

## The Homeric Thucydides

This paper will address the paradox between the antipoetic stance of Thucydides and the numerous allusions to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* found in his *History*. Previously, scholars have acknowledged the unique and conspicuous inclusion of these allusions despite the austere methodology of Thucydides, but none have discussed what sort of implications they may create for our understanding of his *History* as a whole.

This paper has a threefold purpose: the first will connect many disparate scholarly ideas on these allusions and form them into a cohesive whole, specifically those from the works of June A. Allison (1997), Stavros A. Frangoulidis (1993), C.J. Mackie (1996) and A.V. Zadorojnyi (1998). The second purpose will argue that in order to substantiate his teleological view of history, Thucydides had to assume the prophetic role of an epic poet at strategic points in his narrative. His epic language, Homeric allusions and focalizing techniques approximate a panoptic, often oracular conception of events. To adapt Eduard Fraenkel's words (1950): if [Thucydides] shows himself capable of revealing certain facts of the past which could not have been known to him in the natural course of events, his readers will be ready to trust his prophetic vision.

Such a vision leads to the final purpose of the paper: to demonstrate that Thucydides does not wish to excise epic from his vision of history, but instead, he wishes to avoid its tendency to edify, substantiate or even validate the traditional axioms of Greek culture. This last purpose will build off the work Stewart Flory (1990). Thucydides' vision, in short, is one of repeated, inevitable destruction. The final passages of Book Seven, describing in full the Athenian defeat at Syracuse, will serve as the focal point and substantiation of these three goals.

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