmares (28), and of his kindness to Darius' women after Issus (35–8) and to expatriated and mutilated Greeks (69), to take a few examples. But Clitarchus' work ran to more than twelve books,[47] which Diodorus compressed into one. If he paraphrased Clitarchus in a few places, he had to abbreviate inordinately elsewhere, and simply leave out masses of material. And there is surely proof that this is what he did. The incompleteness of Alexander's battle-order at Gaugamela (57) reminds me of the capricious incompleteness of Xiphilinus' list of legions. Clitarchus cannot have failed to describe the crossing of the Hydaspes before the battle with Porus; no doubt his account influenced that of Curtius; in Diodorus it is expunged. I dare say that Clitarchus was, like Dio, a poor military historian, but probably his reports of military operations were rendered still more unintelligible by arbitrary omissions on the part of Diodorus, similar to those we find in Xiphilinus (n. 37). Curtius preserves much excellent prosopographical and geographical data, which he probably drew from Clitarchus; very little survives in Diodorus' much briefer record. Of course Curtius was a conscious stylist, who also embroidered on his source or sources. But that is not the fault common among writers whose aim was to furnish relatively compendious narratives. Ability to pick out the essential elements in a story or a description and to condense it accurately was as rare among them as among the less talented students we may teach today. They were therefore at their best when they chose to excerpt or paraphrase their authorities. Unfortunately their choice was too often determined not by the importance of the matters they enlarged on but by their value for entertainment.

[46] Schwartz *RE* 7.15 noted some similar cases.

[47] Jacoby 137 F 6; Book 12 related to the Indian campaigns. Other book-references, notably in F 4 and 5, give reciprocal confirmation for the scale of the work.

To conclude, in my judgement the most learned and acute scholars have often been over-confident in delineating the scope of lost histories and the qualities of their authors. The judgements passed on them in antiquity cannot be implicitly trusted. 'Fragments' and even epitomes reflect the interests of the authors who cite or summarize lost works as much as or more than the characteristics of the works concerned. Our best evidence for the scope and content of such a work does indeed consist in summaries, especially if they are relatively full and give indications of the distribution of the material in books. Only long excerpts reveal something of an author's quality, and then we need to be assured that they are representative. The most detailed narratives of secondary writers, whose credibility is no more than that of the authority or authorities they followed, also deserve the most respect, at least if we have some means of control from contemporary evidence;[48] they are likely to be the most accurate reproductions of lost works, whereas brief notices in other works which seemingly contradict them may themselves be inexact or misleading reports by a careless epitomator.[49]

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[48] Thus Appian's very detailed account of events from Caesar's death in *BC*, Books 3–5, though not free of mistakes, is confirmed over and over again by Cicero's letters and speeches.

[49] For instance the details Appian gives of Drusus' judiciary bill (*BC* 1.35) should not be taken as invention but as confirmation that his account is correct (cf. *de vir. ill.* 66); the truth is incompletely given in the brief allusions of Vell. 2.13 and is garbled in *Per.* Livy 71 (compare the similar errors in *Per.* 60 and 97; in each case the epitomator misrepresented the complexity of the measure he purported to describe). Of course Appian's own account of Drusus is excessively brief, and therefore obscure and not entirely reliable.