

Finley, J. H. Jr., Three Essays on Thucydides (Harvard Univ. Press) 1967

Finley gives three reasons for believing in the essential accuracy of T. These are: (1) T. undoubtedly conceived many of his own ideas in Athens; hence the likelihood exists that he likewise conceived there the general concept of his speeches (2) Many of the ideas and forms of argument actually used in the speeches are attested of the period when they were allegedly delivered, a fact which strengthens the previous assumption (3) The antithetical style . . . was in all probability the creation . . . of earlier sophists whose stylistic teachings are seen both in the prose of the sophist Antiphon and in the earliest extant plays of Sophocles and Euripides. (115/4-6).

The generalizations of T's speeches have probably caused more people to doubt their accuracy than any other single element (116/4). There is no doubt that T's speeches are more compressed and thus more abstruse than actual speeches would have been. (116/10).

The Unity of Thucydides' History

The revival of the old controversy on when T composed the various parts of his History, although designed to prove the existence of many early parts in the work which we have, apparently tended to prove the opposite. The reason is that each new participant in the controversy, while advancing his own views, undermined those of his predecessor and hence diminished, rather than increased, the number of passages still capable of being regarded as early, with the result that it finally became possible to attack the whole position that the History contains many such passages. (118/1-4). In 1919 Ed Schwartz/^{seemingly} opened a new era in the study of T. when he identified early and late passages in T. with the purpose of proving a development in T's thought. In 1919-20 Max Pohlenz carried the method further while disagreeing with Schwartz's conclusions. His own view of development was to distinguish early from late speeches by the criterion of exactitude, discovering a development not so much in T's view of the war as in his methods of historiography. Nine years later W. Schadewaldt pressed the same conclusion still further. He went on to contrast the methods seemingly adopted in the Archaeology with what he considered the far broader and more penetrating attitude revealed in books six and seven, both of which, he argued, were composed after 404. (119/3-8)