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ARTICLE VI.

THE ORATIONS OF THUCYDIDES.

An Extract from "The Life, Work and Times of Thucydides," by Wm. Roscher, Ph. D., Gottingen. Translated from the German by John W. Mears, A. M., Student in Philosophy and the Arts at Yale College.

Introductory Remarks.

[THE subjoined paragraphs are the results of the labors of a German scholar upon one of the most difficult subjects in Greek literature. The orations of the master historian are not only famous for their intricate and perplexing constructions—they also suggest serious questions as to the veracity and faithfulness of Thucydides; whether, too, he was guided by any settled, profound purpose in his management of this part of the history, or whether the *Thucydidean Oration* is the product of a whimsical and profitless eccentricity. These latter questions employed the energies of Dr. Roscher in that chapter of his work which we now lay before the American scholar; and we cannot but hope it will prove acceptable to such as have encountered the difficulty it discusses and seeks to remove.

We do not vouch for the correctness of all our author's conclusions —it might be presumptuous for us to sit in judgment upon them. Indeed, it is not our whole purpose to publish received elucidations of the obscurities of an ancient model; we wish to put down upon an American page for the inspection of American students, an example of the refinement and closeness of observation, the thoroughness and accuracy of investigation, the sagacity of deduction and more than all perhaps, the free play—the ample range of vision—up and down the subject of study until it is apprehended in its unity, which we and they seek to attain through the medium of classical studies. And yet from the very prominence of these qualities throughout our extract, we feel safe in affirming, that the views of the author are worthy of serious consideration. We are busying ourselves with no cunningly-devised fables, with no plausible but groundless speculations. The man who had never opened Thucydides, would feel secure in yielding to some of his conclusions: they are so palpably just; and the man who *has* studied the philosopher-historian can at least discern, that only after an investigation equally thorough and extensive with that

of Dr. Roscher, could most of his conclusions be effectively assailed; so deep are their foundations.

As to the translation—we have seldom deviated from what we should call literalness, except when compelled to it by the usual differences of idiom and structure. The unnecessary faithlessness of translations generally, has long been a matter of our observation and regret, and while we have sought to present our author's ideas in a true English garb, we have been no less anxious to preserve their exact figure and proportion as they appear in the original dress.—Tr.]

Thucydides is now in possession of a rich store of external facts—that is, of such facts as had fallen under the notice of his eye and ear; popular assemblies and senatorial decrees, sieges and battles. An historical mechanic would have arranged these notices, and published them. Not so the artist. Deep in his thought, began now the *decomposition* and *assimilation* of this material, preparatory to its transformation into a work of art—a work of art peculiar to Thucydides. For, a bare protocol of events is no more history, than the sketch of a lifeless countenance would be a portrait.

The particular work of the historian in this process, is two-fold. He must first penetrate from the outward facts, to the something that is within. This internal is often denoted in our days by the name of historical ideas or principles. To the greater number, there is something speculative, and so unhistorical, or if you please, hyperhistorical, concealed under this title. But in truth, this very phrase has been employed by veritable—by excellent historians. They understand by it, *the spiritual motives*, i. e. the thoughts, the resolves, the feelings, of the chief characters and their dependents, that lie at the foundation of the external facts. These spiritual motives that decide *every individual for himself*, but that come to historical import because they are common to *many*—these motives are not learned simply by learning the facts. Practical men speak sparingly of what goes on in their thoughts; if they *do* speak of it, then least of all, may the historian receive it without investigation. Simple as the *results* may appear, on the contrary the work of the historian in this process is most involved and intricate. Such a many-sidedness of the spirit is here presupposed, that he must think and feel every character that appears in his history. If now the historian meets with outward acts, he inquires: "What must be *my* state of mind if I should purpose such deeds?" Thus, from the action, he learns the spirit of the actor. *Διενοεῖτο οὕτως ὁ Τισσαφέρνης, ὅσα γε ἀπὸ τῶν ποιουμένων ἦν εἰκάσαι*, (8. 46). The great number of such combinations decides for particular cases.

In the next place, the historian must separate the important from the unimportant, through his whole store of material. Importance, however, is a relative idea, which is determined by the object of the work. He must make distinctions between principals and subordinates; he must form threads along which to arrange the events, in groups. Such distinctions, however, such threads and groups do not really exist; they must originate in the historian's thought. These are the two points of view from which the work of Thucydides will now be regarded.

§ 1. *Great number of the Speeches of Thucydides.*

The first object that presents itself in this discussion, are the speeches of Thucydides. They appear to the composer himself, important enough to receive mention in his preface, (1. 22). In quantity only, they make a very important part of the work; of 900 chapters, more than 180, that is more than a fifth, consist in direct formal addresses. Trogus Pompeius is said to have condemned this frequent interweaving of speeches; for his time, indeed, and for his object, the like would no more have been appropriate!

The age of Thucydides, however, was the first period of the political eloquence of Athens, and Pericles and Antiphon, afterwards too, Alcibiades, Critias and Theramenes, were regarded as its masters. Pericles spoke but seldom before the people, and only upon the weightiest occasions. That he left no written speech behind him, is a sufficient proof how, entirely without self-conceit, they were directed to the practical result alone. Notwithstanding he thus individualized for the particular circumstance, Pericles knew how to connect every one of his words to the widest principles of his policy, and to the profoundest views of life in general. In this chiefly consists his majesty, that procured for him the title of the Olympian. Without flattery, he knew how to lift the people to his own elevation; his words, says Eupolis, left a sting behind in the soul of the hearer. His external appearance, too, ever severe, ever great and sublime; his voice smooth and even; his dress never discomposed by violent action; his mien itself unchanging, never relaxed to a smile. It was an eloquence that may have been related to that of Demosthenes, just as the art of Phidias was related to that of Lysippus, as far down as the author of Laocoon and the Gladiator. An exact balance was observed between the word and the action. Already, too, as is usual, the theory was about uniting itself to the perfected practice; and with the first Sophists of Sicily, commenced a long series of rhetoricians, which, sus-

tained through the following century by the first orators, was at last concluded by Aristotle.

We may remember further, that the *drama* of the Greeks was now in the height of its bloom; indeed that, for a time at least, it had well-nigh supplanted the other branches of poetry in Attica and Sicily. Plato has already remarked, how closely the oration is related to the drama. And in truth, if the external difference between the drama and the lyric and epic departments, consists mainly in this, that in it the characters all act for themselves, there is *no way* for history to become more dramatic, than by allowing its heroes to speak. How forcibly the works of Sophocles affected the whole arrangement of Herodotus; how in a thousand ways Xenophon is concerned with Euripides and the later comedy, I must reserve to develop in another place. Thucydides has borrowed nothing more from the drama than the life and oratorical richness of his representation. If hence we ascribe to him a dramatic disposition in particular, a division into acts and the like, as Ulrici has attempted; I can only consider it a piece of that aesthetic trifling against which Niebuhr was so urgent. Even in the conversations of the Sophists, whence indeed, the Socratic method of instruction shortly arose, we may perceive this dramatic tendency of the age. That some *universal* trait of the Hellenic character was the cause of this, may be shown from Homer, who is already much more dramatic and who gives far more in his heroes' direct speeches than the later epics.

Thucydides generally arranges two formal addresses in juxtaposition. In two places of our author's work, this becomes the dialogue, (8. 112, 5. 85). Where he only suffers oblique addresses to be given, a reason is always at hand. For example, there are many places where, if every one were to speak directly, a great multitude of addresses would become necessary—such a multitude, that the simple circumstance lying at the bottom, would be entirely suppressed. Why *not any* direct addresses occur in the eighth book, may be explained from the fact that the finish of the book is wanting, since death interrupted the historian in his task. From other grounds, it will hereafter become more probable, that the speeches received their present shape only at the last elaboration of the work. There are other places besides, where oblique addresses appear; the contents of these, and the events to which they allude, it is the historian's purpose to draw rather into the background. This is an important accessory to that marvellous gradation of color (*abstufung des colorits*) that is peculiar to Thucydides. In his introduction, for instance, some speeches of Themistocles are given—all oblique, because they only belong to the

introduction. In the work itself, Thucydides does not commonly describe the character of his heroes; they must characterize themselves and that by their speeches. In this case too, the introduction follows the opposite course, (see 1. 91, 138).

§ 2. *Preliminary Inquiries upon the Relation of the Speeches of Thucydides, to those really delivered.*

Did Thucydides design to report faithfully, as far as he could, the speeches that were really delivered? This is the first question. Although the scholiast answers it in the affirmative, it must be negatived for *internal* reasons. K. O. Müller has already discovered, that the speeches often stand in a mutual relation, that never could have obtained. The speech of the Corinthians (1. 120 sq.), answers in a manner to that of Archidamus in the Spartan assembly, and to that of Pericles at Athens, though the Corinthians had heard neither of them. How could the Corcyreans, when they were anxious to become the allies of Athens, in reality have enlarged so much upon their former neutrality, or affirmed that Athens owed them just nothing for it? (1. 32). Moreover, since the Athenians desired still to maintain the peace, they would never have dared to preach up the right of the stronger with such inconsiderateness as in 1. 76. In other cases, on the contrary, they were always provided with some proof of right, as appears from 3. 11. Much more, Thucydides states expressly that the real ground of the war—the growing power of Athens—had previously appeared least of all in the speeches, (1. 23). But with the speeches as reported in the first book, this is not the case. The policy of the king Archidamus was chiefly aimed at creating discord in Athens itself, (2. 20). His speech, however, in which he so fully discusses the means of carrying on the war, knows nothing of it. Finally, when Pericles, in the funeral oration that depicts the magnificence of the Periclean age, breaks out into the complaint, that it is so difficult to gain general belief in this representation; in the mouth of Pericles it is almost without meaning—simply because his actual hearers had that magnificence before their eyes, and were personally interested in it.

Fortunately we possess *external testimony* besides. In Aristotle's Rhetoric (1, 7. 3, 10), a sentence is quoted from the true funeral oration of Pericles. And this can be compared with the same speech as it stands in Thucydides. It runs thus: *τὴν νεότητα ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἀνηρῆσθαι, ὥσπερ τὸ ἔαρ ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ εἰ ἐξαιρεθείη.* Of this thought, there is no trace to be found in Thucydides; I could scarcely

name a place where it might be introduced. We may learn from this, that Thucydides disdained a verbal transcript, even where it was possible. If Aristotle could have received that expression, how much sooner the contemporary Thucydides? But more. Since Thucydides himself was sick of the plague (2. 48), and since this plague broke out in Athens immediately after the funeral oration, it is in some degree probable, that he was just at that time in Athens. The plan of writing the history of the Peloponnesian war, he had conceived at its beginning, (1. 1). Should he then have stayed at home from the funeral oration of Pericles? It is well known, indeed, that Pericles left no written discourses; that Quinctilian, especially, declared those extracts in his time to be spurious. Spengel infers from this, that Aristotle received this expression only by a tradition of the rhetoricians. That may all be true. But if Thucydides had intended to bring his speeches as near to those really delivered as possible, he would necessarily have received and incorporated this expression, just as much as it was in the mouths of the reading public. Besides, Pericles was accustomed to prepare himself for speaking always with extreme care; indeed he frequently wrote off the sketch of the discourse beforehand. How easily then, might Thucydides have obtained such a sketch just once for inspection! But there is still another consideration remaining. Weber maintains that the notices of Aristotle have no reference to the funeral oration in the first year of the Peloponnesian war, but to another delivered by Pericles after the conquest of Samos. The expression νεότητα only suits the later speech. This *proof* of Mr. W. I must candidly confess I do not understand. The position itself, however, is contradicted by Plato's Menexenus, which was probably written with reference to Thucydides, and consequently must understand by the funeral oration of Pericles, that given by Thucydides. So then it is to be supposed, that Aristotle intended by the funeral oration, κατ' ἐξοχὴν this second, not the Samian. This idea Dahlmann, among others, has adopted without scruple.

Hence too, we derive a still stronger support for my whole opinion. If antiquity, of Plato's time, declared the nominal orations of Pericles to be spurious, so it found *in Thucydides no real orations* of Pericles.

Now the inquiry arises in the second place, Was the content of the Thucydidean orations, some personal view of Thucydides—some assertion or opinion. Not entirely so. For among other things, it surely was not the real opinion of Thucydides, if he makes the Corinthian ambassadors at Athens maintain that, for this reason only had Cor-

cyra remained neutral, because she alone desired to act unjustly—to escape all observance of her shameful deeds, (1. 37). The sketch of their former conduct, which the same Corinthians draw (1.39), stands almost in direct contradiction to the narration of Thucydides himself, (1. 28). In the speech of Euphemus at Camarina, every one will admit, that the real designs of the Athenians are concealed, (6. 82 sq.). My position, however, hardly needs a further induction of evidence, since now, in the speeches that have a mutual correspondence—and here belong the greater number—while, for the most part, the subject is only variously regarded from various points of view, yet many particulars are expressly affirmed in the one speech that are expressly denied in the other.

§ 3. *True Relation of the Speeches of Thucydides to those really delivered.*

In his preface, Thucydides declares, that with all possible exactness he has retained the ξύμπασα γνώμη of the real speeches; but that besides, he has put into every one's mouth, what may have appeared τὰ δέοντα μάλιστα for the circumstances of each occasion, (1. 22). In the words that follow, where he discloses his manner of treating the facts, it is evidently a different method from that pursued towards the speeches. He secured for those a severer exactness.

We are to regard the speeches of Thucydides as his special means of tracing back the visible facts to the internal moving causes. No one better understood the art of thinking or feeling every one of his characters. From an Athenian, he can become Archidamus and Hermocrates; from a partaker of the spirit of Pericles, he became Alcibiades; from a polished Optimate, he became Athenagoras and Cleon. He can doff all his habits and relationships—the historian, the artist alone, he cannot resign .... What proper view of this can we attain?

A. Most of the speeches, Thucydides puts into the mouth of his *chief characters*. The words really spoken, could have served the historian only as outward facts. In *his own* speeches, however, where, at the same time, the interior of the characters is to be disclosed, Thucydides must comprehend the whole life of every person. He must have looked through his past and even his future, so as to be able, from these sources, to complete the sketch of his character. Thus what lay behind and before the period of the address, was collected into it. The ξύμπασα γνώμη, the main design of the discussion itself, needed not meanwhile to be laid aside—the speech actually delivered, was no less a result of the speaker's character. I cannot help noticing, in this connection, a point of superiority peculiar to Thucydides. There

are certain judgments that historians are in the fashion of giving, among which belong those that I might call *hypothetical judgments.* Thus it is maintained: if instead of the fact *a*, the fact *b* had taken place, then not *c*, but *d* would have followed. The great fault of such judgments is, that they are never reliable; indeed, that they are digressions into a province, totally disproportioned to the historian's standards of measurement. How does Thucydides act in such a case? With *very* few exceptions, he confines this hypothetical judgment to the speeches. There, however, it is perfectly appropriate. There, it can only declare the calculations of the speaker, the expectations of the hearers—a matter which is often mentioned in the direct narration of Thucydides. Before the deed, it is a matter of interest whether anything else may happen; afterwards, it is useless speculation.

B. But at the same time, Thucydides well understood, that everything is not attained with the character of the principal actors. These, by themselves, make no history. It is only when the historian has characterized the *adherents* who connect themselves with the chief personage, that he may presume he has interpreted the facts by their spiritual causes. Hence Thucydides' speeches are not only for the orator himself, but also for his audience's character. Where he paints Pericles, he paints, too, the Periclean age. With Alcibiades, that peculiar party of the young Athens is represented, that afterwards occasioned the tyrannical and aristocratical movements; with Nicias, the remnant of Pericles' Athens, whose age was now past, whose spirit was now flown. Where Archidamus speaks, we recognize at once the Old-Doric party, that resisted the innovations even of the Doric spirit of the age. A few speeches rise from the limited sphere of Greek history to the universality of general history. Thus, in the struggle between the Thebans and Plateans, the case of the old right against the new is tried; and in the transactions at Melos, the ever-recurring dispute of the oppressor against the oppressed is argued out.

And we may learn the great, the truly Hellenic art of Thucydides particularly in this: that, without the least affectation, he has connected all this to whatever circumstance at the time commanded the attention. A reader not thinking of history, might well imagine that it was simply a series of diplomatic or "demegoric" transactions of a high order, that he had before him.

To make these two points clear, I choose now the speeches of Cleon and Diodotus, from the third book. With a delineation of the character of that remarkable demagogue, they unite a portraiture of the people that could endure him. My choice has been decided in this direc-

tion, because we may here corroborate the testimony of Thucydides, almost line for line, from Aristophanes. [See *The Knights.*].

We behold, in Cleon, a man whose energy is thoughtless precipitation, whose courage is only passion joined with ignorance and brutality, (42 init.). In his view stupidity, if it is only determined, must be most suitable for managing the concerns of State, (37 fin.). Unconcerned about the future, he embraces the present only in his view, (39, 44). Averse to all solid counsel (42 init.), for proofs he only gives calumnies, to intimidate his hearers as well as his enemies, (42). His conclusions are deficient in nothing so much as stringency; they prove too much, and, indeed, by taking away all ground from the adversary, weaken their own force, (37 fin. 38 init.). At the same time he understands, admirably well, the art of linking a compliment to every censure passed upon the people (37 init.), and the art of merging his own interests with those of the people, by making a common cause with them, (37 fin.). Conscious of his own corruption, he speaks, at every opportunity, of the bribery of others, (38, 40). Full of envy towards the other statesmen (38 init.), he seeks, by low invective, especially to degrade the art of the polished rhetorician, (40 init.). He perfectly understands how to judge correctly of the people, (38). But if he sometimes is inclined to desire the true inheritance of Pericles' power (37 fin.), yet, on the whole, he is merely a flatterer of the people, knowing nothing higher than their caprice (37 extr.), and therefore, too, as it mostly turns out, is properly despised by his master, (39 conf. 4. 25). Cleon, however, is only fearful to the allies, not to the enemies of Athens; yet in spite of all this, his speech evinces much strength of character and soundness of judgment, as indeed we could not but expect, in the successor of Pericles.

Not less clearly than his personal character, is the demagogue's relation to *the people*—consequently the true foundation of his influence—exhibited. In this speech, the people are seen to be credulous of the past and of the future; slaves to the remarkable, and despisers of the common and the secure; with idle egotism dispensing their favor [as an audience] not from respect [to the speaker] but from a love of controversy; inquisitive on all topics but the really useful; eager for change, without rightly understanding their present institutions, (38). With all this, the Athenians had high resolves, and aimed at nothing less than to play the honest man and observe a safer moderation, (40). In spite of their despotic disposition, this unwieldy mass was ill qualified to rule over others, (37). With all its credulity, it was unaccustomed to put confidence in the open and honest counsellor, and the good statesman himself was forced to crooked ways, (43). The natu-

ral consequence was, that even the demagogues could not enjoy their good fortune securely; did their counsel fail, they alone must suffer for it, (43). In short, it was a people to which Cleon was suitably connected.

This picture receives its historical finish from this circumstance, that in the speech of Diodotus, not only the better state that had gone before is delineated, but moreover the worse that was to arise after it, (42). All this we see developed in two speeches, that have for their express object the fate of the conquered Mityleneans; Cleon would have them all put to death; Diodotus, only the ringleaders. And these speeches are by no means the richest in thought of any in Thucydides.[1]

This characteristic tendency of the speeches is in a high degree strengthened by the variety of their language. The Scholiast, already, has observed that Thucydides uses the boldest figures in the mouth of Alcibiades, (6. 18). How proud and great is the language of Pericles—how mild and convincing that of Nicias—how thoughtful, and grave that of Archidamus! With what a simple and touching view [of their subject] discourse the Plateans, with what craft and sophistry the Thebans! How gloomy and cruel are the discussions at Melos!

C. Thucydides is now in a position to bring his *facts into connection*, and to arrange them accordingly. This, too, he has done in the speeches: very naturally, since the speeches had arisen immediately before, from the action of the historian's mind upon the same facts (*Verarbeitung derselben facta*). Here, principally, he labored to give a transparent clearness to his history, so that in every part where it was possible, one might discern the whole work in miniature. It is for this purpose that the more important speeches are made to contain so many retrospections and so many predictions—the latter, frequently, without the clear consciousness of the speaker. Thus, for example, in the first speech of Archidamus, we find not only the present relation of the Lacedemonian resources to those of the Athenians unfolded, but, in like manner, the springs of action that had thus far decided the course of Lacedemon; and finally, the course of the impending war, its continuance, and the road to victory. In the speech of the Mityleneans at Olympia, the secret progress of the Athenian *hegemony* is disclosed to us; but at the same time it is shown where Athens is most vulnerable, and from what causes its fall will one day result, (3. 9). In Hermocrates' speech at Gela, the whole condition of Sicily before

[1] I do not deem it unlikely that Parrhasius, in his celebrated painting of the many-headed Demus, had this delineation of Thucydides before his eyes.

the struggle, its relations to Athens and the character and final issue of the impending war, are clearly and distinctly developed. This appears quite remarkably in the last speech but one of Nicias, (7. 61 sq.). It is here especially significant that in animating the Athenians, where the opposite consequences of victory and defeat are described, the latter alternative comes out so decidedly, (61). Next, the approaching contest and the Athenian armament are depicted, though just as if this latter were justified rather by necessity, and not as if suggested by prudent forecast, (62). But at the close, a brief yet penetrating glance is thrown upon all the past and future of Athens, (63, 64). In the brief address of Brasidas, too (2. 87), how admirably the essential character of the war is depicted in a general way. Only one must weigh every word.

I cannot forbear exhibiting the same feature more at large, in two other speeches, short and easy of survey. First in 5. 69. Here we have reported in oblique narration, the language which the generals of the different forces used to encourage their soldiers before the battle of Mantinea. On this occasion the Mantineans are told, that victory will make them free, defeat reduce them again to servitude; the Argives, that now or never may their former superiority be regained; the Athenians, that only by a victory on land, will they maintain their authority on land. The Lacedemonians at last—and this is the *keystone* of the whole—are stimulated with the hope of victory to the victory itself. I choose again, 6. 68, a speech of Nicias to the Athenians, just before their first general engagement with the Syracusans. Here, to rouse the spirit of his men, the general appeals to the greatness of their armament, and to the inexperience of the foe, that must baffle his boldness and his energy. Here the question forces itself, unbidden, upon the reader's mind. But how now if that armament is reduced by the sword, by hunger, by fatigue; if this inexperience has become experience by practice? If we are seeking to answer this, the close of the speech at once assumes the character of a dark prediction. "From our fatherland we are far away; and here, there is nothing for us except what we gain for ourselves in battle. We *must* conquer; for in the condition of this territory and in the numerous cavalry of the enemy, any retreat, would bring us certain destruction."

We are now prepared to make use of some *immediate hints of Thucydides himself* upon the relation of his speeches to those really delivered. They are found in the first book, in connection with the speech of the Athenian ambassadors at Sparta (73 sq.). Here the substantial import of the true discourse, the *ξύμπασα γνωμή, precedes*

in a narrative form, (72). And the brief reply of the Spartan Ephor, of little significance for the proper historical development of ideas, serves to control and confirm this narration. Now whatever *else* the Athenian ambassadors say, we may consider as Thucydides' pure material and pure manufacture (*Verarbeitung*). And in the remaining speeches, it is my opinion that the authentic abstracts, as they were presented to Thucydides, will bear pretty much the same relation to his edition of them.

At this point the eighth book presents itself. If it was the decree of Providence to call away our historian before the completion of his great work, we ought yet to congratulate ourselves that he was obliged to leave one book *half* finished. We gain by this means, a most interesting view of the workshop of his art; and if I should at all succeed in placing Thucydides in a clearer light, I am principally indebted to this view [for my success]. The brief and oblique discourses in which this book abounds, are, without exception, such ξύμπασαι γνώμαι, that yet want the last finish. As they now stand, the historian could only have come in possession of them, perhaps have criticised and abridged them. Their proper artistic reproduction and incorporation into his work, had not yet taken place. Similar *draughts* must be presupposed in the case of all the speeches. Whoever would have a conception of these draughts, must be especially recommended to 8. 81. We find here not only a brief, protocol-like account of the contents of the speech, but the motive of the speaker is already intimated, only superficially, however, without much order, without extensive connection with the earlier and later parts of the whole work. Characteristic expressions are introduced with a view to the peculiar rearrangement and preparation (*Verarbeitung*) [of the speech, that is to follow]: for example, the expression that Tissaphernes would not suffer the Athenians to be without support, "even if he must sell his couch to provide it."

§ 4. *Arrangement of the Speeches.*

With very few exceptions the speeches of Thucydides go together *by pairs or groups*. In most cases this is self-evident. It may be less obvious that the speech of the Corinthians (1. 120 sq.) is connected with that of Pericles, (1. 140 sq.). Both speeches announce in the parties there opposed and faithfully carried through in their opposition, the opening of the struggle and their expectations of victory. It may need mention too, that the indirect words of Hermocrates (6. 72) answer to the direct uttered by Nicias, 6. 68. Where two

speeches contradict one another, there Thucydides is never, like most historians, to be found on one side only. The reasonings that he ascribes to both parties, are the strongest that in any similar case could have been employed. Hence it is only seldom that the one discourse is directly contradicted by the other. A more thorough explanation of this peculiarity is not yet in place. But in every case, whoever would read the decision of Thucydides, must gather it for himself from both speeches. All his speeches owe their origin to the effort, by a counter reflection faithfully to mirror back reality. And it is by the same means that reality is represented in its progress—by the opposing strifes of parties.

Of the speeches arranged in pairs, that always stands last, whose object is finally accomplished. Indeed (4. 10 sq.) Demosthenes not only *precedes* Brasidas, but delivers besides a direct oration—the other only an oblique. Where not two, but three speeches go together, then the strongest, i. e. the most successful, is placed in the midst; because of three things, that in the middle always holds the prominent place. The application of this rule is by no means confined to the speeches, but extends to nearly every case where a similar combination of two or three things presents itself for examination. Where more than three things are to be discussed, the most important comes either at the end to make an imposing conclusion (5. 60), or it is placed first, and then at the end repeated, (8. 87). If the alternative is not given directly by the historian himself, but mention is only made that one of his heroes proposed it, then that member always precedes, which contains the expectation of the proposer, (see 1, 87. 139; 7, 8. 15).

A general principle lies at the foundation of these particulars. When Thucydides reports but indirectly the propositions of others, that proposition which *with them* preceded, comes likewise into *his* foreground, because he had thoroughly thought himself into their state of mind. When however he narrates for himself, that always appears to him especially important which afterwards by the result, evinced its greater power. Everybody knows that the majority of the ancient historians, especially that Tacitus maintained the opposite practice. And indeed whoever pursues rhetorical objects, does well, too, to follow a rhetorical order, that saves the most important for the conclusion. Hence we may discern, notwithstanding all his richness in orations, how foreign to our Thucydides are rhetorical objects. Herodotus even, the confessedly *naive* Herodotus, always brings in the strongest, with great parade, at the end.

We may now inquire, *at what places* in his history Thucydides

judged an oration suitable. As unsuitable, he regarded those in which only material relations were to be discussed: for example, the financial and military resources of Athens,[1] or the naval preparations of Syracuse, (7. 36). It is only when for still other reasons a speech seemed necessary, that, to avoid repetition, these statistics are included in the same, (6. 22; 7. 62). Just as little is the speech employed to ascribe motives to plans that were to fail without the least consequence. The latter half of the war with Syracuse especially, is but sparingly interspersed with speeches; nor is it strange if we reflect that the characters and influences that were to decide the course of the war, had been amply discussed in the speeches of the first half.

The chief points of view from which Thucydides regarded the course of the war are the following: The decline of political power in Athens, and as connected with this its decline in the rest of Greece; the ruinous excess of the Athenian spirit of enterprise, which belongs to the Lacedemonians on the contrary, in a proper degree of moderation; and finally, the transfer of dominion by sea and among the allies from Athens to Sparta. When these threads of our work appear with special clearness, there always stands a speech. Thus at the revolt of the first allied State that endeavored to sustain Sparta, (3. 9); at the first sea-fight between Athenians and Lacedemonians, (2. 87); at the first general confederation of Sicily, (4. 59); and finally at the last successful effort to extend the Athenian power, (5. 85). This is particularly to be remarked, where several of these threads are entangled, as it were, into a knot. Thus, upon the punishment of the revolted Mityleneans (3. 36), the debates were continued in two separate councils of the people. Thucydides selects the second to fasten his speeches upon. Evidently with the intention to discuss, besides the chief question, the other also, upon revoking the first decree. Because with this question, he could best exhibit the inner disunion of the Athenian "demagogy," and its relations to the people. For a similar reason, the speeches of Hermocrates and Athenagoras are delivered at Syracuse, *before* there was any *certain* knowledge of the naval expedition of the Athenians, (6. 32). When the Lacedemonians were summoned by the Syracusans to their assistance, then indeed, the embassy of the Syracusans and Corinthians delivered speeches, (6. 88). Yet Thucydides only communicates to us the discourse of Alcibiades, so that besides the nature of the impending war, he may bring out the character of that remarkable man, and the existing relations of Athens. Why of all the funeral orations of the Peloponnesian war Thucydides gives only the first, why too he

[1] 2. 13. Although Pericles really delivered a speech in this connection.

has put the other speeches every one in its place, I leave to the reflection of the reader. Thucydides however pays naturally great regard to the practical importance of the event at any time involved, and to the speech occasioned by that event. Thus, he connects his observations upon the rupture of the peace, which, after his manner, he cannot help expressing in alternate speeches, not to the embassy of Perdiccas (1. 57), nor to that of the Potideans (1. 58), but to that of the Corinthians; because this gave the immediate occasion for the war, and partly because it was actually combatted by the Athenian envoys. Why so little is discoursed *in the seventh book*, is now still more naturally explained; here, there appear very few places where those four threads of our work crossed one another. Another reason is to be sought in the crowded action [*gedrängte Thatenfülle*] of this book, in which the whole war is decided, and which would plainly have suffered dismemberment by too much speaking. The sixth book, which precedes, is the richest of all in speeches; the eighth, had it been completed, would be just as rich. Thus enclosed, the deficiency of speeches in the seventh book would have been completely concealed.

The weightiest occasions of the whole war, Thucydides seeks to set in relief by *trilogies of speeches*. Thus, the war with Sicily is introduced with three speeches (of Nicias, Alcibiades, and Nicias again), by three speeches brought to a close, (7. 61, 66, 69). At the commencement of the whole war, we find again three speeches (of the Corinthians, the Athenians and Archidamus), one for, one against, and one deciding it. From Thucydides' great love of symmetry and tendency even to the style of the refrain, we may expect that at the close of the whole war he would have employed a trilogy again; likely Theramenes for the peace, Cleophon to the contrary, and Lysander with the decision.[1]

§ 5. *Conclusion.*

It has already been observed that Thucydides' orators, often unconsciously, and even contrary to their purpose and their conviction, disclose the motives and the results of their measures. We may see this most beautifully exhibited in the case of Cleon. Less sagacity

[1] The reader can now judge whether it is consistent separately to translate the orations of Thucydides as Melanchthon and Reiske have done. In general, it is a thankless task to give excerpts from Thucydides. One might as well extract a dialogue from Plato, as well make a copperplate of a single figure from one of Raphael's groups.

even he supposes, joined with a sober deference to law, is more beneficial than great intellect with unbridled lawlessness, (3. 37). It is conformable to human nature, to despise the flatterer with all his courtliness, (39). He that hath done another unjustifiable wrong, is his most violent persecutor, and is implacable from very dread, (40). He regards it a prime error of the Athenian body politic, that every one is eager *to* appear *himself* an orator, and if he fails in this, at any rate to oppose the other orators, (38). What cutting self-irony is contained in these propositions! But there is the refinement of the artist beneath this circumstance.

I liken it to a peculiarity of *Sophocles*, that has been called his tragic irony. It consists in this, that the characters of the piece in their delusion are made to utter ambiguous speeches; to themselves indeed, only the one sense is clear, which *becomes* their presumption, but to the spectator the other too, that predicts their destruction. Thus the speeches of king Oedipus from the beginning throughout, are full of awful truth: the more awful, the less he appears to have a bare presentiment of the truth. By this means the work acquires on the one hand, its highest transparency; on the other hand, the reader or spectator is, by the same arrangement, exalted above the intricacy of a particular moment, and allowed an unobstructed view of the whole from the position of the composer. With the tragedian, there lies in this sad irony of human blindness, something profoundly tragical; with the historian, something truly historical; because it is only by this means that he can show how destruction may impend and yet be unobserved. To Euripides, this irony is but little known; he uses it chiefly in verbal witticisms. With *Aeschylus* it is rarely introduced, but never without powerful, deeply moving effect. But for this, Aeschylus employs another means to make the connection of his trilogies more complete; and this too, to some extent, can be compared with the speeches of Thucydides. It has already been remarked by *Heeren*, that in Aeschylus, an episode is often introduced in the midst of the plot, that helps the progress of the piece but little, that much rather lays open a view which extends far, far beyond the limits of the piece. Thus in Prometheus the *intermezzo* with Io. Here let us remember, that most of the performances of Aeschylus now extant are middle-pieces, and we shall see how beautifully these episodes suggest a retrospect into the first, or an anticipation of the last third of the trilogy; how necessary they are for the whole.

In their historical signification, we can still further compare the speeches of Thucydides with the *Stasima* of the Attic tragedy, or better, with the *Parabases* of Aristophanes. This comparison, how-

ever, is lame in a single point. In the drama the choruses constitute the least dramatic part; in history, on the contrary, the oration chiefly assumes the personal character of the drama. But, just as the choruses secure a point of repose, where all the ideas of character that give the piece its *poetic* life, may be brought to view, so, the orations of Thucydides bring to light the inward motives (the hidden traits of character) that are *historically* the occasion of the facts. Again; just as the poet's own activity (*eigene Thätigkeit*) that has wrought the material gathered from the myths or other sources, appears principally in the choruses; so we have seen too, of the speeches, that in them is most clearly exhibited the artistic creativeness (*künstlerische Schaffen*) of the historian.

Thus there are many points in which the speeches of Thucydides receive light from the contemporary drama. Meanwhile let us beware of regarding the numerous speeches and counter-speeches in Euripides, as of like character with those in Thucydides;—much as the first may have served the rhetorizing historians after Isocrates, and, in like manner, the orators of the later age, as patterns. In general, the speeches of Euripides and the majority of later historians are so manifestly directed to rhetorical objects, so crammed with sentiment and common-place, that with slight alteration, they might be employed in periods and relations of the most opposite character. From such secondary rhetorical objects, Thucydides, however, is perfectly free. Thus he speaks of the last discourse of Nicias, before the issue of the war with Syracuse. He gives us its contents in a few words, and only notices at the end, that Nicias did not fail to speak of wives, and children, and household gods, and did not concern himself, whether such topics might not appear antiquated, (7. 69). Would Theopompus, for example, have here denied himself an extended—an imposing address?

Indeed, the oratory of Thucydides appears to have been a peculiar product of the most flourishing period of Grecian history. With *Herodotus*, we find the oration already wholly employed for the very same objects, only more awkwardly, with less versatility in its management, less free from unhistoric digressions. Thucydides would never have endured the anecdote style and apothegm of 6. 1. The significance, too, of the speeches, for the whole work of Herodotus, is not so great. The oriental kingdoms he describes, instead of a popular assembly, had only a council of princes. Hence, the historian usually employs the dialogue, but just in the same way that Thucydides employs the "demegory." And as to the Grecian world, in the age when Herodotus wrote, its eloquence was yet in the future. For this reason, in

the first half of his work, the place of the oration is partly supplied by the oracles of the gods, and partly by romantic accounts of the royal houses. On the other hand, the speeches of Xenophon often remind us of Thucydides. They are shorter, however; not so diligently elaborated, more similar again, to the dialogue. Politics retire, the military becomes prominent. Already, as a follower of Socrates, Xenophon could have taken little delight in the transactions of the *agora;* the declamations of the Sophists might have been examples of warning to him, besides. Xenophon is not sufficiently impartial to devote the same study to two opposing discourses. Hence his more labored orations, especially in the Cyropedia, usually pass over into the region of universally applicable precept. Thus they disconnect themselves from the fact under consideration, and so far, prepare the way for the later historians, whose works are not properly interwoven, but only outwardly adorned with orations.

Later antiquity has here followed in the footsteps of the pupils of Isocrates. I will only mention Livy. E. g. he makes Hannibal deliver an address immediately before crossing the Alps. In this case Thucydides would probably have discussed the reasons why the war had been brought into Italy, not by sea but over land; he would have cast a glance upon the first Punic war, have drawn the character of Hannibal and his forces, and indicated substantially the course of the war that followed. But what does Livy? He *animates* the Carthaginians to the crossing of the Alps. With very few alterations, the emperors Charles, Otho and Napoleon, when they crossed the Alps, might have delivered the very same address. Livy's speeches are pretty much what he himself would have delivered under similar circumstances. The Thucydidean are by no means such. Livy's strength is in the elegance of his common-place—his expression. In the speech of Hanno (21. 10), we perceive with especial clearness, that the want of acuteness, of individuality for the particular circumstance, and of its pragmatical union with the whole work, which characterize the speeches of Livy, arise from his imperfect knowledge of the subject. It is only with great richness of material, and with complete command over the same, that the oratory of Thucydides can be realized.