

in precedenza, che vengono elaborati sotto forma di integrazioni, ripensamenti e verifiche. Benché non sembri presentare novità assolute, il libro di Mele rimane un utile contributo sintetico su un argomento che da tempo meritava una trattazione del genere.

*Mika Kajava*

MARTHA C. TAYLOR: *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-76593-0 (hb). XII, 311 pp. 3 maps. GBP 50, USD 85.

Martha C. Taylor's book *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War* is a textual analysis of the classic type of Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, and precisely for this reason I found this book refreshing. It is an accomplished, disciplined and detailed reading of Thucydides' text, meant to strengthen Taylor's main arguments, namely that in his work, Thucydides criticised "Pericles' radical redefinition of Athens as a city divorced from its traditional homeland of Attica" and that "Thucydides ... repeatedly questions and discredits the Periclean vision." (p. 1). Given the fact that Thucydides' account is the most important source of our knowledge of the Peloponnesian War and the power politics of the era, and that Taylor's work is the first to consider the ancient historian as a critic of Pericles' vision of Athens as an empire based on its position as a major naval force of the Greek world, I find Taylor's study one of great importance.

The book is divided into an introduction followed by five main chapters. Taylor begins by analysing Thucydides' account of Pericles' view of Athens as "the sea and the city", an empire not reliant on its geographical status but rather on its citizens' ability to adjust themselves as Athenians of Athens, no matter what their actual location was. To demonstrate her argument, Taylor explores Thucydides' account of Pericles' speeches to Athenians, as well as Pericles' epitaph. In the following chapters, Taylor shows how after his death, Pericles' views still influenced the politics of later Athenian leaders until the end of the Peloponnesian War. Throughout her study, Taylor is able to show how Thucydides, explicitly or implicitly, expressed his disapproval of a view of Athens as a naval empire as well as of the Athenians' weakness of character in abandoning their motherland in exchange for status as a naval force and further, how this sentiment led the Athenians to disasters in Melos, Sicily and Samos.

Thucydides' language is probably most complex in the texts written in Attic prose. Taylor's detailed reading of this author is skilful and carefully considered and her arguments always seem valid. Her analysis thus seems convincing and certainly offers new insights to those studying the contemporary views of Periclean politics. For the benefit of those who do not read Greek, the author quotes Thucydides in English using her own translations. This book will thus be of interest both to classicists and to those interested in the history of political thought as well to those wishing to know more about the foundations of western democracy. A bibliography, an index, and an *index locorum* completes the book.

*Sanna-Ilaria Kittelä*