
This excellent book takes its title from a striking phrase in Thucydides' section on civil strife at Corcyra: 'the ancient simplicity of which nobility so largely consisted was laughed down and disappeared'. (Rather oddly, Crane, henceforth C, suddenly renders this as 'good nature' rather than 'simplicity' (142).

C's book is a contribution both to the study of Thucydides and to political science; but unlike some political scientists who tackle Thucydides he has superb command both of ancient Greek and of the Thucydidean thought-world. C very approximately follows Thucydides' text sequentially through the eight books of the History (but the Archaeology is treated later than the Corcyra affair); it is not however a close reading like that of W.R. Connor (*Thucydides*, [Princeton, 1984]). C's study is discursive, it does not aim at comprehensive coverage of the whole, and there is much about authors other than Thucydides, such as Xenophon's views on the Spartans and Herodotus' view of the Athenians, not to mention detailed parallels with tragedy and epic. (Notable discussions are the comparison of Sthenelaidas to Ajax (216), or the interesting use of Euripides' *Phoenissai* (319-20). (The play is variously called *Phoenician Women* and *Phoinissai* on the same page). Finally, extensive and confident use is made not just of Machiavelli and Marx but of modern insights drawn from disciplines not often exploited in conventional studies of Thucydides: Hans Morgenthau, Thomas Kuhn, Pierre Bourdieu and so on.

The first and brilliant chapter, audaciously entitled 'Sherman at Melos' makes good use of Sherman's correspondence to make the point that 'like Thucydides' Athenians, Sherman lived in a society that had changed profoundly, and whose changes dictated a revision in the ideology of force' (23). Thereafter there are excellent chapters which deal with the Corcyra affair and the Archaeology (two substantial chapters on this one section, the first of which (134ff.) offers a notable critique of ancient ideas of human progress, and the second of which is concerned with the accumulation of capital, with a good analysis of Thucydides inside a framework of of Marxist ideas (169ff.), and Mytilene (ch. 7, 'The Rule of the Strong and the Limits of Friendship') with illuminating
opening remarks about Pindar. Not surprisingly, given C's preoccupations, the Melian Dialogue chapter forms a wonderful climax, with a good deal of intelligent back-tracking to Herodotus. Only the Sicilian books come off rather badly in all this, though there is (in the course of ch. 10) a nice section on Euphemus at Camarina, a too often neglected speech.

The thesis of the book is not easy to summarise. Essentially, C thinks that Thucydides' agents, above all his Athenians, have moved beyond emotions like gratitude, pity, and traditional justice, and have replaced those sentiments with a 'new, deeply logical system based upon the principle that the strong rule the weak' (11-12). Beyond that bald sentence, I despair of avoiding over-simplification, but in any case the strength of C's account of one of the very greatest of world historians lies in its rich treatment of individual sections. C's long, well-written and impressively up-to-date book has notably advanced this reader's understanding of some extremely difficult questions of detailed and general interpretation.

Simon Hornblower
University College, London