Alcibiades and the Thucydidean Gaze: Rethinking Leadership and Strategy Beyond Charm

Vasileios Liotsakis

Περίληψη_ **Βασίλης Λιοτσάκης | Ο Αλκιβιάδης και η θουκιδίδεια ματιά: Μια επανεξέταση της ηγεσίας και της στρατηγικής πέρα από τη γοητεία**

Ο Θουκυδίδης διατηρεί ευνοϊκή στάση απέναντι στον Αλκιβιάδη, όχι τόσο επειδή είχε γοητευθεί από αυτόν, όσο εξαιτίας ευρύτερων εκτιμήσεών του πάνω σε κρίσιμα ζητήματα πολεμικής τέχνης και ηγεσίας. Ο ιστορικός θαυμάζει τον Αλκιβιάδη κυρίως για τη στρατηγική χρήση της υποκίνησης εξεγέρσεων, αναγνωρίζοντας εκείνη τη μέθοδο ως αποτελεσματική τακτική. Από αυτή την άποψη, κατά τον Θουκυδίδη, το κρίσιμο σφάλμα των Αθηναίων δεν ήταν οι πολιτικές που επρότεινε ο Αλκιβιάδης να εφαρμοστούν στην Πελοπόννησο και τη Σικελία, αλλά η αποτυχία τους να αποκλείσουν προσωπικές έχθρες και φθόνο από τη λήψη σημαντικών αποφάσεων. Τελικά, ο Θουκυδίδης ενδιαφέρεται περισσότερο για τον Αλκιβιάδη ως πρότυπο κατανόησης των προσόντων ενός αποτελεσματικού ηγέτη των Αθηναίων, εκτιμώντας τις πραγματιστικές του ικανότητες έναντι της αμφισβητήσιμης ηθικής του ακεραιότητας.

If asked to speak about Alcibiades to an audience that was altogether unfamiliar with him, we could do no better than to introduce him as a 'controversial' character. For on first appearance it would seem that Alcibiades, swayed by both his immoderate individualism and his excellent intellectual qualities, could only harm his city to the same, if not to an even higher, degree than that to which he brought benefit to it. Similarly, the portrayal of Alcibiades in Thucydides' *History* has been subject to noticeably differing opinions. While most scholars contend that Thucydides admired Alcibiades' intelligence and used him as an informant,[1] others are doubtful that he held Alcibiades' insight in such high esteem.[2] Others still focus on the historian's censorious

[1] Connor 1984, 165; Brunt 1952; Delebecque 1967; Bloedow 1973, 80–81; Bloedow 1990, 2–3; Lang 1996; Nývlt 2014; for further bibliography, see Nývlt 2014, 381 n.1. See, *contra*, the bibliography in Fulkerson 2013, 272 n.8.

[2] Bloedow 1990, 1991, 1992b, and, above all, 1992a.

stance towards his morality,[3] or even his confusion and change of mind on the matter.[4] In this essay, I will try to shed new light on some of the debated aspects in Thucydides' multifaceted portraiture of Alcibiades. First, I will argue that to consider Thucydides' view of revolts as a war strategy reveals Thucydides' positive verdict on the policies proposed by Alcibiades to the Athenians. Second, I will offer some alternative readings of Books 5–6 and 8 through the prism of the popular envy (φθόνος) towards Alcibiades. Last, I will reassess Thucydides' motivation in treating him favourably.

I. Alcibiades' service to Athens

I.1 The 'Cold War' (420–418[5])

Alcibiades makes his debut in Book V, where we first learn of his opposition to the Peace of Nicias. Alcibiades, Thucydides says, never treated this agreement as the basis upon which a harmonious coexistence between the Greek cities could be achieved. For this reason—and out of resentment towards Nicias and the Spartans for marginalizing him during the negotiations that led to the settlement—he headed Athens' efforts to enfeeble Sparta's influence in the Peloponnese through the conclusion of an alliance with Argos (5.43.1-3). In the years 420–418, Alcibiades struck some significant blows upon the Spartans' relations with the Peloponnesians, to the extent that they were forced to restore their authority in the battle of Mantinea in 418 (5.75.3).[6]

While some maintain that Thucydides disapproved of Alcibiades' anti-Spartan policy,[7] others believe that he rather saw Alcibiades' involvement in Athens' external policy as a felicitous one.[8] Focusing on the narrative arrangement of the work and its author's theory of international relations may offer some new arguments to the latter view. First, the *History* taken on its own suggests that Thucydides indeed was sympathetic to Alcibiades' doubts as to the Peace of Nicias. Alcibiades appreciated that Athens' interests would be served more effectively by an alliance with Argos than one with Sparta (5.43.2). Independently of whether or not Thucydides embraces this view, he seems to be equally sceptical towards the potential of the agreement as he presents Alcibiades as being, which is evident in the authorial comment of 5.26.2-3:

---

[3] Bloedow 1992b, 203; McGregor 1965, 30, 33, 38; Jordan 2000; Mitchell 2008, 23.

[4] Von Fritz 1967.I, 774–77; Westlake 1968, 1–4, 212–60; Pouncey 1980, 105–17; Gomme 1956, 287–88; Hornblower 1987, 145–46; Fulkerson 2013.

[5] All dates refer to the Pre-Christian Era (BC).

[6] For Thucydides' focus on the Spartans' perplexity during this period, see 5.57.1; 5.64.1; Hatzfeld 1940, 88–118; Romilly 1963, 197–200; Meiggs 1972, 343–44; Rhodes 2010, 126–30. For further bibliography, see Hornblower 2008, 53–57.

[7] Romilly 1963, 195–200; Bloedow 1991; Bloedow 1992b, 201 and 201–2 n.39.

[8] Brunt 1952, 69–71; Westlake 1968, 213–19; Kagan 1981, 71–74; Cawkwell 1997, 143–44.

> καὶ τὴν διὰ μέσου ξύμβασιν εἴ τις μὴ ἀξιώσει πόλεμον νομίζειν, οὐκ ὀρθῶς δικαιώσει. τοῖς [τε] γὰρ ἔργοις ὡς διῄρηται ἀθρείτω, καὶ εὑρήσει οὐκ εἰκὸς ὂν εἰρήνην αὐτὴν κριθῆναι, ἐν ᾗ οὔτε ἀπέδοσαν πάντα οὔτ' ἀπεδέξαντο ἃ ξυνέθεντο, ἔξω τε τούτων πρὸς τὸν Μαντινικὸν καὶ Ἐπιδαύριον πόλεμον καὶ ἐς ἄλλα ἀμφοτέροις ἁμαρτήματα ἐγένοντο καὶ οἱ ἐπὶ Θρᾴκης ξύμμαχοι οὐδὲν ἧσσον πολέμιοι ἦσαν Βοιωτοί τε ἐκεχειρίαν δεχήμερον ἦγον.
>
> As for the agreement in the middle part, if anyone ventures to think it was not wartime, his claim will be incorrect. Let him look at it, and he will find it unreasonable for this to be called a peace, during which they neither returned nor received everything they agreed on, and aside from this there were wrongs on both sides in connection with the Mantinean and Epidaurian wars and in other cases, and the allies in Thrace were no less hostile, and the Boeotians had ten-day armistices.[9]

This comment has rightly been seen as expressing Thucydides' view that the observance of the treaty's terms proved to be, in many respects, an agreement of wishful thinking (5.26.2-3).[10] However, no attention has been paid to the significance of this comment in understanding Thucydides' view of Alcibiades' policy of that period. The comment indicates that for Thucydides it was not Alcibiades who ruined the 'greatest' opportunity the Athenians had to bring balance and harmony to Greece. In hindsight,[11] Thucydides instead chose to convey the impression to the reader that the Peace of Nicias was from the outset doomed to fail due to long-enduring factors, whose impact was much more decisive than the activity of a sole individual. The treaty flew in the face of consolidated structures of international relations, and its terms would therefore, sooner or later, be put to the test by traditional interstate rivalries.

This message is conveyed not only by the aforementioned comment but also by the overall account of the diplomatic turmoil in Book 5. Alcibiades' scepticism is justified by the course of the events. First, it is not the Athenians that are unable to satisfy the most significant terms of the treaty, but the Spartans. They cannot convince the Boeotians to deliver Panacton to the Athenians, being unable to overcome the old rivalry between the two sides (5.26.2; 5.39.2–42.2). What is more, a number of Peloponnesian cities, led by Corinth, resisted the Peace of Nicias, out of fear that its conclusion betrayed a Spartan intention to rule the Peloponnese in league with the Athenians (5.29.2-4). Thus, taking

[9] I follow Lattimore's (1998) translation everywhere.

[10] Finley 1942, 208; Connor 1984, 142–47; Rood 1998, 108.

[11] For the retrospective nature of this comment, see Gomme, Andrewes, & Dover 1970, 16; Hornblower 1991, 43.

into consideration Thucydides' scepticism towards the feasibility of the Peace of Nicias, I doubt that he saw Alcibiades' activity in this period as an attempt to harm a diplomatic achievement that favoured Athens' interests. Thucydides might have wished that the Peace of Nicias had succeeded. Nonetheless, he by no means conceals from the reader the fact that Alcibiades, despite his selfish motives, proved to be perspicacious in not trusting the agreement.

To attribute this positive stance to the fact that Thucydides was charmed by Alcibiades' temperament during their alleged meetings[12] offers a hypothetical and thus insufficient explanation. A more solid proof of Thucydides' approval of Alcibiades' policy rather lies in the historian's theory of international relations. It has recently been demonstrated that Thucydides developed a stereotypical way of narrating revolt-episodes.[13] This narrative recurrence may shed new light on Thucydides' view of Alcibiades' policy in 420–418. It indicates that the historian not only included the organization of the defections from the enemy's alliance among the means of making war, but that he also considered defections to be as important as battles in times of war. It is telling in this respect that Thucydides was particularly fond of Brasidas' competence, not only in the battlefield but also because of the shrewdness with which he orchestrated the disruption of the Athenian Empire in Thrace (3.81.1-3).[14]

Furthermore, the emphasis on the revolt-episodes in the *History* also mirrors the Greeks' general appreciation of the disruption of the enemy's alliances as a war strategy. Before Alcibiades' activity in Book 5, we have already seen similar efforts made by the Corinthians in Thrace (1.56-65) and by the Spartans in Acarnania (2.80-82), in Ionia (3.2-19; 25-51), and again in Thrace under Brasidas' command (4.78-88; 102-116). Not only for Thucydides but also for many Greeks of the period (cf. the Corinthians' thoughts in 1.122.1), Alcibiades' aspiration to undermine the Peloponnesian *status quo* was undoubtedly a well-tried and hence familiar move; Thucydides may have seen it as more hazardous than the alternative propounded by Nicias' party,[15] but he was also in a position to recognize that it was equally reasonable.

Thucydides must hardly have considered those earlier years of Alcibiades' political career as fruitless. It has been argued that Thucydides highlights the futile character of the anti-Spartan league in his comment on the significance of the Spartan success in the battle at Mantinea (5.75.3):[16]

---

[12] Brunt 1952; Delebecque 1967.

[13] Liotsakis 2017, 20–32.

[14] For Thucycides' admiration of Brasidas' policy, see Westlake 1968, 150; Hornblower 1996, 56; Badian 1999, 33–34; Classen 2005, 116; Gribble 2006, 466; Liotsakis 2017, 46–59. On comparative examinations of Brasidas and Alcibiades, see Forde 1995, 144; Rood 1998, 258; Liotsakis 2017, 56–57.

[15] McGregor 1965, 30 n.9.

[16] Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, & Dover 1981, 424–25; Bloedow 1991, 59–60; Bloedow

> καὶ τὴν ὑπὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τότε ἐπιφερομένην αἰτίαν ἔς τε μαλακίαν διὰ τὴν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ξυμφορὰν καὶ ἐς τὴν ἄλλην ἀβουλίαν τε καὶ βραδυτῆτα ἐνὶ ἔργῳ τούτῳ ἀπελύσαντο, τύχῃ μέν, ὡς ἐδόκουν, κακιζόμενοι, γνώμῃ δὲ οἱ αὐτοὶ ἔτι ὄντες.
>
> And the blame that they had incurred among the Hellenes, both for cowardice because of the disaster on the island and otherwise for indecision and slowness, was wiped away by the single deed, since it appeared that they had been humiliated because of luck while still the same men in spirit.

Indeed, one of Thucydides' goals in narrating the period from the events on Sphacteria to the battle of Mantinea is to show to the reader that Sparta would eventually prove that it had not lost its power.[17] Nonetheless, Thucydides also lays special emphasis on the Spartans' insecurity and the disruption that was initially generated by the misfortune in Pylos.[18] This insecurity culminated in Alcibiades' diplomatic manoeuvres. In the comment quoted above at 5.75.3, Thucydides by no means underplays Alcibiades' contribution to the protection of Athens' interests; on the contrary, for him the significance of the battle of Mantinea lies exactly in that it helped the Spartans to get out of the diplomatic dead-end they had backed themselves into. And Thucydides was well aware of the fact that this dead-end was for more than two years shaped by Alcibiades' policy.

The comparison with Brasidas may again help us approach afresh Thucydides' view of Alcibiades. Like Alcibiades, Brasidas stood at the head of an effort to create a chain of defections, though he was unsuccessful in eventually bringing about the desired outcomes. Within three years (424–421), the Athenians re-established their influential position in Thrace.[19] Yet it is exactly this 'ineffective' activity that compelled Thucydides to distinguish Brasidas from his peers in terms of how much more skilfully he served his country during the war than they did.[20] This means, if anything, that Thucydides did not judge such efforts by their *eventual* results. The sober realism with which he analysed the historical development made him realize that the balance of the warring powers—*Peloponnesian League* vs. *Athenian hegemony*—was fairly

1992a, 142; Gribble 1999, 186 n.79; Hornblower 2008, 193 and 347–48.

[17] Liotsakis 2017, 64–87, 98–101.

[18] Romilly 1963, 197 n.4, 198; Hornblower 1996, 109; Schwinge 2008, 86–88; Liotsakis 2017, 84–87.

[19] On this period, see Gomme 1956, 540–666; Hornblower 1996, 256–469.

[20] On Thucydides' comparison of Brasidas with Alcidas and Cnemus, see Westlake 1968, 136–50; Lateiner 1975; Roisman 1987, 411–18; Wylie 1992, 77; Connor 1984, 128 n.45 for a comparison between Brasidas and his peers in general; Hornblower 1996, 41; Badian 1999, 5; Liotsakis 2017, 47–48.

hard to upset on a permanent basis.[21] Rather, he had realized how firmly this structuring of the Greek world was set up since the end of the Persian Wars (1.1.1; 1.18.2-19; 1.98-117).[22] He was therefore in a position to appreciate the intellectual qualities of individuals such as Brasidas and Alcibiades, men who succeeded—albeit temporarily—in disturbing such solid pillars of the contemporary domestic and international arenas.

At this point, it should be underscored that Thucydides' reflections on Alcibiades' strategic acumen acquire particular gravitas precisely because they are voiced by one who had himself exercised command as an Athenian general. His own experience of military leadership, culminating in the failure at Amphipolis, had endowed him with an intimate understanding of both the potential and the constraints of strategic ingenuity. Accordingly, when Thucydides acknowledges Alcibiades' skill in manipulating diplomatic realignments and orchestrating revolts, his judgment bears the authority of a practitioner's insight rather than the fascination of a distant admirer.

I.2 The Sicilian Expedition (415–413)

So far, I endeavoured to offer some new arguments in support of the view that Thucydides appreciated Alcibiades' policy of the years 420–418. In this section, I will try to demonstrate that Thucydides still retains a partial approval of Alcibiades' political decisions even in the wildest moments of his later involvement in the Sicilian disaster. First, the historian does not place the blame on Alcibiades for its failure itself. Thucydides clearly states that the Athenians had no evidence for Alcibiades' involvement in the mutilation of the Herms. Alcibiades is also presented as asking them to judge him before sending him to Sicily, warning them that to condemn him *in absentia* would be disastrous for the expedition (6.27-29).

In his major policy speech, Alcibiades argues that the Achilles' heel of the Sicilian cities lies in the heterogeneity of their populations and the discord among their citizens. He suggests that the Athenians use this weakness of their opponents as a means to manipulate them and turn them against Syracuse (6.17). He also does not hesitate to mention his own successful activity in the Peloponnese (6.16.6). Thucydides undoubtedly judged Alcibiades' plan to be overambitious. First, he believed that the Athenians should not have undertaken the enterprise. The Sicilian expedition was the product of a war policy that was far more aggressive than Pericles' moderate strategy, which had seemed preferable to the historian (2.65.7). Thucydides also preferred Lamachus' more aggressive proposition that the Athenians should attack Syracuse as soon as possible (7.42.3). Still, it would be an exaggeration to conclude that Thucy-

[21] Liotsakis 2017, 20–21.

[22] Westlake 1955, 54–55; Wick 1982, 16–20; Hornblower 1991, 55–56 and 133; Stadter 1993; Pritchett 1995, 2.

dides treated Alcibiades' arguments as totally misguided and insincere. After all, had Thucydides not seen signs of insight and feasibility in Alcibiades' plan, why did he admit that Alcibiades' recall from Sicily was one of the most decisive mistakes of the Athenians in the enterprise (2.65.11)?[23]

Thucydides' esteem for the effectiveness of instigating revolts can also shed new light on his view of Alcibiades' strategy regarding Sicily. Independent of the question whether or not Thucydides believed that such a policy would have borne fruit there, he must have perceived Alcibiades' intention to construct once again through his diplomatic skills the basis of a successful military campaign. And given Alcibiades' confidence in this handling of the war effort, Thucydides most certainly perceived that one of the most effective strategies was in this case being proposed by one of its most avid practitioners. Despite some critics' doubts,[24] I believe that Thucydides invites us to give some credit to Alcibiades' suggestion through the prism of his success in the Peloponnese. The historian seems to admit that, although leading Athens down a dangerous path, Alcibiades at least had a reasonable plan.

I.3 The Ionian War and the Coup of the Four Hundred (412–411)

Book 8 abounds with subtle emphasis on the cynicism with which Alcibiades undercut the interests of his home-city. Nonetheless, Thucydides simultaneously mitigates (a) Alcibiades' share of responsibility for the acts of violence perpetrated by the oligarchs, and (b) the consequences of the coup for Athens' positioning in the war at large. With regard to (a), it is telling that, when relating the execution of Alcibiades' rivals, Thucydides refers to them in a cold or scornful fashion. The first case is Androcles, whose negative portrayal is delineated through the creation of negative associations in the reader's mind by means of cross-references. In 8.65.2, we read that some young Athenian supporters of the oligarchic government wished to pave the way for Alcibiades' return by secretly murdering Androcles. This man exercised great influence on the *dēmos*, was a sworn enemy of Alcibiades, and had contributed the most to his condemnation in 415.

Thucydides introduces Androcles in the following way: 'a certain Androcles, the most prominent leader of the popular party […] who had done most to bring about the banishment of Alcibiades.' (τινα τοῦ δήμου μάλιστα προεστῶτα […] ὅσπερ καὶ τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδην οὐχ ἥκιστα ἐξήλασε). In light of

[23] Although in 2.65.11 Thucydides does not offer a precise list of those mistakes, most scholars rightly believe that the historian refers, among others and first of all, to Alcibiades' recall. See Finley 1942, 224; Brunt 1952, 59–60; Stewart 1966, 150; Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, & Dover 1981, 424; Pouncey 1980, 108–9; Rawlings 1981, 136; Rhodes 1988, 245; Cawkwell 1997, 77–78, with hesitation; Gribble 1999, 176–80 and 176 n.51 with earlier bibliography. On further arguments for this view, see Section II.

[24] Gribble 1999, 211; Hornblower 2008. Cf. above n.7.

2.65.11 and 6.28.2, these words sully Androcles' image and role in his country's affairs. In 6.28.2, Thucydides had touched upon the hypocrisy of Alcibiades' accusers in the case of the Herms, explaining that they wanted to get rid of him merely because he impeded their ambition to rule the Athenian *dēmos*. The phrasings in that analysis—τοῦ δήμου βεβαίως προεστάναι and ἐξελάσειαν—are echoed by the description of Androcles as τοῦ δήμου μάλιστα προεστῶτα … ἐξήλασε (8.65.2). In 2.65.11, Thucydides had repeated the view that the Athenians (and I believe that Thucydides is referring here to Alcibiades' political opponents, including Androcles) sacrificed the Sicilian enterprise out of their ambition to control the masses (περὶ τῆς τοῦ δήμου προστασίας). This net of distant cross-references transforms the phrase τοῦ δήμου προεστῶτα from a neutral piece of information into a source of negative associations with regard to Androcles' morality. The reader is reminded that he was one of the corrupted demagogues responsible for the most tragic calamity of Athens, and is thereby invited to conclude that he deserved to be punished.

Thucydides' contempt for Alcibiades' political rivals is overtly expressed in the short reference to Hyperbolus' execution (8.73.3), specifically in the following pejorative characterisation:

> Ὑπέρβολόν τινα[25] τῶν Ἀθηναίων, μοχθηρὸν ἄνθρωπον, ὠστρακισμένον οὐ διὰ δυνάμεως καὶ ἀξιώματος φόβον, ἀλλὰ διὰ πονηρίαν καὶ αἰσχύνην τῆς πόλεως
>
> Hyperbolus, one of the Athenians, a depraved fellow who had been ostracized, not through any fear of power and consequence, but because he was a villain and a disgrace to the city

The Samian democrats who had recently overthrown the oligarchs in the coup of 412 (8.21) were persuaded by Peisander to organize a new coup, this time against the democrats of the island. Although discretely deriding those men's opportunism,[26] Thucydides welcomes their decision to murder Hyperbolus. Plutarch informs us that this man had tried to organize Alcibiades' ostracism (somewhere between the years 417–415), but the latter, in cahoots with Nicias, thwarted Hyperbolus' plan: it was Hyperbolus and not Alcibiades who was eventually ostracized (Plu. *Alc.* 13.4-9).[27] Unlike in Androcles' case, Thucydides avoids referring to the prehistory between Hyperbolus and Alcibiades; but the historian can hardly have expected his contemporary Athenian readership not to recall that this man was one of the most ardent enemies of Alcibiades. Thucydides obviously takes sides as to who had been right in the debate that led to Hyperbolus' exile. Taken together, the chapters on Androcles and

[25] Note the emphasis on both men's triviality marked through the use of the indefinite τινα.

[26] Liotsakis 2017, 42–46.

[27] For full discussion of the views on Hyperbolus' ostracism, see Hornblower 2008, 968–72.

Hyperbolus' deaths reflect Thucydides' intention to highlight their immorality and thereby to convey to the reader the impression that the prosecution of Alcibiades' enemies partly brought about a purge of Athens' political life. In this way, Thucydides mitigates Alcibiades' share of responsibility for the political tension in Athenian circles in 411.

Let us now move on to the question whether or not Thucydides deemed the constitutional shift and Alcibiades' involvement in it as destructive for Athens' efforts in the war. The overthrow of democracy was undoubtedly a radical political change with multilayered ramifications, at a time when Athens was struggling to recover from the debacle in Sicily and to avert the domino-effect of its allies' revolts all over Greece. It is therefore worth examining Thucydides' view of the consequences of the coup for Athens' fate in the war and of Alcibiades' role in it.

Though taking into consideration the chain of violent reactions generated by the coup, Thucydides does not maintain an unfavorable stance towards the system of government that eventually emerged from it. First, he admits that the heads of the coup were all men of high intellectual qualities; and second, he explains that it was exactly their shrewdness which allowed Peisander, Antiphon, Theramenes, Phrynichus, and their peers to confine the political tension and the reactions of the Athenian *dēmos* to a relatively moderate degree (8.68.1-4). Especially with regard to Phrynichus, Thucydides so noted his perspicacity (8.27.5) that he construed the account of Book 8 as an extensive confirmation of Phrynichus' predictions.[28]

At this point, let us point out an unnoticed association with the encomium of Pericles. In 2.65.12, Thucydides had admitted that the Athenians, despite the state of discord (ἐν στάσει ὄντες), endured the pressure of the war for a number of years after Sicily. For the historian, it was only in the last phase that the lack of opposition to the corrupted pursuit of self-interest (κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας διαφοράς) led to the city's eventual defeat. It is hard to define how many years Thucydides meant that the Athenians managed to prevent private rivalries from affecting their decisions concerning the war.[29] Nonetheless, he evidently believed that, during the coup and the oligarchic government, there were still some factors that prevented opportunists from leading the city to wholesale destruction.

Alcibiades emerges in Book 8 as one of these factors who protected Athens from falling prey altogether to its suicidal tendencies. In the near-miss of 8.86, we read that the Athenian democratic troops of Samos, full of anger against the oligarchs in Athens, nearly sailed against Athens, but Alcibiades dissuaded them from doing so. Thucydides comments on this incident as follows (8.86.4-5):

[28] Westlake 1956, 99; Westlake 1968, 242; Hammond 1973, 49 ff.; Hammond 1977, 149; Plant 1992; Lang 1996; Liotsakis 2017, 88–98.

[29] Finley 1942, 165; Hornblower 1991, 348.

> καὶ δοκεῖ Ἀλκιβιάδης πρῶτον τότε καὶ οὐδενὸς ἔλασσον τὴν πόλιν ὠφελῆσαι· ὡρμημένων γὰρ τῶν ἐν Σάμῳ Ἀθηναίων πλεῖν ἐπὶ σφᾶς αὐτούς, ἐν ᾧ σαφέστατα Ἰωνίαν καὶ Ἑλλήσποντον εὐθὺς εἶχον οἱ πολέμιοι, κωλυτὴς γενέσθαι. καὶ ἐν τῷ τότε ἄλλος μὲν οὐδ' ἂν εἷς ἱκανὸς ἐγένετο κατασχεῖν τὸν ὄχλον, ἐκεῖνος δὲ τοῦ τ' ἐπίπλου ἔπαυσε καὶ τοὺς ἰδίᾳ τοῖς πρέσβεσιν ὀργιζομένους λοιδορῶν ἀπέτρεπεν.
>
> And it seems[30] that then, for the first time, Alcibiades did the state a service, one that was unsurpassed, in that when the Athenians at Samos were passionately determined to sail against their own people, in which case it is absolutely clear that the enemy would immediately have seized Ionia and the Hellespont, he prevented it. And at that moment not one other man would have had the power to hold back the crowd, but he stilled it and with a scolding dissuaded those who were personally enraged against the envoys.

Alcibiades, the personification of self-interest in the *History*, is surprisingly praised by Thucydides for saving Athens from those acting in the name of their private conflicts (8.86.5: τοὺς ἰδίᾳ τοῖς πρέσβεσιν ὀργιζομένους λοιδορῶν ἀπέτρεπεν). This incident confirms Thucydides' foreshadowing in 2.65.12 that the Athenians would protect themselves from their private rivalries (κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας διαφοράς) only up to a certain point.

In the same episode (8.86.6), we also read of Alcibiades' approval of the upcoming government of the 5,000, an approval which Thucydides himself seems to share. In 8.97.2, he states that this system of governance was, at least in its beginning, one of the most effective political systems in Athens that he had seen in his life. In his opinion, the moderate combination of democratic and oligarchic principles brought about a political balance that helped the city to recover from the recent disasters. Having predisposed the reader in this positive way towards this government and its choices, Thucydides concludes that one of the measures taken by the Athenians during that time was to recall Alcibiades and some others from exile (8.97.3). Thucydides conveys the impression that the government of the 5,000, which was approved by Alcibiades and which determined his return, was the most successful in the Athenians' history.

II. Envy (φθόνος) towards Alcibiades

Alcibiades may have represented policies that were much more aggressive than those proposed by Pericles and Nicias and that were approved by Thucydides,

[30] Bloedow's (1992b, 210) view that the verb δοκεῖ suggests that Thucydides does not express his own view is misguided. This is Thucydides' typical manner of expressing his own approval of an individual's qualities (cf. the δοκοῦντα in Brasidas' encomium (4.81.1) and the ἔδοξεν in that of Phrynichus (8.27.5)).

but the *History* leaves no room for doubt that, in the historian's eyes, Alcibiades knew how to accomplish his self-interested plans. This means that, for Thucydides, Alcibiades' tragic mistake did not lie in his strategies. On the contrary, the account leads the reader to conclude that the fatal moments for the Athenians were not the occasions on which they entrusted an office to Alcibiades, but rather those on which they did not.

The most influential error made by both Alcibiades and the Athenians ultimately lay in the fact that they all allowed envy (φθόνος) that emerged from their personal affairs and ambitions to lead to Alcibiades' removal. Thucydides weighs both shares of responsibility. On the one side, Alcibiades stimulated competitiveness among his fellow-citizens not only because of his extraordinary feats in war, but also in no small degree by his arrogant exhibitionism. On the other side, the Athenians are presented as being carried along out of their hatred towards him, a mistake that repeatedly harmed their city.

Thucydides touches upon a subject here that was well-known and very popular to his contemporaries. Alcibiades' 'talent' in causing antipathy due to his pomposity was in later reception a much-discussed issue, as testified by sources after Thucydides. Plutarch dedicates a number of paragraphs in his *Alcibiades* to stories about the envy shown towards or felt by Alcibiades both in Athens (*Alc.* 14.2) and Sparta (*Alc.* 24.3-5). Although writing five centuries later than Thucydides, Plutarch should be seen as reflecting the emphasis of his sources, some of which date to as early as the Classical Era. Aristophanes, an author who gives further evidence of this view, writes in the *Frogs* the celebrated statement on the relationship between Alcibiades and Athens: 'It pines for him yet loathes him, but wants to *have* him' (*Fr.* 1425).[31]

The significance of the element of φθόνος for understanding Thucydides' delineation of Alcibiades' portrait in Books 5–6 and 8 has been neglected by modern scholars. To begin with Book 5, special attention should be paid to the clarification that in 420 Alcibiades was young to be entrusted with an office (5.43.2). This comment on Alcibiades' age helps the reader to apprehend one of the principal reasons why the Athenians were envious of his successful strategy in 420–418. While Alcibiades was boasting in the Assembly that 'I brought together the strongest powers in the Peloponnese with little risk or cost to you and made the Lacedaemonians contest everything in a single day at Mantinea' (6.16.6), many from among his audience must have felt piqued by the fact that he had managed at an early age what others had never achieved after decades of political careerism. It is exactly these feelings of suspicion and jealousy at which Nicias' injunction seems targeted, namely not to trust a young, ambitious citizen such as Alcibiades (612.2–13.2). It has been maintained that Thucydides must have blamed Alcibiades for failing to be elected a general in

[31] Halliwell's (2015) translation.

the battle of Mantinea.[32] However, the reading of Book 5 I propose may offer a counterargument to this view: to judge from Thucydides' contempt towards the Athenians for their repeated removal of Alcibiades from office due to their rivalry (6.15.4), it would be more economical to conclude that, if the historian *were* to blame someone for the young Alcibiades' removal from generalship in 418, it would not be just Alcibiades but his political rivals as well.

In Book 6 Thucydides explains that Alcibiades' private life was equally envied. 6.16 is suggestive of Alcibiades' provocative temperament. He begins his speech by antagonistically claiming that he deserves to rule more than others (6.16.1). At the beginning of the war, Pericles too had been doubted for being insufficiently qualified to be elected to high public office. However, he had defended himself in a moderate fashion, without distinguishing himself from his fellow-citizens (2.60). Through this distant comparison, Thucydides invites the reader to feel Alcibiades' provocative arrogance and to recall that the main qualitative difference between Pericles and his successors was that the latter's words and deeds were dictated by their desire to outdo each other (2.65.8). Alcibiades is presented as swayed by his intense sense of superiority.[33] To the accusation made by Nicias (6.12.2) that he uses public affairs in order to cover the expenses of private needs, he answers that this is a slander reflecting his accusers' envy, which is, as he claims, natural (6.16.3; 6.16.5),[34] as his glory and feats are incomparable to theirs (6.16.3-5). He is even confident about his posthumous fame (6.16.5).

Scholarly interest has focused on the fear these arrogant words triggered in the Athenians that Alcibiades was intending to overthrow democracy and establish a tyranny.[35] However, this view, though correct, isolates only the one part of the contemporary Athenian political arena. This is because the fear of the masses was undoubtedly roused by demagogues who were particularly agonistic towards Alcibiades and envious of his public and private successes. This speech, along with the reference to Alcibiades' young age, shows how through both his public and private life, and both knowingly and involuntarily, he offered to those politicians who, like him, aspired to be the first among their peers, the opportunity to neutralize him, a development which exerted a disastrous impact upon Athens.

[32] If he really did so. Cf. Bloedow 1992a.

[33] See also Harris' (2016) stimulating observation that Alcibiades' choice to mention his own ancestors, and not those of the entire community, is one further aspect suggestive of his disrespect for domestic unwritten rules, given the silent rule that 'speakers in Thucydides and Xenophon and Demosthenes, when addressing the Assembly, never mention their own ancestors' (145).

[34] In Thucydides the phrase λυπηρός εἰμι is closely related to envy (φθόνος) and hate (μίσος). Cf. 2.37.2; 2.64.4-5.

[35] Cornford 1907, 206–9; Pearson 1949; Seager 1967; Palmer 1982; Forde 1989, 92–95 and 184–87; Mitchell 2008.

The importance to Thucydides of the competitiveness of Alcibiades' rivals is also suggested by the fact that, in the *History*, Alcibiades and Brasidas[36] are the only individuals who face their countrymen's envy. Both of them do so due to their leading roles in dissolving the alliances of their opponents. Now, Thucydides glosses a definition of φθόνος through Pericles' maxim that (2.35.2; cf. 2.45.1; 2.64.4-5) 'praise spoken of others can only be endured as long as each believes himself capable of doing something of what he hears about; towards what goes further, men feel envy and then actual disbelief' (τῷ δὲ ὑπερβάλλοντι αὐτῶν φθονοῦντες ἤδη καὶ ἀπιστοῦσιν). In light of this definition of envy, it is arguable that Thucydides not only considered the two men's successes as an unprecedented feat but also believed that this was also the opinion of their contemporaries.

To focus on the element of envy may also strengthen the view that, when referring to Pericles' successors' fatal mistakes due to their self-interest in 2.65.11, Thucydides has Alcibiades' removal from office in mind as well.[37] In 3.82.8, Thucydides, discussing civil strife in the light of the conflict in Corcyra, supports that envy is closely connected with civil discord: the influential individuals in the Greek cities, both democrats and oligarchs, used political ideologies as a pretext to gain power, and one of the characteristics of this political behavior was envy towards influential citizens. This is exactly the situation described in Book 6: Alcibiades' envious and competitive rivals try to subdue his influence under the pretext of the protection of democracy. In 2.65.11, Thucydides had stated that it was such competition for power that inaugurated for Athens a period of internal disorder and discord. Through the prism of 3.83.8, in which discord is linked with envy, the comment of 2.65.11 must at least in part refer to the envy felt by Alcibiades' enemies towards him. For Thucydides, of course, Alcibiades was equally at fault for this corrupting political game, as seems testified by the language that is used to describe Alcibiades' competitiveness towards Nicias in 5.43.2 (φρονήματι φιλονικῶν), which again echoes the political analysis in 3.82.8 (ἐς τὸ φιλονικεῖν καθισταμένων τὸ πρόθυμον).

If Books 5 and 6 demonstrate the roots of the envy felt towards Alcibiades by his enemies, Book 8 reveals why they should not have let this emotion affect their decisions about him. As we saw, for Alcibiades the first step in the Sicilian expedition should have been the recruitment of allies through charm-diplomacy, a plan that he did not have chance to put into effect. The Athenians' decision to remove him from office contrasts sharply with Alcibiades' own diplomatic skills as presented in Book 8. Alcibiades' thought-process in his earlier speech (6.16.6-17) on the easiness with which he could manipulate the disparate masses, though never fulfilled in Sicily, is echoed by the way he is

[36] 4.108.7.

[37] See above, n.23.

presented as acting in the Ionian War. Two incidents in Book 8 exemplify Alcibiades' persuasive skills here more than any other part of the work.

The first event is Alcibiades' arrival at Samos. In 8.81, Alcibiades appears in front of an Athenian assembly after an intermission of four years:

> ὑπερβάλλων ἐμεγάλυνε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν παρὰ τῷ Τισσαφέρνει, ἵνα οἵ τε οἴκοι τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν ἔχοντες φοβοῖντο αὐτὸν καὶ μᾶλλον αἱ ξυνωμοσίαι διαλυθεῖεν καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ Σάμῳ τιμιώτερόν τε αὐτὸν ἄγοιεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ πλέον θαρσοῖεν, οἵ τε πολέμιοι τῷ Τισσαφέρνει ὡς μάλιστα διαβάλλοιντο καὶ [ἀπὸ] τῶν ὑπαρχουσῶν ἐλπίδων ἐκπίπτοιεν.
>
> He went on to magnify to excess his own influence with Tissaphernes. His object was that those who were in control of the oligarchy at home should fear him and that the political clubs which conspired against him should more surely be broken up; also that the army at Samos should hold him in greater honour and feel a greater degree of confidence themselves; and finally that the enemy should be filled with all possible suspicions of Tissaphernes and so deprived of their present hopes.

Thucydides presents Alcibiades as doing at Samos what he had promised to do in Sicily. In front of a heterogeneously minded audience, he exploits his relationship with Tissaphernes in order to satisfy the expectations of the entire group listening to him. In Thucydides, the relationship between words and deeds usually unfolds as a plan that is either realized or that fails.[38] In this case, however, the connection of Alcibiades' speech in Book 6 with the ensuing account of Book 8 is much more complicated. The plot development neither confirms nor refutes anything that is previously said; it hints instead that, *had* the Athenians allowed Alcibiades to lead the Sicilian expedition until the very end, his diplomatic skills might well have brought about a very different outcome. This counterfactual thought, although remotely entertained, was, according to Plutarch, one of the main arguments of the supporters of Alcibiades during the period that he was trying to return to Athens (Plut. *Alc.* 32.4). In Book 8, Thucydides deliberately encourages counterfactual musings of this kind.

In 8.86.4, Thucydides brings to a climax his defense of Alcibiades. In the account in which the latter dissuades the Athenians on Samos from sailing against Athens, we saw that, as it seems to Thucydides, this intervention actually saved the city. The adverb πρῶτον ('first') foreshadows further occasions on which Alcibiades had benefited his country. In this respect, the comment suggests that, had death not prevented him, Thucydides would have laid em-

[38] The literature is vast. For an exhaustive bibliography, see Liotsakis 2017, 89 n.75.

phasis on such moments.[39] What is more, it is particularly telling in understanding Thucydides' criticism of the envy shown towards Alcibiades that, in the historian's opinion, no-one else could have succeeded in dissuading the troops from sailing against Athens (8.86.5). This is an exaggerated judgment; a few months earlier, Thrasybulus had achieved a similar feat, preventing the development of polarizing factions between the Athenian and Samian oligarchs and the democrats (8.75.1-77). Through this exaggeration, Thucydides succumbed to the temptation of taking sides in the competitive debate that he himself considered disastrous for his city, as to who among Pericles' successors deserved to be first among his peers. In arguing that Alcibiades was irreplaceable, he implicitly agrees with the latter's words that 'Athenians, I more than others am entitled to command' (6.16.1).

III. Thucydides: Charmed by Alcibiades or in love with Athens?

Thucydides' favorable stance towards Alcibiades is, as we have seen, uncontestable. His leniency is also discernible in his unwillingness to overtly criticize the darkest moments of Alcibiades' betrayal, such as his decision to defect to the Spartans, his advice to them to support Syracuse and to fortify Deceleia, and his participation in the battle of Miletus. Even if Alcibiades, as is occasionally argued, did not actually play a decisive role in the Spartans' decisions,[40] Thucydides believed exactly the opposite (6.88.10; 6.93.1; 8.6.3; 8.12; 8.26.3-27.1), and some readers might therefore reasonably expect at least a pejorative comment. On the contrary, the most striking authorial comments regarding Alcibiades' relationship with Athens (2.65.11; 6.15.3-4; 8.86.4-5) embellish his political career, foreground the effectiveness of his service to the city, and emphasize the fact that he was wronged by his countrymen.

However, it remains to ask what the meaning of Thucydides' leniency towards Alcibiades is. What was the historian's aim in delineating this—albeit only partially—favorable portrait? Some scholars have discerned in Thucydides' positive comments Alcibiades' own influence on the author's judgment. According to this view, Thucydides had the opportunity to meet Alcibiades and used him as his informant.[41] For some supporters of this hypothesis, Thucydides, charmed by Alcibiades' temperament, was convinced by him that his influence on the course of the events was much more important than it actually was. Some scholars have even tried to take advantage of such views in order to solve the so-called 'Thukydideische Frage', which relates to the vexed issue

[39] Thucydides' comment not only targets Alcibiades (as argued by Adcock 1963, 135–36; Delebecque 1965, 175; Gribble 1999, 187 and Bassi 2007, 209) but also the Athenians for having wasted all those years before having him on their side. Cf. Woodhead 1970, 95–96.

[40] Brunt 1952, 69–72 followed by Kebric 1976, 250 n.15; Ellis 1989, 66; Nývlt 2014, 384–85.

[41] Mewes 1868, 6–7; Brunt 1952; Delebecque 1967; Lang 1996; Nývlt 2014. For criticism of this view, see the bibliography in Fulkerson 2013, 272 n.8.

of the several stages of the *History*'s composition.[42] In their view, after discussing with Alcibiades, Thucydides reconsidered the causal history of the war (especially in its last years) and revised certain parts of Book 8.

This theory is plausible only in its first part, namely that Thucydides met Alcibiades, or at least someone from his close environment, and drew information from him. On the other hand, as I shall argue, the view that the *History* reflects Thucydides' admiration for and excitement about Alcibiades is erroneous. Thucydides, though he makes no overt criticism of Alcibiades' defection, conceals nothing of the details and constantly reminds the reader of Alcibiades' devious conduct and ruthless opportunism.[43]

Thucydides' interest in Alcibiades' skills and his contribution to Athens should not be seen as a reflection of his partiality for him, but as part of his general concern for what the ideal system of governance for Athens should be, why Athens lost the war, and what strategies it should have followed in order to avoid the eventual defeat. Needless to say, my analysis of Thucydides' portrait of Alcibiades in light of the relationship between Athens and its individuals is influenced by Forde's and Gribble's seminal studies.[44] Both scholars approach the literary representation of Alcibiades in the *History* as a reflection of Thucydides' theoretical speculation about the dynamics of the relationship between a city and its citizens, and the dangers lurking behind this relationship as private aspirations collide with common interest. For my part, I would like to transfer the focal point of interest from Forde's and Gribble's conception of 'Thucydides the political thinker' onto 'Thucydides the Athenian patriot'.

Thucydides' tolerance of Alcibiades' immorality is not the latter's privilege but is also evident in his portrayal of other Athenian individuals as well. The comparison of Thucydides' stance towards Alcibiades with his judgments on Themistocles and Hippias is particularly insightful in this respect. After the Persian Wars, Themistocles was banished by the Athenians and, like Alcibiades, defected to Persia, where he spent the rest of his life as a satrap. Nowhere in his biographical digression on Themistocles (1.135.2–138.6) does Thucydides treat Themistocles' choice as a treasonous act; rather, he vigorously expresses his high esteem for Themistocles' sagacity and its benefits for Athens, listing the construction of the Long Walls as his greatest feat.[45] The comparison with Hippias is even more illuminating: Hippias not only had been a tyrant in Athens but also, after being toppled from power, took refuge in Darius' court and later followed the Persian army against the Athenians in the battle

[42] Delebecque 1967; Westlake 1968; Pouncey 1980, 115–16; Hornblower 1987, 145–46.

[43] Lang 1996, 292; Mayer 1998, 232–33; Bassi 2007, 199–205; Nývlt 2014, 381–82, and n.1 with further bibliography on the view that, although Thucydides used Alcibiades as an informant, his judgment was not influenced by him.

[44] Forde 1989; Gribble 1999, 159–213. Seeds of this approach are found in Stewart 1966, 149.

[45] Cf. Palmer 1982, 115–18.

of Marathon (Hdt. 6.102; Hdt. 6.107-109; Hdt. 121; Th. 6.59.4). Although to many contemporaries of Thucydides Hippias was a symbol of the suppression of Athens' democratic values and national independence,[46] Thucydides does not hesitate to recognize that this tyrant governed skillfully and moderately, showing respect to the country's laws and institutions (6.54.4-6).[47]

This attitude is also discernible in Thucydides' treatment of Alcibiades' contemporaries. Phrynichus, in his effort to avoid the danger lurking for him in Alcibiades' return to Athens, dared to contact the Spartan navarch Astyochus and promised to surrender to him the fleet at Samos (8.50-51). Nonetheless, as we have seen, Thucydides highlights the prudency of Phrynichus' admonitions to the Athenians[48] and is equally generous with the instigators of the oligarchic coup. Theramenes, the man who let his countrymen starve to death in order to make them accept Sparta's terms at the end of the war (X. *HG* 2.2.16), is praised by Thucydides for his rhetorical skills and insight (8.68.4). In the light of all these examples,[49] Thucydides' tolerance of Alcibiades signals not an exceptional treatment, but reflects the historian's favorite practice of looking for politicians who were most profitable to Athens, even if they could turn against it without the slightest hesitation. Thucydides' aim was not to express his feelings for Alcibiades but to share with his readers his verdict that, although potentially useful, the Athenians foolishly left him unexploited, as they did many others before him.

Thucydides' positive comments on these controversial personalities of Athens undoubtedly arise from his special interest in political issues, as Forde, Gribble and others have demonstrated.[50] However, it should also be noted that Thucydides' cynical rationalism in the quest of qualified leaders, even among individuals of questionable morality, carries a heavy emotional load; it is dictated by Thucydides' concern for Athens. This view is strengthened by the juxtaposition of Thucydides' interest in these Athenians with his indifference to the Spartans. The discussion of Themistocles is placed shortly after that of the Spartan king Pausanias (1.128.2–135.1). However, nowhere in the chapters on Pausanias do we read any analysis of his political virtues or flaws in a similar manner to the account of Themistocles. In the same way, Thucydides' focus in Book 8 on the political tension in Athens and Samos stands in sharp contrast with his apparent reluctance to offer a political analysis of the contemporary perplexities in Spartan circles. These are the implications of Astyochus' admi-

[46] For tyranny as a symbol of these negative aspects in ancient Greece, see Seager's (1967) excellent survey of the sources.

[47] On the relationship between the tyrannicide digression and Alcibiades, see Wohl 1999. See also, most recently, Liotsakis 2022.

[48] Cf. further Fulkerson 2013, 275 n.23, 276 n.24.

[49] For a comparison with further examples of individuals (incl. non-Athenians) in the History motivated by self-interest, see Palmer 1982, 119.

[50] See also Mitchell 2008.

ralship for the state of the navy (8.78), his questionable relationship with Tissaphernes (8.50.3), and the tragic end to which his negligence of the besieged Chians led Pedaritus, his compatriot and governor of Chios (8.55.2-3).[51]

In a similar fashion, the element of envy in the *History* is examined from a clearly Athenocentric perspective. As already demonstrated, Brasidas too is presented as having been treated by his political rivals with envy. However, Thucydides is not interested in offering an in-depth analysis of how this public envy affected political life in Sparta and Brasidas' career. Furthermore, the comparison with Plutarch can again prove particularly enlightening. As a biographer, in touching upon Alcibiades' inability to avoid the envy of his environment, Plutarch wished both to present a distinctive dimension of Alcibiades' character as well as a historiographical component in Athens' fall. For this reason, he included in his account incidents that took place in both Athens and Sparta. We thus learn of the envy of leading Spartans towards Alcibiades due to his prominent role in Spartan decisions. We also read about the envy shown to Alcibiades in Tissaphernes' court (Plut. *Alc.* 24.3-9). In contrast, Thucydides omits all these details, focusing exclusively on the envy towards Alcibiades in association with Athens' political decay and defeat in war.[52]

In conclusion, Thucydides' portrayal of Alcibiades reflects both his strategic brilliance and the complex nature of his character, making it possible that Alcibiades may have, to some extent, charmed Thucydides. However, Thucydides' admiration stems primarily from Alcibiades' strategic use of revolts as a wartime tactic, recognizing its effectiveness independently of Alcibiades' moral ambiguities. Thucydides' favourable stance towards Alcibiades is also rooted in his broader interest in identifying the qualities of an ideal leader, focusing on practical abilities rather than personal ethics. Simultaneously, Thucydides emphasizes how Alcibiades' actions were deeply influenced by the destructive impact of envy and personal rivalries within Athens, which hindered the city's decision-making and led to his eventual downfall. For Thucydides, the critical mistake of the Athenians was not their policies in the Peloponnese and Sicily, but their inability to exclude personal animosities from major decisions. This dilemma is reflected in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1425, where Athens is depicted as torn between desiring and resenting Alcibiades. Thucydides, however, provides a clear answer: regardless of Athens' emotional response to him, the city should have recognized Alcibiades' potential and embraced his leadership. Ultimately, Thucydides' treatment of Alcibiades underscores the importance of effective leadership, free from the destructive forces of internal rivalries.

[51] Thucydides merely treats these issues as signs of Sparta's inability to win the war after the Athenian disaster in Sicily (Liotsakis 2017, 111–38).

[52] Cf. Romilly 1988, 28.

Bibliographic References

Adcock, F. E. 1963. *Thucydides and His History*. London; New York; Ibadan: Cambridge University Press.

Aidonis, T. 1996. Tissaphernes' Dealings with the Greeks. *C&M* 47: 89–108.

Alonso-Núñez, J. M. 2000. *Die Archäologien des Thukydides*. Konstanz: UVK Universitätsverlag Konstanz.

Badian, E. 1999. The Road to Acanthus. In: R. Mellor & L. A. Tritle (eds), *Text and Tradition: Studies in Greek History and Historiography in Honor of Mortimer Chambers*. Claremont, Calif.: Regina Books, 3–35.

Bassi, K. 2007. Spatial Contingencies in Thucydides' *History*. *CA* 26(2): 171–217.

Benson, E. F. 1928. *The Life of Alcibiades*. London: Ernest Benn.

Bloedow, E. F. 1973. *Alcibiades Reexamined*. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner.

_____, 1990. 'Not the Son of Achilles, but Achilles Himself': Alcibiades' Entry on the Political Stage at Athens II. *Historia* 39(1): 1–19.

_____, 1991. On 'Nurturing Lions in the State': Alcibiades' Entry on the Political Stage in Athens. *Klio* 73: 49–65.

_____, 1992a. Alcibiades 'Brilliant' or 'Intelligent'? *Historia* 41(2): 139–57.

_____, 1992b. 'An Alexander in the Wrong Place': Alcibiades 'the Ablest of All the Sons of Athens'? *SCO* 41: 191–216.

Bodin, L. 1935. Thucydide et la campagne de Brasidas en Thrace : remarques sur la composition de l'exposé'. In: É. Privat (ed.), *Mélanges offerts à Octave Navarre / par ses élèves et ses amis*. Toulouse: É. Privat, 47–55.

Bruns, I. 1961. *Das literarische Porträt der Griechen im fünften und vierten Jahrhundert vor Christi Geburt. Die Persönlichkeit in der Geschichtsschreibung der Alten: Untersuchungen zur Technik der antiken Historiographie*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms.

Brunt, P. A. 1952. Thucydides and Alcibiades. *REG* 65(304/305): 59–96.

Cawkwell, G. 1997. *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War*. London & New York: Routledge.

Classen, C. J. 2005. Thucydides on Politicians and Poleis. *PAA* 80: 113–26.

Cooper, G. L. 1979. Alcibiades' Criticism of Nicias at Thuc. 6.18.1. *TAPhA* 109: 29–38.

Connor, W. R. 1984. *Thucydides*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cornford, F. M. 1907. *Thucydides Mythistoricus*. London: Ed. Arnold.

Delebecque, É. 1965. *Thucydide et Alcibiade*. Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Ophrys.

_____, 1967. *Thucydide. Livre VIII*. Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Ophrys.

Ellis, W. M. 1989. *Alcibiades*. London & New York: Routledge.

Faulkner, R. 2007. *The Case for Greatness: Honorable Ambition and Its Critics*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Finley, J. H., Jr 1942. *Thucydides*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press & London: Oxford University Press.

Forde, S. 1989. *The Ambition to Rule: Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press.

_____, 1995. International Realism and the Science of Politics: Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Neorealism. *ISQ* 39(2): 141–60.

Fulkerson, L. 2013. Alcibiades πολύτροπος: Socratic Philosopher and Tragic Hero? *Histos* 7: 269–98.

Gomme, A. W. 1956. *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, III: *The Ten Years' War: Books IV–V 24*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gomme, A. W., Andrewes, A., & Dover, K. J. 1970. *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, IV: *Books V 25–VII*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

_____, 1981. *Commentary on Thucydides*, V: *Book VIII*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grayson, C. H. 1972. Two Passages in Thucydides. *CQ* 22(1): 62–73.

Gribble, D. 1999. *Alcibiades and Athens: A Study in Literary Representation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

_____, 2006. Individuals in Thucydides. In: A. Rengakos & A. Tsakmakis (eds), *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 439–68.

Halliwell, S. 2015. *Aristophanes. Clouds, Women at the Thesmophoria, Frogs. A Verse Translation, with Introduction and Notes*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

Hammond, N. G. L. 1973. The Particular and the Universal in the Speeches of Thucydides, with Special Reference to That of Hermocrates at Gela. In: P. A. Stadter (ed.), *The Speeches in Thucydides. A Collection of Original Studies with a Bibliography*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 49–59.

_____, 1977. The Meaning and Significance of the Reported Speech of Phrynichus in Thucydides 8,48. In: K. H. Kinzl (ed.), *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of His Eighteenth Birthday*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 147–57.

Harris, E. M. 2016. Alcibiades, the Ancestors, Liturgies, and the Etiquette of Addressing the Athenian Assembly. In: V. Liotsakis & S. Farrington (eds), *The Art of History. Literary Perspectives on Greek and Roman Historiography*. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 145–55.

Hatzfeld, J. 1940. *Alcibiade : Étude sur l'histoire d'Athènes à la fin du V^e^ siècle*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.

Hornblower, S. 1987. *Thucydides*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

_____, 1991. *A Commentary on Thucydides*, I: *Books I–III*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

_____, 1996. *A Commentary on Thucydides*, II: *Books IV–V.24*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

_____, 2008. *A Commentary on Thucydides*, III: *Books 5.25–8.109*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

Howie, J. G. 1992. Η αριστεία από τον Όμηρο έως τον Ξενοφώντα. *Parnassos* 34: 425–47.

Hyland, J. O. 2007. Thucydides' Portrait of Tissaphernes Re-Examined. In: C. J. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 1–25.

Jordan, B. 2000. The Sicilian Expedition was a Potemkin Fleet. *CQ* 50(1): 63–79.

Kagan, D. 1981. *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press.

Kallet, L. 2006. Thucydides' Workshop of History and Utility outside the Text. In: A. Rengakos & A. Tsakmakis (eds), *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 335–68.

Kebric, R. B. 1976. Implications of Alcibiades' Relationship with the Ephor Endius. *Historia* 25(2): 249–52.

Kinzl, K. H. (ed.) 1977. *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of His Eighteenth Birthday*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Lang, M. L. 1996. Alcibiades vs. Phrynichus. *CQ* 46(1): 289–95.

Lateiner, D. 1975. The Speech of Teutiaplus (Thuc. 3.30). *GRBS* 16(2): 175–84.

Lattimore, S. 1998. *Thucydides,* The Peloponnesian War. Indianapolis & Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.

Liotsakis, V. 2017. *Redeeming Thucydides' Book VIII: Narrative Artistry in the Account of the Ionian War*. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

_____, 2022. Witnesses and Evidence in Thucydides: The Institutional and Rhetorical Context of the Digression on the Tyrannicides. In: A. Markantonatos, V. Liotsakis, & A. Serafim (eds), *Witnesses and Evidence in Ancient Greek Literature*. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 185–213.

Liotsakis, V. & Farrington, S. (eds) 2016. *The Art of History: Literary Perspectives on Greek and Roman Historiography*. Berlin & Boston: Walter de Gruyter.

Littman, R. J. 1970. The Loves of Alcibiades. *TAPhA* 101: 263–76.

Mader, G. 1993. Rogues' Comedy at Segesta (Thucydides 6.46): Alcibiades Exposed? *Hermes* 121: 181–95.

Mayer, K. 1998. Alcibiades the Deserter: P. Oxy. III 411 Col. IV. 98. *ZPE* 123: 232–34.

McGregor, M. F. 1965. The Genius of Alkibiades. *Phoenix* 19(1): 27–47.

Meiggs, R. 1972. *The Athenian Empire*. Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press.

Mellor, R. & Tritle, L. A. (eds) 1999. *Text and Tradition: Studies in Greek History and Historiography in Honor of Mortimer Chambers*. Claremont: Regina Books.

Mewes, W. 1868. *Untersuchungen über das achte Buch der Thukydideischen Gechichte*. Brandenburg: A. Müller.

Mitchell, L. 2008. Thucydides and the Monarch in Democracy. *Polis* 25(1): 1–30.

Münch, H. 1935. *Studien zu den Exkursen des Thukydides*. Heidelberg: Bilabel.

Nývlt, P. 2014. Was Alcibiades an Informant of Thucydides? *AAH* 54(4): 381–91.

Palmer, M. 1982. Alcibiades and the Question of Tyranny in Thucydides. *CJPS* 15(1): 103–24.

Pearson, L. 1949. Note on a Digression of Thucydides (VI, 54-59). *AJPh* 70(2): 186–89.

Plant, I. 1992. Thuc. VIII. 48.5: Phrynichus on the Wishes of Athens' Allies. *Historia* 41(2): 249–50.

Pouncey, P. R. 1980. *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Pritchett, W. K. 1995. *Thucydides' Pentekontaetia and Other Essays*. Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben.

Privat, É. (ed.) 1935. *Mélanges offerts à M. Octave Navarre par ses élèves et ses amis*. Toulouse: É. Privat.

Rawlings, H. R. 1981. *The Structure of Thucydides' History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rengakos, A. & Tsakmakis, A. (eds) 2006. *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*. Leiden & Boston: Brill.

Rhodes, P. J. 1988. *Thucydides, History II. Edited with Translation and Commentary*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
_____, 2010. *A History of the Classical Greek World, 478–323 BC*. Chichester & Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
Roisman, J. 1987. Alkidas in Thucydides. *Historia* 36(4): 385–421.
Romilly, de, J. 1956. *Histoire et raison chez Thucydide*. Paris: Les Belles-Lettres.
_____, 1963. *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, transl. P. Thody. Oxford: Blackwell.
_____, 1988. Plutarch and Thucydides or the Free Use of Quotations. *Phoenix* 42(1): 22–34.
Rood, T. C. B. 1998. *Thucydides. Narrative and Explanation*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.
Schwinge, E.-R. 2008. *Komplexität und Transparenz. Thukydides: Eine Leseanleitung*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
Seager, R. 1967. Alcibiades and the Charge of Aiming at Tyranny. *Historia* 16(1): 6–18.
Stadter, P. A. (ed.) 1973. *The Speeches in Thucydides. A Collection of Original Studies with a Bibliography*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
_____, 1993. The Form and Content of Thucydides' Pentecontaetia (1.89-117). *GRBS* 34: 35–72.
Stewart, D. J. 1966. Thucydides, Pausanias, and Alcibiades. *CJ* 61(4): 145–52.
Taylor, M. C. 2010. *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.
Tsakmakis, A. 1995. *Thukydides über die Vergangenheit*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
Tuplin, C. J. (ed.) 2007. *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales.
Von Fritz, K. 1967. *Die Griechische Geschichtsschreibung*, I–II. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
Westlake, H. D. 1955. Thucydides and the Pentekontaetia. *CQ* 5(1/2): 53–67.
_____, 1956. Phrynichos and Astyochos (Thucydides VIII. 50-1). *JHS* 76: 99–104.
_____, 1968. *Individuals in Thucydides*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wick, T. E. 1982. The Compositional Structure of Chapters 98–117 of Thucydides' Excursus on the Pentecontaetia (I, 89 ff.). *AC* 51: 15–24.
Wohl, V. 1999. The Eros of Alcibiades. *CA* 18(2): 349–85.
Woodhead, A. G. 1970. *Thucydides on the Nature of Power*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Wylie, G. 1992. Brasidas – Great Commander or Whiz-Kid? *QUCC* 41(2): 75–95.

Vasileios Liotsakis

Associate Professor of Ancient Greek Literature
Department of Philology
University of the Peloponnese
v.liotsakis@uop.gr