

Purposive participles in Herodotos' *Histories*

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Participles used to express purpose in Herodotos' *Histories* show a very strong association with contexts of full-body motion, and participles may only be used to express purpose where that purpose has a connection with place. On the basis of these limitations, we infer that the expression of purpose by participles has no independent status and is not firmly lexicalised.

A qualitative methodology is used to arrive at an assessment of the distribution of future participles with and without ὥς. All examples of these constructions were collected from the corpus consisting of Herodotos' *Histories*, using manual data collection cross-referenced with digital corpora.

From this exploration of the data, it appears that there is a very strong association between the expression of purpose by means of a participle and purposes achieved by moving to a specific location. By this finding, the claims made by grammars and handbooks that future participles expressing purpose often occur with verbs of motion are confirmed, but also strengthened: there appears to be a synchronic constraint on future participles expressing purpose only appearing with matrix verbs of motion. Moreover, the purposes expressed participially always have a non-arbitrary connection with the location at which they are performed, which is the destination of the movement.

However, the data drawn from Herodotos shows that the bare future participle, but not in combination with ὥς, shows a limited, idiosyncratic expansion from contexts of motion, into contexts where the location with which purpose is connected is not a literal destination. Instead, this destination relies on the metaphor, A NARRATIVE IS A SPACE. This is demonstrated in [1], an example normally interpreted as a periphrastic future:

[1] ἔρχομαι σημανέων τὸ πρὸς θάλασσαν αὐτῆς τῆς Σκυθικῆς χώρας ἐς μέτρησιν
“I am going to talk about the measurement of the coast of Skythia” (4.99.2)

On the other hand, ὥς with the future participle can appear verbs which do not express motion at all. However, like the bare participle, ὥς with the future participle cannot appear unless there is a strong connection between purpose and place. ὥς with the future participle, as other scholarship has indicated, has some extra nuance concerning the credibility of the purpose. Welser suggests that some of the time these constructions indicates unfulfilled purpose; in fact his claim stands for all uses of ὥς with the future participle in Herodotos exhaustively. Fulfilment or not of purpose is therefore a relevant semantic feature for expressions of purpose in Greek.

We conclude that synchronically ὥς with the future participle is not simply the bare participle with a prefixation of ὥς. These findings on participial expressions of purpose speak to questions of free variation and semantic distribution, alternatives in natural language, and degrees of lexicalisation.

References

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- Welser, C. S., “Use of ὥς with the future participle in Herodotus as an indicator of unfulfilled expectations”, *Mnemosyne* 63 (2010).