

Characteristics of Ancient Biographies

- no pretense of detached objectivity
- no concern for establishing facts (e.g., by citing evidence or sources)
- little attention to historical data (names, dates, places)
- little attention to chronology of events or development of the subject's thought
- no psychological interest in the subject's inner motivations
- anecdotal style of narration
- emphasis on the subject's character and defining traits
- consistent focus on the subject's philosophy of life
- strong interest in the subject's death, as consistent with philosophy of life
- presentation of the subject as a model worthy of emulation
- depiction of the subject as superior to competitors or rivals
- overall concern with the subject's legacy, evident in followers who carry on the tradition