

for his merits at his death; his successes are all attributed to pure chance (pp. 50-4). So much for the omissions. However, when Cawkwell does address the utterances of Thucydides, he stresses *what* Thucydides says, rather than *how* he says it. A consideration of the ways in which Thucydides fashioned his narrative, arranged his material, positioned the passages or used rhetorical devices is what appears to be 'conspicuous by its absence' in Cawkwell's own book.

Cawkwell's decision to discuss the conduct of Athens' leadership during the war in two separate chapters, one devoted to strategy and the other to the politicians and their policies, has no basis in the historical reality, and stems from his own interest when examining the views of Thucydides. This leads to a curious conclusion. Cawkwell strongly suggests that there may have been collusion between Demosthenes and Cleon on policy towards Sparta. Nevertheless, he seems to be commending Demosthenes for his strategy while at the same time he criticises Cleon on political grounds, because of his refusal to accept the peace offer of 425 (p. 55, 65-6, 74) — in one case diverging from Thucydides' verdict, in another agreeing with him. But Cleon and Demosthenes must be dealt with together and bear the same judgement if indeed the pair cooperated and strove to achieve the same goals. Conversely, two other chapters are divided because of their historical subject matter, when they should have been combined from the historiographical point of view. Both the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war and the Sicilian expedition are discussed in terms of the 'truest' causes. The same approach prevails in the two accounts: by 'truest' Thucydides must have meant a deeper cause than a mere pretext, not the avowed one of the participants themselves.

While the book is guided by two different and sometimes conflicting points of view, that of commenting on the writing of Thucydides and that of describing the historical reality of the Peloponnesian war, Cawkwell succeeds in illuminating both levels in a new and attractive way. His work provides a fascinating insight into the area that is found at the crossroads between historiography and pure historical questions. As such it is sure to be of interest for historians in general, and not only for students of the 'greatest war'.

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T.J. Luce, *The Greek Historians*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, 156 pp., ISBN 0-415-10592-7.

Only seasoned scholars should write introductions to their subjects. The responsibility of simplifying vast and complex knowledge for beginners, navigating through scholarly controversy and making a subject pertinent and interesting while avoiding oversimplification, should fall only to the most experienced hands.

Prof. T.J. Luce has spent his professional life thinking and writing about ancient historiography. He has produced both detailed studies and general assessments of individual texts (most notably of Livy, Tacitus and Herodotus), and before his retirement was known as a masterful teacher. The Routledge editor Richard Stoneman invited him to write this survey, which, in the words of the preface, 'is introductory in nature and is aimed at A level and first-year undergraduates'. Luce was the right man for the job, and he has written a very good book.

Given the audience, the book's organization and emphases make sense: first a brief sketch of the pre-Herodotean material (the chapter is titled 'Before History'), then *two* chapters each on the great masters of the fifth century, Herodotus and Thucydides, followed by a survey of fourth-century historiography and a final chapter on Polybius. The focus on the three giants of Greek historiography is indeed appropriate, not only because of the accomplishments and later influence of each, but also for the more mundane reason that their texts (or large portions of them) have been preserved and can be read in a coherent manner in translation. The chapter on fourth-century historiography is accordingly the least engaging of the book, reflecting in its very structure — after a brief exposition of Xenophon, sections on the different styles and genres of historical writing — the fragmentary and varied nature of the texts themselves. The many Greek historians of the Roman empire are left out (and will apparently not be covered in the companion volume on Roman historiography being prepared by Ronald Mellor), but this group of writers has been relatively neglected in scholarship, as well.

Readers of Herodotus will know that Luce has recently entered into the thicket of controversy regarding Herodotus' *Aegyptiaca*, but in the present work Luce remains true to his purpose and offers no new interpretations or polemical opinions; controversies are unavoidable, but are settled quietly and with invariable good sense. At the same time, he manages to keep the discussion fresh, insightful and interesting, which is an accomplishment in a book of this nature. Particularly successful is chapter 5, 'Thucydides: Science and Tragedy', in which Luce combines into a unified explanation two aspects of the *History* which modern critics have (perversely) found to be incompatible in one author. Luce shows how, on the one hand, Thucydides was influenced by medical science in his approach to raw, observed data of human experience, how he tried to distinguish between important and insignificant detail, how he searched for underlying causes, and how he assumed that 'human nature' was neither inherently good nor bad but would lead men to act in certain ways in similar sets of circumstances. On the other hand, Thucydides was an artistic writer with a profound and passionate vision, by which he viewed the Peloponnesian War not (simplistically) as a morality play about empire and the excesses of wealth and pride, but as a generation-long ordeal (*a kinesis*) which brought unprecedented destruction and suffering on all of Hellas. The sheer length of the war meant that its nature, and the patterns of human thought and action (*logos* and *ergon*) witnessed in it, changed and developed over time. Luce teaches that

the changing nature of the conflict brought corresponding changes in the psychology and behavior of the participants and ... Thucydides means the reader to appreciate these developments as the narrative unfolds. The question is not what Thucydides thought about a topic in absolute terms but how as a historian he saw its formulation changing over time. (p. 96)

This is just right. Violence, brutality, violation of Hellenic *nomoi*, all increased as the war wore on, 'putting men's impulses on the same level with their fortunes' (Thuc. 3.82.2). By the end of the conflict, Luce observes, 'the civilized veneer of Hellenic culture cracked and fell away' (p. 98).

Errors are few. Two, however, are found in the chapter just discussed. In 8.97 Thucydides praises the rule of the Five Thousand, not the Four Hundred (p. 95), and 3.84, which Luce quotes for illustration (pp. 85-6), has been rejected by a majority of scholars as spurious; another passage should have been used. Yet on the whole the reader may trust Luce's facts and judgments.

If such a book were available in Hebrew, it would greatly ease my task in my survey of ancient historiography for undergraduates with no knowledge of the ancient languages. The temptation to assign it, together with the ancient authors, would be great. But I think I would resist. For while the presentation here is clear, sensible, often illuminating, and does invite the reader to attempt the original texts themselves, it inevitably — like all books of this type — leaves an impression of authority and finality regarding the issues selected and explained. This is no criticism of Luce, who produced a good book, but of the genre. My students, after reading this book, would not read Herodotus or Thucydides in the same way, or bring the same questions and puzzlements to class. Some would choose not to read the ancient authors at all. For students, especially undergraduates — and especially in this decade — are concerned to succeed in a rapid and efficient manner, to learn what the ‘right answer’ is and move on. This problem especially annoys teachers in the Humanities, where critical reading and appreciation of ambiguity are as important as mastery of information. Ancient authors are not immediately accessible; they require effort and patience. In my experience, students’ first reaction to Herodotus and Thucydides is usually bewilderment (a good thing), and then an urgent desire to know what I want them to know. Refusing to satisfy that desire can lead them to a fresh and honest interaction with the text. Luce’s book, with all its virtues, will be an excellent companion and guide to the first-time reader who lacks any other real teacher of Greek historiography but understands that neither this book nor any other contains unimpeachable ‘right answers’.

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Janice J. Gabbert, *Antigonus II Gonatas: A Political Biography*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, viii + 88 pp.

Antigonus Gonatas occupies a pivotal place in the history of ancient Macedon. The family’s dynasty took root in the era of his grandfather, Antigonus Monophthalmus, founder of a long and impressive line. But Monophthalmus, shrewdest of Alexander’s generals, consumed the later part of his career in ambitious eastern conquests, which evaporated at the battle of Ipsus in 301 BCE. His mercurial son, Demetrius Poliorcetes, lit up the skies of the diadoch era for two decades. He claimed the Macedonian throne — and occasionally held it. But he too came to an ignominious end in the East. Gonatas, more plodding and less spectacular than his dynamic predecessors, represents stability and endurance. He reigned and ruled in Macedon, exercised a continuous hegemony in Greece, and secured a regime that his family would control for more than a century thereafter.

Hence, it seems, a worthy subject for biography. But grave obstacles stand in the way. The evidence is sparse, late, woefully inadequate, and frequently unreliable. That did not deter the distinguished Hellenistic historian W.W. Tarn from devoting a hefty tome to Antigonus Gonatas more than three quarters of a century ago. Tarn’s contribution was stimulating and speculative, insightful and imaginative, but filled with flights of fancy. Janice Gabbert’s new endeavor offers a sharp contrast, in every way. She produced a slender volume, more in keeping with the paucity of the evidence. The text is spare, sober, and restrained, careful in exposition, cautious in conjecture. Gabbert provides a reasonable analysis of the evidence and a fair summary of Gonatas’ career. She traces his