

# Thucydides in the School Rhetoric of the Imperial Period

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**T**HUCYDIDES' *History* was one of the most important tools of reference in the educational process during the Imperial period.<sup>1</sup> During this age, the knowledge of the Attic author's work cannot be detached from an aspect which helps to explain some of the features of its reception.<sup>2</sup> We refer to how his history was read and what purpose it served in the school rhetoric.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to what may be thought today,

<sup>1</sup> This paper is a re-elaboration which starts from data and ideas presented in J. C. Iglesias-Zoido, *El legado de Tucídides en la cultura occidental: discursos e historia* (Coimbra 2011), where we offer a study of the Thucydidean legacy from Antiquity to the present age.

<sup>2</sup> The reception of Thucydides' legacy has become a favourite area of research. See the chapters devoted to this theme in the general works by A. Rengakos, A. Tsakmakis (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Thucydides* (Leiden 2006); J. S. Rusten (ed.), *Thucydides* (Oxford 2009); and V. Fromentin et al. (eds.), *Ombres de Thucydide. La réception de l'historien depuis l'Antiquité jusqu'au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris 2010). Also R. Nicolai, "κτῆμα εσ αiei. Aspetti della fortuna di Tucídide nel mondo antico," *RivFil* 123 (1995) 5–26; M. Pade, "Thucydides," in V. Brown (ed.), *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum VIII* (Washington 2003) 103–181; F. Murari Pires, *Modernidades tucídideanas: Ktēma es aei I. No tempo dos humanistas: (Re)surgimento(s)* (São Paulo 2007); S. Hornblower, "Thucydides," in A. Grafton et al. (eds.), *The Classical Tradition* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2010) 935–937; Iglesias-Zoido, *El legado*. On the reception of Thucydides in Antiquity, see above all H. G. Strebel, *Wertung und Wirkung des Thukydideischen Geschichtswerkes in der griechisch-römischen Literatur* (Munich 1935); O. Luschnat, "Thukydides der Historiker," *RE Suppl.* 12 (1970) 1266–1323; L. Canfora, *Tucidide tra Atene e Rome* (Rome 2005).

<sup>3</sup> On the role of historiography in the school rhetoric see J. Bompaire, "Les historiens classiques dans les exercices préparatoires de rhétorique

many readers did not approach Thucydides' work because it offered a definitive picture of a period, but rather, above all, directed their attention to a series of landmarks which stood out from the whole and which, for their rhetorical usefulness, had aroused the interest of the most respected critics.<sup>4</sup> Passages chosen from the *History* (descriptions of battles, programmatic passages, accounts of plagues and civil disorders, and of course, speeches) ended by becoming rhetorical models during this age.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to study how the rhetoric of the Imperial period provides the key to understanding this selective way of reading Thucydides' *History*. To this end we analyse two types of rhetorical testimonies: on the one hand, the role played by the Thucydidean work in the theoretical recommendations of the best-known progymnasmata manuals (Theon and Aphthonius); on the other, its practical

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(*Progymnasmata*),” in *Recueil Plassart* (Paris 1976) 1–8; generally, D. A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge 1983); R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language* (Berkeley 1988); R. Nicolai, *La storiografia nell'educazione antica* (Pisa 1992), and “Storia e storiografia nella scuola greca,” in J. A. Fernández et al. (eds.), *Escuela y Literatura en Grecia* (Montecassino 2007) 39–66; R. Criboire, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton 2001); G. A. Gibson, “Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on Progymnasmata,” *CP* 99 (2004) 103–129; P.-L. Malosse et al. (eds.), *Clio sous le regard d'Hermès. L'utilisation de l'histoire dans la rhétorique ancienne* (Alessandria 2010). The historical themes of declamations are in R. Kohl, *De scholasticarum declamationum argumentis ex historia petitis* (Paderborn 1915).

<sup>4</sup> On the public of ancient historiography see A. Momigliano, “The Historians of the Classical World and their Audiences,” *AnnPisa* III.8 (1978) 59–75; J. Malitz, “Das Interesse an der Geschichte. Die griechischen Historiker und ihr Publikum,” in H. Verdin et al. (eds.), *Purposes of History: Studies in Greek Historiography from the 4th to the 2nd Centuries B.C.* (Leuven 1990) 323–349.

<sup>5</sup> In general on the period see B. P. Reardon, *Courants littéraires grecs des II<sup>e</sup> et III<sup>e</sup> siècles après J.-C.* (Paris 1971); G. Anderson, *The Second Sophistic. A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (New York 1993); S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire* (Oxford 1996); T. Withmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford 2001).

application for composing declamations (Aelius Aristides and Lesbonax).

1. *Thucydides in the school rhetoric: a selective way of reading history*

The fourth-century sophist Libanius attests that interest in Thucydides was kept alive in the schools to the end of Antiquity. He tells us of an exemplar of the text much appreciated by him, a codex containing the whole work, which was stolen and sold in the second-hand market. As the purchaser was a student, Libanius was able to recover his copy of Thucydides; he describes himself as a father who welcomes home a son after a long period of separation.<sup>6</sup> This anecdote shows that, together with other historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides played an important role in the schools of both grammarians and rhetors for centuries.<sup>7</sup> However, although the presence of the complete work is a documented fact, the truth is that the way in which his *History* was read encouraged a process of selection. As happened with other authors, e.g. Homer, the attention of students and professors was centred on selected books (especially the first three) and, above all, on a group of passages which were constantly reread as illustrating the most important parts of the work.<sup>8</sup> This sort of use led to a very fragmentary study of the *History*, organised in collections of *exempla* starting from ethical themes or selections of useful passages for

<sup>6</sup> Lib. *Or.* 1.148–150. On the books read in class by Libanius cf. *Ep.* 1036. On the context see R. Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the affirmations of Aelius Aristides in the *Περὶ λόγου ἀσκήσεως* (*Or.* 18.9–10 K.) on the need to have a good knowledge of history and on its utility in both oratory and political action.

<sup>8</sup> This idea is set out by P. Perrochat, “Salluste et Thucydide,” *REL* 25 (1947) 90–121, and *Les modèles grecs de Salluste* (Paris 1949), and by G. Avenarius, “Sallust und der rhetorische Schulunterricht,” *RendIstLomb* 89–90 (1956) 343–352, in analysing the selective influence of Thucydides’ work on Sallust. See also Canfora, *Tucidide*. Cf. P. Payen, “Thucydide et Polybe dans Plutarque,” in *Clio* 13–25, on Plutarch’s use of Thucydides; and T. Dorandi, *Le stylet et la tablette. Dans le secret des auteurs antiques* (Paris 2000) 27–50.

rhetorical *mimesis*.<sup>9</sup> Thus, in the grammatical school chosen passages were read from orators like Demosthenes and historians like Thucydides, with the intention of assimilating their style and vocabulary.<sup>10</sup> These same texts were studied in greater depth in the schools of rhetoric, where students composed declamations in which they put to proof their gifts for argumentation. The surviving declamations show a striking and abundant presence of classical historical themes, which contributed to selective familiarity with personalities and episodes of the past.<sup>11</sup>

The interest on the part of school rhetoric in Thucydides' *History* could explain the circulation of selected passages taken from his work, possibly from as early as the first century B.C. Even though the dominant idea at the end of the Republic was that Thucydides was inferior to Herodotus in style (*elocutio*), the critics considered his work superior in the search for appropriate ideas to defend a thesis (*inventio*) and in the deployment of arguments (*dispositio*).<sup>12</sup> His expressions and his figures were little suited to practical oratory, but his speeches and *contiones* offered a rhetorical model much appreciated by authors like Quintilian (10.1.73), an opinion supported even by one of his major critics, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who noted that, although Thucydides was often faulty in style and in the deployment of ideas, the speeches are admirable for their invention.<sup>13</sup> And his *De Thucydide* offers a selection of exemplary

<sup>9</sup> On the context cf. Russell, *Greek Declamation* 109–110. Quintilian made clear that imitation was not to be word-for-word, but required digestion (10.1.19, cf. Sen. *Ep.* 84).

<sup>10</sup> Criatore, *Gymnastics* 144–145, offers a clear picture of the process. Cf. Kaster, *Guardians*, and Nicolai, in *Escuela y Literatura* 39–66, for the grammatical schools.

<sup>11</sup> See Gibson, *CP* 99 (2004) 103–129, and the historical themes of the declamations collected by Kohl, *De scholasticarum*.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the broad treatment in Iglesias-Zoido, *El Legado* 88–98.

<sup>13</sup> Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 34 and 43. Cf. M. Lévy, “L’imitation de Thucydide dans les *Opuscules rhétoriques* et dans les *Antiquités Romaines* de Denys d’Halicarnasse,” in *Ombres* 51–61.

speeches useful for *mimesis*, which include the first speech of Pericles to the Athenian assembly, all those of Nicias, the dialogue between the Plataeans and Archidamus, and the defence of the Plataeans before the Spartan judges.<sup>14</sup> This is consistent with remarks of Cicero on texts that included speeches of Pericles and Alcibiades.<sup>15</sup> The possibility has been raised that Cicero was looking at fabricated speeches of Pericles or school exercises, since Quintilian states that he had no authentic texts by the Athenian statesman (12.2.22, *nulla ad nos monumenta venerunt*). But what seems most likely is that Cicero's knowledge of the oratory of Pericles and Alcibiades was due to selective reading of the work of Thucydides: for in another passage, Cicero says that the eloquence that flourished in the classical period could be understood above all from the writings of Thucydides (*Brut.* 29). What is not so clear is whether this knowledge of Athenian oratory to which Cicero refers was due only to reading the complete text of the work,<sup>16</sup> or rather to "writings" (*scripta*) "put into circulation" (*feruntur*)—that is, to selections from speeches of Pericles and Alcibiades drawn from Thucydides (the only possible source at that time) which supplied to those interested the most important examples of Attic oratory of the late fifth century.

This usefulness is further illustrated by the papyrus testimonies, which provide material evidence of the selective circulation of the *History* for didactic or rhetorical ends.<sup>17</sup> A glance

<sup>14</sup> Dion. Hal. *Thuc.* 42.1–4 and, as models for orators, *Pomp.* 6.11.

<sup>15</sup> *De or.* 2.22.93: *antiquissimi fere sunt, quorum quidem scripta constant, Pericles atque Alcibiades et eadem aetate Thucydides; Brut.* 27: *tamen ante Periclem, cuius scripta quaedam feruntur*. Cf. W. R. Connor, "Vim Quandam Incredibilem. A Tradition the Oratory of Pericles," *ClMed* 23 (1963) 23–33; R. Nicolai, "L'eloquenza perduta. Tradizioni antiche sulle orazioni di Pericle," *QS* 44 (1996) 95–113.

<sup>16</sup> So Canfora, *Tucidide* 116, invoking a text that would also include the first two books of Xenophon's *Hellenica*.

<sup>17</sup> A general picture in B. Legras, "L'enseignement de l'histoire dans les écoles grecques d'Égypte," in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses I* (1997) 586–600. On Thucydides specifically see O. Bouquiaux-Simon and

at the list of surviving papyri shows that, above all, passages of speeches by Thucydides have been preserved.<sup>18</sup> This could reflect the chance of transmission and the dynamic itself of archaeological discoveries, but the fact remains that there are also specific examples, e.g. *P.Oxy.* LVII 3877 (s. II), that seem to be a “raccolta tematica di brani tucididei verosimilmente riconducibile ad àmbito scolastico.”<sup>19</sup> These are selections in which the speeches occupied a central place because of their rhetorical usefulness. One of the most representative is *P.Oxy.* XIII 1621, a selection from the speeches prepared in the mid-fourth century, where we find in immediate succession Thuc. 2.11.5–9 (the central part of the speech of Archidamus at the beginning of the war) and 2.35.1 (the beginning of the *epitaphios*

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P. Mertens, “Les papyrus de Thucydide,” *ChrEg* 66 (1991) 198–210; N. Pellé, “I papiri e la storiografia antica,” *A&R* 2 (2010) 59–79, and “Per una nuova edizione dei papiri di Tucidide,” in *Proceedings of the 25th International Congress of Papyrology* (Ann Arbor 2010) 597–604.

<sup>18</sup> A full list of the Thucydides papyri is in P. Stork, *Index of Verb Forms in Thucydides* (Leiden 2008) xiv–xv. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the papyri with essentially the texts of speeches is, to say the least, remarkable between the first and fourth centuries: *P.Oxy.* 16+696 (s. I: Thuc. 4.8–41); 225 (s. I: 2.90 ff.); 451 (s. III: 2.73 ff.); 452 (II–III: 4.87); 879 (III: 3.58 ff.); *P.Gen.* 2+*P.Ryl.* 548 (III: 2.2–5, 13, 15 ff.); *P.Giss.* 12 (IV–V: 2.59 ff.); *P.Oxy.* 1245 (IV: 1.139–141); 1621 (IV: 2.11 and 35); 1622 (II: 2.65, 67); *PSI* 1195 (II: 1.71–73).

<sup>19</sup> Pellé, *Proceedings 25th* 599. The papyrus passages, belonging to three consecutive books, are Thuc. 1.2.2–4, 2.19.1–21.1, and 3.82.1–2 and 4. Another possible selection could be *P.Oxy.* XVII 2100, also s. II, possibly a selection of passages from Books 4, 5, and 8. But there are doubts about the nature of this selection, cf. A. Loftus, “A New Fragment of the Theramenes Papyrus,” *JPE* 133 (2000) 11–20, at 11 n.5: “Although fragments of closely related columns are often found together, this is not a generally applicable rule. Several texts excavated at Oxyrhynchus are composed of fragments from different parts of a roll or even from more than one roll. For example, *P. Oxy.* 15.1810 (II, Oxy.) consists of fragments from five speeches of Demosthenes; *P. Oxy.* 15.1819 (II, Oxy.) is made up of fragments from Books 10, 11 and 12 of the *Odyssey*; *P. Oxy.* 17.2100 (II, Oxy.) contains varied fragments from Books 4, 5 and 8 of Thucydides.”

of Pericles).<sup>20</sup> To this testimony to selection others can be added, hitherto unrecognised, such as a papyrus containing the last part (2.73.1–74.1) of the dialogue of the Plataeans (*P.Mil. Vogl.* IV 205, s. II).

The papyri allow us to glimpse an educational panorama in which the circulation of selected texts was very important. This is the case, for example, of the collections of maxims and sayings which often were taken from the classic texts most prone to contain passages of a gnomic sort.<sup>21</sup> A testimony to the selective use of Thucydides' text in literary composition, as favoured by school rhetoric, is offered by Plutarch.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the image he used in dedicating to Trajan his *Apothegms*, a selection of exemplary famous sayings, is from a theoretical viewpoint very significant. Plutarch compares writings about the deeds and, above all, the sayings of illustrious men to a mirror (a metaphor which was to enjoy great success into the Renaissance) which allows the essence of their character to be reflected.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the lives of illustrious men (with the positive or negative examples that they imply) can be made more visible to readers through

<sup>20</sup> See the detailed analysis by J. L. Fournet, "Un papyrus strasbourgeois inédit de Thucydide, III 42, 1; 43, 3–4," *Klèma* 27 (2002) 65–70.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. R. Tosi, *Studi sulla tradizione indiretta dei classici greci* (Bologna 1988). Cf. the collections of maxims attributed to Demades, a very interesting example of a selection of later sayings circulated under the orator's name: V. di Falco, *Demade Oratore. Testimonianze e frammenti*<sup>2</sup> (Naples 1954), provides a learned and scholarly commentary.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Ch. Pelling, "Plutarch and Thucydides," in Ph. A. Stadter (ed.), *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition* (London 1992) 10–40; F. B. Titchener, "Plutarch's Use of Thucydides in the *Moralia*," *Phoenix* 49 (1995) 189–200; R. Tosi, "Tucidide in Plutarco," in I. Gallo (ed.), *La biblioteca di Plutarco* (Naples 2004) 147–158; Payen, in *Clio* 13–25. W. C. Helmbold and E. N. O'Neil, *Plutarch's Quotations* (Baltimore 1959), find 138 Thucydidean quotations in Plutarch, not counting various allusions and reminiscences. According to Payen (20), 41% of these quotations are in the *Moralia* and 59% in the *Lives*. Also, the books most quoted were 1 (45 times), 2 (27), and 5 and 7 (16 each).

<sup>23</sup> *Mor.* 172C and 345E–F.

the reflection of both their deeds and their words. It is clear that these sayings and actions from history, as a consequence of the perspective promoted by school rhetoric, appear before Plutarch's eyes as an immense collection of *exempla* which he could adapt to his educational needs. Accordingly, he used both the actions and the speeches in Thucydides in preparing both the *Lives* and the *Moralia*—in the first, as a source of information on the character of historical personalities;<sup>24</sup> in the second, as a source of ornamental quotations, which reveals admiration for the Attic historian as a stylist, and attraction to the *History* as a source of *sententiae*.<sup>25</sup> It happens that passages from Thucydides' most important speeches are quoted more in the essays than in the biographies. This was normal for the time, as the *Lives* aimed above all to expound exemplary actions that reveal the character of the subject of the biography.<sup>26</sup> To take just the example of Pericles,<sup>27</sup> speeches rich in maxims, such as the *epitaphios*<sup>28</sup> or his final advice to the Athenians,<sup>29</sup> are more used in the *Moralia* than in the *Life of Pericles* itself. Taking into account Plutarch's working method in composing the essays of the *Moralia*, using manuals and collections of passages selected for their stylistic or moralising value,<sup>30</sup> it seems evident that Thucydides' work, and above all the speeches, had become a very important source of sayings by the beginning of

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Ph. A. Stadter, "Thucydidean Orators in Plutarch," in *The Speeches of Thucydides* (Chapel Hill 1973) 109–123.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Titchener, *Phoenix* 49 (1995) 189–200.

<sup>26</sup> Plut. *Nic.* 1.3, *Cat.Min.* 37.10.

<sup>27</sup> On the treatment of other figures from the *History* in the Imperial period, see A. M. Favreau-Linder, "La figure de Cléon à l'époque impériale," in *Clio* 35–46.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. 217F, 220D, and 242E quoting and alluding to Thuc. 2.45 on the virtues of women; 533A (cf. Thuc. 2.40.1); 783F (cf. Thuc. 2.44.4); 854A speaking on Menander with Thucydidean terms (cf. Thuc. 2.41.1).

<sup>29</sup> Thuc. 2.60–64: 4 out of 5 quotations: 73A, 535E, 540C, 802C.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Dorandi, *Le stylet* 28–42, where he quotes the more important passages on the selecting of extracts.

the imperial period.<sup>31</sup> This importance continued throughout the whole of the period, as his γνωμολογικόν was still praised by his biographer Marcellinus centuries later.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. *Thucydides and the rhetoric of the Imperial period*

The selective transmission of Thucydides' *History* which, as we have seen, took place in the schools can also be perceived in the well-known progymnasmata manuals and in declamations by the rhetors of the Imperial age.

### 2.1 *Theoretical recommendations*

In the progymnasmata manuals there are many passages that show the uses of Thucydides' work as a source of model passages for composing rhetorical exercises.<sup>33</sup> We focus first on Theon, who is helpful for understanding how a rhetor was able to work with material provided by history.<sup>34</sup> This use could

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Plut. *Fab.Max.* 1.8 on Fabius' manner of speaking, which made ample use of maxims that recalled those in Thucydides.

<sup>32</sup> Marc. *V.Thuc.* 51. Cf. J. Maitland, "Marcellinus' *Life* of Thucydides: Criticism and Criteria in the Biographical Tradition," *CQ* 46 (1996) 538–558.

<sup>33</sup> A general view of their use in Criboire, *Gymnastics* 160–244; R. Webb, "The *Progymnasmata* as Practice," in Y. L. Too (ed.), *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Leiden 2001) 289–316; L. Pernot, "Aspects méconnus de l'enseignement de la rhétorique dans le monde gréco-romain," in H. Hugonnard-Roche (ed.), *L'enseignement supérieur dans les mondes antiques et médiévaux* (Paris 2008) 283–306; R. J. Penella, "The *Progymnasmata* in Imperial Greek Education," *CW* 105 (2011) 77–90, which provides the most up-to-date bibliography. Translations of Theon's, ps.-Hermogenes', Aphthonius', Nicolaus' *Progymnasmata*, and John of Sardis' commentary on Aphthonius are in G. A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta 2003); of Libanius' *progymnasmata* in C. A. Gibson, *Libanius' Progymnasmata: Model Exercises in Greek Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta 2008). On the role played by some of these progymnasmata, like the *ethopoïia*, see E. Amato and J. Schamp (eds.), *Ethopoïia. La représentation de caractères entre fiction scolaire et réalité vivante* (Salerno 2005).

<sup>34</sup> Ed. M. Patillon, *Aelius Théon, Progymnasmata* (Paris 1997). Scholars commonly assert a first-century date for this author, but M. Heath, "Theon and the History of the Progymnasmata," *GRBS* 43 (2002/3) 141–158, argues for the fifth century. On the role of other historians like Herodotus in the pro-

also, in turn, affect the historiographic work itself, as the rhetor makes clear when he affirms (*Progymn.* 60) that three exercises are especially useful for anyone wanting to devote himself to history: description, the commonplace, and personification (προσωποποιία). This third is particularly interesting as it means the composition of speeches that exemplify what would be said by a specific type of orator, for example a general haranguing his troops.<sup>35</sup> To practice these exercises, Theon tells us, the master started from classic works. Above all, continuous reading was encouraged, since “reading is education in style” (61). But most frequently a selection was made of rhetorical material: “First and foremost, the master must collect from the ancient works examples appropriate to each exercise, and order the young people to study them in depth” (65–66). This “in-depth” study of the examples collected certainly had to be based on selections written out to provide a set of paradigms, highly respected as coming from classic works like that of Thucydides. On this point, Theon tells us that models could be taken from the historian’s work when preparing descriptions; specifically, he cites the episodes of the plague (*Thuc.* 2.49), the siege of Plataea (3.21), and “a naval combat” which could well be that of the final battle in the bay of Syracuse.<sup>36</sup>

Above all, Thucydides’ work is analysed by Theon as a source of exemplary speeches. Thus, when differentiating between a *thesis* and a *hypothesis*, two of the student exercises, the rhetor refers (*Progymn.* 61), as a starting point, to the Sicilian

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gymnasmata of Theon see L. Miletti, “Herodotus in Theon’s *Progymnasmata*. The Confutation of Mythical Accounts,” *MusHelv* 65 (2008) 65–76.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Amato and Schamp, *Ethopoia* 11–33.

<sup>36</sup> This episode (*Thuc.* 7.69.4–72.1) became a point of reference in the development of the historiographic genre. The accumulation of multiple elements (exhortations, descriptions, etc.) meant that the scene was characterised by great vivacity, a frantic pace, and great pathos, and was often imitated in the later historiographic tradition. Cf. the favourable commentary by Dionysius of Halicarnassus asserting that this passage is worthy of emulation and imitation (*Thuc.* 27); he takes it as a model when telling of the combat between the Horatii and Curiatii in *Ant.Rom.* 3.19.

speeches of Books 6 and 7. A *thesis* would consist of preparing a general speech on “whether it is desirable to send an army outside one’s own frontiers to others besieged on foreign soil,” an exercise in which the student does not define the personalities who speak, or the specific place, or the time, or the means, or the cause. A *hypothesis*, an exercise which requires greater specificity, would address the question “whether it is desirable to send an army to Sicily to the Athenians besieged by the Peloponnesians.” In this case, the letter of Nicias (Thuc. 7.10–15) and the debate that followed its arrival in Athens become a starting point which, as we shall see (section 2.2), was put into practice by rhetors such as Aelius Aristides. Other examples have to do with the exercise of the reply (*Progymn.* 70). For a speech of reply, rhetoric considers two examples from Thucydides especially useful: the speech of the Corinthians (Thuc. 1.37–43) in response to the accusations of the Corcyreans and Diodotus’ reply (3.42–8) to Cleon who urged merciless punishment of the Mytileneans. Theon ends by saying something fundamental to our point: the speeches selected are like the foundations of every form of speech (ἔστι γὰρ ταῦτα οἰονεὶ θεμέλια πάσης τῆς τῶν λόγων ιδέας, 70). That is to say, the rhetoric of the progymnasmata, which became decisive in the creative process of the Imperial period, also had to encourage the process of selection of those passages that would be most appropriate for imitation. And among these, Thucydides’ speeches, as can be seen from these theoretical recommendations, occupied a fundamental position.

This process of selection of the material that could be used for rhetorical purposes also appears in a very significant passage of Aphthonius, another of the more important authors in school rhetoric, who wrote several centuries later.<sup>37</sup> And it appears in an especially revealing way. This rhetor, in defining how to compose an encomium (*Progymn.* 8.22–24), gives as a

<sup>37</sup> Cf. n.34 on Theon’s date; ed. Michel Patillon, *Corpus rhetoricum. Préambule à la rhétorique, Anonyme; Progymnasmata, Aphthonios* (Paris 2008).

model a tribute dedicated, precisely, to Thucydides. From our viewpoint, this is not simply a eulogy (praising only the value of having preserved for posterity an account of thirteen events in the Peloponnesian War),<sup>38</sup> but more is of enormous interest for the information it gives on the most known and valued passages of the *History*.<sup>39</sup> In the central part of the tribute, Aphthonius offers a selection in which he emphasises especially both the battle descriptions and the speeches. The most striking feature of this eulogy is that, by selecting both descriptions and speeches, Aphthonius seems, as he proceeds, to be reviewing what could justly be considered a selection of passages for the purposes of the school.<sup>40</sup>

The capture of Plataea has become known from it, and the laying waste of the countryside of Attica was recognized, and the circumnavigation of the Peloponnese by the Athenians was made clear. Naupactus saw naval battles; by recording these things Thucydides did not allow them to be forgotten. Lesbos was taken, and this is proclaimed right up to the present day. Battle was joined with the Ambraciots, and time has not destroyed what happened. The illegal trial conducted by the Spartans is not unknown; Sphacteria and Pylos, the great achievement of the Athenians, did not escape notice. For what reasons the Corcyraeans appear in the assembly at Athens, and the Corinthians reply to them; the Aeginetans come to Sparta with accusations, and Archidamus shows self-control in the assembly while Sthenelaidas stirs them up for battle; and furthermore, Pericles slights the Spartan embassy and does not allow the Athenians to become angry when they fall sick—these things once and for all are preserved for all time by Thucydides' history.

In the case of the descriptions, the passages cited offer a run-

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Gibson, *CP* 99 (2004) 113.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Iglesias-Zoido, *El legado* 104–105.

<sup>40</sup> Aphthonius *Progymn.* 8.23–24. According to Gibson, *CP* 99 (2004) 113 n.44, the references are to the following passages: Thuc. 2.2–5, 2.19–23, 2.90–92, 3.27–28, 3.107–108, 3.68, 4.8–14, 1.32–43, 1.67, 1.79–85, 1.86, 1.139–144, 2.59–64.

through of the most important points of the work from Book 2 to Book 4: the first confrontation between Plataeans and Thebans (2.2–5), the devastation of Attica by the Spartans (2.19–23), the revenge of the Athenians sailing along the coast and attacking the Peloponnese (2.23–25), the naval battle of Naupactus (2.90–92), the taking of Lesbos (3.27–28), the battle with the Ambraciots (3.107–108), and the decisive battle at Pylos and Sphacteria (4.8–14). For their part, all the speeches cited belong to the first and second books, from that of the Corcyreans (1.32–36) to that of Pericles (2.60–64). Finally, in a clear allusion to the key text of the methodological chapter where usefulness for future generations is evoked (1.22.4), Aphthonius ends his list of selected passages by saying that the facts related in them are preserved for all time thanks to the work of Thucydides. This is, in short, an encomium which can only be understood in the school context. By means of a eulogy of Thucydides, Aphthonius offers his pupils a survey of the passages which were the best known and studied in the schools of rhetoric, which, in short, had a practical application in the imitative process.

The usefulness of these exemplary passages did not end with simple imitation, but, going a step further, the rhetors show us how they could become a source of declamations. Thus Theon (*Progymn.* 88.17 ff.), analysing the verisimilitude of the account, cites as a paradigm the information which Thucydides (2.2–5) offers on the first confrontation between the Plataeans and Thebans. Precisely, and it is clear that this is not a coincidence, this is the first text referred to in the encomium to Thucydides which we have just seen in Aphthonius. Theon gives three ways of credibly constructing the beginning of a speech which one or the other could have uttered after the failed attack by Thebes on Plataea in 431 B.C., the first clash in the Peloponnesian War—and therefore a text of enormous importance in conceiving a historiographic account.<sup>41</sup> Theon takes the Thucydidean model as a

<sup>41</sup> Also Ps.-Hermogenes *Progymn.* 9 offers as a principal example of *ethopoia* the words of encouragement that a general addresses to his soldiers *after* the victory.

starting point for rhetorical use, but also offering the students the possibility of inserting exhortations where the historian did not do so. This practical example brings out one more step: the evolution of the system of instruction in rhetoric and the growing demands of the imitative process led to the composition and circulation of historical declamations, fictitious speeches which could come to be part of a broader selection. In this new rhetorical context, the Thucydidean speeches provided exemplary starting points for the composition of further declamations on historical themes which would help to fill out aspects not developed by the Attic historian.

## 2.2. *Practical application in the composition of declamations*

A perfect example of the practical application of these school recommendations is to be found in the way that Aelius Aristides, one of the most important rhetors of the Second Sophistic, composed his *Sicilian Discourses*. These are declamations prepared from the context of the Athenian expedition to Sicily, as told in Thucydides 6–7.<sup>42</sup> Although the details of the expedition were also referred to by other Greek historians, Thucydides was the most important source in all Antiquity for knowledge of this terrible event, which to a great degree determined the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War. It is true that we also have an account by Diodorus (12.82.3–13.35) and another by Plutarch in the *Lives* of Nicias (12–30) and Alcibiades (17–21), and there were other historical sources, such as Ephorus and Philistus of Syracuse, of which there remain today only a few fragments. Nevertheless, in studying the historiographical sources used by Aristides in drafting these declamations, Pernot pointed out his profound knowledge of Thucydides' work.<sup>43</sup> Thucydides, Diodorus, and Plutarch agree in the fundamentals, but there are notable divergences, which

<sup>42</sup> Cf. L. Pernot, *Les discours siciliens d'Aelius Aristide* (New York 1981). For a general picture see A. Boulanger, *Aelius Aristides et la Sophistique* (Paris 1923). On the Sicilian expedition theme in the Second Sophistic cf. Bompaire, in *Recueil Plassart* 1–7.

<sup>43</sup> Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 31–57.

are essential to showing the influence of Thucydides on the composition process of Aristides' declamations. For example, Diodorus (13.8.6–7) scarcely takes into account the letter of Nicias (Thuc. 7.11–15) or the two assemblies held after its arrival in Athens which were determinants for the tragic outcome. This is a particularly vital fact, for both Nicias' letter and the debate it occasioned form the historical basis on which Aristides prepared his two declamations.<sup>44</sup> The rhetor, following Thucydides faithfully, attributes great importance to this debate and in general considers that the circumstances surrounding receipt of the letter were the critical moment on which the fate of Athens hinged. On this historiographical basis, in which some of the most representative speeches of the *History* occupy a notable place,<sup>45</sup> the rhetor constructed his declamations.

The most interesting point is that Aristides proceeds in a way similar to what a historian would have done who, in his time, had to face the task of relating these same facts. First, he has to take into account what was written by a prestigious predecessor (thus Thucydides). But his value as a writer was based not on reproducing all the facts and speeches on the matter in the same way. So second, in putting his imitative abilities to work, he has to try to take advantage of lacunae that may be in the original text in order to exercise his art. In this way, a historian, without being untrue to his source, can carry out an authentic work of re-creation in which the school rhetoric plays a decisive role. Thus, one of the most prominent features of this new account, and that which would most attract the attention of recipients who knew perfectly the text of the predecessor, had to be the introduction of speeches which offered a counterpoint to other narrative passages such as battle descriptions, or which completed what was passed over in the original source. In this case, as Theon explained theoretically (*Progymn.* 61), the text of

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Fronto *Ep. ad Ver.* 2.15, who considered this letter as *nobilissima*.

<sup>45</sup> Especially the initial debate between Nicias and Alcibiades in Thuc. 6.9–20.

Thucydides was especially attractive as a starting point, for he, avoiding repetition of arguments already used at the beginning of Book 6 in the debate between Nicias and Alcibiades, practically excluded from his account the deliberations that took place after the reading of Nicias' letter. It is precisely here that the speeches of Aristides are inserted.<sup>46</sup> The rhetor portrays a deliberation by taking advantage of a situation similar to that of the assembly prior to the expedition (the beginning of Book 6). Many arguments are similar and refer back to those particularly representative speeches, although the present circumstance had the advantage of offering an even more dramatic (and, therefore, more rhetorical) context if possible: the speakers were not now starting from a situation of the indisputable superiority of Athens, as at the beginning of Book 6, but had to take into account the defeats in Sicily. This situation, therefore, provides the rhetor with the interesting opportunity to create an *antilogía* in which two orators counterpose arguments for and against increasing Athenian involvement in a theatre of operations that was beginning to be seen as a trap.<sup>47</sup> This specific situation also allowed the construction of a more general reflection on the appropriateness or otherwise of becoming involved in a more decided way in a campaign which risked sinking the ship of state itself. A withdrawal would allow what remained to be saved, although it would mean paying the price in terms of prestige. And a greater involvement meant a decided bet on completing the undertaking successfully, although also involving the risk of failure on a greater scale. This was a dilemma full of drama, very much to the taste of the schools of rhetoric. It was a practical example of *hypothesis* which also could serve as a starting point for an account of new

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 45.

<sup>47</sup> Thucydides puts the dilemma in 7.15.1: it has to be decided whether they should bring back the troops or instead send in support an army no smaller than the first. As Pernot points out, *Les discours siciliens* 36 n.40, this phrase became a formula (in fact it is repeated three times in Thucydides: 6.73.2, 7.8.1, 7.15.1), described by the rhetors as an example of *paronomasia*.

historical events in which a similar dilemma could be seen.<sup>48</sup>

Also, as Pernot points out, these Sicilian speeches have the interest that they are the result of integrating two types of *mimesis*.<sup>49</sup> The historical data, context, arguments, and specific expressions representing the spirit of an Athenian at the end of the fifth century B.C. are taken from Thucydides. But many of the formal elements, such as the figures and expressions which give them shape as speeches, come from imitation of Demosthenes. To a certain degree, this is an example of eclectic *mimesis*, which drew from each author what was more advantageous in each of the rhetorical ambits. This also should be seen in relation to the opinions of authors like Cicero or Quintilian concerning Thucydides' speeches, that they would be useful from the viewpoint of content and ideas, but should not be imitated in terms of style.<sup>50</sup>

These declamations make evident the admiration that Aristides felt for the Athenian historian's speeches, an admiration which he displays quite clearly throughout his writings and which became fundamental to some of his compositions.<sup>51</sup> Some of Thucydides' important speeches served as excuses for the creation of other rhetorical declamations, such as *For Peace*

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Kohl, *De scholasticarum* no. 146, which includes the theme of a declamation connected with these events (the decision of Hermocrates, after the victory, to undertake an expedition against Athens).

<sup>49</sup> Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 147 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. section I and Cic. *Brut.* 287–288, *Or.* 31–32.

<sup>51</sup> In *Or.* 3.20 L.-B. he emphasises the strength (*δύναμις*) and dignity (*σεμνότης*) of expression together with exactitude (*ἀκρίβεια*) in setting out events; also 3.23, where he notes Thucydides' search for the truth and praises the way in which a picture of Pericles' personality is given. With all these virtues, it is logical that, in *Or.* 50.15 K., Asclepius himself recommended reading a triad of authors comprising the greatest philosopher (Plato), the greatest orator (Demosthenes), and the greatest historian (Thucydides). Among Aristides' re-elaborations from his reading of the historian, a notable example is that concerned with the plague, *Or.* 33.30–31 K., as noted by I. Avotins, "A Reinterpretation of Aelius Aristides 33.30–31 K.," *TAPA* 112 (1982) 1–6.

with the *Lacedaemonians* (*Or.* 7), on a historical theme, events after the blockade of the Spartan troops on Sphacteria, especially the speech in which the Spartans called for peace with the Athenians (Thuc. 4.17–20). The anonymous orator in this declamation takes on the task of persuading the Athenian assembly to accept the Lacedaemonians' peace proposals after the capture of a large number of Spartan women on Sphacteria. Again, Aristides constructs a declamation out of a lacuna in the account of Thucydides (4.21), who here has informed us only of the contrary position expressed by Cleon and is silent on the arguments in favour. Or, finally, the influence of the speeches of Thucydides as an essential reference for Aristides is also seen in speeches which he actually delivered, such as the *Panathenaic*, in which the analysis of the civil and military history of Athens is based to a large degree on the ideas set out by Pericles in the *Epitaphios* (Thuc. 2.35–46), the speech he has taken as a model.<sup>52</sup>

All these testimonies make clear that in the Imperial period we are looking at an authentic process of rhetorical 'deconstruction' of Thucydides' work, especially useful for the practice of rhetors and historians. On the one hand, the strictly Thucydidean application of the principles of the methodological chapter, which means a selection of those truly significant speeches and the exclusion of others of minor importance, now gives the rhetors the opportunity to complete those debates that had been portrayed only in part. On the other hand, this method provided one of the keys to the imitative process in historiography. As Brock has pointed out, among the historians of this period who dealt with the same events (a specific war) there is a marked trend towards avoiding the insertion of the same speeches in the account (e.g., repeating a speech before a particular battle).<sup>53</sup> What the historians did, following what

<sup>52</sup> Cf. E. Oudot, "Aelius Aristides and Thucydides: Some Remarks about the *Panathenaic Oration*," in W. V. Harris and B. Holmes (eds.), *Aelius Aristides between Greece, Rome, and the Gods* (Leiden 2008) 31–50.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. R. Brock, "Versions, 'Inversions' and Evasions: Classical His-

seems to be an unwritten law, was to exploit points not developed or types of speeches not used so as to give a free rein to their rhetorical training and show new possibilities from old passages. Thus, in a well-known episode in which a historian introduced a harangue directed to the leaders, a later historian preferred to introduce an *epipoleis*;<sup>54</sup> or vice versa.<sup>55</sup> To carry out this procedure, the rhetoric of the progymnasmata contributed the theoretical base and the *meletai* the practical examples.

A modern reader should not be surprised by this interconnection between the historiography and the rhetoric of the time, on the one hand, and between real and fictitious speech, on the other. The ancient critics did not use different patterns when judging the works of rhetors and historians. There was the idea that historiography, as a literary genre in prose, belonged to the field of rhetoric.<sup>56</sup> Thus it was entirely logical that appreciations of the style and content of historiographic works should be included in treatises intended to pass judgment or make recommendations on rhetors' compositions. Dionysius of Halicarnassus gives a perfect example in the prologue of *On the Ancient Orators* (4): his purpose is to determine "who are the most important orators and historians of Antiquity, what were their preferences in life and in speeches, and what should be taken from each and what avoided," putting the orators and historians on the same level. There was no barrier between

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toriography and the 'Published' Speech," *PLLS* 8 (1998) 209–224; cf. R. Nicolai, "Unam ex tam multis orationem perscribere: riflessioni sui discorsi nelle monografie di Sallustio," in *Atti del primo convegno nazionale sallustiano* (L'Aquila 2002) 43–67.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. D. Carmona, *La epipólesis en la historiografía grecolatina* (Rome forthcoming).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. J. C. Iglesias-Zoido, "The Pre-Battle Speeches of Alexander before Issus and Gaugamela," *GRBS* 50 (2010) 215–241.

<sup>56</sup> Evidence of this, in Roman times, is found in the repeated petitions addressed to Cicero by Brutus and Atticus at the beginning of the *Brutus* that orators with their training should write history.

them, from a rhetorical viewpoint, as the writing of history was also considered a proper task for orators. Ancient criticism refers to the oratorical compositions of both with the same term, ‘political speeches’ (λόγοι πολιτικοί). The critics apply this phrase to both public speeches of general interest, which fit into the three traditional rhetorical genres and are opposed to those that have only a private interest (ιδιοτικοὶ λόγοι), and also to fictitious speeches found in other types of works and which, although they address that general interest, were not delivered in real debates and contexts. The study of λόγοι πολιτικοί, therefore, enabled the ancient critics to place the compositions actually uttered by orators like Demosthenes and others, which sought to reproduce what was really said, on the same level as those that historians like Thucydides inserted into their works. All these speeches could be ideal starting points for creating other, fictitious speeches which do not start from a historical context as specific as that of Aristides’ declamations, and which, by being presented among selections of speeches, allowed all the creative and rhetorical opportunities of a given situation to be used.

The most significant example of this rhetorical possibility is given by another second-century author, Lesbonax of Mytilene. This rhetor has left us a testimony which is fundamental in understanding how Thucydides’ speeches were used not only as rhetorical models but even to inspire the creation of anthologies of speeches of historical content.<sup>57</sup> From a scholium on Lucian *Salt.* 69 and a short commentary by Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 74, p.52a), we know that Lesbonax composed sixteen λόγοι πολιτικοί which at least into the Byzantine period were transmitted as a group. Today only three historical declamations survive from this set, and these, as was normal in the Second

<sup>57</sup> Ed. F. Kiehr, *Lesbonactis sophistae quae supersunt* (Leipzig 1906). Cf. J. C. Iglesias-Zoido, “Una figura olvidada: el rétor Lesbonacte,” in *Actas del XII Congreso Español de Estudios Clásicos II* (Madrid 2010) 381–388; E. Amato and N. Sauterel, “L’utilisation de l’histoire dans les déclamations de Lesbonax le Sophiste,” in *Clio* 47–54.

Sophistic, imitate situations and speeches typical of the fifth century B.C. We can read one deliberative speech and two military harangues, reflecting the imitative process of adapting the classical models.

Three imitative levels can be distinguished in these declamations. The first, the most general, concerns the form adopted by the speech and the historical context into which its hypothetical delivery fits. In this case, as these are military harangues, the reference is necessarily of the historiographic type, as the harangue is the most characteristic type of speech in this genre.<sup>58</sup> If to this we add that the identifiable historical context in two of the three declamations is the Peloponnesian War, it is clear that the starting model has to be sought in authors who dealt with this period, among whom without doubt Thucydides must have occupied the most prominent place. The second imitative level is related to the argumentative content of the speech—the use of the *τελικὰ κεφάλαια* or ‘headings’ that concern the goals of human actions, and, above all, the ample use made of historical examples.<sup>59</sup> In this case, the possible references extend to other historians such as Herodotus (particularly in references to events in the Persian Wars) and the most prominent exponents of Attic oratory, especially Demosthenes and Isocrates (in speeches like the *Plataicus*).<sup>60</sup> Finally, the third imitative level concerns style, a field in which, as happened in the case of Aristides, the models have to be sought more in oratory than in historiography.<sup>61</sup> It must not be forgotten that these declamations have survived because they were copied in manuscripts which collected speeches by the most important classical orators.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. J. Albertus, *Die paraklétikoi in der griechischen und römischen Literatur* (Strassburg 1908); J. C. Iglesias-Zoido (ed.), *Retórica e historiografía: el discurso militar en la historiografía desde la Antigüedad hasta el Renacimiento* (Madrid 2008).

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Amato and Sauterel, in *Clio* 47–54.

<sup>60</sup> This model accounts for the inexactness of some of the historical references adduced. This was normal in Attic oratory; cf. M. Nouhaud, *L'utilisation de l'histoire par les orateurs attiques* (Paris 1982).

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Kiehr, *Lesbonactis* 5–8.

It is worth studying their content in order to understand their practical use. In the deliberative speech we only have the beginning of a declamation of an Athenian who, after the destruction of Plataea by the Thebans in 427 B.C., exhorted his fellow-citizens to avenge the fate suffered by their allies. In accordance with this theme, we find two lines of reasoning in his arguments which are normal parts of the assembly's consideration of war. First (2–3), the orator tries to establish that war against the Thebans is just (δικαίον). To do this, he turns to the past: the Thebans, since they took the side of the Medes in the Persian Wars, have been constant enemies of the Athenians, ever plotting the defection or destruction of their allies. Second, the orator underlines the moral obligation to give help to peoples who have been their allies (4). The Thebans have destroyed the homeland of the Plataeans, who had always been faithful allies of Athens, and this makes them deserving of harsh punishment.

Both the content of the speech and its fragmentary state have prompted discussion, and it has even been suggested that the text is merely an outline.<sup>62</sup> But this fragmentary state is explained perfectly if we take into account the rhetorical context in which it was created. The confrontation between the Plataeans and Thebans was a perfect occasion for producing an imitation that would take into account references as important as the *Plataicus* of Isocrates and, above all, the speeches in Thucydides. In the Second Sophistic, going back to the confrontation between Plataeans and Thebans must have been a typical example of a school exercise, with the decisive imitation of passages as well known as the beginning of Book 2 (Thuc. 2.2–5), where Thucydides tells how the first confrontation of the Peloponnesian War occurred, the dialogue of the Plataeans with Archidamus (2.71–74), and the trial of the Plataeans (3.53–67). This same confrontation, as a source of rhetorical speeches, was already present in the progymnasmata by Theon, where he quotes as a model of a credible account that given by Thucydides on the first confrontation

<sup>62</sup> Amato and Sauterel, in *Clio* 48 n.8.

between the Plataeans and Thebans (*Progymn.* 88.17 ff.). What is most notable is that starting from this passage, as we have already seen, Theon provided three ways of credibly constructing the beginnings of the harangues that could have been pronounced after the failed attack by Thebes in 431. Like Lesbonax, Theon gives only the beginning of the speech, leaving the pupil to complete its substance. In both cases, also, the function of the rhetorical exercise is to complete an aspect not dealt with in the original historiographic work. Thucydides ends the account of the destruction of Plataea (3.68) without dealing with the effect that this crime had on Athens. In situations like this, a rhetor like Lesbonax had an open field for the creation of a speech that ‘completed’ the classical model, the composition of which could respond to a question which would suppose the development of a *hypothesis* such as: “what speech would the Athenians have pronounced after the destruction of Plataea?”

There is greater interest, however, in the other two surviving declamations, which are military harangues. The first, which in the manuscripts is entitled *First Protreptic*, is a speech adapted to the model of harangues addressed by a general to his soldiers before the start of a battle. The opening phrase of the speech, “The enemies are close, soldiers ...” (Lesb. 2.1), tells us that the fight will be very soon, fulfilling the same function as narrative settings in historiography.<sup>63</sup> It is striking that, in contrast to the greater specificity of place and time in the previous speech, in this case we have a declamatory exercise with an indeterminate historical setting. Lesbonax gives no specifics for either date or locale, so that we cannot know the historical moment, or the speaker, or the nationality of the army to which the harangue is delivered. This lack of precision is where its principal interest lies. In the previous speech, the known context gives the key to its truncated state (for an experienced reader it would not be necessary to complete the rest of the speech); now, by contrast,

<sup>63</sup> Cf. J. C. Iglesias-Zoido, “El sistema de engarce narrativo de los discursos de Tucídides,” *Talia Dixit* 1 (2006) 1–28.

Lesbonax offers a complete speech, from start to finish, enlivened with reasoning of a general nature which could be applied to various speakers, yet always suitable for a specific narrative context. The harangue is addressed to an army drawn up in formation just before going into action. Its argument (2.3–8) is thus centred on the urgency of the situation, and above all on the terrible consequences (ἐκβησόμενον) that could follow defeat.<sup>64</sup> Lesbonax offers an authentic *amplificatio* of what is one of the more characteristic *topoi* of the Greco-Roman harangues of the Imperial period, understood as a way to motivate and arouse the men in an extreme situation. We have, therefore, an authentic ‘discourse-model’ in which the various arguments that could be used in this situation are compressed.

The second harangue, entitled *Second Protreptic* in the manuscripts, is represented as spoken in 413 B.C. by an Athenian who wanted to motivate the citizens before a battle with the Lacedaemonians. In that year the Lacedaemonians incited the Athenian slaves to fight against their masters when, having occupied Decelea, they were devastating Attica. Again we have a historical context that is easy to identify. But from the rhetorical viewpoint, the most important feature is that this is another characteristic example of a military harangue, given in the setting of a military assembly hours or days before a specific confrontation. This one is a type of harangue which, by its very nature, has many similarities to speeches which are in fact deliberative. In accordance with this rhetorical nature, it has two lines of argument. It starts with one of the more extended topics of the harangue, that it is only useful if addressed to men who are by nature valiant (Lesb. 3.1–2). But, above all, this beginning gives the speaker the opportunity to introduce a broad chain of historical examples (3.3–12) by which he tries to demonstrate, from the remote past to the present, the contribution made by the forebears to the common welfare and the forging of a valiant spirit in a nation. This is, in short, an exemplary development of another of the

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Albertus, *Die paraklêtikoi* 79–84.

principal *topoi* of the harangue: the recourse used to arouse the troops by recalling the feats of the ancestors. The conclusion of this inductive reasoning, the fruit of a calmer context, is clear: the children must not put to shame the example set by such fathers.

Both declamations, therefore, are exponents of the two types of harangue which we find most often in Greek historiography after Thucydides. In the first, we have an urgent speech in the proximity of the enemy and usually addressed to soldiers who are already drawn up in battle formation. The second is an example of a speech addressed to an assembly of soldier-citizens. What is most important to us is that these speeches are not unconnected examples. The element unifying these three ‘political speeches’ (λόγοι πολιτικοί) by Lesbonax is that they are ‘exercises’ which imitate, with a rhetorical and instructive purpose, the model of historiographic speech cultivated since Thucydides. Thus they constitute a testimony of great interest, as they allow us to understand how a rhetor in the Imperial period, taking this model of historiographic speech as a base, could approach different models of exhortation depending on their adaptation to a specific situation: whether addressing an assembly or a battle line. It is a clear application of the precept defended by Lucian in his work on how history should be written.<sup>65</sup>

### 3. *Conclusions*

The imperial rhetoric thus provides keys to understanding one of the ways of reading the work of the most influential historian during this period. The testimonies studied bring out the role played by Thucydides’ *History* in the school rhetoric. The constant presence of our historian in this context makes his work a base-line for understanding the different ways of conceiving *mimesis* during the Imperial age.

Thucydides’ work provided *gnomai*, imitable descriptive passages (a siege, a night battle, a plague), and above all examples of the three types of speeches most common in the historiographic genre: speeches for assemblies, embassies, and military

<sup>65</sup> Lucian *Hist.conscr.* 26.

harangues. This rhetorical use engendered the selective reading of a *History* which was believed to transmit examples of the oratory practised in classical Athens. Historians like Sallust and Plutarch, orators like Cicero, and rhetors like Aristides give testimony of this process of reading Thucydides, selecting the passages considered most worthy of imitation, and taking them as reference points for their own compositions.<sup>66</sup> Throughout the Imperial period, there is evidence that a series of Thucydidean passages acquired in school rhetoric the status of exemplary models and became the starting point for composing declamations. This is seen in the *Sicilian Discourses* by Aristides, which offered essential testimony to this rhetorical process and to what could be their subsequent use in historiographic composition.<sup>67</sup> A first phase would have consisted in a detailed reading of Books 6 and 7, the Sicilian expedition, in order to achieve a general view of the circumstances surrounding this historical episode and to understand the keys to interpretation defended by Thucydides himself. The second phase would have consisted of a selection of those central themes and ideas of the account, which the historian himself would have emphasised by means of verbal similes (expressions, epithets, etc.). The third phase would consist of re-composing, formally and according to the laws of rhetoric, the ideas drawn from Thucydides.<sup>68</sup>

This process of composition of declamations also enables us to understand the method followed by the historians. Aristides in fact added no details of his own invention but started from what his source gave him: a well defined historical context, arguments directed to an interpretation of the facts, and, finally, verbal expressions. In the same way, the historian would arrange, group, or re-compose the material with the intention of offering a new

<sup>66</sup> See generally Dorandi, *Le style*.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 55–57: “Aristide n’est pas seulement un grand lecteur, mais aussi un bon lecteur de Thucydide.”

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 56: “en regroupant ce qui était diffus, en amplifiant ce qui était concis, en insistant sur ce qui était persuasif ou dramatique.”

version of the same facts, as they would have been set out and interpreted by the literary source he used.<sup>69</sup> Thus, a rhetor like Aristides puts into the hands of the students the results of an arduous process of interpretation of the most significant passages of Thucydides and how they could be reused in composing declamations. This instructional purpose is confirmed by the fact that the first of these speeches on the Sicilian theme is analysed in a later work, the *Rhetoric* of Ps.-Aristides, where the way in which he has prepared his argument is analysed and his respect for the original historical source is brought out.<sup>70</sup>

Throughout the Imperial period this process was pursued. The complete works of historians like Thucydides would of course continue to occupy a privileged place among the possessions of educated men; the abundance of passages from his *History* quoted by critics and rhetors is evidence of this.<sup>71</sup> But the evolution of teaching methods in the ancient school led to a fragmentary study of history, organised in *exempla* or selections of texts which offered models for rhetorical composition.<sup>72</sup> This new educational context, the fruit of instruction in which the progymnasmata and *meletai* played an important role, explains the circulation of selected speeches and representative passages for rhetorical purposes, as can be seen from the papyri and from passages such as those offered by Aphthonius in the encomium of Thucydides.

But even these selections of historiographic origin, putting into the hands of the disciples select repertoires which could be used

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Pernot, *Les discours siciliens* 57: “Thucydide a fourni toute la réalité où baignent les *Discours siciliens*: le contexte historique est ici un contexte livresque.”

<sup>70</sup> Ps.-Aristid. *Rhet.* 65; M. Patillon, *Ps.-Aristide, Arts rhétoriques I* (Paris 2002) 13–16.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Bompaigne, in *Recueil Plassart* 4.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Nicolai, *Storiografia*, for a general picture. Suggestions in this direction with respect to the work of specific authors, such as Aristides, and his use of repertoires of historical examples or selections of chosen passages can be found in Boulanger, *Aelius Aristide* 438–439.

for literary emulation, could be improved through the publication of other types of supplementary rhetorical creations. Thus rhetors like Lesbonax composed a type of historical declamation which, deprived of a specific narrative context in which to be inserted (therefore more lacking of definition), could be used to complete what the classical historiographic texts did not provide, introducing changes and alterations especially useful for rhetorical *mimesis*. These declamations could include a broader number of topics in their arguments, which made them, in the manner of the fictitious speeches of the First Sophistic (such as *Ajax* or the *Encomium of Helen*),<sup>73</sup> into general rhetorical models, adaptable to many specific situations. This allowed greater freedom and facilitated their instructional use. The three speeches surviving from Lesbonax constitute a fundamental proof of this process. They offer distinct models of exhortation to battle, from which could be extracted all the potential of the topics, very much to the taste of the moment (e.g. the dramatic consequences of defeat), which had not been brought forth in speeches of the fifth century B.C.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Th. Cole, "Le origini della retorica," *QUCC* 23 (1986) 7–21.

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