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REVIEW

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In historical writings since at least the days when Herodotus of Halicarnassus (see [13]) sought to account for the Greek victory over the Persians at Salamis and Thermopylæ and determine what were the causes and significance of that war, political history has been the primary subject; and the chief focus has largely, if not exclusively, been laid upon the "great" man or "hero" and the "great" deed, especially the handful of kings, emperors, generals, and statesmen, who "made" history. We may hold emblematic of this approach to history the stele erected to describe Egyptian pharaoh Ramses II's virtually single-handed defeat of the Hittite army at Kadesh, Syria, in 1296 B.C., after Ramses's army abandoned him in the field—despite the fact that history, and the peace treaty which the Hittite king offered soon after the engagement, records the battle as a "draw", if not as an outright Egyptian defeat.

Biography as such developed in the Alexandrine or Hellenistic period, an outgrowth at once of both the hero-worship that attached to Alexander the Great and of the encouragement of philosophical reflection and self-analysis that developed with Socrates and Plato, the teacher of Alexander the Great's tutor Aristotle. Indeed, it was Aristotle's nephew and student Callisthenes of Olynthus (d. 327 B.C.) who inaugurated the field of biography, traveling across Africa and Asia with Alexander as Alexander's official historian (see [12], esp. pp. 374-379, p. 550, n. 36).

In intellectual history, this trend was confirmed by writers such as Plutarch, who, in such treatises as the *Lives of the Seven Wise Men*, of classical Greece (see [31]), took as its primary focus the "great" men and "great" ideas of ancient history, and found further expression in