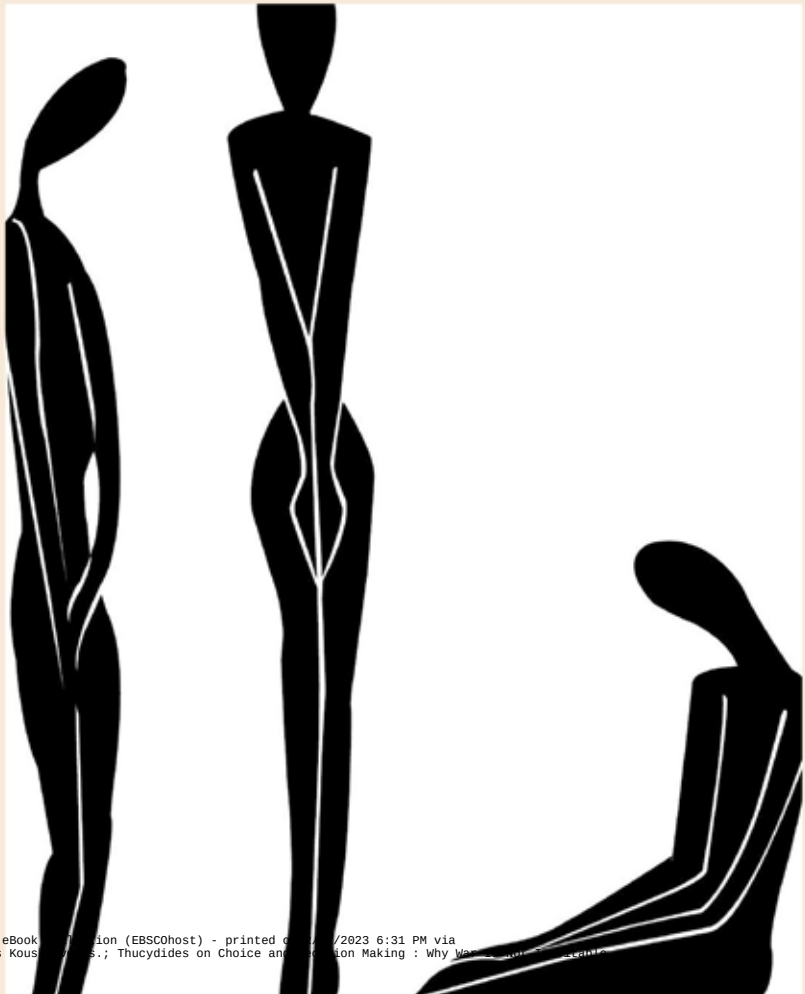
Ilias Kouskouvelis

Thucydides on Choice and Decision Making

Why War Is Not Inevitable



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To Lia and to Filitsa Ioanna

Contents

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"Those who have the choice, if in all else they prosper, it is great folly to go to war."

Thucydides, 2.61.1

Introduction

This book provides a new perspective on Thucydides' seminal work and consolidates further the view, although for different reasons, that his ideas resonate with the twenty-first century.[1] The kernel of the book delineates Thucydides' thinking about how people decide, and, therefore, its main task is to present it, structured in two schemata.[2] The first is about how decisions are made, especially in matters of war and peace (1.75.3, 1.76.2).[3] The second schema, connected with the previous, focuses on the reasons why people are making flawed choices or decisions that drive them into risks (3.45.4). In this introduction, I will explain my long-time relation with the outstanding work of Thucydides, the living and intellectual paths through which I have reached this thesis, and the basic elements of his decision-making insights.

The first encounter I had as a young Greek with Thucydides (46–98 BC)[4] was through the common and widespread view, that he was a "historian," who wrote a book about the ancient war between the Athenians and the Spartans, the "Peloponnesian War" (431–404 BC). Soon, the reference to the southern Greek region of the Peloponnese came into conflict with my experiences, since I was growing up in Halkidhiki, next to Potidaea,[5] which was one of the issues that "triggered" the war. This living experience raised in me a question that I addressed to my History teacher during my first year of high school, when he taught us that, in addition to the military operations in Potidaea and its peninsula (Pallini), battles have taken place in Sithonia (the middle peninsula of Halkidhiki), in Amphipolis, practically all over Macedonia, but also in Ionia (Minor Asia), and in Sicily: why then was the war between the Athenians and the Spartans called "Peloponnesian," since it took place not only in the Peloponnese, but also

in Halkidhiki and many other areas? The answer I got was "because this is what has prevailed."

My interest with Thucydides continued when, in the third year of high school, the time came for the teaching of the Funeral Oration "of Pericles," as it was named to us, and then, without knowing that I was raising a much and long debated issue, my question was who wrote the Funeral Oration, Pericles or Thucydides? The answer was that "it was spoken" by Pericles, but it was written by Thucydides, who was the "first scientific historian."

So for many years, in my mind, like in many people's minds today, Thucydides was the "first historian" who recorded "scientifically" the war, which was later dubbed "Peloponnesian," although it was a war fought between Athenians and Spartans, and despite the fact that it was the Athenians who held the leading role in this war drama! There was not even a word on the premises upon which Thucydides based his writing and, especially, his analysis and interpretation; not a word, even at the Law School that I later attended, about the great debate he raised on the relationship between power, law, and morality. I had to wait nearly a decade, until I was in the United States, in 1986, for my Master's studies in International Relations,[6] in order to be taught in English the Melian Dialogue and the Mytilinean Debate as the first, significant and characteristic texts of International Relations, in the realist tradition; and to hear that Thucydides was not a historian, or at least not only a historian, but, for many, he was the "father" of International Relations.

Since then—more than thirty years now—I continued studying his monumental treatise, in different versions of Modern Greek and, progressively, as my knowledge was improving, in the ancient text. Of course, I haven't abandoned my very first question: why his work is called "The History of the Peloponnesian War," "The Peloponnesian War," "Historiae," "History," or «Ξυγγραφή» ("Xyngrafē").[7] Thucydides has never called himself a historian and he never used the term "history"[8] or «ξυγγραφή» to describe his work.[9] Indeed, in the first line of text one reads: "Thucydides, the Athenian, wrote («ξυνέγραψε») the war[10] between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians" (1.1.1). But, in the famous section on the "truest cause" of the war, he reversed the order: "the Athenians and the Peloponnesians have started it" (1.23.4); and he did the same in the first line of the second book: "here, this moment, begins the war of the Athenians and the Peloponnesians . . . " (2.1.1). Obviously, on the basis of the text, the use of the terms «Ξυγγραφή» or even "Peloponnesian War"—a term first used in the first century BC by Diodorus of Sicily and Cicero[11]—are perhaps more appropriate to title the work than "History," which seems to have prevailed and which, contributing to disorientation, alludes to someone who was simply a "historian."

I maintain that Thucydides is more than just a historian, exactly as many of his commentators in antiquity thought, when they referred to him solely as "the author" (or the "writer," «ξυγγραφεύς»), in counter distinction with Homer, to whom they referred as "the poet" («ποιητής»).[12] Through the study of the war "between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians," he touched upon the causes of war, hegemony, power competition and polarization, strategy in all the expressions of his time, alliances and their cohesion, the nature and the behaviour of man in a war environment, but also the political system and leadership—topics that, after him, were again studied in the International Relations literature just in the twentieth century. This is obviously what led Martin Wight to characterize his work as one of the "supreme" books on power politics ever.[13]

Thucydides, more than 2,400 years ago, came to crystallize in a single work, an entire body of thought and wisdom on all the above topics, and, more important, a distinct methodological approach to knowledge, expressed first and before him by the Sophists and the Hippocratics.[14] This positions him at the same level of thinkers that were not even born when he started writing his work (431 BC), such as Plato (427–347 BC) and Aristotle (384–322 BC). The fact is that Thucydides is the first producer of political thought in general[15] and, given the admirable and insightful contribution of his treatise to the matter of war, I suggest that instead of thinking of or referring to his text as the history of a specific war (the arbitrarily named "Peloponnesian"), his work could be perceived and received as it really is: a study of war in general; as Bakker pointed out "Thucydides does not write a treatise *about* the Peloponnesian War; he writes the war. The War is his work."[16] For this reason I submit that his work could be referred to accordingly, with the more appropriate term "*The War*." This is the one I use hereinafter.[17]

Obviously, the study of Thucydides, and, more broadly, the teaching of International Relations, for the great majority of scholars in the field, is focusing on the central issues relative to war.[18] The question of decision-making in Thucydides' work was only of indirect interest in the International Relations literature, mainly when classical realists addressed human nature or when their critics argued that their approach is pessimistic and cynical. Initially, it was of no interest to me either, as my attention was first captured by the issues of power, which led me to the study and analysis of the phenomenon of hegemony.[19]

It is impossible, however, when one studies *The War*, not to come to the conclusion that decisions and decision-making have been crucial in determining developments, war and peace, the fate of people, and cities in the ancient world. So when, before long, I began preparing an updated and improved version of my textbook on decision-making and crisis management,[20] I thought that in order to highlight and explain better the modern theories of

decision-making it would be attractive for the students to use, among others, examples of events and, especially, of decisions from *The War*. Thus, I started searching in the text and systematically recorded the various cases and respective interpretations in categories of decision-making. But as the study progressed in depth and scope, and the number of, on the one hand, the explained decisions amounted to hundreds, and, on the other, his generalized insights on politics, war, and people, amounted to dozens, I realized, more and more, that there was an explanation of both the process and of the decisions taken. It was at this stage of my research that I decided, initially with many reservations, to investigate and fully explore whether Thucydides had a decision-making thinking and, in the affirmative, how it was shaped.

Nowadays, after many years of effort, and after a systematic, complete, and thorough study of the text in Ancient and its different versions of Modern Greek, I am able to argue that Thucydides, apart from his political thinking, had a determined and specific thinking, structured in schemata, about how people make decisions, both *on*, as well as *in* war and peace. My findings changed the direction of my research beyond simply renewing and updating a textbook. The goal now was to uncover and present Thucydides' decision-making insights.

His decision-making thinking, whose parts I have recovered from the text as fragments of an entire picture and which I have tried to reconstruct, is anthropocentric—it is based on the operation of the human being. Man, alone and collectively, as an ordinary citizen, a member of a group or a leader, not only decides mainly on the basis of necessity and of his nature, but also on the basis of another series of factors (fear, honor, interest, boldness, arrogance, passions, hope, and chance), which express what he wants, feels, or seeks. For this reason, and despite the fact that a rational, cost-benefit analysis in the interpretation and justification of a large number of decisions is often and clearly used by Thucydides or by his protagonists, his thinking, assessed with contemporary criteria, could be easily seen as close to those contemporary decision-making theories, privileging man's subjective (psychological or ideological) dimensions.

The exhaustive study of Thucydides' text highlighted also a wealth of examples of decision-making, which are offered to us in the form of historical events and/or as their interpretations thereof. I am using these specific examples and/or interpretations in order to determine the meaning of the different and multiple independent variables of decision-making, such as necessity, human nature, honor, fear, or interest, to understand the causes that produce them, and mainly to record, either case by case basis or by induction out of several, their impact on decision-making. It is precisely these abundant examples of decisions' interpretations, one after another, that, as mentioned in the very beginning, consolidate the view that much of what we know today

was known to Thucydides and his contemporaries.[21] As for the question or, rather, the objection that may be raised, as to whether ancient ideas about decision-making are valid or useful today, the answer for me is obvious: yes, subject naturally to certain restrictions of analogy as to size, technology, morality, and the knowledge gained since then. Thus, the minimum that the present effort of recording and reconstructing Thucydides' perspective to decision-making may contribute is a proposal for the interpretation of decision-making, which, further, may offer elements or hypotheses for improving existing contemporary interpretations.

Therefore, the search, discovery, recording, and presentation of the Thucydidean decision-making thinking is the main and most important task of this volume, which makes it a completely different piece of research, as compared with previous approaches on Thucydides. To attain my task I employ content analysis. I systematically use words, concepts, and excerpts from the text of *The War*, sometimes as an example of a decision-making cause, sometimes as the basis of the decision itself, and sometimes as an evaluation by Thucydides of the decision-making-process' correctness or of the decision itself. Hence, the fourth and fifth chapters of this volume are entirely and exclusively based on Thucydides' verses.[22]

Using Thucydides' text in these specific chapters, or in any part of this book, does not mean that I am attempting to interpret his intentions or present my thoughts as those of his.[23] I have conscientiously and scrupulously avoided reinterpretation, so as to let the text speak for itself. For this reason I have checked every section that I quote at any point of my text, avoiding translations that distance themselves from the text, and trying to connect as reliably and objectively the ancient Greek terms with meanings understandable for the modern reader. Simultaneously, in the study of all the independent variables listed and found in Thucydides' text, such as, for example, honor, fear, or interest, I am also attempting an elementary quantitative analysis. This is a beneficial result of the content analysis applied throughout the entire text of *The War*, which allows, quite safely, to proceed, based on the number and the frequency of use of each variable, to a comparative quantitative evaluation of its importance.

The study of Thucydides through the prism of decision-making fills a scholarly gap. It is well known that his work has been studied by eminent philosophers, classicists, historians, political scientists, and international relations specialists—beginning in modern times with Thomas Hobbes, the first translator of the text in English; yet, almost no one has approached his monumental text with a view to distilling his approach to decision-making. Great classicists and historians have dealt with his methodology, his sources, the influence of the Hippocratic school, of sophists, and even of the tragic poets

on him, with his writing style and the speeches, his inductive generalizations and the resulting projections in the future, with political realism, hegemony, balance of power and, of course, with war.[24] But no research, as far as I have discovered, has sought a decision-making thinking in Thucydides.[25] With nearly one partial exception: that of the French academic, Hellenist and dedicated student of Thucydides, Jacqueline de Romilly, who touched on the issue but did no proceed further in this direction.

Jacqueline de Romilly dealt with Thucydides in her PhD, *Thucydides et l'impérialisme athénien*[26] or *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism.*[27] In what she called "The Theory of Athenian Imperialism,"[28] she attempted to determine how Thucydides understands that system of imperialism[29] and how he succeeds in doing so thanks to his "very great tendency towards abstraction."[30] It is here that de Romilly attempted to link leadership and the citizens' behavior with concepts I examine in the present work, that is, human nature, necessity, and hubris, and she referred, among others, to sections 1.75.3, 1.76.2, and 3.45.4–7, which I consider as the basis of Thucydides' decision-making thinking, expressed in a form of schemata. Indeed, she characterized some of these concepts as psychological, which allowed her to talk about a "psychological urge"[31] of the Athenian imperialism.

Even more interesting for the present study is her work *La construction de la vérité chez Thucydide*.[32] In the second chapter,[33] she shows the evolution of the inductive process in the ancient Greek thought, starting from Homer and arriving quickly to Thucydides. She notes that "general reflections are more common" in *The War* than in any other ancient Greek work and estimates that in each of the eight books there are about fifteen to twenty "general reflections,"[34] which often take the form of maxims, describing specific, mainly international policy issues, strategy, and, of interest to my research, decision-making; moreover, she presents and analyses Thucydides' efforts to predict. Thus, in the above way, de Romilly documents Thucydides' theoretical tendencies, because, if anything, generalizing out of the partial and attempts to predictability are the key features of any such proneness. Finally, in the third chapter,[35] she turns again to the same topic that she has dealt with previously in *The Athenian Imperialism*. She focuses on the psychological dimension of the citizens' decisions, but she uses nowhere the words "decision-making procedure," "decision theory," or anything similar. This chapter, however, is in the literature, to the extent I know, the closest with the logic of my present work.

The volume at hand is composed of six chapters. The following chapter introduces the reader to the concept of decision-making, its relation with politics, and, based on Thucydides' verses, the difficulties of decision-making, such as uncertainty and lack of information, and its costs. The second chapter

briefly presents the evolution of the understanding of decision-making and the scientific approach to it, the modern theories or models, the theoretical and practical benefits they offer, and connects them with our knowledge on negotiations and crisis management. Thus the two chapters set the decision-making background of the present study.

The third chapter examines together and for the first time in the literature seven debates that have taken place on Thucydides. It starts with the debates on the composition and on the veracity of his text, on the authenticity (or historicity) of the speeches, and on the scientific character of his contribution. Taking part in these discussions, I argue that Thucydides provided us with a rather unitary and accurate work; and that his speeches contain the *γνώμη* (the opinion, the main ideas) of the orators, but, given the circumstances, he had the opportunity to express his thinking on the topic of discussion; and, based on nine argumentation points, I maintain that he is an early social scientist or a scientific precursor.

Then the chapter moves into examining his impact on International Relations, including his unwanted involvement in the inter-paradigm contentions, meaning whether he is a realist, a neorealist, or a constructivist. After reviewing the arguments, here I conclude that Thucydides had his own idea about the international level of politics in his era—a Thucydidean approach—putting particular emphasis on deliberations, or the decision-making processes, for the beginning and the conduct of the war. This point is becoming clearer in the presentation of the sixth debate, the one on the "use and abuse" of Thucydides, by discussing the so-called "Thucydides's trap" and the truest cause of the war, and showing that misreadings could be avoided and the "truest cause" could find its proper meaning had we taken under consideration the decision-making processes. Finally, the chapter presents the most recent discussion on how one should study and interpret him. I propose a holistic reading of his work, so as to avoid the mirroring of one's ideas, the misreadings, and/or the ahistorical approaches, which for a period of time have dominated the International Relations literature. Thus, the conclusions to all seven debates set the theoretical framework for the two following chapters and set the conditions for examining his decision-making thinking.

Next, in the fourth chapter, the book enters fully and exclusively to the study of Thucydides' decision-making thinking, expressed in the form of schemata. I argue that Thucydides' decision-making thinking is encompassed in verses 1.75.3, 1.76.2, and 3.45.4–7, and is structured in two associated schemata, which show the movement of human behavior and decisions, from adjusting to necessity and satisfying the human nature's weaknesses to one's risky or flawed decisions and their consequences.

The fourth chapter, thus, uncovers and presents the first schema of Thucydides' multicausal approach to how people decide. Its point of

departure is verses 1.75.3 and 1.76.2. These two, almost identical, paragraphs demonstrate how Thucydides considers humans think and act under the influence of subjective motivations (necessity, human nature, honor, fear, and interest). Man seeks or maintains power and decides on the basis of necessity and of his nature, as well as because of honor, fear, and interest. In order to determine how Thucydides understands each one of the five factors, the chapter proceeds into an exhaustive examination of what is their meaning, their role, or, even, in the case of fear, how it can be managed. This is done by discovering, by documenting, and by making a synthesis of all phrases and paragraphs in Thucydides' text that describe, directly or indirectly, any decision or action undertaken by the participants of the great ancient war. Moreover, an effort is made to explore whether and to what degree each of these factors and altogether may explain the decision to go to war, particularly in connection to Thucydides' "truest cause" explanation (1.23.6).

The fifth chapter elaborates the second schema. It is based on verses 3.45.4–7, in which Thucydides is explaining why and how people come to flawed decisions or, as he says, those that drive them into risks (or, "into dangers"). Thucydides eloquently presents new factors influencing people in their decisions (boldness, arrogance, passions, hope, and chance) and links them with all five factors of the previous schema. Based on the methodological framework put forward in chapter 4, this one proceeds with a thorough examination of how Thucydides understands the influence of each one of these new factors by defining their meaning, role, and interaction, and of how he uses this schema in order to explain the Athenians' decision in another case, that of the expedition against Sicily.

Finally, the last chapter considers what, if anything, can Thucydides tell us about "right" or "good" decision-making. This is an important consideration, given that in his work he offers suggestions about how to proceed to a "right" decision. Yet, the chapter argues that Thucydides neither constructs such a proposal nor has such a schema; his suggestions are disparate, and often conflicting. Although some of his ideas are expressed in the form of advices, it seems that all of them have an ad hoc application and none of them is expressed consistently and in a general form.

Given the above chapters, I believe that the intellectual itinerary of this book is clear. It starts from the concept, the history, the modern theoretical background, and the practical benefits of decision-making studies, then goes to the multidisciplinary theoretical framework of the Thucydidean secondary literature and ends with the presentation of Thucydides' decision-making thinking.

There is, however, one question that I left to answer at the end of this introduction: overall, and after so many books written on Thucydides and his work, why is it important to write another one in order to uncover his decision-making

thinking? The answer is simple and threefold. First, as I have explained, because it has not been tried before and it may contribute to a further understanding of politics; second, because there are many misreadings and axiomatic interpretations of his work, particularly on the causes of war, which may be overcome by emphasizing the decision-making processes; and, most importantly, third, because, some of these interpretations, transferred into the real world of today, often with the usurped authority of Thucydides, may have negative policy consequences, as, among them, one may find included the belief to a despairing malignity of an unchanging human nature, to pessimistic determinism, and to the inevitability of war. Perhaps, Thucydides' world contains elementary seeds of the above; but, overall, and contrary to these long time stereotypes, it is primarily a world of choice and decisions.

NOTES

1. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 227. Indicatively these blog articles show the continuous general interest on Thucydides: Robert Zaretsky, "The Mytilenean Dialogue From 428 B.C. Explains Who Really Won the Trump-Clinton Debate", *Foreign Policy*, September 28, 2016, http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/28/the-mytilenean-dialogue-from-428-bce-explains-who-really-won-the-trump-clinton-debate/; Daniel W. Drezner, "Which Classic Work of International Relations Offers the Most Pertinent Description of Today?", *The Washington Post*, March 2, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/03/02/which-classic-work-of-international-relations-offers-the-most-pertinent-description-of-today/?utm_term=.8fa540bee438#comments; Chen Weihua, "Thucydides's Trap Does Not Have to be Inevitable", *China Daily*, June 23, 2017, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2017-06/23/content_29854458.htm; S. N. Jaffe, "The Risks and Rewards of Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War", *War on the Rocks*, July 6, 2017, https://warontherocks.com/2017/07/the-risks-and-rewards-of-thucydides-history-of-the-peloponnesian-war/.

2. I name "schema"/ "schemata" the mental structures Thucydides describes as used by his contemporaries in decision-making, and which he ends up using in order to interpret their decisions. A "schema" here is understood as a "cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among these attributes"; see Susan T. Fiske and Shelley E. Taylor, *Social Cognition* (New York: Random House, 1991), 98. Schemata influence the actors' selection, interpretation, and their memory of information; see Richard K. Herrmann, *et al.*, "Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata", *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (September 1997): 406, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2600790. See also Stefan Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended: Religion, Narrative, and IR Theory in the Peloponnesian Crisis", *Review of International Studies* 38 (2012): 667, doi:10.1017/S0260210511000738.

3. All references, throughout this text, are made to Thucydides' book, chapter, and section (verse).

4. Thucydides the Athenian, from the municipality of Alimos, was son of Oloros and Hegesipyle, and a close relative of Miltiades and Cimon. For his life, family, and political background, see John H. Finley Jr., *Thucydides* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 3–35; see also Luciano Canfora, "Biographical Obscurities and Problems of Composition," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, eds. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2006), 3–31.

5. Potidaea is nowadays a village in the area known since Thucydides as Halkidhiki or Chalkidiki, in the south of the Greek region of Macedonia, built upon the ruins of the ancient town.

6. The term "International Relations" with capital letters is used hereinafter to mean the field of International Relations.

7. «Ξυγγραφή» ("writing," "authoring," "composition") is a noun that results from the verb «ξυνέγραψε» ("wrote," "authored," "composed," "recorded"), the third word in Thucydides' text, and has been used as the title of Thucydides' work in Modern Greek language translations. For more see Nicole Loraux, "Thucydide a écrit la Guerre du Péloponnèse", *Mètis. Anthropologie des mondes grecs anciens* 1, no. 1 (1986): 139–61, DOI: 10.3406/metis.1986.868; also Egbert Bakker, "Contract and Design: Thucydides' Writing," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, eds. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), 128.

8. This has been pointed out by David Bolotin, "Thucydides," in *History of Political Philosophy*, eds. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 7. Also, by Michael Palmer, "Love of Glory and the Common Good," *The American Political Science Review* 76, no. 4 (December 1982): 825, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1962974; Josiah Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention of Political Science," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, eds. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2006), 131; and, Steven Forde, "Thucydides on the Causes of Athenian Imperialism," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 2 (June 1986): 433, note 1, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1958267?origin=JSTOR-pdf

9. Ober also notes that Thucydides never described his work as a «*ξυγγραφή*». His «*ξυνέγραψε τον πόλεμον*» (1.1.1) might suggest that he saw himself as writing a «ξυγγραφή», that is, as working in the same literary genre as Hellanicus whose «*Ἀττική ξυγγραφή*» Thucydides cites (1.97); see Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 131–32.

10. This is also the way Hobbes has translated this phrase.

11. See Charles D. Morris, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 1*, Perseus Digital Library, Tufts University, accessed January 3, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0097%3Abook%3D1%3Achapter%3D1. Given, however, that the Athenians are mentioned in the text twice ahead of the Peloponnesians and the fact that the main protagonist of Thucydides' work is Athens, it would have been fairer and less mistaken to name the text the "Athenian" and not the "Peloponnesian" war. Another, better choice than the dominant, could have been that used by Hobbes in his 1648 translation, "History of the Grecian War."

12. See Edgar C. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 1*, Perseus Digital Library, Tufts University, accessed January 3, 2018, http://www.perseus.tufts.

edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0095%3Abook%3D1%3Achapter%3D1.

13. Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, eds. Hedley Bull and Carsteen Holbraad (Middlessex: Penguin Books, 1978), 24.

14. The Hippocratics are the followers of Hippocrates (460–370 BC), the physician and philosopher, who is considered as the "father of Medicine."

15. For a similar point of view, see Patricia E. Easterling and Bernard M. W. Knox, *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

16. Bakker also underlines the "pure transitivity" of the word «ξυνέγραψε» ("wrote"), considering as its direct object the "war." He indicates that this use is constant throughout the text, as, for example, whenever Thucydides marks the end of the year: 2.70.4 (2nd year), 2.103.2 (3rd), 3.25.2 (4th), 3.88.4 (5th), 3.116.3 (6th), 4.51.1 (7th), 4.135.2 (9th), 6.7.4 (16th), 6.93.4 (17th), 7.18.4 (18th), 8.6.5 (19th), and 8.60.3 (20th). See Bakker, "Contract and Design," 110–1. A similar view is held by S. N. Jaffe, *Thucydides on the Outbreak of War. Character and Contest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 199, who writes: "rather, he appears to understand himself to be revealing the essence of a single war—and thereby the essence of war itself—through his imitation of the Peloponnesian War".

17. Bakker does not go that far and ends up naming Thucydides' work "The War of the Peloponnesians and Athenians"; see Bakker, "Contract and Design."

18. See Athanasios G. Platias and Constantinos Koliopoulos, *Thucydides and the Origins of Strategy* (London and New York: Hurst-Columbia University Press, 2009). For his influence on realism, see Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics. Ethics, Interests and Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 26. See also Colin S. Gray, *Thucydides Was Right: Defining the Future Threat* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College Press, 2015), http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1256. For the impact of Thucydides on the Greek scholars of International Relations, see Kyriakos Mikelis, "Realist Stronghold in the Land of Thucydides? Appraising and Resisting a Realist Tradition in Greece," *European Quarterly of Political Attitudes and Mentalities* 4, no 4 (2015): 15–32.

19. On hegemony in Thucydides, see Ilias Kouskouvelis, *Introduction to International Relations* (Athens: Piotita, 2004), chapter 5, in Greek.

20. Ilias Kouskouvelis, *Decision Making, Crisis Management, and Negotiations* (Athens: Papazissis, 1997), in Greek.

21. Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 227.

22. A useful tool for the study of Thucydides and his vocabulary is the two-volume dictionary by Élie-Ami Bétant, *Lexicon Thucydideum* (Genevae: É. Carey–Kessmann, 1843), https://archive.org/stream/lexiconthucydid00btgoog#page/n8/mode/2up.

23. Welch warns Thucydides' students: "we should stop treating him as a mirror for our own assumptions, convictions, and biases"; see David A. Welch "Why International Relations Theorists Should Stop Reading Thucydides," *Review of International* Studies 29 (2003): 301–19, DOI: 10.1017/S0260210503003012.

24. See Perez Zagorin, *Thucydides. An Introduction for the Common Reader* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005).

25. Close to decision-making is Yunis, who seeks to determine through Thucydides the mechanisms of democratic decision-making in ancient Athens; see Harvey Yunis, "How do the People Decide? Thucydides on Periclean Rhetoric and Civic Instruction," *The American Journal of Philology* 112 (1991), 179–200. Also, Rosen considers that Thucydides' opinions on human nature, fear and honor, may be the starting point for the implementation of knowledge from Neuroscience in the study of human decisions; see Stephen Peter Rosen, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), VII, 1.

26. Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydide et l'impérialisme athénien* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1947).

27. Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, trans. Philip Thody (New York: Arno Press, 1979).

28. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 311–43.

29. The exact translation should have been the "system" of Athenian imperialism, as the French word used is "système" and not "théorie."

30. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 311.

31. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 322; instead of "urge," the word "derailment" could have been more appropriate to account for the French "entrainment."

32. Jacqueline de Romilly, *La construction de la vérité chez Thucydide*. *Conférences, essais et leçons du Collège de France* (Paris: Julliard, 1990). Zagorin recognizes her contribution to the study of Thucydides; see Zagorin, *Thucydides*, notes 2 and 3 of chapter 8, 178–79.

33. "La montée par l'abstrait: les réflexions générales" or "Rising by abstraction: Generalized thoughts"; see de Romilly, *La construction de la vérité chez Thucydide*, 61–104.

34. See de Romilly, *La construction de la vérité*, 72: "quinze à vingt par livre, peut-être, mais davantage dans les deux livres les plus riches en analyses, à savoir le livre I (cinquante) et le livre VI (quarante)."

35. "La vue d'en haut: découverte des sciences de l'homme" (The View From Above: Discovery of the Human Sciences); see de Romilly, *La construction de la vérité*, 105–41.

Chapter 1

Decision-Making

The decision-making phenomenon, the procedures and processes through which we decide, runs through our activities, characterizing and influencing our lives, in both the public and the private spheres. As biological beings, our body makes millions of decisions on a daily basis, which, in fact, we are not aware of and, in their vast majority, we cannot control.[1] Obviously these are not the decisions that interest the present work. As spiritual beings, however, we make hundreds of thousands of decisions daily, others consciously and other mechanically, others easily and others with difficulty, depending on the context we operate in, as well as the relative and subjective criteria we use. At the same time, we are exposed to millions of decisions made by others, which, directly or indirectly, concern us, and, accidentally or deliberately, affect us. We operate constantly through our decisions and in an environment full of decisions. These, the nonbiological, are the decisions and processes whose meaning and basic elements I am attempting to identify and present briefly in the current chapter.

In this chapter, first, in order to offer a clear understanding of the topic under study, I present the meaning of the decision. Next, I examine the relationship between decision-making and politics, domestic or international. Then, I show that decision-making is difficult because of the uncertainty, the lack of information, but also because of the costs it entails. The less is the information, the greater is the pervading human affairs uncertainty, the higher is possibly the cost; all three contribute to the difficulty of decision-making and attract, thus, our interest to study it.

THE CONCEPT OF DECISION

What is a decision? Indicatively, and with the purpose to initiate the reader, I will refer to and discuss two definitions, each of which—like any definition—has its own shortcomings.

The first definition is considering it as a choice of action between several alternative courses or solutions for which there is uncertainty.[2] This definition perceives the decision-maker as a single and apparently rational actor, who will make a choice. It clearly highlights the existence of uncertainty, but accepts that alternatives exist. For this definition three issues arise. The first is the simple fact that decision-making is strongly influenced by the mental and physical resources of an individual, and also his experience or education. The second is that, in reality or in practice, alternative paths or solutions do not always exist and actors are left to adopt or not a single solution. For example, as stated to the Athenians first by general Demosthenes,[3] at the time of an imminent Spartan attack by land and by sea, "in emergency situations as this now, every calculation is hopeless and what is required is one to confront immediately the risk" (4.10.1); and, later, by general Nicias, while the Athenians are in a very difficult situation in Sicily, "I tell you that you are not fighting in your home, but in a country where either you will win or it will not be easy to depart" (6.68.3).

The third issue with this definition is that there is a degree of uncertainty about the possible solutions and the outcomes that they may produce; thus, the decision-maker does not have the possibility, even by calculating and assuming in advance the risk specific to each of them, to choose the most advantageous one. Of course, there are cases where the uncertainty of choice is limited in time by the course of events, and, thus, the actors, having this possibility, have the option to decide to wait. This can be observed in the actions of the citizens of Megara,[4] both of the pro-Spartan and of the pro-Athenian factions: "both sides (in Megara) were waiting that a battle will occur between the Athenians and those who came to help (Megara), and each one considered safer to join those who supported, if and when they would win" (4.71.2). Or, even better and more favorable to the decision-maker, there are cases in which all distinct solutions are attractive to choose (a "win-win" situation), thus eliminating uncertainty. This is how some Athenians decided when the question of the Sphacteria expedition and the leadership of Cleon were discussed: "the wiser, however, were not in a dilemma, because they were thinking that they would attain one of the two positive outcomes, either to get rid of Cleon, which they rather preferred, or, if they were mistaken in their decision, to capture the Spartans" (4.28.5).

Another definition approaches the decision as the result of the processes of a system—political, administrative, or economic—for the distribution or

redistribution of values. This approach addresses politics or administration as a system, which receives information, processes it, evaluates it, and finally produces a decision. There is an input of information in the system and an output of decisions, as shown in Figure 1.1. The examples abound: a citizen submits his tax statement or his retirement request, a company is informed of the existence of a product or the emergence of a new market, an analyst notes a change of tendencies in the stock market, the police is informed that a criminal act was committed, a country's radars record a violation of its airspace, a diplomat perceives the change in another country's policy.

In all these cases, a structure receives the stimulus/information, which is forwarded to the appropriate department and, after following the established procedures, a result is produced in the form of a decision or of a negative, neutral, or positive reaction.

The approach upon which this definition relies downplays man as a participant in the decision-making process. It omits, thus, that each system, each mechanism is composed of people who decide and who are subject to restrictions, as mentioned in the criticism of the previous definition. Furthermore, it assumes the unity of the structure, which is actually rather sought than given to any mechanism; what is rather the standard in human organization is competition and ensuing divisions within it.

In any case, regardless of the adopted definition, what one observes in the real world is decisions, taken by people who are involved in mechanisms and systems of information, of consultation, and of decision-making, in order to develop and implement policies. Decision-making studies and relative research attempt to describe and interpret mainly the way in which people as units or in entities, sometimes independently and sometimes working within the systemic context, decide. Definitions serve to attain a first understanding to phenomena and to know exactly or approximately what one studies; theories do the rest.

DECISIONS AND POLITICS

As everything (or almost everything) is politics, and as the broader aim of this book is the study of politics under the light of the Thucydidean thinking

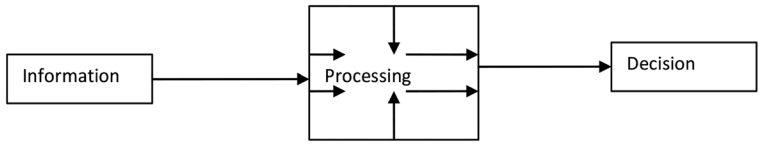


Figure 1.1 Decision-Making as a System. *Source*: Author.

on decision-making, it goes without saying that decision-making, as a process and as a result, dominates and characterizes politics, both domestic and international. Indeed, according to one view, politics is also defined as "the making of decisions," through institutional or other means, for the distribution or redistribution of values.[5] It is obvious, if one finds it opportune to separate politics and economics, that decision-making characterizes the latter too, that is the struggle or the decisions for the production and the distribution of wealth.

These values, of course, either individually or collectively, are determined subjectively, based on personal interests and/or ideology. A value is everything that could interest or be an interest that could mobilize or be an aim of the political actors' struggle, such as human or state survival, power, wealth, glory, education, health, the environment, peace. As in the arena of politics or of life values are given a different meaning and are differently prioritized by every (political) actor, there are different and often conflicting assessments, decisions and behaviors. Further, on the basis of the different objectives or purposes pursued, we often refer to specific policies, such as educational, economic, environmental, defense, or foreign policy. These policies—subsets of public or governmental policy, since the State has entered into all aspects of human activity—have in common that they are the result of a decision-making process or a set of decisions on an issue of public interest. Thus, even though the object and the results of the decision-making process may be different, what is common is that all these policies are the result of a process and a series of decisions.

For the study of why, how, and when decisions are made, and the study of the related phenomena of negotiations and of crisis management, policy is not only understood as public policy, meaning the one that occurs within the public sphere or elaborated and applied by a government. A policy or a strategy may be elaborated by an individual (person) or by an organization (collective entity, enterprise), and this is exactly what denotes the widespread use of terms such as "personal," "business," or "corporate strategy"—the latter being a topic under study in the field of Business Administration. And as in the public sphere, so in the business world it refers to the policy or the strategy on human resources, sales, research and development, investment, social responsibility, communication, and so on—policies that refer to specific aspects of the corporation's general conduct and are the outcome of all its decisions.

The bottom line is that in every form of politics, at one or at each different stage of the process (in the case of a decision made at different stages), there is always someone who decides (a "decision-maker"), someone who (person, group, or institution) is at the center of interest of the decision-making theories. This actor, after having prioritized his values within the existing context, will allocate or will attempt to satisfy them on the basis of her own,

institutionalized or not, processes, procedures, and available tools. The criteria to be used or the factors that will influence the decision and will be presented in detail in later chapters are many and can be personal, national, material, ideological, administrative, or other. The variation of an existing relationship of these factors (cause, independent variable) with decision-making (effect, dependent variable), the time and the manner in which outcomes occur, are of course the main interest of the decision-making theories, which are trying to record and explain the processes or mechanisms by which decisions are made.

UNCERTAINTY AND LACK OF INFORMATION

Decisions and policy making are taking place either under normal conditions or under pressure, as in the case of negotiations and of crisis management. But they are always produced in a context of uncertainty as to the information, the effect, and the associated costs—elements attracting our interest in the decision-making process. If we had the certainty of the rightness of our choices and their consequences or results, if we knew the future, then there would not be any issue about decision-making, nor, consequently, of studying the phenomenon scientifically. But we can not know the future, because, as Thucydides points out, "the changes of conditions (chance) cannot be penetrated (understood) by reason" (1.84.3).[6]

The uncertainty for rational actors, particularly in the absence of other external pressures, usually serves as an inhibition to decision-making or action. This is due, first, to the real, sometimes existential or metaphysical problem of ignorance of what is going to happen and the subsequent insecurity; that is why, according to Thucydides, the first inhabitants of Greece neither accumulated wealth nor were cultivating the land, because, as they did not have any fortifications, "it was unknown when someone would come to seize them" (1.2.2). However, the "imponderable fear" (4.63.1), caused by the uncertainty of the future, may have an inhibitory effect with useful sometimes consequences, such as to avoid a war; in human affairs, "what is the more prevailing is uncertainty about the future, which, although it is so elusive, still proves itself very useful; because, as a result of it, we all fear the same, and only after much consideration we come into conflict with each other" (4.62.4).

Uncertainty and the subsequently mistaken—possibly catastrophic—decision-making are due, second, to the lack of information. This leads the Corinthians, in the very first naval battle of the war (431 BC), to kill instead of assisting their shipwrecked allies, as they did not know that the latter, on the right flank of their formation, have been defeated (1.50.1); even worse, the Athenians wanted to campaign against the distant Sicily and most of them "did not know the size of the island or the number of its inhabitants" (6.1.1).

Instead, the certainty or the "knowledge of the real situation" makes the "foresight" for the future "safer" (5.62.5). The problem arises when certainty is superficial, flimsy, or false, as it may lead to a wrong decision. The superficial certainty results out of information which is general and cannot be verified. This is what general Nicias points out to the Athenians in relation to their reputation in Sicily, saying that it is good because they are far, and those "whose reputation has barely been tested, are admired more" (6.11.4); also, Thucydides says that the Athenians were not reacting initially to the "Oligarchy of The Four Hundred" as "it was impossible" for them "to verify the truth," given "the size of the city and that all did not know each other" (8.66.3).

The false certainty may be due to the simple concealment of reality. This is what Alcibiades and Chalkideus did in Chios,[7] when they claimed that many ships were on the way to help, but failed to say that the ships were blocked by the Athenians, convincing thus the Chians to defect (8.14.2). False certainty may also be the result of operations of misinformation organized by third parties, friends, or opponents. One such operation was organized by the Egestans,[8] in order to convince their Athenian allies to expedite for their benefit against the Selinuntians and the Syracusans, when the Athenians went to verify (415 BC) if the Egestans had the necessary money to finance the endeavor:

> They took them to the temple of Venus . . . and showed the tributes . . . which, because they were made of silver, seemed to be worth more than they actually were; and individuals hosted the crews of the ships in their homes, and either borrowed from Egesta itself all the silver and gold cups they could find or they asked and borrowed them from neighboring cities . . . so everyone was presenting them at dinners as his own. (6.46.3–4)

Respectively, with another operation, during the Sicilian expedition, the Athenian generals tried to trap their opponents:

> They sent to Syracuse a man of their confidence, whom the Syracusan generals also considered as their own. This man was from Katana and said that he was sent by their Katanaian friends, whose names the Syracusan generals knew and believed that it was from them who had still remained loyal. He said that the Athenians were spending the night inside the city, away from their camp, and that if the Syracusans wanted to go with the whole army a certain day, at dawn, and attack them, they would block the Athenians within the city and they would burn their ships, while the Syracusans could hit the wall of the camp and could easily capture the army. He also said that there were many Katanaians who would help, that they were already prepared and that they had sent him. (6.64.2–3)[9]

Sound information is critical and this is demonstrated by the fact that it is sought and pursued by leaders, especially in times of crisis; so, general Nicias, at the end of the Sicilian expedition, trying to ensure the authenticity of the information he wanted to transmit, decided to inform his compatriots in writing, because "he believed that in this way the Athenians would know better his opinion, without it being deformed by the messenger, and they would decide knowing the truth" (7.8.2). Cumulatively, the valid and timely information may prove not only useful, but sometimes salutary; general Brasidas notes that "when the enemy, although is actually weaker, appears stronger, the timely and sound information on his condition encourages more his opponents" (4.126.4).

Information, however, which may be sound, may not be timely. Xerxes at Thermopylae was validly informed by Ephialtes on how to outflank Leonidas' troops, but not early enough for the Persians to avoid serious losses caused by the Three Hundred. Conversely, information may be timely, but not (absolutely) valid. In Salamis, Xerxes received Themistocles' timely information, which was valid only in that the Greek fleet was in the narrow strait between Salamis and the mainland, but not as to the decision of Themistocles and the Athenians to fight. The ubiquitous example of early but unverifiable information is the programs announced by parties or politicians during the electoral campaigns, meaning before the citizens' voting decision; similarly, on foreign policy issues, citizens cannot verify the arguments made by governments wanting to gain their support for difficult decisions.

Uncertainty, however, and even more the subsequent wrong decisions are mainly and usually due, thirdly, to the lack of accurate and adequate information, which inevitably leads to erroneous interpretations. Two such examples are from the unrest in the city of Megara, just before the battle between the Athenians and the Spartans (425 BC). When the Athenians entered the city with the assistance of their political friends there, the Peloponnesian guards "run away because, as the enemies attacked them during the night and as the traitors from Megara were fighting against them, they thought that all the inhabitants had betrayed" the Peloponnesians (4.68.2); and when the Athenians, after their eventual failure to take over Megara from within, turned to siege its port, Nisaia, those who were in it, "as they were in fear because food had been exhausted . . . , and because they thought that the Peloponnesians would not arrive quickly to help them, and as they considered that Megara has turned against them, they came to agreement with the Athenians" (4.69.3). A third example is from the expedition to Sicily; general Nicias "has learned that Gylippus approached, but scorned the number of his vessels, as also did the Thurians, and, because he thought that they were more prepared for piracy rather than war, did not take any precautions" (6.104.3).

The incorrect interpretation by the decision-makers is often the alibi of those who channeled partly valid or general or very technically worded information, as in politics, advertising, or contracts. Citizens often "believe" in the commitments of a party, consumers do not investigate further the advertised product, those adhering to contracts (e.g., credit, telephony, transport) do not study or understand all the terms or do not seek clarification on the so-called fine print of the contract and the obligations undertaken; the obvious result of all this is misinformation and wrong decisions.

The correct interpretation and evaluation of information is a very important endeavor, which is faced not only by politicians, the military, or businessmen, but also by scientists and researchers in their fields. Thucydides, whose thought is under study, constitutes a very good example, as he tries to fully explain how he dealt with the problems encountered in the collection and the evaluation of the relevant to the war information.[10] He, based on his right judgment, started writing "the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians," predicting that it will be both "great" and "more important than all previous" (1.1.1), and managed to write a treatise, which, as he intended, proved to be a "a possession for ever" (1.22.4).

Uncertainty, lack of information, and, in case information exists, its misinterpretation, are characteristic phenomena and particularly intense and common in the context of negotiations or crisis, when time, stress, and the interests at risk increase pressure to the decision-maker and the possibility for wrong assessments and decisions. The greater the uncertainty and lack of information, the more difficult is the decision.

This is why, throughout time, all those who have to make decisions, politicians or generals, persistently seek information. Basil H. Liddell Hart, the well-known British military analyst and author, highlights the importance of reliable military intelligence via his book title, as generals always strived to know what is on *The Other Side of the Hill*.[11] Respectively, states, and, for a good time now, corporations are making enormous efforts to maintain and preserve their secrets, as the leakage of information may have devastating political, economic, or military[12] consequences.

The process of collecting information from governments or other agencies has been important since the antiquity. Herodotus describes how King Alexander I of Macedon gave information about the Persians of Xerxes to his compatriots in the south. Athenians and Spartans attempt to gather information during the war on each other, and Thucydides records the fact with the word «κατασκοπή» (6.41.4), the same word used in Modern Greek for "spying." The Persians in the fourth century, as evidenced by Xenophon, spent a lot of money not only to manipulate the Greeks, but also to gather information on them. Subsequently, the Romans and the Byzantines created intelligence gathering mechanisms, while in modern times the first integrated espionage

and counterintelligence system is considered the one organized by Cardinal Richelieu, for Louis XIV of France. Today all states have intelligence gathering services and, correspondingly, mechanisms to protect them against the collection of information by their opponents. Similar services have been created by corporations for the purposes of economic or industrial espionage.[13]

The costs associated with reducing uncertainty in decision-making are considerable. In order to create and efficiently operate the services of collecting and respectively of protecting information, large funds and investments in human capital are required. Even greater are the demands on capital investment and technology in the modern means of information gathering, such as satellites, and the processing and the storage of the gathered information. All the aforementioned is targeted toward reducing uncertainty. Basically, the cost of gathering and protecting information comes to balance the cost of the subsequent decision-making, and it is upon each actor—person, institution, or state—to choose. If one has the ability to invest in information gathering and the relevant protection, she is also investing in the perspective of an increased potential to reduce uncertainty, facilitate her decision-making, and reduce the possibility of wrong decisions.

DECISIONS AND COST

The difficulty of decision-making depends also on the cost of the decision's consequences or subsequent actions. Essentially for Thucydides there is no decision without some cost. He writes that from all the risks encountered and dealt with by people "the rarest are those which, in case of error, have a minimal damage and, in case of success, offer a great benefit" (7.68.3).

The cost of decisions is not easy to estimate. Certainly efforts can be made to assess it objectively—which is to some extent feasible. But there is always a subjective, individual dimension, as each subject, having a different value system, collects, evaluates and reacts differently to events. The subjective dimension of cost is presented in the extremely telling passage of Xenophon, where he describes what happened in Athens after the catastrophic defeat at Aegos Potami (404 BC), an event marking the town's defeat in its long war with Sparta. What prevailed was not the sorrow and despair for the material and human losses in twenty-seven years of war, but rather what would happen to those who had survived the war and were going to be subjugated to the Spartans:

> When Paralos[14] arrived at night in Athens and the disaster became known, grief has reached the city from Piraeus via the Long Walls, as each one was telling the

> other. So that night no one slept, not only because they were mourning the dead, but rather even more worrying for themselves, because they thought they would suffer what they had done to . . . the Melians . . . as well as to the people of Istiaea, and of Skioni, and of Toroni and of Aegina and to many other Greeks.[15]

To allow for the possibility of an accurate cost estimate, there must be full information and certainty about its validity. If this can happen—a cost estimate on the basis of complete information—then the difficulty may be confined only to that of accepting the cost.

Actors or decision-makers often operate—not always though—on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis. The expected benefits, if seen or perceived superior to the cost, facilitate or reduce reservations towards making tough, even wrong, decisions and, according to Thucydides, lead actors, among others, to war:

> Nobody is driven to war out of ignorance of its consequences and nobody is deterred by fear, if he believes he will gain more. (War) erupts when one considers that the expected gains are to be greater than the risks, and the other is determined to face the risks rather than tolerate any direct damage to his interests, even the slightest. (4.59.2)

The cost-benefit calculation does not take place once. Despite the cost in time, money, and efficiency involved in reviewing the matter again and again, this calculation may be continuous and uninterrupted. It may lead to the postponing of decisions, to time gaining efforts, to abstaining from action and maintaining the status quo,[16] as well as to reviewing previous decisions or searching other, different options and policies. The last is what the Spartans did, after their defeat in Sphacteria, as

> they were watching that the war evolved differently than they wished, because they had thought that, by devastating the Athenians' land, they would destroy their power within a few years; they had suffered a disaster in Sphacteria such that Sparta had never suffered until then, their country was looted with incursions from Pylos and Cythera, and (meanwhile) the Helots were defecting and the Spartans were always afraid that those who remained, supported by those who have gone, may take advantage of the situation and revolt, as they had done previously. Coincidently, the Thirty Years peace treaty with the Argives was expiring and they did not agree to renew it unless Kynouria was given back to them, and the Spartans considered that it was impossible to simultaneously fight against them and the Athenians. They even suspected that some Peloponnesians would defect and ally with Argos, which did happen. (5.14.3–4)[17]

The cost is not only subjective, but also relative to one's size and capabilities. A mistaken investment by a small businessman may provoke unpleasant consequences to him and his business, while it will not hurt someone with

a great financial standing or a corporation. The loss of a small island constitutes a greater loss for a small power than for a larger; yet at the prestige level, the same event may be of equal or of greater harm to the prestige of the bigger power (as Sphacteria for the Spartans) than to that of the smaller. Also, the mistaken choices and the loss of human or material resources (aircraft, ships, etc.) in a crisis or in a war have respectively a different cost for a small and a bigger power. Undoubtedly, and independently of how important is the cost of the loss of a single life for a family, the cost of human losses is different for large armies compared to smaller ones, and different from the perspective of some military leaders, as Napoleon's cynical phrase testifies that "soldiers are the food of cannons." The potential cost of material losses for the armed forces of countries with important resources' stocks is different than for any other. Thucydides records cases of belligerents not counting the material cost; one is that of the Spartans who in their effort to supply food to the besieged in Sphacteria, "they were not sparing anything" to reach the island; to succeed they would even throw their ships on the shore, as their cost would be paid at a value that was fixed earlier (4.26.7).

Cost, finally, can also be determined solely by the ideological parameters and criteria of the one who decides. If anyone, individually or in a group, movement or religion, decides that he wants to maintain or create a world, for himself or for others too, on the basis of his beliefs, then cost for him and his likes takes a completely different meaning; thus violent acts (self-sacrifice, extermination of "enemies" or "infidels", etc.) may take the character of vindication and of a rite of passage to another world, physical or metaphysical. Throughout time, this is the case of those individuals that Martin Wight categorized as the "revolutionaries": all those who tried to maintain or to create a society (domestic or international) according to their ideas and principles, without calculating the cost of lives or resources. For them violence and particularly war—"just" or, even, "holy"—is the necessary tool of history and, in some cases, a means for purification or cleansing; politics exist for the sake of lasting social evolution (or conservation), while the person is considered expendable for the sake of it. Thus their conception of the costs involved in their action is different, and they have very little or no difficulty at all, compared to other people, making a decision to implement their ideals.[18]

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have sketched the meaning of decision-making and highlighted its relationship with politics. Then, I explained the difficulty of decision-making, in terms of three interrelated factors: uncertainty, lack of information, and cost. Most important is that Thucydides and his

contemporaries had a clear understanding, first, of the osmosis between decision-making and politics, and, second, of the difficulties involved in decision-making because of uncertainty, lack of information, and cost. Had the Hellenes of the fifth century BC tried to reduce uncertainty, to have better information and a better idea of the cost of their decisions, perhaps they could have decided otherwise and they would not have gone to a war which has destroyed them. More broadly put, if there was complete, accurate, and timely information for reducing or eliminating uncertainty and, thus, cost, then there would not be any difficulty to decide or any need to understand and explain decision-making. But, then, we would be living in a completely different world.

NOTES

1. For an approach emphasizing the human biological dimension in decision-making, see Rosen, *War and Human Nature*.

2. See James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 469.

3. General Demosthenes was Athenian (not to be confused with the famous Athenian orator and politician of the fourth century BC). He was distinguished in the taking of Sphacteria and the capturing of the Spartan soldiers (425 BC). Later, in 413 BC, he was sent to Sicily to support Nicias' army. After the Athenians' defeat there, he was captured and executed by the Syracusans (7.86).

4. Megara was (still is) a city in Attica, very close to Athens. At the time of the war they were allies of the Spartans.

5. See the definition by David Easton, *The Political System* (New York: Knopf, 1953), 129.

6. "Virtually all speakers in Thucydides' debates recognize the problem posed for political calculation by the uncertainty of the future. Nowhere, they point out, is this more true than in time of war. Tyche, the goddess of fortune, the Greeks from Homer onward acutely realized, is fickle and unpredictable on the field of battle"; see David Cohen, "War, Moderation, and Revenge in Thucydides," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5, no. 4 (2006): 271–72, DOI: 10.1080/15027570601081127.

7. Chios is an island in the eastern Aegean, very close to the Minor Asian coast. Chios was a member of the Athenian alliance.

8. Egesta (or Segesta in Italian) was a Greek city at the western side of Sicily, which had a longtime conflict with neighboring Selinus, an ally of Syracuse (6.6).

9. Other cases of misinformation or entrapment of the opponent are recorded in 2.33.3, 3.22.8, 4.46.5, 4.80.3–4, 4.108.5, 6.8.2, 6.104.1, and 8.108.4.

10. See, in particular, 1.10, 1.20, 1.21, and 1.22.

11. Basil H. Liddell Hart, *The Other Side of the Hill* (London: Cassell and Co., 1948).

12. The Athenian takeover of Megara failed because of an information leak: "the conspirators . . . were already close to the gate, when one of them denounced their plans to the followers of the opposing faction"; see 4.68.6.

13. On economic espionage, see Ioannis Konstantopoulos, "Europe-USA Relations: The Phenomenon of Economic Espionage among Allies," in *The New EUrope: Politics, Economics, and Foreign Relations*, ed. Yannis A. Stivachtis (Athens: Atiner, 2009), 161–83.

14. Paralos, together with Salaminia, were the two "state" and "sacred" ships of Athens. Their crews were carefully selected, not only for their abilities, but also for their dedication to the democratic values of the city. They were fast and served often to carry official missions or messages on behalf and for the city.

15. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, B.II.3.

16. See in 4.73 the behavior and the calculations of all sides—Athenians, Spartans, and Megareans—waiting to see what would be the next move of the others.

17. See also in 5.40 the Argives' cost-benefit calculations, which led them to a reversal of the policy they just had adopted.

18. Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, eds. Gabriel Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991).

Chapter 2

The Long Path to the Study of Decision-Making

From the earliest times man has been observing and struggling to conceptualize events, be they natural or of human agency. Understanding events forced men to consider their causes, whether they were man-made or from the heavens. Not surprisingly, God as the cause of all things was easier to contemplate than human agency, and thus mythology was both attractive and rife. But the answer as to whom, God or man, automatically turned the attention to the decision: Why and when does Zeus throw his thunderbolts, or supports one against the other?

The turning point was when man discovered in the decision-making the existence of a process, starting with a stimulus, internal or external, and producing a result that could be observed by third parties: internally, mainly thinking and feelings (fear, sorrow, joy), and externally, man's observable behavior toward others (violence, urge, creation). From this point onward begin the efforts to interpret the decision-making, which have gone through different stages but, I would say, mainly three: the theocratic and mythological, the literary and, more broadly, artistic, and the scientific.

The scientific study of decision-making develops and to a very large extent—with Thucydides being a precursor—is limited to the twentieth century and thereafter. However, the general interest with it and with the problems it generates for humans is rooted in the antiquity. In this chapter I present the long path of interpreting decisions from the mythological stage to the literary, and from there to the present scientific stage. This brief retrospect, besides being a rough mapping, will provide an understanding of how much decision-making and its difficulty have preoccupied the human mind, and will present elements, ideas, and examples of decision-making provided by the first two stages of interpreting decisions. In addition, I will address the question of the usefulness of decision-making studies and their relevance to

dealing with negotiations and crises, as it is not possible to handle them, without having first understood the processes and problems of decision-making.

MYTHOLOGY, THEOLOGY, AND LITERATURE

The interpretation of phenomena and of man's difficulties has been, for many centuries, an object of reference to the will and the decisions of various deities or, in monotheistic religions, of God. On the one side, the twelve Olympian gods are those who mingle or mess with people's lives, decide and intervene in favor of or against men, toward the one or the other evolution of things, both in peace and in war. On the other side, the one and only God is the one who, according to the Old Testament, creates and decides for the people, leaving them the opportunity to choose whether to follow his commandments or to ignore them and suffer the consequences.

In the evolution of the ancient Greek world, difficult decisions and human dilemmas constituted an inspiration or stimulus for myths and, at the same time, an occasion and tools for the first interpretations. Hercules must decide whether to choose the path of virtue or vice; having opted for the first, he is in the dilemma of obedience or not to Eurystheus, the king of Tiryns, and, every time, he is facing difficult decisions about how to manage each of his twelve tasks. Theseus must make the difficult decision to travel with the young men and girls of Athens to Crete, to develop a strategy on how to deal with the Minotaur, the fearsome creature, and implement it, and especially to find a strategy of exiting the Labyrinth and returning to Athens. During the return trip two mistakes (wrong decisions) will be committed: one from him, not to put up the white sail, and one from his father, to misunderstand the black sail, and thus to commit suicide. Jason must implement the decision of his uncle, the king Pelias, organize his trip to the faraway Colchis, build the appropriate vessel, and choose the best companions for his crew; then make difficult decisions at each stage of the trip, to follow diplomatic tactics in Colchis, to acquire alliances (as he did with Medea), and to develop strategies both in order to get the Golden Fleece and to escape.

Dilemmas in ancient Greek mythology are actually abundant. However, the majority of people are only familiar with Hercules', Theseus', or Jason's adventures. Here are some of the less known dilemmas. Kefeas, the father of Andromeda, chose to sacrifice his daughter to the sea monster sent by Poseidon, in order to save his people. Sisyphus, king of Ephyra, later Corinth, chose for his city a source of water offered by the river god Asopos, and suffered the anger of Zeus. Athamas, the king of Orchomenus, chose to sacrifice his children, Phrixus and Helle, with the aim of stopping a famine, deviously plotted by his second wife, Ino. Orpheus, out of love for Eurydice,

disobeyed the command of the gods and, on the way out of Hades to the living world, chose to look at whether she was following him, thus losing her. Hippodameia, in order to overcome her father's (Oenomaus) refusal to marry (Pelops), replaced the wheels of his chariot, resulting in the death of Oenomaus in the race that followed. Kodrus, the last semi-mythical king of Athens, knowing Pythia's oracle to the Spartans that they would conquer Athens if her king was not killed, chose to disguise himself as a woodcutter, to walk on to the Spartan lines, provoke them and make them kill him in order to save his city. Priam of Troy first chose to kill his newborn son Paris so that Troy would not be at risk as the oracle warned, but later chose to accept both him and Helen, despite the opposing views expressed. Lastly, Prometheus decided to give the fire to humans, resulting in his punishment by Zeus.

Difficult decisions and dilemmas of people become very quickly the inspiration and the basis for artistic creation. Among the world's first, orally and afterwards written, literary works of mankind are Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It all begins with a dilemma facing the young prince of Troy, Paris, and his decision, based on his own subjective criteria, as to which is the most beautiful of the three goddesses: Hera, Athena, or Venus. Of course, the poetic narrative of the war that followed and Odysseus' adventurous wandering is full of dilemmas, difficult decisions, strategies and ploys, endurance in time of armies and people (especially by his wife, Penelope), crisis management and negotiations. On top of these, we owe Homer even the first description of public opinion management and manipulation. According to the *Iliad*'s Rhapsody B, 4–97, in the ninth year of Troy's siege, after the leaders' disagreement and the departure of Achilles, the morale had fallen markedly in the camp of the Greeks, and the soldiers were calling for a return to Greece. The plan was built by Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae, and Odysseus. The former proposed and the leaders' council decided to end the expedition and leave Troy. The second, along with wise Nestor, the king of Pylos, using tactics of persuasion but also of violence, managed to change the soldiers' minds; and not just that, the soldiers assembled and enthusiastically asked from Agamemnon to continue the siege, and after his consent, went with excitement to battle again.

The culmination of artistic creation is the tragedies and comedies of the fifth century BC, whose subject and plot are based on extremely difficult decisions and long-standing human questions and dilemmas. Aeschylus (525–456 BC), the first of the three great Athenian tragedians, in the *Persians* describes the wrong decisions that led to Xerxes' great defeat, as well as the management of the crisis caused by the defeat, when known, in Susa. In the trilogy of *Oresteia*, he puts first Clytemnestra to answer whether she wants or has to avenge her husband for his long time absence and the sacrifice of Iphigenia (*Agamemnon*); then he puts Orestes to decide whether he has to take

revenge for his father by punishing with death his own mother (*The Libation Bearers*), in order to finally decide whether or not he should be forgiven (*The Eumenides*). Next, Sophocles (497/96–406/05 BC) sets *Antigone* in the dilemma of choosing between obedience to the laws of men and the laws of the gods, between the logic of the state and the logic of morality; in the crisis that will arise, Antigone, with enormous cost for herself—not marrying the prince, renouncing the prospect of becoming a queen, and putting her life in danger—chooses the second. Last but not least, Euripides (480–406 BC), in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, engages king Agamemnon in the dilemma of either assuming the responsibilities and the cost associated with leadership and his ambitions or to sacrifice his daughter. In the *Trojan Women* Euripides presents the dilemmas of the women of Troy's royal family, who are transported as slaves to Greece,[1] while in *Medea*, he uncovers the psychological condition and internal conflicts of a betrayed by the unfaithful husband woman, who ends up murdering her own children.

The decisions described, however, are not entirely of the people that make them. It is also a matter of the gods, who are involved actively in human affairs—personal, political, military—helping or imposing decisions or punishing those who oppose them. Gradually, in the fifth century BC, the role of the Olympian gods in the influencing of decisions diminishes and people assume a more central role; thus, in some of Aristophanes' (446–386 BC) comedies (*The Acharnians*, *The Knights*, *Lysistrata*, *The Wasps*), the role of the gods is largely nonexistent. However, the Gods do not entirely lose their place, as it results from the appearance of the *deus ex machina* in tragedies (mainly by Euripides), but also by their involvement, in some of Aristophanes' comedies, as in *Peace*, *The Birds*, *The Frogs*, *Wealth*.

The role of divinity is also important in the oldest monotheistic religious text, the *Old Testament*. God puts Adam and Eve in the dilemma of not eating from the forbidden tree, the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and they make the first ever wrong decision. God commands Noah to build the Ark, Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, and Moses to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land and to freedom from the Egyptian yoke. God will help Joshua conquer Jericho, Esther and the Israelites in their seventy-year captivity, David in his struggle against Goliath, and Gideon, who, in order to defeat the Midianites, must, as he was told, choose a small number of soldiers, coincidently three hundred. But how would he choose? The criterion, the selection process, and the divine intervention are described in chapter 7 of the Book of Judges, verses 4-7:

> The Lord said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there . . . . So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, 'Separate those who lap the water with

> their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink.' Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. The Lord said to Gideon, 'With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands.'"

The advent of the New Testament, from the first century AD, will not change things a lot. Now, men know the teachings of Jesus, but, as in the past, they have, first, the freedom to choose whether to follow the Christian path and, then, apply to each of their decisions the criteria of their own choice. Each of the options has again the corresponding significant consequence: the reward of heaven and eternal life or the punishment of hell. As in the past, applying the New Testament, or later (from the seventh century AD) the Qur'an, was a question of human interpretation and decision-making, in which men, often and abusively, gave the character of a godly inspiration or act. Both monotheistic texts gave rise to decisions of people who caused and produced results apparently contrary to the original purpose of the two texts, such as violence, wars (Crusades, Holy Inquisition, Jihad, etc.), and obscurantism—one of the most important obstacles to the evolution of human decision-making and of scientific knowledge.

DECISION-MAKING: FROM THUCYDIDES TO MODERN TIMES

From the second half of the fifth century BC the approach to the interpretation of phenomena, starting with the great tragedians, is progressively changing, and decision-making—beyond the role of the gods—becomes a human issue, and particularly an issue of free humans, such as Antigone or others, who decide with her/their own criteria. These criteria are specific and are usually determined on the basis of calculations, ethics, and interests. Yet, the criteria and the decision-making processes are also subjective. Among them the dominant position is held by fear, ambition, vanity, as well as hatred and revenge, resulting from psychological conditions like those of Oedipus, Medea, Electra, and Orestes—situations that twentieth century psychologists have called "complexes," with the "Oedipus complex" being the most well known.

Progressively and in parallel, attempts to a non-mythological, nonreligious study of human affairs and of nature developed as well; obviously, the proposed interpretations are at the early stage of scientific inquiry, often mixed with the previously dominant elements. Herodotus (484–425 BC), the first historiographer, in his *Histories*, describes the Persian Wars and interprets them mainly as a result of mythological decisions of mutual abduction of women (Io, Europe, Medea, and Helen) and of the resulting hostility between

Asia and Europe (Clio, 1–5).[2] Despite, however, his failure to offer a credible and satisfactory explanation for the outbreak of the Persian wars, the number of decisions and crisis situations described in his text is countless and valuable. Some of them are an example of a rational and intelligent decision-making, such as Themistocles' strategy for the trapping of Xerxes in Salamis, and others the result of despotism and superstition, as the one of Xerxes, ordering the slaves to whip the Hellespont sea in order to punish it for impeding his efforts to link Asia and Europe with a floating bridge.

Against this background, Thucydides is the first in the history of human knowledge who tried to answer questions such as who decided what, why, and how the decision was made. In *The War*, he described the processes and discussions in the two adversary camps, Athenians and Spartans, which led to the beginning and the evolution of the war. Of course, Thucydides has not attributed the qualification of the "truest cause" directly to the mistaken decisions. He has shown, however, that the thoughts, the aims, the cost-benefit calculations, the feelings and the personalities of the leaders of the two cities and of their allies led the ancient Greek cities into a then world-wide, devastating and destructive war. It is a work about war, which even today influenced the thinking and the analysis of leaders and theorists, not to mention the practice of (international) politics.

Thucydides has abandoned mythology (1.21.1) and stopped crediting decisions to gods, or to their influence on humans or on nature; he has credited them to humans, thus making the initial steps for a scientific understanding and methodology. He is essentially the first who, by observing human behavior, has attempted to record and interpret their decisions on the basis of the actual facts, the given perceptions of the time, but also of his own, which have been strongly influenced by the Sophists and the Hippocratics. Thucydides has also abandoned the metaphysical dimension of the events, without being impious and without ignoring how metaphysics or superstition affects the behavior of his contemporaries; this is recorded, among many others, when, for example, due to natural phenomena such as an earthquake, Lacedaemonians interrupt or postpone war operations (5.54.2, 5.116.1). Thucydides, however, as a genuine thinker has not limited himself to escaping the standards of his time. He tried to explain decisions and developed his own insights about why (and how) decisions, right or wrong, are made. As it will be shown in chapters 4 and 5, it is a combination of necessity, human nature, interests, emotions, passions, and even fortune, from which decisions emerge.

Thucydides, the thinker, is followed by Xenophon the historian (430–354 BC), whose work, particularly *Anabasis*, emphasizes the decisions of the leaders, the organization of the troops, and the management of the difficult and adverse conditions confronted by "The Ten Thousand", who are defeated, without leadership, and isolated in the middle of the Persian

Empire. The *Anabasis*, in addition to being a history text, could be described as the first text in the field of administrative organization and, above all, of logistics. However, despite the precious description of the decision-making and of crisis management it offers, it is difficult to argue that Xenophon has his own, dominant logic or schema for the interpretation of decisions, as Thucydides does.

Greek and Roman historians will continue at the same wavelength with Xenophon, without their Byzantine successors to make an exception. They describe events of war and peace, as well as decisions, and it is obvious that they have a sense of the importance of decision-making and of the factors influencing it. However, virtually none of them have attempted to provide generalized, theory-type explanations of the politics among the state actors of his time or to offer a systematized explanation for the decision-making phenomenon. Those who attempted to do so, if they did not duplicate the interpretation of any decision under the general and known since Thucydides approach of man's "imperfect" nature, have approached the subject on a case by case basis, offering occasionally and fragmentarily the interpretation they considered to be correct, usually on the basis of interest, fear, or of miscalculation.

This is the case of Byzantine works related to international politics and war, such as the *Strategikon* of Emperor Maurice (late sixth century), the *Tactica* of Emperor Leo VI the Wise (late nineth century), the *Strategikon* of Kekaumenos (eleventh century), and the historical work *Alexias* by Princess Anna Komnena (twelfth century). The first three are implicitly related to the decision-making, as their purpose was to teach new military officers, politicians, or even the emperor himself on the respective issues and leadership. Thus, in the *Tactica* there is the third chapter on how to make decisions, while in the *Strategikon* of Kekaumenos there is a specific reference to intelligence gathering, but also in fear and courage, the two factors that are frequently encountered in Thucydides. Indicatively, on the matter of intelligence, Kekaumenos advises that a leader needs spies and "with them you must also learn the power of the enemy and its cunning; for without these it is impossible to do your job"; and on the matter of fear and bravery he suggests that the military leader protect his army, "but do not become a coward in this effort. Be brave and intractable, but neither too bold to be led to failure nor extremely fearful."[3]

Centuries later, at the end of the Middle Ages and on the road to the completion of the modern state that is timidly emerging in the sixteenth century, politics in Western Europe pass through the stage of absolutism. Obviously, during this historical period, key thinkers have not focused on explaining decision-making; they were mainly interested in understanding the creation of the modern state, to explain or even to justify absolutism. In this period,

two works appear and dominate Western European thinking. The first is *The Prince* (1513). In this, Niccolò Machiavelli, based on the conclusions he had come through his political experience, offers advice of applied politics to the young ruler of Florence. From the outset there was no theoretical purpose in this work; it was rather a "manual," advising the ruler what was right to decide, and, thus, it addressed indirectly some issues of decision-making. The second important work is *Leviathan* (1651); here Thomas Hobbes, based on human nature, articulated his decision-making thinking:

> In the nature of man, we find three principal causes of discord. First competition, secondly distrust, thirdly glory. The first makes men invade for gain; the second for safety; and the third for reputation. (1.13.61–62)[4]

This thinking is very close to the one of Thucydides for two reasons. First, he presented, in the reverse order, the Thucydidean decision-making factors, namely honor, fear, and interest (1.75.3, 1.76.2). Secondly, Hobbes is the first to have translated Thucydides from Ancient Greek directly in English,[5] and that is why it may be reasonable to imitate him.[6]

The next stage, in politics and in human thinking, was the efforts to combat and limit absolutism. Again, the intellectuals' priority was not to determine or analyze the decision-making mechanisms, but to find ways guaranteeing the freedom of will and of decision. This will be achieved through the prevalence in practice and in theory, from the seventeenth century onward, of the political (John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau) and economic liberalism (Adam Smith): the individual either as a citizen or as an economic agent functions freely and rationally, has rights and not only obligations, and it is his free individual choices determining and affecting the political system, the market, and his personal condition. Thus, the lack of attention to decision-making may be explained by the prevalence of the rationality assumption. Whatever the person has decided, it has done it rationally—an approach that leaves no room for any interest or quest for the way or the processes through which decisions are made, or, even more so, as to why, how and when the "wrong" decisions are taken.

Correspondingly, the other major economic and political current of thought, Marxism, also suffocates the study of decision-making processes. Here the individual has a certain rationality, the logic of material (economic) interest, which is determined by his relationship with the means of production. At the stage of feudalism and of capitalism, the members of the ruling class seek to maximize their profits and decide accordingly, while, for the members of the working class, Marxism gives an idealistic, utopian dimension in their mode of operation, that is, they work for the benefit of their class and for the achievement of socialism and further of communism, the ultimate stage in the evolution of history.

Based on all the above, from the fifth century BC and Thucydides' *The War* to the late nineteenth century, there is no other work in which the author seeks to explain the decision process the way Thucydides did. Whatever has been written is, knowingly or unknowingly by the authors, either an imitation or an inferior repetition of the Thucydidean basic insights. This, as I suggested, is understandable due to the political, financial, and dominant scientific priorities of each era. It is only in the early twentieth century that scientists challenged the assumption of rationality—that is, decisions are made solely on the basis of a hierarchical system of values, defining the cost-benefit analysis of each one—and sought different explanatory paths so that man could understand and deal with the decision-making process.

SCIENTIFIC APPROACHES TO DECISION-MAKING

Various scientific fields attempted to penetrate, understand, and interpret the individual's behavior and man's decisions. Psychology was perhaps chronologically first.[7] It was followed by Economics (especially Game Theory[8]), Management, Political Science, and, of course, International Relations, since foreign policy is rife with critical decisions, such as those on peace and war. Psychologists and economists have even started to converge in terms of their approaches to decision-making, and have explored how decisions are influenced by particular heuristics, such as religion or culture or the social context (Behavioral Economics[9]), or limited information and preferences (Economics of information[10]). Both disciplines have become increasingly interested in the way that policy makers can "nudge" people in a particular direction—the most classic example being the change in organ donation policy to an "opt-out" rather than an "opt-in" approach.

Management was also interested in studying decisions that, either within the public administration or within the private sector (Business Administration),[11] either individually or in groups within entities, produce public policies or business strategies.[12] Of course, the objective was to study the organization and operation of any management system, conflicts within it,[13] the possible standardization of decision-making and its procedures, with a view to improving human and cost efficiency of the whole, thus increasing productivity and promoting the produced goods to the public or the consumers.

Attention to decision-making has also been given in the study of politics. Those studying domestic politics were interested in understanding the terms and conditions under which those who govern and those who are governed decide.[14] Research has focused on the decision-making behavior of individuals,[15] that is, as voters, of bureaucracies,[16] or of leaders[17]—issues that are equally interesting to International Relations. In this field, decision-making

theories approach the phenomena—war, crisis, competition, or international cooperation[18]—from a different perspective than the field's dominant theories. They do not offer a leading role to the states, the international system and power distribution, but to the one who makes decisions, that is, how that person understands his environment (personal, professional, economic, political), his interests, his psychology,[19] and what are his decision-making procedures.[20] They focus on the individual, the (political) microcosm, and offer methods for analyzing, studying, and drawing conclusions on the behavior of actors, as well as developing (foreign) policy under normal circumstances, but also in a crisis or in a negotiations environment.[21]

The different approach to international phenomena, often through the behavioral analysis of individuals,[22] allows the researcher to penetrate events and to focus on the detail. To use an analogy, if balance of power theory offers the analyst a wide-angle lens, decision-making theories offer a microscope, and indeed very invasive, to understand how a leader sees or perceives[23] the balance of power, the relation of forces, and whether she takes them into account when deciding. In addition, decision-making theories provide flexibility, which is due to their diversity and their varied scientific origins. Thus, if one or more of them are not able to interpret a particular event or decision, there is a chance that some other among them could do it; or, it is also possible, that each one of them may partially explain the phenomenon. A characteristic example is Graham Allison's *Essence of Decision: Exploring the Cuban Missile Crisis*,[24] where the traditional (rational), the organizational, and the bureaucratic models are used successively to analyze the said crisis, and each of the three models explains different parts and aspects of the events.

The above advantages of decision-making theories enable them to become necessary for a holistic interpretation of international phenomena, usually as a complement to other theories. This is because in decision-making studies, the crucial dimensions, such as the role of power, of great powers, or of the international system, are not eliminated or underestimated; rather, decision-making theories are used in order to assist completing the image or increasing the clarity of the image offered from the use of the more traditional tools of analysis. As a result, we may end up in practice with an eclectic approach, in the sense that we use different tools and, thus, different theoretical approaches, in order to have the best possible methodology and reach a more accurate picture and interpretation of the phenomenon under consideration.[25]

More analytically, if the critical variables (power, great powers, international system) are stable and controlled for the needs of any study, then what is it that can improve our analysis and possibly differentiate our conclusions? If these critical variables, in real and important situations of the past, were given, then how can we explain what happened and why things did not evolve as expected? For example, the Persian, the Athenian, and the American

hegemony and supremacy were given, but what happened and why Persia was defeated in Salamis and Gaugamela, Athens in Sicily, and the United States in Vietnam? Or, the risks of specific economic policies were known, as well as the prosperity of the American economy; what has happened and why both the American and the international economy were led to the recessions of 1929 and 2008? Was it an issue of the international system, of state, of power factors, or of a series of wrong decisions, or some other cause? Furthermore, if, in the end, we want to seek answers to wrong decisions, then the theories under study are the only ones which can tell us how and why the mistake or mistakes happened.

Decision-making theories are, finally, the methodological tool allowing us to approach theoretically and practically negotiations, as well as crisis management, which often involves or requires negotiations.[26] This is because both negotiations and crisis management require a series of difficult and critical decisions in a very limited period of time, and may both be understood and analyzed as a set of decisions on a particular issue.[27] By understanding or improving the processes of decision-making in general, we understand better the processes of negotiations and crisis management and we improve our abilities in their management.[28]

The International Relations field may easily claim that it has pioneered the study of negotiations and crises,[29] contributing importantly to their knowledge and marking and advance in comparison with other social sciences. This is certainly due to the frequency and the danger international crises were presenting for the stability of the international system and peace during the Cold War[30]—a period when decision-making, negotiations, and crisis management research, for obvious reasons, received strong funding.

The decision-making approach to negotiations or crises is not referring to those phenomena present over long periods of time, but to those that may be a permanent ingredient of any social and of any (international) political or economic system. Decision-making studies approach negotiations and crises rather as events with a beginning and an end, as episodes, as action, focusing mainly on the stages before and during their occurrence, and on the difficult decisions to be made under great pressure. These are cases of decision-making within a given social, political, and economic context, involving a very high probability for violence and for the transformation of competition into conflict. For example, the situation in the Middle East, in its latest configuration, is a very important issue in the agenda of international politics of the last hundred years, characterized by constant antagonisms, conflicts, and negotiations; what is of interest to decision-making is not the timeless and constant tension in the region or the constant and stagnant negotiations, but those moments of the peak of tension, such as the negotiations after World War I, the Camp David negotiations (1979), the Suez crisis (1956), the Gaza crisis (2008), and so on.[31]

Last but not least, decision-making theories have a broader, practical utility. In fact, just the act of dealing with decision-making theories raises our concern about our own decisions, which leads to identifying our mistakes, and, perhaps, without realizing it, in a search for improving our potential in decision-making, especially in the context of negotiations[32] or of crisis.[33] Theories of decision-making, through the conclusions they produce, do not teach us how to make good decisions; they identify, however, the reasons leading to wrong decisions and highlight the mistakes that are being made. In practice, this means that each person, aware of the possible problems, constraints, or the pursued goals, can avoid committing the mistakes described by the theories. The central idea of this approach lies again in Thucydides: "the fewer mistakes one makes, the more he serves his interest" (1.42.2). Or, in the words of another scholar, reflecting the same spirit and answering the question why is it beneficial for decision-making to study Thucydides' work, because

> by studying the failures and successes of the past (as documented and analyzed in his *History*), decision-makers in the future can better understand the political dynamics of wartime decision-making and the corrosive forces that crises too often produce. Thucydides' narrative analyzes the political, social, and moral psychological dynamics that produce aggression, violence, and the desire for domination and revenge.[34]

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have attempted a brief review of the mythological, theological, literary, and scientific background of decision-making. I also set Thucydides in his historical perspective; his work represents an important turning point in how we approach decision-making, moving from the supernatural to the rational. But, as with his theoretical thinking on the more traditional themes of international relations, many centuries had to pass before we started to question the rationality of human behavior. We had to wait until the beginning of the twentieth century to see scientists investigating the human mind and its expressions, to see different disciplines trying to understand the subject and produce a theory—each field under a different prism.

This intellectual wandering in the evolution of knowledge was completed with an effort to outline the scientific and practical contribution of decision-making theories. First, decision-making theories improve the analysis given by the broader and more traditional theories of international politics. Second, they contribute to the understanding of the crisis and the negotiations phenomena, and they better the crisis management procedures. And, third, by

indicating the faults in the process of decision-making, they may better the abilities of those making decisions, in any realm of human activity.

Finally, the previous and the current chapters have set the general context of decision-making studies, in which this particular study of Thucydides can be integrated. In chapter 3 I will examine the specific theoretical context created by a multiple of studies on Thucydides, including those in International Relations, and explain how the work at hand can both fit in this context, and contribute to the knowledge on Thucydides, on decision-making, and on international relations.

NOTES

1. The tragedy *Trojan Women* (415 BC) is in fact a covered but harsh critique by Euripides to his countrymen, the Athenians, for the slaughter and the subjugation of the Melians (416/415 BC).

2. On Herodotus see Egbert J. Bakker, Irene J. F. de Jong, and Hans van Wees, eds., *Brill's Companion to Herodotus* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

3. Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* (Athens: Kanakis, 1996), 52, 54, in Byzantine and Modern Greek; translation is of this author. The text is also known as Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes*, trans. Charlotte Roueché (SAWS edition, 2013); http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/folioscope/greekLit%3Atlg3017.Syno298.sawsEng01%3Adiv1.ab1&viewOffsets=-2034.

4. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 96.

5. As to how Hobbes was seeing Thucydides, see Ioannis D. Evrigenis, "Hobbes's Thucydides," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5, no. 4 (2006): 303–16, DOI: 10.1080/15027570601037749.

6. Hobbes does not refer at all to any of his sources; just before the very end of his Book, in "A Review, and Conclusion" (394), he writes: "I have neglected the ornament of quoting ancient poets, orators, and philosophers"; see Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 555.

7. Lorenz Konrad, *On Aggression*, trans. Marjorie K. Wilson (London: Methuen, 1966); Theodor W. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper & Bros, N. York, 1950); Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1969).

8. One of the research trends in Economics was game theory, assuming the rationality of actors. Game theory was later extensively applied into politics. See: John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944); Martin Shubik, ed., *Game Theory and Related Approaches to Social Behavior: Selections* (New York: Wiley, 1964); John. C. Harsanyi, "Game Theory and the Analysis of International Conflict," *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* 11 (December 1965): 292–304; Anatol Rappoport and Albert M. Chammah, *Prisonner's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965).

9. See Richard A. Thaler, *Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioral Economics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015); Richard A. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

10. George Akerlof, "The Market for 'Lemons': Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84, no. 3 (August 1970): 488–500, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0033-5533%28197008%2984%3A3%3C488%3ATMF%22QU%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6; Michael A. Spence, "Job Market Signaling," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 87, no. 3 (August 1973): 355–374, http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0033-5533%28197308%2987%3A3%3C355%3AJMS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-3.

11. Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior* (New York: Macmillan, 1959).

12. Herbert A. Simon, "Rational Decision-Making in Business Organizations," *The American Economic Review* 69, no. 4 (September 1979): 493–513, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1808698.

13. Irving L. Janis, "Decisional Conflicts: A Theoretical Analysis," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3, no. 1, (March 1959): 6–27, http://www.jstor.org/stable/172865; Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972).

14. David Braybrooke and Charles E. Lindblom, *A Strategy of Decision: Policy Evaluation as a Social Process* (New York: The Free Press, 1963).

15. Kenneth E. Boulding, *The Image: Knowledge in Life and in Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956).

16. Francis Rourke, *Bureaucracy and Foreign Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972); Morton A. Halperin, Priscilla A. Clapp, and Arnold Kanter, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2006); Jerel A. Rosati, "Developing a Systematic Decision-Making Framework: Bureaucratic Politics in Perspective," *World Politics* 33, no. 2 (January 1981): 234–52, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2010371.

17. John D. Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

18. Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

19. Ralph K. White, *Nobody Wanted War: Misperception in Vietnam and Other Wars* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968).

20. Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); John G. Stoessinger, *Why Nations Go to War* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1982).

21. Richard C. Snyder, Henry W. Bruck, and Sapin M. Burton, eds., *Foreign Policy Decision-Making: an Approach to the Study of International Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1962).

22. Nathan C. Leites, *A Study of Bolshevism* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1953); Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (June 1969): 190–222, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3013944.

23. Boulding, *The Image*; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in Iinternational Politics*; Jack Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems," *World Politics* 36, no. 1 (1983): 76–99.

24. Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).

25. Kale J. Holsti, "The Necrologists of International Relations," *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique* 18, no. 4 (1985): 675–95.

26. Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision-Making and System Structure in International Crises* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

27. Ole R. Holsti, *Crisis, Escalation, War* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972).

28. Fred Charles Ikle, *How Nations Negotiate* (New York: Praeger, 1967); Fred Charles Ikle, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

29. Richard N. Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis* (New York: The Free Press, 1981).

30. Robert S. McNamara, *Blundering into Disaster* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986); Herbert S. Dinerstein, *The Making of a Missile Crisis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1976).

31. James L. Richardson, *Crisis Diplomacy. The Great Powers since the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Michael Brecher, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, and Sheila Moser, *Crises in the Twentieth Century: Handbook of International Crises* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

32. William Ury, *Getting Past No: Negotiating With Difficult People* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991); Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1991); David A. Lax and James K. Sebenious, *The Manager as Negotiator: Bargaining for Cooperation and Competitive Gain* (New York: Free Press, 1987).

33. Oran R. Young, *The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crises* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); Coral Bell, *The Conventions of Crisis: A Study in Diplomatic Management* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

34. Cohen, "War, Moderation, and Revenge in Thucydides."

Chapter 3

Five Plus Two Debates on Thucydides

Anyone who tries to enter Thucydides' universe encounters an enormous and sometimes outstanding literature on the man and his work; and the more one proceeds the more one is faced with questions that are unexpected to the noninitiated who just started encountering the enormous amount of written work on Thucydides and his text. These questions are the bases of extensive debates that have taken place and produced many arguments and counter-arguments about the nature, the structure, the character, the scientific affiliations, and the inputs of his seminal work *The War*. In this chapter I have used these questions to categorize the various arguments around seven key debates, each one linked and of importance to the next, and all five to the final two: how does one—including myself in the present study—read Thucydides without "abusing"[1] him.

The debates on Thucydides, his work and its interpretation or analysis are intense, some of them very old, and all of them, with short periods of detente, endure until today. Undoubtedly, the first and oldest debate is the one over the composition of the text. It refers to whether Thucydides' text was written at once and continuously as a whole or in parts and at different times. This debate is closely related and has given birth to a second, the veracity of the offered information, and a third concerning the authenticity (historicity) of the speeches and their unity with the narrative. All three debates are basically trying to assess whether there are contradictions between one and another part of the narrative, whether one may consider his famous and numerous speeches accurate and corresponding to historical facts and to what was really said and happened, and whether, finally, the narrative and his speeches constitute a whole.

The fourth debate started among classicists and historians but was most hotly argued within the realms of modern political and international relations

studies, and refers to whether Thucydides had a scientific method. This question gave rise to discussions on whether to characterize him as a historian or something else, such as a "scientific historian," or a "political thinker," or even a "political scientist," and, in the latter case, the founding father or the first ancestor of the field of International Relations.

The fifth debate, spawned by the previous one, concerns if and the degree to which Thucydides is a classical realist,[2] or a neorealist,[3] or, even, a constructivist.[4] The view that he is a realist thinker was accepted by leading figures in the field of International Relations until the development of structural realism or neorealism and the ensuing argument that he was a neorealist. In the meantime, other scholars have disagreed with both these positions and advanced their own proposals, such as the one qualifying Thucydides a constructivist.

The above contending writings have opened up again and anew—if they were ever closed[5]—almost all the previous debates, such as those on the composition, the veracity, the nature of the speeches, and the one on his scientific character, mainly in order to question the realist and particularly the neorealist orientation attached on Thucydides. They have also added two new important debates, the one rather for the first time, on how to avoid the "abuse" of Thucydides (debate six) and, the second, rather perennial, on how we (should) read, study, and understand Thucydides (debate seven).

Why should I deal with these debates or pay attention to them, when I could use assumptions in order to avoid them? I believe an author should clarify for himself and his readers how he is going to proceed with the study of Thucydides and how he is going to avoid abuses similar to those observed. But in order to do this, one needs to specify Thucydides' position within the International Relations currents of thought, and most importantly he needs to know whether he finds himself on a stable or on a slippery ground; the latter depends on whether Thucydides' work is proven and not assumed to be unitary, accurate, homogeneous between the parts, and presents a degree of scientific character. Furthermore, and in addition to the recognition and respect one owes to those classicists and historians who spent their lives studying Thucydides, ignoring their works and the resulting debates may lead to an ahistorical reading and may facilitate another "abusive" study on him. Besides, in the decision-making about how to proceed with the study of Thucydides, the conclusions in these debates will signpost my approach to the main goal of this book, that of delineating the core elements of his approach to decision-making.

These debates are important as my argument on the existence of a Thucydidean decision-making thinking in the form of two schemata is based on verses found in two speeches, the one of the Athenians in Sparta, and the other of Diodotus in Athens; moreover, the content of the concepts

composing the schemata is spread throughout the entire text and the determination of their content is based on examples from the entire text as well. Thus, if the text presents a different philosophy or perspective in the beginning, the middle or the end, this will mean that a concept, such as necessity or human nature or any other, may correspondingly have a varying or different meaning and this would render less credible any conclusion. A similar result could be produced if the text was not accurate, as this would undermine the solidity of Thucydides' arguments. Equally, if the speeches were just Thucydides' creation, this would certainly facilitate my argument that the decision-making thinking belongs to him, but it would hurt his veracity and the unity of the composition. If, a contrario, the speeches were written exactly as they were pronounced, it would have meant that the decision-making thinking was one of the Athenian emissaries to Sparta or of Diodotus and not the one Thucydides is credited having and he further used in the text.

The discussion on his scientific character is also important as it impacts on the theoretical character of his thinking. Are the propositions on the way people think and decide mere generalizations of his contemporary common wisdom or did Thucydides have a sense of causality, which is reflected upon his propositions forming the decision-making schemata? Did he stick to the facts, did he believe in repetition, did he exclude mythology, did he have a purpose with his writing, and mostly, related to the next debate, did he have a view about international politics of his time and if so which?

Certainly Thucydides, for nine different reasons, had a scientific attitude toward knowledge and certainly he had a view about the politics, domestic, and international, of his time. Yet, this view, this approach—although closer to two of the currently existing—is one that characterizes him alone, a Thucydidean approach. Thucydides, even though he accepts competition of power and the role of human nature, is not simply realist, is hardly neorealist, and, at the same time, presents elements of the constructivist approach; but what distinguishes his approach from the contemporary ones is his emphasis on the individuals' decision-making or the collective deliberative processes, and the functional utility of these processes to the understanding of matters and of his thinking.[6] Decision-making to Thucydides is the transmission belt between the politics at the international, the domestic and, then again, toward the international level; and this is more than obvious when this logic is applied either to deal with interpretative abuses, such as the "Thucydides's trap" or to shed light to interminable discussions on the "truest cause" of the war.

Having said the above, obviously it is left to discuss how one should read Thucydides in order to better understand him and how one should avoid another abusive study, this time of my own. My answer is through a holistic approach, meaning one that respects parallel research from the Classics and

the History fields, one that understands as better the whole of the text, if possible as close to its original language, one minimizing our own contributions, particularly our self-mirroring, and one bridging international level politics with decision-making.

DEBATE 1: ON THE COMPOSITION'S UNITY

Disagreements over the composition of Thucydides' text have dominated the discussions among historians and classicists, perhaps discouraging and impeding research on other important themes of his work.[7] The basic questions are whether the text was composed as a whole or in parts, at the same time or in different periods, with the same governing principles in the author's mind, and whether there was an editor who intervened in the text.

The two main opposing views were expressed in the nineteenth century. First, Franz Ullrich (1846), based on what is known as Thucydides' "second introduction" (5.26), argued that it is after this point in time and in the evolution of his writing that Thucydides has started considering the war as one and the same, from 431 to 404 BC, and not two or three. This for Ullrich was a major problem, whose implication was that Thucydides has written the earlier parts under a different perspective and, therefore, the text had two logics.[8] In response to this position, Eduard Meyer, at the turn of the century (1899), made a very frequently cited thorough analysis in support of the text's unity, arguing that Thucydides had a clear idea about what he was writing from the very beginning. Meyer, however, despite his unitarian opinion, offered an argument to the opposing view, by presenting a list of contradictions in relation to the text of treaties, the relations of Athens with other cities, and the number of ships.[9] These contradictions and the resulting disunity claim were later dismissed by de Romilly as simple imperfections of the text, explained not by "the circumstances under which it was written," but as being of the type appearing often, even in "works originally written 'at one sitting.'"[10]

In the next stage, the debate shifted to the question whether the narrative and the speeches were written simultaneously. Eduard Schwartz (1919), supporting the disunity thesis, maintained that there were divisions in Thucydides' work.[11] He tried to show a disorder throughout the text, based mainly on the argument that the speeches in Sparta were made just before the eruption of the war, and were not written simultaneously; those of the Corinthians and of Archidamus were written after the Peace of Nicias, while those of the Athenians and of Sthenelaidas after the end of the war (404 BC).[12]

The first reply from the unitary scholars came from Harald Patzer (1937), who thought the discussion on the composition of the work was rather counterproductive, and, after criticizing Ullrich's and Schwartz' analyses, also

argued in favour of the text's unity.[13] Then, Jacqueline de Romilly, a defender of the text's unity, as early as 1947 and in the very first paragraph of her introduction, taking into account the previous writings, conceded the existence of imperfections raised from the opposite view; thus, she considered unlikely that Thucydides wrote his work "as a whole from the start," that there are indications suggesting several stages of composition, "with possible false starts and revisions," and that these "signs" suggest that the narrative is "not quite homogeneous"; moreover, there are descriptions, as the one of natural phenomena (1.23.3), in which certain omissions" and "the general tone" seem to imply that the chain of events was not "fully known." She further argued that this happened because the war lasted twenty-seven years and, obviously, he did not finish when he started writing it, and because, apparently, disconnected elements introduced initially in the text survived in what was left incomplete by Thucydides.[14] A similar opinion was also held by John Finley, Jr., another pro-unity scholar, who, in his essay "The Unity of Thucydides' History," pointed out the length of the time covered and maintained that the work is "in a fairly finished state as we have it" and "was composed essentially in one period of the author's life."[15]

Another argument made by the disunity proponents, on the intervention of an ancient editor, is based on a final sentence, unique in its formulation, added in the text (8.109), which many of Thucydides editions do not even include: "when the winter after this summer ends, the twenty-first year will be completed." The pro-unity scholars do not disagree on this fact; yet, with de Romilly again leading the way, they reject the possibility of an editor (speculated to be Xenophon) intervening in the text, and point to the tone and the form of the future tense which shows no intention of the editor to alter the text.[16]

An important argument made by the disunity scholars concerns the discrepancies between parts of the Athenians' speech in Sparta and, especially, between the text accounting for the events of the fifty years before the war, known as "Pentecontaetia," and the rest of the narrative. Again the best reply to this point is provided by de Romilly, who, while conceding that both these parts appear as "independent in their construction," and as "parenthetical and unattached," argues that this does not change anything to the overall text's unity, as the above parts are "not indispensable to the rest of the work."[17] To her, even if Thucydides has rewritten or expanded parts of his text, he had from the very beginning fixed the ideas "governing his composition" as they are presented to us nowadays. The "truest cause" («ἀ-ληθεστάτη πρόφασις») of the war not only existed in his mind but its presentation in a combination of narrative and speeches was "planned" from the very beginning and contained the "same mixture" of Corinthian hatred and of the Spartan timidity, and increasing fear. To conclude, "the whole of this structure belongs to

Thucydides' first version—if, indeed, there was a first version of Thucydides' work."[18]

Her most important argument, however, in favor of the text's unity was the one resulting out of her consideration on Thucydides' main thesis, which is the Athenian imperialism. His interpretation of the facts under this prism "provides them with a definite unity," which is "visible in the close relationship" "established between the various episodes"—a unity "also apparent in the succession of speeches" on imperialism. The speeches "develop the same arguments, with all the enemies of imperialism on one side and all its supporters on the other. Thus the whole work is filled with the ever-strengthening echo of their debate, as their two voices are heard from beginning to end, replying to each other in an eternal and dramatic conflict."[19]

Overall, it appears that the disunity scholars have not offered any solid argument to support their case. Obviously the text could not have been written at one period and in a short space of time, especially about a war which lasted twenty-seven years, with Thucydides accounting for the twenty-one of it. Equally, given the physical writing techniques and difficulties of those times, the text may present imperfections, as well as parts that were unattached or left for betterment in an ulterior stage of processing. Most important, however, is the argument of the unity thesis that the main idea about the behavior of Athens is present from the beginning to the end; as is Thucydides' opinion—which is important for the present work—about human nature, necessity, and about the role of honor, fear, and interest in determining the behavior of men. And, finally, having myself read the text exhaustively and repeatedly, I have never had the feeling that there was a different Thucydides in the beginning than at the end. Thus, for all the above reasons, I conclude in favor of the composition's unity.

DEBATE 2: ON THUCYDIDES' VERACITY

Related to the question of its composition is the question of Thucydides' veracity and, therefore, his honesty as an author and the credibility of the information he provides. Cartwright raised the issue that Thucydides' technique to ascribe, without being able to know, motives to characters for their actions "prompts disquiet" and "worries the modern reader" as the speeches "were not word-for-word transcripts of the originals."[20] Abbot has questioned Thucydides' credibility, attributing to him a likely doubt about having got "everything exactly right." He argued that Thucydides "is circumspect about the limits of historical accuracy in 1.21, and he notes a number of obvious sources of error in 1.22."[21] David Welch, echoing Cartwright and Abbott, has cast doubt on the veracity of the Thucydidean account, especially by

commenting and questioning his arguments on the "truest cause" of the war. "Why should we believe" Thucydides, he asked; "it is possible" that he is "correct," but "he failed to cite his source properly."[22]

Stefan Dolgert argued that many, especially from the field of International Relations, have fallen in the trap of accepting the text as it is, evincing "a strange credulity when examining Thucydides' pronouncements."[23] He submitted the question whether the text we have and the war Thucydides has shown us is "the reflection of his own mirror-image" or "his own self-narrative," and whether his text is a "mantle" hiding from us information or other elements of and for the war. He went even further to raise an issue of our ability to rely on Thucydides about the facts he is offering to us.[24] To find his argument of the "substantial scepticism" on Thucydides' "reliability as a source of data,"[25] he referred to the works of Simon Hornblower and of Gregory Crane. It is certain that Hornblower has tried "to show that alongside the military and political struggle of the Peloponnesian War there was a religious war" and suggested that "if Thucydides had had a different outlook we would know a good deal more about the war." But, in the same study, Hornblower concluded also that "without Thucydides we would lack many of the texts with which to correct Thucydides" and that "without him we would hardly have a Peloponnesian War at all."[26] As for Gregory Crane, his goal was to "highlight the tension between the archaic and the modern Thucydides" linked "to the conflict between 'real' and 'apparent' factors driving his work "from beginning to end."[27] Crane credited Thucydides with the effort of providing "an accurate account of individual events," but he pointed out, first, the presence, even though marginal, of anthropological and cultural phenomena (i.e., religion), and, second, the lack of effort "to resolve the larger ambiguities of his narrative." Crane basically related the latter with the issue of values, despite the fact that Thucydides has "sought to assimilate" decades of observed brutality "in a new rationalized form, that of 'ancient simplicity.'"[28] Overall, however, and despite the fact that in his work he has raised some problems in Thucydides' work, Crane underlined, contrary to those who have questioned Thucydides honesty, that "no one before him and few since have insisted so firmly on the importance of sticking to the facts."[29]

Peter Pouncey and John Wilson have also defended Thucydidean veracity and referred, among others, to chapter 1.22, where Thucydides proclaims his effort to collect and verify the facts. Pouncey discussed Thucydides' "accuracy" («ἀκρίβεια») in chapter 1 of his work and concluded that his "rigorous and systematic method" redefined the genre and left "an impressive work."[30] Wilson concluded that "nobody believes that in describing what was done, rather than said, Thucydides would have even thought of setting down what he thought the agents ought to have done or 'what the situation required' them to do."[31] Similarly, Perez Zagorin underlined the lack of the

word "objectivity" in Ancient Greek and Thucydides' insistence on accuracy and truth;[32] and more recently, Josiah Ober has also supported the veracity of Thucydides' work, considering that the text "does seek to offer a precise account of the past."[33]

Based on the above, may we rely on Thucydides for the facts? Did he write everything that happened during the war or about what was happening in parallel to the war? The answer is yes to the first question and, obviously, no to the second. Can we verify these answers? Not really, as there are not many sources to use in order to control the facts, or not until another text or evidence to the contrary is discovered by archaeological or historical research. In fact, as it is probably already understood, it is basically Thucydides that is used to control Thucydides. This is what Kagan, despite questioning Thucydides' "truest cause" explanation, underlined[34] and, after specifying that for Thucydides "the phenomena and the narrative are not ends in themselves, but means whereby the historian can illustrate general truths," concluded "this is not to say that Thucydides means to deceive. Quite the opposite is true. He is determined that the reader will not be deceived, so he selects his material in such a way to emphasize and clarify the truth."[35] I think it is difficult to disagree with this assessment, and, therefore, I conclude for the veracity of the Thucydides' text; besides, and as there is not any evidence to the contrary, one may ask, reversing Welch's question, why shouldn't we believe him?

DEBATE 3: ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SPEECHES

Are the speeches authentic[36] and if yes, to what degree? Do they correspond to what was really said? And how do the speeches relate to the narrative? As already noted, these questions have been debated widely and such debates have focused on the accuracy, not so much of the narrative, but of what was said in the speeches. Donald Kagan has pointed out that on this matter the "opinions range from one extreme, that they are fictions completely invented by Thucydides,[37] to the other, that they are close to verbatim reports of what the speakers said."[38] The debate has basically arisen from the various interpretations of 1.22.1, where Thucydides presents his method on the writing of the speeches: "that is why I wrote them as I thought that each one could speak more appropriately to the circumstances, trying to be the closest to the general sense («ξυμπάσης γνώμης») of what was really said."

The prevailing opinion is that Thucydides has kept as closely as possible to the general purpose of what was actually said. Frank Adcock adhered to this opinion and considered that in composing the speeches Thucydides has written them "in such a way as to coincide with his opinion of what the several speakers would most likely have presented to their hearers as being what

the situation required." Adcock pointed out, however, that both his opinion and 'what was actually said' were limiting factors for what Thucydides has eventually written; thus, we today know "something at least of what was actually said," as Thucydides' knowledge was limited "in terms of the difficulty (or even impossibility) of remembering precisely what was said."[39] Lowell Edmunds has also argued that every speech is "a combination of an ideal speech and the real one."[40] Donald Kagan rejected the idea that they were not made at all, and explicitly concurred with Adcock's understanding, and considered that the problem is basically due to the fact that "far too little attention has been given to the unequivocal force of the words" in 1.22.1: "of course adhering as closely as possible to what they really said."[41] To these arguments, Marc Cogan has added that as Thucydides "gives no indication that he has fabricated them in any material way, he has given the speeches the same guarantee of their historicity that he has given to every other aspect of his history, every other event in his narrative."[42]

John Wilson suggested that the phrase of 1.22.1 must basically mean "in the way it seemed to me likely that each of them would speak." If Thucydides meant that he would report what was actually said instead of "what ought to have been said" or "what the situation called for," then "he is guilty of very grave inaccuracy," because he did not.[43] But, Wilson specified that "what the situation called for" was not always in line with what "actually happened"; moreover, as to an extent what happened was caused by what was said, Wilson thought that "Thucydides must have tampered with what happened (to make it fit with a speech containing what X or Y ought to have said) or else reported the speeches essentially as they were made, so that (unsurprisingly) they were in line with what happened"; to conclude, "it might be held that what Thucydides did was to concoct speeches which fitted subsequent happenings."[44]

Based on this thought, Wilson suggested a series of "moves" that Thucydides followed, based on "self-imposed rules": reporting in his own style and not in the speaker's; selecting from a number of speeches actually made; being selective with regard to some of the «γνώμη»[45] and not reproduce all of it; not reporting anything which does not count as «γνώμη»; adding words to make the «γνώμη» clearer; abbreviating or expanding (so long as the «γνώμη» is clear); casting the «γνώμη» (without changing its general force) in terms which might serve his particular purposes, as the "pairing" of remarks in two different speeches (e.g., 1.69 and 144), or even the arrangement into a formal dialogue, as in the Melian (5.8–13). Wilson concluded that this series of "moves" cater "for most if not all of the objections which have been raised against the 'historicity' of the speeches" and that, although there are "objections to the photographic, Hansard-like reportage which is one form of 'historicity' or accuracy," there can be no objections "to the kind of correct reportage which Thucydides in fact claims."[46]

There are also those scholars who have not just categorically rejected the possibility of Thucydides making up the speeches, but that he kept as close as possible to what has been said. Among them the primary figure is Arnold Gomme,[47] followed by others such as David Grene, who maintained that Thucydides has "clung as closely as he could to the available evidence of the delivered speech."[48] This is the line of argument followed by Daniel Garst, who is among the first from the International Relations field to discuss the issue and to support the full authenticity of the speeches. He referred to "Thucydides' insistence that the verbal exchanges of his history are accurate accounts of actual speeches given on particular occasions" and to the "difficulties of recollection" that "forced him to make the speakers say what, in his view, the circumstances of the various situations demanded they say." He also referred to Thucydides' statement that "his description of events is not simply derived from the first source that came to hand but instead 'rests partly on what I saw myself, partly on what others saw for me, the accuracy of the report being always tried by the most severe and detailed tests possible'" (1.22.1–3). Based on the above, Garst concluded that Thucydides has been telling us that "he has been as careful and accurate as possible in the acquisition and verification of his information"; therefore, as "objective evidence that would make us doubt Thucydides' basic reliability has yet to be uncovered, there is no good reason to doubt the fundamental veracity of the speeches, especially when Thucydides insists that he treats them with the same care he gives to the events in his narrative."[49]

As to the question of whether the speeches should be separated from the narrative and "be distinguished from nonverbal behavior" and, further, should be considered as "mere rationalizations of systemically determined interests," Garst disagreed. First, he accepted White's argument that the speeches constitute a "culture of argument," consisting of the "discourse, the conventions of argument and action" by which the Greek city-states "maintain and regulate their relations with one another."[50] Then, he brought in the opinion that Thucydides introduces the speeches into the narrative "whenever he reaches a turning point in the conflict, an event that signals a radical departure from earlier policies by the different actors."[51] This is an argument made earlier by de Romilly, who wrote of a "planned arrangement of narrative and speeches," designed by Thucydides from the very beginning of his writing, and of the unity of the text "apparent in the succession of speeches dealing with imperialism."[52] The argument, as shown by Garst, was adopted by Moses Finley and by Marc Cogan; the former was of the opinion that Thucydides is using the speeches not only to "lay bare what stood behind the narrative, the policy, the possibilities and mistakes," but also "to dispense with explicit precepts in outlining the political prescriptions of the history."[53]

Finally, in support of the text and speeches' unity as well as authenticity, Garst made appeal to a prominent figure in the study of Thucydides, Thomas Hobbes, who wrote in "Of the life and history of Thucydides"—the text preceding his translation of Thucydides: "In sum if the truth of the history did ever appear in the manner of relating, it doth so in this history: so coherent, perspicuous and persuasive is the whole narration, and every part thereof";[54] and "The ground and motives of every action he setteth down before the action itself, either narratively, or else contriveth them into the form of deliberative orations . . . . Digressions for instruction's cause and other such conveyance of precepts, (which is the philosopher's part), he never useth; as having so clearly set before men's eyes the ways and events of good and evil counsels, that the narration doth secretly instruct the reader, and more effectually than can possibly be done by precept."[55]

Despite the number of scholars supporting the authenticity thesis of Thucydides' work, there are still those who stress—in a rather moderate form—Thucydides' creative role in the writing of the speeches. Thus, Egbert Bakker underlined the problems that Thucydides' decision to write "what was called for" created for modern historians, "who often see in the sentence an unresolved tension, or even an outright contradiction between 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity.'" Yet, Bakker does not question the authenticity of the text; he simply considers that the sentence of 1.22.1 states "an essential element of Thucydides' project" that "only when the speaker's real motives and assumptions are laid bare can *The War of the Peloponnesians and Athenians* serve the paradigmatic function its creator envisages"; thus, he continues, it is very likely that the Athenians have said precisely what Thucydides wrote, who, not having a transcript of the Melian dialogue, "availed himself of the occasion . . . to impart to posterity the essence of empire and *Realpolitik*."[56]

Doubts have been expressed also on the basis of alleged contradictions in Thucydides' text itself. This is the case of David Welch, who focused on what appeared to him as a tension between the "truest cause" and the speeches made before the war in Sparta. He pointed out that King Archidamus advised patience and proposed not to go to war, an argument contradicting the "truest cause," that is, the fear out of the growth of Athenian power pushing the Spartans to start a war. On the other hand, Sthenelaidas proposed to go to war and invoked several reasons, as the injuries the Athenians caused to the Spartans, the obligations toward their allies, their honor, and the gods favoring them. Eventually the Spartans decided to go to war based on these arguments. The question therefore that Welch asks is whom should we believe; Thucydides of the "truest cause" or Thucydides of the speeches?[57]

Another thesis supporting the subjectivity of the speeches and the conflict between them and the narrative has been proposed by Edith Foster, whose

method involved an analysis and comparison of the narrative with Pericles speeches.[58] She argued that there is a tension between his speeches and the narrative surrounding them. This contrast, according to her, is due to the fact that Thucydides disagreed with Pericles,[59] and this was his way of showing it, without depriving the reader from a presentation of Pericles' character and views.[60] Independently, whether she is right or wrong, the point is that Finley, de Romilly, or Foster, and many others, by accepting that Pericles speaks for Thucydides or the opposite, they support to a varying degree the subjectivity thesis on the speeches and, most importantly, despite the observed contradictions, the unity of the text and the speeches.

Our quest to find out what really happened in the writing of the text, from the point of view of its composition, of the veracity of its information, and of the speeches' authenticity, obviously matters for an accurate record of the past, especially as Thucydides is our basic source of information or interpretation for this great war. It is impossible Thucydides could have written the text at once, but this does not entail that his text does not constitute a whole. It makes no sense also for Thucydides—someone who has stressed so much his dedication to the facts—to have faked the events of the narrative. But it is more possible and more logical that in the speeches, as Wilson suggested, Thucydides had the freedom to be more creative and expansive, for as long as he was close to the «ξύμπασα γνώμη», that is, the main idea of what was fit or expected to be said in the context of the particular historic moment. Thus, I conclude that the central ideas of the speakers are obviously contained in the text, but the creative development of the arguments in the speeches and the interpretation are imbued with his own thinking.

DEBATE 4: THUCYDIDES, SCIENTIFIC OR NOT?

The fact that Thucydides is an important author is clear. Yet, the quality of his contribution and the degree of his scientific character has been questioned. It is useful to preface our considering of this debate by noting that such discussion has sometimes failed to appreciate the historical context and the state of scientific progress that one can reasonably expect within the fifth century BC. Moreover, the debate has been fueled by the many different readings of his work over the last 2,400 years, undertaken with different purposes, within different disciplines, under different ideological prisms and predispositions toward Greek antiquity and Thucydides himself, with different research aims, and with different understandings of what science was then or is today—thus, by their conception, competitive and contending. Most importantly, Thucydides' participation in these discussions has been indirect, with his few yet clear sentences on the topic and without any

possibility to reply, while the posterior discussants had the opportunity to study him (it appears sometimes not entirely) and use him in their arguments both for and against him.

On the one side are those academics that we can characterize as Thucydides' disciples or, even, enthusiasts. Their argument, roughly sketched, is that Thucydides, for a variety of reasons, offered us scientific and theoretical knowledge; his method was scientific, and, thus, for many, he is, respectively, the first scientist in the fields of History, Political Philosophy, Political Science, and International Relations.

The other side is those one could call the skeptics of Thucydides' scientific character. They vary from those finding errors, omissions, and contradictions in his text, to those questioning his scientific contribution and qualities. Yet, to be fair, despite the different degrees of scientific contribution ascribed by this category of authors to Thucydides, first, many of their writings have been given as a response to the arguments (sometimes exaggerated or wrong) of the other side, and, second, there is no record of treating Thucydides or his work with disrespect. What one may record in the literature is a strong critique for Thucydides' enthusiasts, as respectively happened in the responses of the latter for the unfounded arguments of the skeptics.

Thucydides has attracted important students since antiquity, ranging from Xenophon, Plutarch, Diodorus, Cicero, Dionysius Alicarnassius, Marcellinus, Polybius, Procopius, Anna Komnena,[61] to modern times Machiavelli[62] and Hobbes,[63] who have all been influenced or praised his work.[64] Hobbes was among the first to credit him with a theoretical insight in politics, David Hume linked him with the balance of power theory and international politics,[65] Immanuel Kant considered his text as "the unique beginning of the entire true History,"[66] and John Stuart Mill thought of his speeches as something "among the most remarkable specimens" of the "wisdom of ages."[67]

Among the most important and strongest admirers of Thucydides was Nietzsche, who is considered as being influenced by him.[68] In a passage of *Twilight of the Idols* he vehemently attacked Plato for idealism, while praising Thucydides for adhering to reality and applying "hard factuality":

> My recreation, my preference, my cure from all Platonism has always been Thucydides. Thucydides and, perhaps, Machiavelli's *Il Principe* are most closely related to me by the unconditional will not to delude oneself, but to see reason in reality [. . .] One must follow him line by line and read no less clearly between the lines: there are few thinkers who say so much between the lines. With him the culture of the Sophists, by which I mean the culture of the realists, reaches its perfect expression [. . .]. Greek philosophy: the decadence of the Greek instinct. Thucydides: the great sum, the last revelation of that strong, severe, hard factuality [. . .]. In the end, it is courage in the face of reality that distinguishes a man like Thucydides from a man like Plato: Plato is a coward

> before reality, consequently he flees into the ideal; Thucydides has control of himself, consequently he also maintains control of things.[69]

Thucydides' scientific character and quality had also his strong supporters among twentieth-century historians and classicists. Cochrane presented Thucydides as a modern scientific historian, who was influenced and used the methods of Democritus and Hippocrates, and whose "true greatness is that of a pioneer in scientific method."[70] In agreement were Collingwood[71] and de Romilly; the latter not only presented a Thucydidean theory of Athenian imperialism, but she also proposed and discussed the existence of a "psychological law" driving it.[72]

From a different perspective, the scientific character of Thucydides was also raised and strongly supported by students of International Relations, mostly of the neorealist perspective. Neorealists, influenced by Waltz' theory of international politics, the differentiation he made between laws and theories, and his critique on observation and induction as a means for building theory without the capacity to provide for an explanation,[73] treated the Thucydidean "truest cause" of the war as the basis of "a covering law explanation, pointing to the enduring importance of international anarchy and the quest for power in shaping the relations between states."[74] This neorealist scientific reading reached its peak with Robert Gilpin's statement that Thucydides is "the first scientific student of international politics."[75]

There have been contrary views, however, critical to those just expressed. First of all, the notion of "psychological laws" has been questioned by Geoffrey de Ste. Croix, a historian of Marxian perspective,[76] who argued against their existence and rejected the opposite arguments as "speculations."[77] Similarly, Daniel Garst, despite the variety of "laws" invoked and observed in the speeches, maintained that "Thucydides makes no attempt to explain them in the course of his narration; indeed, he rarely puts forward explicit laws of his own."[78]

A second point, consequent of the previous and questioning the position of Thucydides' scientific credentials, concerns his generalizations. Critics did acknowledge that Thucydides does generalize his observations on human actions and mentality. Yet, "these generalizations ought not be equated with the causal laws"—not just any laws, however, but, as they suggested, those "used by scientists to explain recurring phenomena in the natural environment"; both, Thucydides' "laws" and/or generalizations are just "grounded in shared conventions and beliefs," and, at best, Garst suggests they "correspond to what Winch (1958) has called 'rule-governed' behavior." Worst, they "do not entail a singular and well-defined set of counterfactual conditions in the way that law-like generalizations in the natural sciences do. Their explicans and explicandums refer to the same object."[79]

The critique on his generalizations raised the issue of causality and the existence of behavior patterns in Thucydides' thinking, as well as the use of methods to gather knowledge similar to the ones in the natural sciences. Francis Cornford, more than a century ago, concluded that Thucydides has demonstrated "a completely scientific spirit, and also an equally complete destitution of a scientific view of nature."[80] Thucydides "makes note of recurring events and patterns of behaviour," observed Garst, but "he does not commit himself to drawing specific causal connections between them." In support of this argument, the example of 1.23.3 was brought to the forefront, from which, given his comment that earthquakes, solar eclipses, famines, droughts, and plagues "ceased to be incredible," one could conclude that Thucydides qualifies them as a direct result of the war; yet, Thucydides fails to explain, if this conclusion is right, why these events occurred more frequently during the war. In order to solidify the view that Thucydides lacks the scientific method, critics very often used his account of the plague: while he did record its symptoms and its repercussions so that people in the future will be able to recognize it, should it occur again (2.48), he did not try to explain its causes.[81]

The conclusions, however, of this group of academics, despite the fact they are using similar arguments, vary. Thus, Garst suggested that "Thucydides' enduring insights on international relations were primarily political rather than scientific," that his history "does not point to general laws explaining international conflict, nor did its author intend it to do so," but it provides "timeless insights into the basis of political power and hegemony."[82] David Cartwright argued that passages of direct analysis or of interpretation by Thucydides are "rare,"[83] and David Welch maintained that Thucydides did not offer us "a philosophical argument as such" or "anything that we could immediately recognise as a 'theory.'"[84]

To all these arguments of critique, there are, however, an important number of counterarguments. Thucydides began writing his work, as he mentions, with the eruption of the war (1.1.1), in 431 BC, at an age, as all agree, of no more than twenty-nine years old. Set aside the fact that the act of writing was at the time not an easy enterprise, this means, as a way of comparison with the other two major thinkers, that he began writing four years before Plato's birth and stopped with his death in 398 BC, long before Aristotle was born in 384 BC. What is important, however, is that he started writing in an adverse environment, characterized by a dominant tradition of explaining things based on mythology and superstition.[85] And, what is most relevant and should always be kept in mind is that he was writing in a world where scientific knowledge was in its infancy, and, certainly, with a complete lack of an understanding of our modern conception of science (and we still have disagreements on what science is).

Thucydides comes in this context. First, he denounces the pleasing writing forms of earlier historians, poets, and speech-writers,[86] as well as the use of fiction, from which he totally dissociates himself—a decision he knows it can cost to his work at that time, as he writes that "the exclusion of the mythical from my work may make it less pleasant as a hearing" (1.22.4). Thus, he abandons mythology (1.21.1) and the metaphysical; he does not credit events and decisions to gods, nor to their influence on humans or on nature; instead, he credits them to humans, thus introducing the first small but important step toward scientific understanding and methodology.[87]

Thucydides, secondly, is not a writer who, as he mentions, simply records what he hears, thus taking his distance[88] and clearly criticizing indirectly, without naming him, Herodotus.[89] Indeed, he seeks from the beginning the most reliable evidence of the facts (1.1.3),[90] setting thus the basis of some modern rules of research methodology, and criticizes people's leaning for the easy and processed knowledge:

> The old events I found so, despite the fact that it is difficult to trust existing evidence. Because people what they hear about the past, even for their own country, they accept it each one equally airily than the other. The search for the truth is so effortless for the many, that they rather turn to what is readily offered.(1.20.1)[91]

His insistence to seek the facts and overcome the unreal, together with the abandoning of the gods' involvement in human affairs, is what is believed to have led Nietzsche to attribute Thucydides the "virtue" of "hard factuality";[92] Thucydides had overcome the unreal of his times, an achievement which by itself was for Nietzsche sufficient to be termed "naturalizing" or "science."[93]

Sticking to reality and the facts[94] is a method that, as it is widely accepted, he adopted from the Sophists[95] and, particularly, the Hippocratics, those who at that time tried to practice medicine. This is evident in the detailed description of the war's important events and its description in stages of development, as "the best way to develop an understanding of the process."[96] It is obvious in the description of the plague, where he did not speculate on the plague's origins, nature, or efficacy; instead, he described it as accurately as possible, having himself suffered from and survived it.[97] And, it is obvious in the adoption from their vocabulary of one of the most critical words in his text, the word «πρόφασις," in combination with «αληθεστάτη» (the "truest cause"), as distinct from the symptoms (1.118.1).[98]

Thucydides, thirdly, tried to filter and control his information, thus enhancing the veracity of his narrative and its scientific characteristics. This is how he highlights the difficulties he encountered and how he has dealt with:

> The events of the war that occurred I did not attempt to write by taking my information from the first I happened to meet, or as I imagined them, but after having

> examined them as accurately as possible, both those which I attended and that I learned from others. The verification was difficult because eyewitnesses did not say the same for the same events, but each according to his favor for each side and according to his memory. (1.22.2–3)

Thucydides, fourthly, was not interested in recording all the events. He was interested in the important ones, and these are the ones he has chosen to interpret, that is, to produce knowledge based on criteria similar to the ones used nowadays. Why did he write his work? Because, he explains, he had "predicted that the war would be bigger and more important than any previous one" (1.1.1).[99] And why did he reach this conclusion? As he further substantiates, because "the two opponents were entering the war culminating in every kind of preparation" and "because he saw the rest of the Greeks allying with one or the other party. . ." (1.1.1).

Thucydides, fifthly, works inductively and, thus, uses a scientific method.[100] This is an accomplishment for his time. What does it mean to proceed inductively? It means that by following the various individual events, one reaches a conclusion, an abstracted view, which then he does not abandon, and is using it again and again in order to explain events, a process through which he continues confirming his conclusion or explanation (or theory). Thus, the interpretation of the war through the competition of power and through decisions due to necessity and human nature are not met just in one passage of his work, but govern the logic of approach in his entire text.

It is true that one may find shortfalls in the way he presents the "truest cause" of the war;[101] yet, it is difficult to deny that there was a competition of power between Athenians and Spartans apparent in the entire work. It is also true that some of the generalizations are a result or contain the common wisdom of his time; yet, it is again difficult to deny that the conclusion he reached after the account of the Civil War in Corcyra about the war and human nature is not the result of induction. As John Finley has put it, Thucydides displays "that profoundest of Greek abilities, apparent alike in their literature and their art, the ability to convey the generic without falsifying the unique."[102]

This leads to a sixth point; in my view Thucydides had, if not a theory, at least a credible explanation about the war: competition of power for the creation, maintenance or prevention of hegemony, and human nature leading, in combination with other factors, to wrong decisions. Bluhm correctly observed that his "chief purpose was to reveal the dynamics of empire, the inner workings of the process of imperial growth and decline, conceived as a recurrent natural event." Bluhm, despite being an admirer of Thucydides' "genius," did not attribute a theory to him; he argued convincingly, however, that one may find in his text "a cluster of orienting concepts and hypotheses which are pregnant for the study of the dynamics of national power in our time."[103]

The seventh point is that Thucydides accepted and sought to point out the repetition of events related to man, which is another trait of and methodological tool for theoretical thinking, and a condition allowing him to make generalizations.[104] Thucydides' concept of history or the evolution of human affairs is not linear, but, like natural phenomena, is characterized by repetitions.[105] His belief in repetition, the same that is true today in science, is the one which gives him the possibility to try to make projections into the future. He argues that his work will be beneficial to those who will want to have a precise knowledge of what happened during the war, but also for "what according to human nature will happen similar and approximate" (1.22.4).[106]

In other words, Thucydides is not the storyteller of his time as he engaged with "a considerably wider field" than that of the writers known of as the "early Greek historians."[107] It is commonly accepted that he is a historian who made himself famous as a "historiographical innovator." Thus, "Thucydides took up the nascent prose genre of history from earlier writers, including Hellanicus and Herodotus, and transformed it into a rigorous and 'scientific' discipline."[108] Thucydides sought "to document who did what, when, and why. Yet, this last, analytical 'why' [. . .] inevitably involves a writer in larger, more theoretical questions that Thucydides' abstract, concise style seems actively to invite."[109]

The eighth point is that, contrary to criticisms, Thucydides had not just one, but, according to his text, at least three purposes. The first was to leave his work to future readers as a possession for all times (a *ktēma es aiei*, 1.22.4)—an aim that he has achieved, irrespectively of whatever anyone thinks of him being scientific or not. The second was not just to describe but to analyze the most important war until his time (1.1.1). And the third was to provide a tool for those who want to have a clear picture both of what had happened and of what may be expected to happen in the future,[110] based on the behavior of men, repetitive as of their nature (1.22.4).

In order to attain his aims, he used his own interpretive insights, first, on the politics arising from or in the competitive relations between the politically and territorially organized human entities of his time (cities and kingdoms), and, second, on human nature, which many authors have come to term psychological "laws" or "approach."[111] The war's analysis on the basis of these interpretive insights, his explanations on the outbreak of the specific war (1.23.6) and on the Sicilian expedition (6.6.1),[112] and his discussions on power and imperialism, led to the formation of a quite widespread opinion among students of International Relations that Thucydides is the founder of the field.[113]

The belief that Thucydides did something more than writing just a "scientific" history is held by students of his work in other fields as well. Bakker, emphasising in his study the dynamic relationship between Thucydides and

his readers, argued that Thucydides wrote "the war" as a "model";[114] "the war is not a past reality that is recorded in total and exhaustive detail, but a reality 'towards which' the work is written"; "his strong insistence on the scope of 'this war' shows that he considers his work the only way of access to a reality of which he has laid out the fundamental structure."[115] Ober, on the other hand, went further; he suggested that Thucydides founded Political Science, as his fundamental conceptual breakthrough and insights on the "newness" of the Athenian world but also its grounding "in features of human psychology" concerned "dynamic systems and reflexive processes of change."[116] Based on this line of thinking, Ober maintained that "Thucydides' text teaches its reader[117] that the key to effective future action is understanding sociopolitical systems, that is, "political science," going thus much further than the Sophists' *πολιτική τέχνη* (*politikē technē*, the art of politics) or the art of rhetoric of his time. Thucydides chose the historical narrative just as the "literary vehicle for the presentation of his invention," as this was the only way to demonstrate the change over time of the relevant phenomena.[118]

All the above—abandoning mythology and the gods, sticking to facts, verifying information, selecting between events, thinking inductively, accepting the repetitive nature of human behaviour and events, having an explanation about the war, setting specific purposes for his work, and, even, according to some, creating the model of the war—render it impossible not to recognize in his work a degree of scientific quality, especially if one takes under consideration, the political, intellectual, scientific, and religious global context within which he created his work. Given these nine points, Thucydides, at least, may be qualified as an early social scientist or a scientific precursor.

It is obvious that Thucydides' work does not satisfy the modern criteria of science. Yet, in order to judge his scientific contribution, the critical question is whether his work, method, and explanations were comparable to what constituted "science" in the fifth century BC.

It is also obvious that Thucydides does not demonstrate causality in all of the conclusions he makes. However, in my opinion, there are important passages as in 3.45.4-7 or 3.82.2 where both the cause-effect relation and the theoretical thinking exist; the explicans and the explicandums do not refer to the same object. But if these are exceptions as anyone may counterargue, is it because he didn't think of causes or is it because of his way of writing—which for his time constitutes a new form—and goes straight to the conclusion of his thinking? And even more, was there and then any other form of scientific writing, for politics or other areas of "science"?

Often the argument is made that Thucydides did not search for the causes of the plague. But Thucydides was not and did not want to be or become a "medical doctor" of our times; he survived the plague and he described it with his "hard factuality." What he wrote, a list of symptoms, was exactly

similar with the writings of the medical doctors of his time[119] and, perhaps even better[120] than anyone else as he had experienced the disease. Furthermore, even the Hippocratic doctors did not know and did not have any means to determine the cause of the plague (*yersinia pestis*)—something men were unable to do until the last decade of the nineteenth century. And finally, if his naturalistic and nonreligious approach to natural phenomena is often downplayed and even criticized by the proponents of a hard science approach (or, by others, for not covering satisfactorily the religious aspects of his time), what of his absolute success in the explanation of the tidal wave (3.89.5)—a "tsunami" as we call it today—that he describes?[121]

Overall, the fact that Thucydides is not interested in determining the causes of the plague does not mean that this is the case for the rest of his work[122] or that he did not understand it. On the contrary, Thucydides and his contemporaries had a good idea of the relation between cause and effect. And not just that; ancient Greeks were thinking in terms of multicausality, which is obvious in 3.45.4-7 and in the fact that there are three rather complementary theories on the outbreak of war, two of the "truest cause" (1.23.6 and 6.6.1) and one based on a cost-benefit analysis (4.59.2). Thus, the conclusion reached by Robert Gilpin that "Thucydides did not think of causes in the modern or scientific sense of the term" is only partially correct;[123] what is correct is that Thucydides did not follow in the fifth century BC the methodology of science and the forms of writing of the twentieth or the twenty-first century. But, at the end, criticizing Thucydides—often with a purpose to polemicize with some other of his interpreters—for not having followed the present day rules of scientific methodology is so exaggerated that could not be so much different from criticizing him for not having written his text in some contemporary language.

What, after all, is the scientific contribution of Thucydides, in modern day terms? This is related to the next inter-paradigm debate, taking place within the field of International Relations.

DEBATE 5: THUCYDIDES AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thucydides has been also trapped in the crossfire of another debate, this time of another discipline, International Relations, with students of the field trying to assign him in the one or the other contending paradigm. Is he a realist, and of what kind? And could he be something else, as, for example, a constructivist?

Before discussing how Thucydides has been assigned to specific International Relations perspectives, an important caveat is necessary, regarding his

reception within the discipline. According to a succinct typology, this reception unfolded in three stages: the depiction of historical parallels between, initially, the ancient war and the twentieth century's world wars, and, later, the competition of Athens and Sparta with that of the superpowers during the cold war (respectively, the United States and the USSR); the proclamation of Thucydides as the "father of realism" around the end of the 1970s, along with the incorporation of his writings into the realist research; and the continuation of his portrayal as the first realist theorist, which happened to coincide with a critical research literature. Noticeable is that the latter, while offering alternative readings of him, has not questioned so much his work or even his foundational role within International Relations per se, but specific realist readings or alleged instances of misuse or abuse within that work.[124]

Thucydides as a Classical Realist

As anyone may guess, the International Relations literature presents a multitude of texts acclaiming Thucydides a "realist," of both the classical and the structural variants, with the former describing rather residually and broadly the nonstructural scholars, while additionally, within the "classical" category, the label "biological" refers to those scholars putting the emphasis mostly on human nature.[125] Thucydides has been associated with classical realism, first, because he conceptualized "international" politics in terms of essentially power politics, the principles and practices of which delineate the array of the survival choices for each state-like entity.[126] Secondly, because of the intellectual connection found between him and some of the classic figures of political thought. His influence on Machiavelli is epitomized mainly in respect to the role of political psychology, but less to the method or to the conceptualization of the balance of power.[127] His influence on Guicciardini consists of the parallels the latter has drawn between the Italian and the Greek city-state systems, while on Hobbes it is detected in the latter's analysis of regularities and the establishment of "laws" (or axioms) regarding human behavior.[128]

Robert Keohane has notably assigned to Thucydides, as well as to Hans Morgenthau, the role of having set the core assumptions of classical realism, understood in terms of a research program. Those are "state-centrism," "rationality," and "power." They refer, respectively, to states being the most important actors in world politics, the conceptualization of states as rational unitary actors and utility maximizers, and power emerging both as the aim of states and as the means of interests' calculation and satisfaction.[129] Despite contestations on whether Thucydides would agree accordingly,[130] it remains a fact that classical realists have focused in a multitude of Thucydidean references to the motivations of fear, honor, and interest.[131] Hans Morgenthau, for

his part, cites Thucydides in his axiomatic perception of interest as power, as well as a universally valid and objective category,[132] and in the presentation of the tendency for domination as a feature of human association.[133] Raymond Aron also cites Thucydides, however in a rather narrower fashion, that is, with regard to understanding the Greek city-states as an archetypical example of bipolar systems.[134]

Most crucially, and despite the claimed, structuralist-type position found in his work, particularly in the Spartans' reaction toward the Athenians' greatness, Thucydides evidently offers a first image realist analysis, pinpointing human nature as the ultimate driving force of war.[135] It is human nature upon which the drive of power and the will for domination are based and rooted. Within this universally applied logic, the characteristics of people are thus reflected to state behavior. This premise is though associated to the engagement with moral philosophy and the seeking of virtue, for example, as to what extent ethical considerations guide state leaders. In fact, the interest of mid-twentieth-century realists for the possibility of mitigating anarchy within the international order, through wise leadership and the pursuit of the national interest, is considered to be a follow up of Thucydides.[136] In this regard, the common feature of Morgenthau, Niebuhr, Thucydides, and Machiavelli, as regards to writing on politics at both the domestic and the international realms, cannot be ignored.[137] Donnely accurately summarizes:

> Thucydides and Machiavelli (and Carr and Herz) treat the evil in human nature, the dangers of anarchic international relations, and the necessities of power and interest as problems and a challenge. They insist on the importance of struggling against the tendency towards power politics, even if that struggle can never fully succeed. Power politics perhaps cannot be eliminated. Some of its most destructive consequences, however, can, and must, be mitigated. Morgenthau, by contrast, takes evil, anarchy, and power politics as facts of nature, and the final theoretical word.[138]

Given the birth of the early twentieth-century realism in contrast to idealistic or moralistic worldviews, Thucydides is related to classical realism in the sense of privileging "necessity," of unfolding sensitivity to the science-ethics relation, and of adopting a specific vision of science. The latter is related not only with value neutrality, but also, to a certain extent, with the opposition toward moral principle in terms of a human action motive. Within this unresolvable competition of realism (necessity) with ethical concerns (the ethical achievement of communities), the violation of moral principles is driven by internal compulsion in state attempts to cope with external necessity at the risk of integrity. The disregard of justice then owes to the prevalence of necessity and the attempt to combine these proves to be a manifestation of

tragedy.[139] In any case, while for Machiavelli the tension between realism and domestic reality is handled through the abandonment of the ethical community as an ideal, as well as through the reliance on deception, some of Thucydides' actors disregard justice, bowing to or claiming necessity[140] and what is required of the circumstances.[141] Succinctly put, ''justice is rarely triumphant in Thucydides' *History*. It is, however, regularly present, relevant, and even important."[142] Moreover, it has been suggested, Thucydides' view of war as a central characteristic of interstate relations is susceptible to a complementary reading of his work in terms of a theory of peace, as far as the margin or the preconditions for peace are addressed. However, this does not change things as it is human psychology and motivations (ambitions, interests, and irrationality) rather than bipolarity which delimit/restrict the possibility of peace as well as justice. Managing expansive impulse rests upon the successful balance, which proves to be the ultimate responsibility of a statesman.[143]

From a slightly different angle, others have argued that Thucydides reveals how the nature and characters of collectivities (namely, the Athenians, the Spartans, the Corinthians, etc.) rather than individuals have an impact on decisions taken during war. In this sense, he is not restricted to an explanation of shifting capabilities; he is rather closer to those classical realists who also showed interest in unit-attributes. It was not simply fear vis-à-vis just some power, but vis-à-vis a specific one and its respective character (a "democratic" and "innovative" Athens), which was perceived as imperialist and thus threatening.[144] Accordingly, the sources of state behavior can be located within the character of the primary political units.[145] If this is the case, then Thucydides ceases being a first image author and could also be categorized as one belonging to the second image.[146]

The overlap between him and classical realism is also manifested in their perception of Thucydides having a pessimistic view of human nature, the appreciation of statesmanship, and the recognition of a tragic element within international politics. Yet, such overlap is considered to be a partial one, insofar as Thucydides does not adopt Morgenthau's egoism and the lust for power assumptions, nor the sameness of competing national characters, allowing a lesser margin for predictability.[147] But this is subject to a specific definition of classical realism. For example, Richard Ned Lebow addresses Morgenthau, Clausewitz, and Thucydides as classical realists who reflect and impinge upon a tragic understanding (vision) of politics.[148] Here, it is stressed how Thucydides and others have formed classical realism through a holistic[149] understanding of politics, emphasizing not only the differences, but also the similarities between domestic and international politics. Key respective elements thus include an interest in the role of community as a promoter of stability; the recognition of the fragility and volatility of communal bonds, in

light of the untamed pursuit of power; the possibility for the failure of peace preservation or of mechanisms, such as alliances and balance of power; and, finally, the belief that theoretical knowledge is merely a starting point for problem appreciation.[150] Not only that; it is the juxtaposition of achievement and transgression which brings Greek tragedy and classical realism together, along with the recognition of the propensity of men for self-destruction and the pessimism regarding the ability for self-restraint and for the maintenance of order and stability.[151] Emphatically put, "tragedy in many ways provides the vision of the world that underlies . . . classical realism."[152]

To be sure, the counter argument to the categorization of Thucydides as a (classical) realist on the grounds of a tragedy-related affinity lies in detaching tragic analysis from realism. It also relates to the peculiarity of unfolding the tragic element toward the direction of taming power politics. Following this argument, Thucydides' narrative structure in the form of a tragedy unveils a critique toward the excessiveness and the unrestrained nature of the conduct of politics, which at the end of the day brought retribution in the form of the Athenians' defeat. Realist attempts to temper state conduct thus fall short of Thucydides' emphasis on reasoned moderation, as far as they do not fully appreciate the contingency of reasonable conduct upon state practices.

Thucydides as a Neorealist

Thucydides, however, as it is well known, has often been linked with the neorealist variant too. Crucially, Kenneth Waltz latently affirmed Thucydides as a structural realist, to the degree that the latter is discussed in the name of the "third image" and understood in terms of a focus on self-help within antagonism rising in conditions of anarchy.[153] As a matter of fact, in Waltz's *Man, the State and War*, the very beginning of the chapter devoted to the "third image" includes reference to Thucydides as one of the first to imply such an image and its repercussions for international anarchy and conflict, through the notion of a war emerging out of fear toward the adversary's rise.[154] It is also no coincidence that reference to Thucydides is made also in Waltz's discussion of the notion of balance of power within the anarchical international realm. Thucydides is cited by Waltz as a source which confirms the balance of power predicament within international politics, specifically the proclivity of weaker states to choose (as long as they are free to do so) to side with the weaker side rather than with the stronger.[155] Equally important, state behavior is deeply affected by a thorough sense of the placement of states, with the notable example that power maximization can hardly be a profitable goal.[156]

It appears that Thucydides' emphasis on nonstructural factors is not enough to undermine a connection of his work with structural realism (in terms of constraints and incentives). This is so, as far as the focus is given to

states suffering costs (regarding autonomy and security), when they do not follow power related dictums. The key lesson here is not that states conform to the stronger, but that they face costs when they do not.[157] Moreover, Buzan, Jones, and Little, while acknowledging that Waltz's balance of power theory was confirmed by the collaboration of the Greek city-states in light of the Persian threat, evoke Thucydides in their own modification of the Waltzian framework, particularly concerning the possibility for anarchic systems with structurally differentiated political units. They credit Thucydides for revealing how the logic of anarchy institutionalizes intervention, in such a system, whereby power was centralized only in certain city-states and not all of them.[158]

Equally, Robert Gilpin, especially when discussing international political change, regards Thucydides as the forerunner of the law of uneven growth of power that functions as the driving force of international relations. The key issue here is how the international dynamics are related to the shifts of the distribution of power, which result in a change of interstate relations as well as of the nature of the international system.[159] To be sure, Thucydides' emphasis on the contrasting characters of the major parties of the war is acknowledged.[160] But at the end, for Gilpin, this war serves as an acute example of hegemonic war and of how the differential growth of power among states provides the dynamic of international relations.[161]

From the vantage point of structural realism, emphasis is given to the Thucydidean dictum about the "truest cause" of the war in light of one side's "growth" provoking the other side's fear.[162] However, the neorealist appropriation of Thucydides (particularly with respect to political power and hegemony) has met noticeable critique. This reading of power transition has faced the objection that the Spartan reaction was not solely related to a fear of shifting material capabilities, but also to need for prestige (standing) preservation.[163] Simply put, in this sense, Thucydides doesn't constitute the epitome of materially based power and physical capabilities. He is thus acknowledged as having offered an account of political power also in non-tangible/measurable terms. Consequently, the effects of power are understood to be "contingent upon the structure of social institutions and conventions that delimit the use of both the tangible and intangible resources that enable actors to establish relations of psychological control."[164] In this line of reasoning, Thucydides does not support neorealism's "ahistoricism," as well as the perception of the quest for power as a central and permanent systemic imperative.[165] Without necessarily questioning him being a representative of realism or indeed presenting a kind of a systemic understanding of imperial politics, attention must be focused on the fact that he offers a broader conceptualization of the motives of states, holding the premise that "policies designed to promote security are challenged by policies pursued for the sake of prestige and profits."[166]

Thucydides as a Constructivist

As already briefly raised on the critique cast on both the classical and the structural realist readings of Thucydides, he has quite often been associated with some sort of reflectivist, critical, or constructivist analysis. Indicatively, Hayward Alker underscores how Thucydides holds a dialectical conception of "scientific" history rather than positivism or amoralism, combining a historiographical commitment to factual accuracy with a "dramaturgical perspective on human affairs." This includes designating practical lessons from the historical analysis, which are grounded "in an eternal, dialectical grammar of natural human possibilities."[167] By his turn, David Welch also regards Thucydides as one who is subject to a non-realist reading, to the extent that he raises contingency and indeterminacy. Those are reflected upon the skills and characters of leaders, as well as choices, while they are not reduced to situational or material constraints. In this respect, international politics impinges upon the management of passions rather than upon a calm deliberation of national interests. Self-interest thus emerges as only one motivation out of many, while the domestic issue of good rule is assigned equal importance as the international problems of stability and security.[168]

In this line of reasoning, succinctly presented, Thucydides offers a "contested terrain for realist and critical approaches to international relations theory." Similarly, he "underscores the necessity of thinking about political praxis in the study of international relations that are both realistic *and* critical."[169] Here, emphasis is given to how his work reveals not only the contingent and problematic nature of political institutions, regarding political power and hegemony, but also reveals that such power is more than capabilities (might and wealth), extending to social conventions that are intersubjectively defined.[170]

In addition to discussing Thucydides as a classical realist who unravels the tragedy of politics, Lebow stressed Thucydides' purpose of exploring the relationship between, on the one hand, nature and, on the other, convention, custom and law, along with how this affects development, through the proclamation that "Thucydides is a founding father of constructivism."[171] Perceiving Thucydides as a constructivist is based on his relevance for understanding identity construction through language and convention, the interplay of power and influence, and the mutual constitution of interests and justice. But at the end of the day, human nature includes both features of *homonoia* (concord) and *stasis* (revolt, rebellion), thus justifying the claim that after all "Thucydides is both a realist and a constructivist."[172] More specifically, Thucydides is appraised for distinguishing the goal of persuasion from persuasion as a means. Such recognition unravels upon a concern not only with tactics but also ethics. Persuasion is brought by varied non-benevolent forms

(e.g., deceit, false logic, or coercion), but it may also be attained through dialogue, friendship building and common identities, or mutually valued norms and practices. The practical use of this relates to how foreign policy undermines the standing or influence as well as the hegemonic status of great powers.[173]

In a similar fashion, John Zumbrunnen understands Thucydides as "realist-constructivist" or "constructivist-realist,"[174] insofar as he leaves substantial margin for a deep understanding of power and how "political actors construct what is real as they struggle over just what counts as power or justice or character." Thucydides is also appraised for reopening "domestic politics in general and democratic politics in particular as a site of contingent (and so irreducible) contestation of ideas and ideals, interests and power."[175]

Thucydides allows for the thorough examination of varied interaction among varied factors (human nature, political culture, identity, rhetoric) operating at different levels and across the materialist/ideational divide. Yet, structural constraints and incentives as those suggested by Waltz are not negated. Thus a significant margin is allowed for the intersection between constructivism and realism: "Thucydides demonstrates that a structural approach need not exclude attention to variation in unit-level attributes."[176] On the other hand, he is charged with a secular bias, principally unfolding upon the neglect of the religious self-narrative of Sparta (in terms of a pious defender of moderation against the corrupted Athens). But even so, within a realist/constructivist synthesis, the realist assumptions over power, interest, and rationality coexist with the recognition that the rational pursuit of power and interest does not come with a purely rational adjudication. Actors do seek power, profit, and security; however those motives are understood only with reference to the respective narrative structure.[177]

The proclamation of Thucydides as constructivist may make some sense in respect to the tendency of (both structural and classical) realists to privilege international anarchy, power, and survival as universal features, underestimating the role of cultural differences, including ideology and rhetoric. The incorporation of history, culture, politics, and moral impact, that takes place in Thucydidean fashion, may well fit the constructivist perspective. However, the latter is not deemed to be incompatible with every strand of realism, especially classical realism.[178] In this sense, Thucydides emerges as "a different type of realist."[179] This is compatible with how Doyle eventually came to identify Thucydides' realism as a complex one (indeed the only one of his kind), from which other variants of realism derive from, namely, fundamentalist, constitutionalist, and structuralist.[180]

This complexity is also shown by how the (principally non-realist) literature on the "just war" tradition reflects three approaches vis-à-vis Thucydides: his establishment as the opposite pole of this tradition, his understanding as a

moralist contributor on the relation between ethics and war, and the neglect or indifference toward him. Although the majority of the seminal texts of that tradition overlook Thucydides, certain texts, such as those of Gentili, Grotius, or Vattel, cite and engage his work, either as an intellectual adversary or as a source of historical cases.[181] Eventually, Thucydides' realism is confirmed (regarding self-interested states and international anarchy), yet with the caveat that it reflects at the same time a critique of realpolitik and realism. This means the coexistence of claims over the role of justice and the perils of moralism in the international realm, with doubts about realism's ability to constitute the basis for a successful foreign conduct, as well as the states' ability for a rational and realist foreign policy, in light of the persistence of human passions or hopes and the possibility for a self-destructive reaction. The power of moral passion in political life and the need for a respective accommodation was shared by scholars such as Wolfers and Morgenthau, even Machiavelli and the need for *virtù*. However, Thucydides seems to fall short with regard to his faith in state rationality and in the prospect for enlightened statesmanship. So the key point here is not only the weakness of justice, but also the weakness of reason in political life. Liberation from *fortuna* cannot be caused but, even more, it may be aggravated by an emancipation of hope.[182]

In this sense, it is useful to keep in mind that, in contrast to many contemporary realists, Thucydides shows an awareness of the limits of human rationality.[183] Although, the Athenian envoys at Melos emerged as "extreme" realists,[184] who adopted the premises of anarchy and egoism as well as power politics in an excessive form, Thucydides himself seems to allow for many "hedges," thus justifying the label of a "hedged" realist, meaning one who accepts anarchy and egoism, but shows discomfort with power politics serving as the solution.[185]

What is Thucydides?

What is then Thucydides, after all? Well, Thucydides is unique! He created his work without knowing any of the above categories and assignments attributed to him in the twentieth century. What results out of his entire text is that politics at the international level are characterized by anarchy, within which the state-like units (cities or kingdoms) compete, others to maintain, in order to remain independent (secure), and others to end anarchy and impose hegemony. Yet, these units are in no case assumed to be either unitary or rational; Thucydides always refers to the people of the cities (or to kings), and, most of the times to their deliberations and decisions. The units, through their leaders and decision-making institutions, have a view of politics at the international level; they have an understanding of the other cities' role in a distribution of power, including those peripheral to mainland Greece entities, such as the

Sicilian cities, Persia, or Carthage; but there is nowhere in Thucydides such a thing as an international "system," in the sense Kenneth Waltz has forged it. Thus, at the level of "international politics," created by the competitive interaction and the perceived distribution of power, units behave and calculate on the basis of interest, but also on the basis of other criteria too, as necessity, human condition, fear, or honor; power, a means and an end, is sought and used, either for survival or for pursuing hegemonic policies.

This is certainly a world view with a realist scent, bearing Thucydides' own characteristics, one that, as Doyle and Johnson suggested, we could call "Thucydidean." It is also a view of international politics close to what has been relatively recently termed neoclassical realism, an approach emphasizing the role of unit-level variables, such as decision-making, intervening, and linking the international and the domestic levels, and responsible for the foreign policy outcomes produced by the units. Seen under this perspective, Rose is not wrong to claim that Thucydides provides the "neoclassical realist archetype."[186]

It is this "Thucydidean" approach that is adopted here as the theoretical framework of the study at hand. It obviously allows a role for decision-making and for seeking Thucydides' thought not in constructions of structural voluntarism, but on deliberations and the ways people and politicians make decisions for war and peace. Most importantly, it results out of Thucydides' text and it could have prevented most of its notable misreadings.

DEBATES 6 AND 7: ON THE "ABUSE" AND ON THE READING OF THUCYDIDES

Thucydides wrote his work in the late fifth century BC and twenty-four centuries later we are still studying and discussing not only his work, but also the relative secondary literature. Yet, the latter has not only shed light on his work, but it has also uncovered the misreadings or abuses that have been committed in this very same enterprise. Thus, before moving further, some issues need to be discussed in order to avoid, at least in the present study, possible unfortunate approaches.

Misreading Thucydides

The questions "how should we approach," "what criteria should we use to distinguish better readings from worse,"[187] and how may we avoid abusing[188] Thucydides and/or his text have already been raised.[189] This means that we all have been given a warning and the consequence of it is that this study too has to consider it.

It is true, as shown in the inter-paradigm debate just above, that Thucydides' work is offered for a realist reading,[190] and also, but less, for a neorealist or a constructivist one. Yet, and despite the fact that the warning has been formulated and given in the context of the reactions to the neorealist approach of Thucydides, misreadings have been observed in all strands of the International Relations thinking, including in those criticizing others. Garst is right when he concludes that neorealism provides for an "ahistorical" treatment of Thucydides, and it is not so obvious that "prediction and control" were among Thucydides' intentions.[191] Yet, it is a misreading to negate any scientific character to an author and a work written so many centuries ago, to negate the existence of any theoretical insight on politics at the then international level, to reject any structural element but to connect Thucydides with Gramsci,[192] as it is a misreading to argue in favor of the full historicity of the speeches in order to strike out one pillar of the neorealist reading, when we know that in the speeches Thucydides had the freedom, the opportunity, and the sophistic ability to build arguments and develop dialectically opposing contentions.

Welch is right about the Thucydides' neorealist "cottage industry" and a self-reinforcing, by a self-referential over the centuries realist hermeneutic; he is right about recovering our distance from him or to put him in perspective," and right about the possibility of different readings of his work. Yet, it is not fair to treat him just as a simple historian, without a specific purpose, and without considering him as one of the leading precursors in the social sciences; it is also a misreading to argue that Thucydides does not offer us any theoretical perspective about politics, that "he does not tell us anything about human nature that we do not already know" and, although "his discussion raises virtually every important question of interest to current scholars of international politics"—here Welch contradicts his previous assessments—Thucydides answers "none of them for us."[193] It is a different thing to propose the modification or the replacement of the neorealist "pedestal," and a different thing—even though stated bluntly by Welch, obviously for the sake of expression—to "pull him off his pedestal"; doing just this results only in an "ahistorical" treatment, forgetting that he is the first to provide an important insight of politics outside the realm of the then organized entities, among the first to discuss human nature, and he has certainly served for many others throughout time as the basis for the development of the study of politics, both at the domestic and international levels, and particularly the study of war. As Laurie Johnson has put it, "the Thucydidean perspective can be useful in explaining change and innovation that structure alone cannot explain. It can be useful as a guide for 'layering' different theories and perspectives to obtain a fuller picture . . . ."[194]

Certainly, engaging the critics is not an easy endeavor and perhaps not opportune, especially when it is understandable that the necessities of

argumentation lead the critic to cut edges or to generalize, and when one, as myself, agrees that the abuse of Thucydides continues or that the "cottage industry" prospers: "habits of selective reading, misattribution (or at least unjustifiable attribution), the confusion of evidence with authority, and anachronism" continue, thus distorting "the proper intellectual development of the field and the largely unproductive use of a potentially very useful text."[195] Selective reading or, in my terms, "cherry-picking,"[196] which create confusion about the text and even about historical reality, and a self-referential way of reading which perpetuates mistakes, are certainly the most common phenomena and reasons for the abusive study of Thucydides.

These phenomena were most recently observed in what was named and became known as "Thucydides's Trap" [*sic*]. According to Allison, "Thucydides's Trap" is the "natural, inevitable discombobulation" or the dangerous dynamic "that occurs when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power" and it may be "the best lens for understanding what's happening in relations between a rising China and a ruling United States today" or between other powers.[197]

To begin with, the above mentioned "lens" presents from its inception three historical misreadings, all in one page. Let me put the record straight. First, contrary to what Allison writes, Thucydides has outlived the war and saw its end.[198] Second, nowhere in Thucydides' text have the Spartans argued that they provided the security environment for Athens to flourish.[199] And, third, and most importantly, Sparta was not the dominant power of the time, as Allison suggests;[200] Sparta, for its own reasons, had abandoned the leadership of the Greeks immediately after the Persian Wars, and Athens had officially become the leader[201] of the Delian League since 478 BC—almost fifty years before the outbreak of the War (431 BC).

Next is the authoritative-type explanation and content of Allison's "lens," in the terms of international "structure," and the quest for Thucydides' "imprimatur,"[202] as if Thucydides was the one who invented the so-called "trap" and as if he was thinking in terms of "structure," the same way Waltz thought of it[203] or the way Modelski,[204] Wallerstein,[205] Kennedy,[206] and Mearsheimer[207] did in their respective, structural, and relative to power transition works that have not been considered by Allison. Thus, Allison joins many other authors in reaching a pure neorealist understanding of Thucydides—one which is deterministic and, therefore, convenient to his conclusion on the inevitability of the war: "more important than the sparks that lead to war, Thucydides teaches us, are the structural factors that lay its foundations."[208]

The issue here, obviously, is not just another work misreading Thucydides. The issue is why this misreading—historical inaccuracies set aside—has occurred. In my opinion, it is due to the misinterpretation of Thucydides' "truest cause," one that has overlooked the role of decision-making in his

work. Next, I will present the outbreak of war with the additional use of the decision-making process, offering, first, a new and more accurate explanation of the "truest cause," but also, second, demonstrating the usefulness of a decision-making approach to the study of Thucydides.

The "Truest Cause" and Decision-Making

Many authors before Allison, in addition to overlooking the historical facts and context, were trapped by the translation they used of Thucydides. First, by understanding the words «ἀναγκάσαι ἐς τὸ πολεμεῖν» as "made the war inevitable,"[209] instead of "forced" the Spartans "to go to war." Second, by understanding as "rise" the words «*τους Ἀθηναίους μεγάλους γιγνομένους*, which could be more accurately translated as "the Athenians being great" or the "existing greatness of the Athenians" (1.23.6). What does "being great" or "existing greatness" mean in the historical context? It means that the Athenians, starting from 478 BC, had already reached a high stage of power and, thanks to their prospering economy and their allies, their warring capabilities could be increased easily and fast if necessary. Even if we assumed as correct what Kagan has suggested, that the Athenian power did not increase before the war, in the period from 445 to 435 BC, it does not change much.[210] The military and economic capabilities were there, and all one needs to do is read Pericles' speech on the economic situation of the city and its ability to finance the war effort (2.13).[211] But given the Athenians' greatness and not excluding a further increase, the fear was that the Hellenic independent city-states were risking their freedom. This is the argument the Corinthians, the Spartans' allies, are using in the debates within the Peloponnesian alliance in order to convince the reluctant Spartans to go to war.[212] To put it simply, the Corinthians, as their interests were harmed and as, given their geographical proximity to Athens, their perception of threat was higher, what they told the Spartans was, simply put, it is now or never.

The Spartans themselves appeared indifferent to hegemony. They did not maintain troops outside Lacedaemon, their territory, and the institutional procedures for a military expedition were rather demanding. Moreover, even in their surrounding region, the Peloponnese, their rule was never complete, as it was always contested by the Argives. What they cared about was their freedom and, to a limited extent, that of their allies, mostly Peloponnesian. The account given by Thucydides, explaining even more in detail the decision made by the Spartans to get out of Lacedaemon and fight a war at the then international level, confirms this understanding:

> All these are the actions of the Hellenes against each other and the barbarian that occurred during the fifty years between the retreat of Xerxes and the beginning

> of the present war: during them the Athenians made their hegemony firmer and advanced their power to a great height. The Lacedaemonians, although aware, opposed it only for a little while, but remained inactive during most of the time, as they were always slow to go to war unless they were in necessity, and at that time they were also hampered by wars at home; until the Athenians' power grew considerably and started harming their alliance. They then felt that they could not postpone it, but that the time had come to undertake with all their heart to destroy the (hostile) power, if they could, by starting the present war. (1.118.2)

Thus, the "structure" of the "system," as we understand both these concepts today, was there for some time. Then why were the Spartans and their allies not compelled earlier to face and deal with the Athenians' greatness? One explanation of what might have happened is that the competition of power at the international level has, given the incidents in Corfu and Potidaea, escalated and made itself more intensively felt. Another is that the Corinthians, mercilessly badgering and shaming the Spartans, have led them to create a different perception of the situation and of the Athenians' threat; it was just before the Spartans' final deliberation that the Corinthians made a negative comparison of them and the Athenians, criticising their inactivity and indecision and praising the latter's greatness and achievements (1.70). And a third, that most of the realist and especially neorealist interpreters never looked upon, was the decision-making processes. In fact, this is the real trap in which most of the Thucydides' students have fallen, by limiting their search of the causes of the war just in the "truest cause" of 1.23.6.

Indeed, one may observe that neorealist interpretations, when discussing the outbreak of war, overlook and do not consider that in Thucydides' text there are two more interpretations on the matter, consequently relativizing the importance of structure in the "truest cause" under discussion. One interpretation, also characterized by Thucydides a "truest cause" but of a rather classical realist nature, is that of hegemonic expansion or of classical imperialism, offered in 6.6.1, when the Athenians decided on the Sicilian expedition. And the other, which may be seen as complimentary to the previous two, is focussing on decision-making and, particularly, the cost-benefit calculations preceding a war (4.59.2).

Now, putting things in order, Thucydides, in 1.23.6, says that it was first the Athenians' greatness, which provoked the fear of Spartans, who, as a result, "were forced" to go to war. The same rationale is clearly repeated in 1.88: he stresses again the fact that the Spartans decided ("voted") to go to war, because "they had to," as "they feared" that the Athenians, who "controlled most of Greece," "would increase their power even more." Further, the same explanation is offered in 1.118.2, quoted above: the Spartans "were always slow to go to war unless they were in necessity," but "they then felt that they could not postpone it."[213] And, speaking of Thucydides' consistency,

the necessity argument is reiterated when explaining the ending of the 421 BC peace treaty: Athenians and Lacedaemonians "were compelled to break" the Treaty, out of the mutual suspicion for not respecting it (5.25.2–3)!

Thus, in the particular historic moment, the decision was not made because of the fear felt by the assembled Spartans for the present situation, but because of the fear for the future and the necessity they have at that moment felt to deal with the source of the said fear then and not later. The greatness of the Athenians' power was there, fear for future developments too; yet necessity had not surfaced earlier. Why has it surfaced then?

One answer could be given on the basis of the "underbalancing" phenomenon, occurring, according to Schweller, when states fail to recognize dangerous threats, choose not to react to them, or respond in "paltry and imprudent ways"; states that are most likely to underbalance are incoherent or fragmented states, whose elites are constrained by domestic political considerations.[214] The Spartans, based on 1.118.2, had some domestic political issues,[215] including those related to the Helots' rebellions,[216] but they were definitely not an incoherent entity; thus, this reality may lead us either to think that a threat did not exist, or that, according to their perception, the threat was low.

Another answer, yet incomplete, could be given based on the national and religious character of the Spartans, as presented by S.N. Jaffe, that, basically, they were slow to react.[217] Jaffe examines thoroughly the debates in Sparta and particularly the necessity arguments of the Corinthians and the Athenians, of Archidamus and Sthenelaidas, and he is not missing the techniques used by Sthenelaidas to win the "war vote" of the Apella, as their assembly was called; however, and despite all these correct observations, Jaffe sidesteps the "why then?" and moves one step further in order to solidify his national character argument by making a comparison between the "truest cause" and the advanced by the Spartans "greatest cause" (1.126.1).[218]

Yet, the answer is there, first in Thucydides and second in Jaffe's text, and it is obvious: it was the decision-making and its process. The decision to go to war was not taken by a few Spartans behind closed doors; it was taken in the open, at the Apella. And it is not that Archidamus or Sthenelaidas did not fear possible future imbalances or that there is contradiction in Thucydides' mind between the "truest cause" and the reason why the Spartans decided to go to war.[219]

In the deliberation, Archidamus represents the wise and sober, rather conservative and old style leader, and certainly closer than Sthenelaidas to what is perceived as the Spartan national character. Thucydides lets him speak for six entire chapters (1.80–85), but he did not convince his compatriots to give peace a chance with a last "diplomatic" effort, while they would be preparing themselves in order to start the war from a better position, if necessary.

Sthenelaidas then takes the floor, looking more like what one could call today a "populist" politician, and speaks just for one chapter (1.86). He appeals to their psychology, to their sentiments, by reminding the injustices committed against them by the Athenians; he appeals to their honor and interests, and he even asks for a different way of voting: those who agreed to go to war should move and stand on the one side and those who disagreed on the other. Obviously, given the high sense of honor and pride of the Spartans and their lifetime training to be warriors, one may imagine how easy it was for Sthenelaidas to "carry the day"[220] against Archidamus.[221]

Thus, the war between the Athenians and the Spartans—and perhaps other wars as well—was the result of a projected, feared, and future distribution of capabilities, as this was perceived and felt by the Spartans and their allies, and eventually the result of their decision-making process. The war was not inevitable, for as long as the Spartans did not feel compelled to go to war,[222] and did not fear to accept publicly that they feared to go to war, thus harming their honor and vindicating the Corinthians' accusations!

This way of thinking is in harmony with Thucydides' thinking of 1.75.3, where he maintains that what motivates people or states to decide on power, war, and peace, are necessity, plus, in the order of qualitative importance within his entire text, the famous triad: interest, fear, and honor. More specifically, the Athenians argue that hegemony was offered to them by the other Greeks out of the felt necessity to face the Persian threat, and because the Spartans, even though the Persian threat was there, have abandoned it and left the Hellenic cities without leadership (1.75.2). Hence, the relevant question becomes who is feeling the necessity, who is judging whether there is necessity to assume leadership or go to war? The answer is given in the next paragraph (1.76.2), with an almost identical phrase. It is here that Thucydides introduces one more variable, the human factor: decisions of power, of war and peace, are also a matter of human nature, plus, again, the triad: interest, fear, and honor.

For Thucydides, as for his preceding Sophists and Hippocratics or his contemporary Euripides, there is no fate! Men hold their fate in their hands! Men may fall into the "irrationality" (or the "folly") of going to war despite the existence of "choice" («αἵρεσις», 2.61.1), because of a decision. Humans calculate; they may also miscalculate, for reasons given by Thucydides in 3.45.4–7 and examined in chapter 5 of this book. Yet, they cannot be stopped from going to war even by fear if their calculations appear to be leading to favorable results for them:

> Nobody is driven to war out of ignorance of its consequences and nobody is deterred by fear, if he believes he will gain more. (War) erupts when the ones consider that the expected gains are to be greater than the risks, and the others are determined to face the risks rather than tolerate any decrease of their interests. (4.59.2)

Based on the above, it appears, first, that decision-making was important for the outbreak of the war; second, that decision-making was important in Thucydides' thinking and analysis; and, third, the outbreak of the war was neither predetermined, nor inevitable. These observations leave us with or lead us to the question how to approach best the study of Thucydides, including the present, so as to avoid further misreadings.

How to Read Thucydides

Thucydides, as just shown, is not contradicting himself in the explanation of the war's outbreak. What was happening for many years is that the interpretation of his work—the act of extracting meaning from a text[223]—was often based on ahistorical and *à la carte* readings of his work, and not on a holistic approach as, for example, the one used by Jacqueline de Romilly or, more recently and despite the fact that his work limits itself to the first book of *The War*, by S.N. Jaffe.[224]

It is indeed difficult to comprehend how those who studied Thucydides have not come to realize that the text of *The War* shows Thucydides having an understanding of the political interactions at the realm outside of the then state-like entities, yet not within the context of a structured international system, as the one Waltz has proposed. It is also difficult to realize how those who studied Thucydides have not come to realize the importance attributed by him to the open deliberations, most of the times in the cities' assemblies, and, thus, to the decision-making processes. It is these processes, it is decision-making that constitutes—as neoclassical realists would argue today—a transmission belt[225] between the politics at the international, the domestic and, then again at the international level.

Some classicists, however, understood the importance of deliberations, but they were stuck with the discussion of the impressive matter called the "psychological laws," instead of studying the Thucydidean thinking on the ways people decide and make mistakes in their decision-making. There are also some from the field of politics, with Thomas Hobbes being first to praise Thucydides for "having so clearly set before men's eyes the ways and events of good and evil counsels."[226] Cogan maintained that speeches emphasize the direction exercised by human agents over conflicts both by drawing attention to the fact of deliberation and by setting forth its content.[227] And Garst credibly argued that with the speeches "Thucydides emphasizes the *deliberate* choices made by individuals and the close relationship between these choices and the events of the history"; to add, "far from viewing historical figures as driven by forces outside their control, Thucydides sees them as the conscious initiators of events."[228] There are also those who stressed the role of individual and collective passions, such

as Desmond who observed that "despite Thucydides' own dispassionate style, his History documents a war that stirred the most vehement passions in both individuals and larger groups"; and added that "careful reading of his work detects a long and considered observation of how the emotions pervade and sometimes even dominate political life."[229] And there is the insightful study of Laurie Johnson, who underlined in her conclusions the importance of the deliberative process for Thucydides, the lack of determinism, and the importance of human decisions:

> The Thucydidean approach emphasizes the importance of the chance attainment of good political deliberation and judgment. To obtain and inculcate true political wisdom we may have to abjure the notion that any one theory or formula will accurately predict human behavior or solve human problems. In a sense this only is accepting what we already know: the price of celebrating our free will is lamenting the inability to easily explain and solve the problems of the human condition. Thucydides teaches us that even though internal passions and external forces may exert much force, humans are in control of themselves and morally aware; they can blame only themselves for their failures.[230]

Only a holistic approach to Thucydides[231] and his text, with respect to the parallel classical and historical studies,[232] may offer the full perspective of his thinking. Yet, what is the best way to do this? Welch sketched out four approaches to the reading of texts, including Thucydides'. The first puts emphasis on the author's intentions, which is the most commonly encountered, in the form of "Thucydides thought . . ." this or the other. The second praises the virtues of studying just the text—a reading providing objectivity as the student has only the text[233] in front of her and nothing else.[234] The third puts the emphasis on the reader, her creativity and, consequently, her subjectivity.[235] And the fourth way is the "complex interplay between author, text, and reader." Evidently, "only the fourth position is tenable."[236] But, as we know very little about Thucydides' intentions and we should avoid self-mirroring,[237] it seems to me that the text takes more preponderance in the combination of the three approaches.[238] Thus, I consider, it is our responsibility to understand as better the whole of the Ancient Greek text, while respecting parallel research of other fields, and "minimize our own contributions."[239]

CONCLUSION

Before explaining how I intend to meet the said responsibility, let me briefly remind the reader that the primary aim of this book is to uncover Thucydides' insightful thinking on decision-making; in addition and indirectly, to provide

a different understanding of the causes of war, and show how decision-making functions in *The War* as a transmission belt or an intermediate variable between politics at the international level and the development of policy responses from the inside toward the outside. Also, let me clarify that in accordance with the conclusions from the discussion of the academic debates on Thucydides presented in this chapter, I adhere to the unitary view of the text and to its veracity. As for the authenticity of the speeches, I concur with the opinion that Thucydides respected and reproduced the «ξύμπασα γνώμη» (the central idea) of what was said in those speeches that he was present, and he wrote, in the many others that he was away, what was fit or expected to be said in the particular historic moment. Moreover, based on the presented nine different points, I consider impossible not to recognize within his work a degree of scientific quality and, at least, the character of an early social scientist. Finally, Thucydides' conception of international politics is unique; he had an international politics view and a method of his own, placing him above present day categorizations.

In this context my personal reading consists solely in singling out the three chapters of the text (1.75.3, 1.76.2, and 3.45.4–7) and arguing that these are the main sources of Thucydides' theoretical schemata on decision-making.[240] From this point onward my involvement in the interpretation is minimized as I intend to let the text speak for itself. This choice cannot be hindered by the issues related to the unity of the text, because decision-making, in the form of explaining events or strategies and policies, is constant and traceable in all parts of the work, both in the narrative and the speeches, as constantly present are the war, the Athenian imperialism, and human nature.[241] Moreover, proceeding to this endeavor with the use of content analysis, documenting all cases of decision-making throughout the entire text, and taking under consideration the variance of each concept acting as the independent variable for the decision-making, provides a holistic approach, much different and more extensive, if compared to the studies selecting and usually limiting the focus of research into the "highlights" of the text, such as the "truest cause," the prewar Athenian-Spartan debate, Pericles' speeches, the Mytilinean debate, the stasis in Corcyra, or the Melian dialogue. And it is on the basis of all the documented cases of each concept that conclusions are drawn about how necessity, human nature, interest, fear, and honor, and all the other passions are acting upon men making right or wrong choices. Because, after all, and besides other possible, existing or future, readings, Thucydides' work is about men deciding about war and peace; it is either persons or the Athenians, the Spartans, the Syracusans, the Argives, the Corcyraeans, and so many others, deciding all over the text, and not any rational, unitary "like-unit,"[242] city or state, whose behavior is determined by the pressure of the international system's "structure."

NOTES

1. I am using this term with the meaning introduced by Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse of Thucydides in International Relations," *International Organization* 48, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 131–53, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706917.

2. Classical realism, expressed in the twentieth century by authoritative figures such as Hans Morgenthau or Raymond Aron, virtually equates international relations with interstate relations. It emphasizes how the national interest compels sovereign states to aim for survival and security in an anarchical and, thus, competitive setting, through the pursuit of power. The latter is conceived primarily in military terms and war is a tool serving specific interests and the political aims of states.

3. Structural realism or neorealism, introduced by Kenneth Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979) preserves the central realist features such as state-centricity, the emphasis on power and self-interest. It innovates though by introducing the role of the international system and how the latter (rather than the national interest *per se*) imposes restrictions or offers incentives to state behavior. Thus, it is the structure (the distribution of power) of the system which determines state choices (about conflict or cooperation) rather than particular characteristics of states or of statesmen and the respective processes; war ultimately results out of systemic imperatives.

4. Constructivism, in all its variety, upholds that international relations and related concepts such as state sovereignty and the international system impinge upon the intersubjective definition of interests. Subsequently, the respective analysis goes well beyond rational choice and a strictly materialist understanding of interests or of the structure of the international system, emphasizing aspects such as the function of discourse or of language and the constitution of agents and of structures. Power is not necessarily drawn out of the picture, but it is closely associated with the function of norms, which are reproduced through social practice, thus delineating the margin for action.

5. Finley has suggested that the old controversy on the unity of Thucydides' text was reviving every time a new participant, arguing the discontinuity of the composition, was undermining the arguments of his predecessor; see John H. Finley, Jr., *Three Essays on Thucydides* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 118.

6. For a related strategic analysis that traces the fluctuating social, political, and psychological determinants of three instances of surrendering during the war, see Alexandros Koutsoukis, "Challenging Victor Bias and Status Quo Bias in Realist Accounts of Surrender: Re-Reading Three Cases of Surrender from the Peloponnesian War" (PhD Diss., Aberystwyth University, 2016).

7. This suggestion was made by de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 5, and note 5.

8. Franz Wolfgang Ullrich, *Beitrage Zur Erklarung Des Thukydides* (Hamburg: Perthes-Besser & Mauke, 1846), https://archive.org/stream/beitrgezurerklr01ullrgoog#page/n5/mode/2up.

9. Eduard Meyer, *Forschungen Zur Alten Geschichte* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1899), II, 286–87, https://archive.org/stream/bub_gb_SzQZAAAAYAAJ#page/n7/mode/2up.

10. Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 8, note1.

11. Eduard Schwartz, *Das Geschictswerk der Thukydides* (Bonn: Cohen, 1919), https://archive.org/stream/dasgeschichtswer00schw#page/n3/mode/2up.

12. The disunity thesis was also supported by Richard Laqueur, "Forschungen zu Thukydides", *Rheinisches Museum* 86 (1937): 316–57, http://www.rhm.uni-koeln.de/086/Laqueur.pdf. De Romilly has dismissed Laqueur's thesis as an example showing how the proponents of the text's disunity "could still analyse the text away to nothing"; see *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 6. In French, her assessment is more categorical: "les explications génétistes, à force d'eplucher le texte, n'en laissaient rien subsister"; see *Thucydide et l'impérialisme athénien*, 12.

13. Harald Patzer, *Das Problem der Geschichtsschreibung des Thukydides Und Die Thukydideische Frage* (Berlin: Junker Und Dünnhaupt, 1937), 118 p. See also, the "compte rendu bibliographique" of Jacqueline David, *Revue des Études Grecques*, Année 1938, 191–92, in http://www.persee.fr/doc/reg_0035-2039_1938_num_51_239_8194_t1_0191_0000_2.

14. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 3, note 3.

15. Finley, *Three Essays on Thucydides*, 122.

16. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, note 1. A similar issue was raised as to the authenticity of chapter 3.84; the claim that it may have been inserted by an "imitator" is rejected by C. D. C. Reeve, "Thucydides on Human Nature," *Political Theory* 27, no. 4 (August 1999), 436–37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/192300.

17. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 35.

18. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 34, 35.

19. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 54. Slightly different is Canfora, who considers reasonable to assert that "the speeches belong to the later, more mature phase of Thucydides' writing, and that consequently they were written in blocks"; this explains why there are correspondences among some of them or "a kind of dialogue." He too attributes this to the thirty years long work of Thucydides, during which he "more than justifiably modified his style"; he did not, however, question the unity of the text. See Canfora, "Biographical Obscurities and Problems of Composition," 30.

20. David Cartwright, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 8.

21. George F. Abbott, *Thucydides: A Study in Historical Reality* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1970), 36.

22. David A. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists Should Stop Reading Thucydides," *Review of International Studies* 29 (2003): 305, DOI: 10.1017/S0260210503003012.

23. He is using as an example the opinion of William Chittick and Annette Freyberg-Inan, "'Chiefly for Fear, Next for Honour, and Lastly for Profit': And Analysis of Foreign Policy Motivation in the Peloponnesian War", *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 73, https://doi.org/10.1017/S026021050001069X, who consider that "Thucydides' rendering of the speeches should be considered historically accurate" and that Thucydides has a "penchant for accuracy". See Stefan Dolgert, "Thucydides,

Amended: Religion, Narrative, and IR Theory in the Peloponnesian Crisis", *Review of International Studies* 38 (2012): 662, note 7, DOI:10.1017/S0260210511000738.

24. Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 663.

25. Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 662.

26. Simon Hornblower, "The Religious Dimension of the Peloponnesian War, Or, What Thucydides Does Not Tell Us," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 94 (1992): 197, http://www.jstor.org/stable/311424.

27. Gregory Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 6

28. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity*, 6–7.

29. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity*, 8.

30. Peter R. Pouncey, *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 29.

31. John Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim for His Speeches?" *Phoenix* 36, no. 2 (Summer 1982): 97, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1087670.

32. Zagorin, *Thucydides*, 154.

33. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention of Political Science", 132.

34. See Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969): "as far as I have discovered, there is rarely any reason to prefer either Plutarch or Diodorus to Thucydides where they contradict him" (: x); or "our best source of information for the years 445–431 is the history of Thucydides" (: 5).

35. Kagan, *The Outbreak*, 374.

36. "The authenticity of the content of Thucydides' speeches is a much discussed problem"; see Kurt A. Raaflaub, "Democracy, Power and Imperialism in Fifth-Century Athens," in *Athenian Political Thought and the Reconstruction of American Democracy*, eds. Peter Euben, John R. Wallach, and Josiah Ober (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 112.

37. For the thesis of the created speeches see Kurt Riezler, "Political Decisions in Modern Society", *Ethics* 64, no. 2 (January 1954): 7, who notes: "in case of lack of information Thucydides would be satisfied with speeches that, as he says, could or should have been made—as long as the speeches, though imaginary, were representative of each person and his way of thinking and acting and of the dynamic forces operating in the field." This thesis has been extensively discussed and rejected by Donald Kagan, "The Speeches in Thucydides and the Myteline Debate," *Yale Classical Studies* 24 (1975): 71–94. It is also rejected by Daniel Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (1989): 6.

38. Kagan, *The Outbreak*, ix.

39. Frank E. Adcock, *Thucydides and his History* (Cambridge: University Press, 1963), 27–42.

40. Lowell Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 167–68.

41. Kagan, *The Outbreak*, ix; Kagan is using Crawley's translation.

42. Marc Cogan, *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1891), xi.

43. Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim," 97, 101, 102.

44. Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim," 102–03.

45. On the meaning of «γνώμη», Wilson suggests: "First, *γνώμη* must mean something wider than 'thesis'; and second, της *ξυμπάσης γνώμης* cannot mean 'main thesis' or 'whole (as distinct from its parts),' since the parts are often heterogeneous to be summarised into a single *γνώμη*. *ξυμπάσης* must mean 'complete' or 'total'—that is, something which takes account of each and every part of the whole. The precise meaning of *γνώμη*, is hard to specify. It means, I think, something like 'the points made in' or 'the ideas behind' the speech (*sententiae*). For Thucydides this may chiefly include *propositions* advanced and argued for, but not only those: *γνώμη* may also appear in other sorts of speech-acts, such as the issuing of imperatives, promises, verdicts, hopes, and so forth. Nevertheless, *γνώμη* has its limits: most obviously, perhaps, the speaker's style is not part of it and we should feel no surprise that Thucydides is unconcerned to reproduce the style." See Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim," 99.

46. Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim," 103.

47. Arnold W. Gomme, *More Essays in Greek History and Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press., 1962), 125–26.

48. David Grene, *Greek Political Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 23.

49. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 5, 6.

50. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 6, 7; also James B. White, *When Words Lose their Meaning: Constitutions and Reconstitutions of Language, Character, and Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 59.

51. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 6.

52. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 34, 54.

53. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 7.

54. Thomas Hobbes, *Hobbes's Thucydides*, ed. Richard Schlatter (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1975), 17.

55. *Hobbes's Thucydides*, 18.

56. Egbert Bakker, "Contract and Design," 120.

57. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 305.

58. Edith Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4.

59. This is not a widely accepted point of view; see for the contrary John H. Finley, Jr., *Thucydides* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942); de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*; Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 664.

60. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles*, 1.

61. For Thucydides' influence on them all, and many others until even the fall of Constantinople, see: Canfora, "Biographical Obscurities"; and Luciano Canfora, "Thucydides in Rome and Late Antiquity," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, eds. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2006), 721–53.

62. See the arguments of Charles N. Cochrane, *Thucydides and the Science of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 170–71. See also Michael Palmer, "Machiavellian *virtù* and Thucydidean *aretē*. Traditional Virtue and Political

Wisdom in Thucydides," *The Review of Politics* 51, no. 3 (summer 1989): 365–85, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670500049731.

63. Laurie M. Johnson, *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Interpretation of Realism* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993).

64. Machiavelli does not praise him, although he knew Thucydides' work very well. He does not refer to him at all in *The Prince*; yet he is referring directly to him (by name) once in the *Discourses on Livy* and, indirectly, nine more times, especially to events described by him in the expedition to Sicily and to Nicias; see Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

65. "THUCYDIDES represents the league, which was formed against ATHENS, and which produced the PELOPONNESIAN war, as entirely owing to this principle"; See David Hume, "Of the Balance of Power," in *Essays. Moral, Political, and Literary*, eds. Thomas H. Green and Thomas H. Grose, vol. I, (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1882) (fist edited 1741–42), (348–56) p. 349, (http://www.humesociety.org /hs/issues/v21n2/whelan/whelan-v21n2.pdf)

66. "Der einzige Anfang aller wahren Geschichte"; see Immanuel Kant, *Kant's Werke*, Bd. VIII (hrsg. von der Königlich-Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften). Berlin—Leipzig, 1912, 29.

67. John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, vol. I, eds. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger (Oxford: Routledge, 1981), 421.

68. For the topic see Scott Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche Owe Thucydides?" *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 42 (Autumn 2011): 32–50, Project Muse; Thomas Brobjer, "Nietzsche's Relation to the Greek Sophists," *Nietzsche-Studien* 34 (2005), 256–77, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110182620.256.

69. Friedrich Nietzsche (1895). *Twilight of the Idols or How to Philosophize with a Hammer* ("The Ancients": 2), trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, https://archive.org/stream/TwilightOfTheIdolsOrHowToPhilosophizeWithAHammer /TwilightIdols_djvu.txt.

70. Cochrane, *Thucydides and the Science of History*, 4–5, 168.

71. Robin G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946, 29).

72. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 313. On the psychological aspect of Thucydides' text, purely from a philological perspective, see Pierre Huart, *Le vocabulaire de l'analyse psychologigique dans l'œuvre de Thucydide* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1968). For the psychological dimension in Thucydides, see S. N. Jaffe, *Thucydides on the Outbreak of War*, 6–7, 9.

73. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); see chapter 1 ("Laws and Theories").

74. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 4.

75. Robert G. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism." *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 291, http://www.jstor.org /stable/2706441

76. Geoffrey E. M. de Ste. Croix. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World: From the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (London: Duckworth, 1981).

77. Geoffrey E. M. de Ste. Croix. *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 6. But de Ste. Croix did not question Thucydides' objectivity; quite the opposite. While defending his disunity position, he argued that "Thucydides was such a remarkably objective historian that he himself has provided sufficient material for his own refutation. The news columns in Thucydides, so to speak, contradict the editorial Thucydides, and the editor himself does not always speak with the same voice"; see Geoffrey E. M. De Ste. Croix, "The Character of the Athenian Empire," in *The Athenian Empire*, ed. Polly Low (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 234.

78. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 4.

79. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 4–5.

80. Francis M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythhistoricus* (London: Edward Arnold, 1907), 103; cited also by Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 5.

81. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 5, and especially note 2, where Garst attributes to Thucydides the following: "Indeed, Thucydides observes, 'As a rule . . . there was no ostensible cause' (II:49:115)." But, when one comes to discuss the specific issue, the use of the words "as a rule"—an addition to the text by the translator (Richard Crawley)—may be misleading. «Τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀπ᾽ οὐδεμιᾶς προφάσεως, ἀλλ᾽ ἐξαίφνης» means "the others, without any apparent reason, suddenly" were taken by the disease (2.49.2).

82. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 25.

83. Cartwright, *A Historical Commentary*, 5.

84. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 303.

85. For Thucydides' intellectual background, see Finley, *Thucydides*, 36–73.

86. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 133.

87. "In placing 'human nature' at the center of history so emphatically, he also implicitly rejected any idea that the divine might play a part in either individual actions, or the larger patterns of history"; see Rosalind Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu and the Plague," in *Brill's Companion to Thucydides*, eds. Antonios Rengakos and Antonis Tsakmakis (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2006), 87.

88. "Thucydides' text seems clearly to break with, as well as to build upon, the texts written by the Greek founders of the enterprise of writing history"; see Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 132.

89. See Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche," 42.

90. On his quest for facts, the plan of his work, and his methods, see Finley, *Thucydides*, 74–110.

91. Thucydides, in what is known as "Archaeology" (1.2 to 1.18), has given a brief account of the major events that took place since the times Greeks inhabited the areas they lived until the Persian Wars (early fifth century BC), in order to make his point that the war he was writing was the most important one ever. For this account he had to rely heavily on mythology, oral tradition, and Homer's works; thus this verse appears as a warning to the reader and an excuse for being unable to verify the information he includes in his text.

92. Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche," 42.

93. Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche," 45. Jenkins maintains that both Thucydides and Nietzsche are what contemporary terminology would call "virtue epistemologists"

as "they assume that we can come in contact with the facts, and they seek to explain systematic failures to do so through appeal to deficiencies in character"; also, they both "emphasize virtues such as courage and aim to understand those traits in terms of a relation between parts of the soul" (44). Bluhm also agrees with the qualification of his approach of politics as "a naturalistic process"; William T. Bluhm, "Causal Theory in Thucydides' Peloponnesian War," *Political Studies* 10, no. 1 (1962): 16. This is an idea first made by Cochrane, *Thucydides*, 17, 175–76.

94. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity*, 8.

95. De Romilly considers him to have been a disciple of Gorgias, Prodicus, and Antiphon; see Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*, translated by Janet Lloyd, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), viii. Thomas maintains that his "ability to use these sophistic techniques is not equivalent to acceptance of some of the most radical theories"; see Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 90, 88. For the Sophists' influence see also Thomas J. Johnson, "The Idea of Power Politics: The Sophistic Foundations of Realism," *Security Studies* 5, no. 2 (1995): 194–247, DOI: 10.1080/09636419508429267. For the influence from tragedy, see Colin Macleod, *The Collected Essays of Colin Macleod* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 140–58. For his relation with epinician poetry, see Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar. Historical Narrative and the World of Epinikian Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Also, a possible influence of Thucydides on Plato's *Alcibiades* is suggested by Henrik Syse, "Plato, Thucydides, and the Education of Alcibiades," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5, no. 4 (2006): 299, DOI: 10.1080/15027570601081044.

96. Bluhm, "Causal Theory," 17.

97. Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche," 43.

98. See Cochrane, *Thucycides*, 7–13. See also Bluhm, "Causal Theory," 17. Hornblower considers "the explicit formulation of a distinction between profound and superficial causes" as Thucydides' greatest single contribution to later history-writing"; see Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 65 and 194.

99. See also 1.21.2, where by the choice of words the war is "personified": "this war . . . will show that it became greater than the previous."

100. See Jacqueline de Romilly, *La construction de la vérité chez Thucydide. Conférences, essais et leçons du Collège de France* (Paris : Julliard, 1990), 61–104.

101. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 305.

102. Finley, *Thucydides*, 67.

103. Bluhm, "Causal Theory," 15, 16.

104. For Thucydides' generalizations see also Bluhm, "Causal Theory."

105. Against this view is Rawlings considering that Thucydides was far more concerned with contrast rather than comparison, contradiction rather than repetition, and with variety rather than regularity; see Hunter R. *Rawlings* III, *The Structure of Thucydides' History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

106. This statement, expressed as a "universal constant," shows, according to Thomas, one more connection of Thucydides with the Sophists and the Hippocratics; see Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 87.

107. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 133.

108. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 131, 134.

109. William Desmond, "Lessons of Fear: A Reading of Thucydides," *Classical Philology* 101, no. 4 (October 2006): 359–60, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/519183.

110. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 132.

111. "Thucydides' answers to these questions constitute an arresting psychological theory of empire"; see Bluhm, "Causal Theory," 16. Also, "these accounts of behavior in Thucydides suggest a position in moral psychology. Very roughly, he believes that in conditions of social breakdown, typical agents' passions lead to inaccurate judgments concerning their best interests"; Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche Owe," 40. And Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 107: "Thucydides' emphasis on fear puts the psychological at the basis of human society."

112. Here is another use of the "truest cause," that of imposing the Athenian rule on the entire island, which the majority of the literature tends to ignore.

113. "Realists univocally embrace Thucydides as their founder and inspiration"; Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 304.

114. "His ξυνέγραψε draws on the language of architecture, treaties, and legislation, and so endows his work with important attributes of these fields"; see Egbert Bakker, "Contract and Design," 128. Similarly W. Robert Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 248: "The verb chosen for the author's writing is *xynegrapse*, a prosaic word, appropriate for the technical manuals on architecture, medicine, rhetoric, and cookery that we know became common in the late fifth century."

115. Bakker, "Contract and Design," 128.

116. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 134, 153, 156.

117. A position similar to that of Bakker and Ober that Thucydides is addressing the reader, is held by David Bolotin, "Thucydides," 9.

118. Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 132, 133, 156.

119. "Medicine was influenced by philosophy, and the two were sometimes quite impossible to distinguish or disentangle"; see Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 91. On Thucydides' writing being "comparable" with that of *Epidemics I* and *III* of the Hippocratic Corpus, see Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 93.

120. Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 103.

121. "The cause of this phenomenon, in my opinion, was the earthquake; at the point where it was stronger the sea was driven back, and then suddenly sent back with greater strength caused the inundation. Without an earthquake I do not think such an event may happen" (3.89.5).

122. Thomas, "Thucydides' Intellectual Milieu," 104.

123. Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (Spring 1988), 597, http://www.jstor.org/stable/204816.

124. Edward Keene, "The Reception of Thucydides in the History of International Relations," in *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides*, eds. Christine Lee and Neville Morley (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 365–66.

125. Jack Donnelly, *Realism in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2000), 11.

126. Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 66–69.

127. Torbjorn Knutsen, *History of International Relations Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 45–49.

128. Knutsen, *History*, 101–2. Cf. Keene, "The Reception," 357–8.

129. Robert Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in *Neorealism and its Critics*, ed. Robert Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 163–5.

130. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse," 132; Donnelly, *Realism*, chapters 2 and 6.

131. Laurie M. Johnson, "Thucydides the Realist?" in *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides*, eds. Christine Lee and Neville Morley (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 392.

132. Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 10.

133. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 40.

134. Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 140–9.

135. Chris Brown, "Structural Realism, Classical Realism and Human Nature," *International Relations* 23, no. 2 (June 2009): 262–3, DOI: 10.1177/0047117809104638

136. Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidt, "Realism" in *The Globalisation of World Politics*, eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 103–04.

137. Donnelly, *Realism*, 12.

138. Donnelly, *Realism*, 187.

139. Tragedy takes different meanings for various realists; for example, see, for example, the specific meaning given be John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014). See on the topic Toni Erskine and Richard Ned Lebow, eds., *Tragedy and International Relations*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

140. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 313–21.

141. Steven Forde, "Classical Realism," in *Traditions in International Ethics*, eds. Terry Nardin and David Mapel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 69–75; Steve Forde, "International Realism and the Science of Politics: Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Neorealism," *International Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1995): 143, 158.

142. Donnelly, *Realism*, 170. On the topic of justice in Thucydides see Jaffe, for whom justice, or dealing with the injustices caused to them and to gods by the Athenians, is one of the two ingredients of the Spartans "greatest cause" for going to war; see Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 165.

143. Steven Forde, "Thucydides on Peace," in *The Realist Tradition and Contemporary International Relations*, ed. David Clinton (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 24–50.

144. Mark Kauppi, "Thucydides: Character and Capabilities" in *Roots of Realism*, ed. Benjamin Frankel (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 142–68. Cf. Gilpin,

War and Change in World Politics, 96. On the "national character" also cf. Desmond, "Lessons of Fear," 368; Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 11. On "political culture" cf. David Cohen, "War, Moderation, and Revenge in Thucydides," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5, no. 4 (2006): 270–89, DOI: 10.1080/15027570601081127. On the "modernity" of Athenians and the conservatism of Spartans, see Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention," 142–43. On Sparta being "the pious defender of moderation pitted against the corrupt Athenians," see Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 661.

145. Jonathan Monten, "Thucydides and Modern Realism," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (March 2006): 5, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693549.

146. For the three "images" or levels of analysis (the man, the state, and the international system), see Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

147. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse," 132–33, 137.

148. Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 3 (September 2001): 551–53, https://doi.org/10.1017/S00030 55401003112.

149. "Holistic" is not understood here as in Medicine—a meaning given to the word by Richard Ned Lebow and Robert Kelly, "Thucydides and Hegemony: Athens and the United States," *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 594, https://doi.org /10.1017/S0260210501005939

150. Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 257–58.

151. Lebow, *The Tragic Vision*, 307.

152. Richard Ned Lebow, "The Ancient Greeks and Modern Realism: Ethics, Persuasion, and Power," in *Political Thought and International Relations. Variations on a Realist Theme*, ed. Duncan Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 37.

153. Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, chapters 6 and 7.

154. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, 159.

155. Indeed the Greek cities facing the Persian danger have aligned first around Athens and then risking the Athenian domination, shifted toward the Spartans.

156. Waltz, Kenneth, *Theory*, 127, 187.

157. Monten, "Thucydides and Modern Realism," 15–18.

158. Buzan Barry, Charles Jones, and Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism* (New York, Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1993), 144–47.

159. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change*, 93–4.

160. Gilpin, *War and Change*, 96.

161. Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War."

162. Johnson, "Thucydides the Realist," 392.

163. Lebow, *The Tragic Vision*, 67.

164. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 21.

165. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 25.

166. Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 125.

167. Hayward R. Alker, Jr., "The Dialectical Logic of Thucydides's Melian Dialogue," *The American Political Science Review* 82, no. 3 (September 1988): 806, DOI: 10.2307/1962492.

168. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 315.
169. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 3, 25.
170. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 19–20.
171. Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," 547.
172. Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," 559.
173. Lebow, "The Ancient Greeks," 28, 38.
174. For this combination of the two currents, see J. Samuel Barkin, *Realist Constructivism*: *Rethinking International Relations Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
175. John Zumbrunnen, "Realism, Constructivism, and Democracy in the History," in *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides*, eds. Christine Lee and Neville Morley (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 308–09.
176. Monten, "Thucydides and Modern Realism," 23.
177. Stefan Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 682.
178. Johnson, "Thucydides the Realist?" 392, 397.
179. Johnson, "Thucydides the Realist?" 398, 404.
180. Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 44–50.
181. Cian O'Driscoll, "Thucydides and the Just War Tradition," in *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides*, eds. Christine Lee and Morley Neville (Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 373–90.
182. Paul Rahe, "Thucydides' Critique of Realpolitik," *Security Studies* 5, no. 2 (1995): 141, DOI: 10.1080/09636419508429264; Peter Ahrensdorf, "Thucydides' Realistic Critique of Realism," *Polity* 30, no. 2 (Winter 1977): 233, 263–4, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3235218. Cf. Donnelly, *Realism*, 184.
183. Josiah Ober and Tomer J. Perry, "Thucydides as a Prospect Theorist," *Polis: The Journal of Ancient Greek Political Thought* 31, no.2 (2014): 206–32, DOI: 10.1163/20512996-12340015.
184. Wight, *International Theory*, 20–21, 47, 220–21.
185. Donnelly, *Realism*, 12, 23–24.
186. Gideon Rose, "Review: Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (October 1998): 153–4, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25054068
187. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 309.
188. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse."
189. Cf. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism"; Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended."
190. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 308, 313.
191. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 25. Connor writes: "We learn from it not how to predict the future or to control events but their complexity and the consequent vulnerability of civilization and order"; see Connor, *Thucydides*, 247.
192. See Timothy J. Ruback, "Ever Since the Days of Thucydides: On the Textual Origins of IR Theory," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Modern Theory, Modern Power, World Politics. Critical Investigations*, eds. Scott G. Nelson and Nevzat Soguk (London: Ashgate/Routledge, 2016), 27.
193. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 317–18.

194. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse," 313.

195. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 302.

196. Ilias Kouskouvelis, "The Thucydides Trap: A Distorted Compass," *E-International Relations*, November 5, 2017, http://www.e-ir.info/2017/11/05/the-thucydides-trap-a-distorted-compass/.

197. Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (New York, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), xvi, viii; see also Graham Allison, interview, July 6, 2017 in https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/multimedia/20170706-graham-allison-america-china-war-thucydides-trap.

198. Allison writes: "he did not live to see its bitter end, when a weakened Sparta finally vanquished Athens"; Destined for War, xv.

199. "Who, Spartans rightly asked, provided the security environment that allowed Athens to flourish"; Allison, *Destined for War*, xv. See also on this point and more generally the critique to "Thucydides's Trap" by Richard Ned Lebow and Daniel P. Tompkins, "The Thucydides Claptrap," *Washington Monthly*, June 28, 2016, https://washingtonmonthly.com/thucydides-claptrap.

200. "Intentions aside, when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, the resulting structural stress makes a violent clash the rule, not the exception. It happened between Athens and Sparta in the fifth century BCE"; see *Destined for War*, xv. Here, Allison perpetuates Gilpin's inaccuracy, who has appointed Sparta to be the "hegemonic state," which organized "the international system in terms of its political, economic, and strategic interests"; see Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," 595. The historical record shows not only that Sparta did not organize anything, but in a way she kept away from it, except in its near abroad in the surrounding Peloponnese; moreover, given the Spartan political and especially its monetary system, it is not clear which and how important its "economic" interests were.

201. "When the Peloponnesian War broke out, the Athenians were by far the most powerful city of the entire Mediterranean area"; see Riezler, "Political Decisions," 9.

202. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 302.

203. Waltz, *Theory*.

204. George Modelski, *Long Cycles in World Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988).

205. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

206. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

207. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014); see in relation to China, 360–401.

208. Allison, *Destined for War*, xiv.

209. This interpretation is by itself another "abuse" of Thucydides, which has misled many readers of Thucydides' text.

210. Kagan, *The Outbreak*, 345–46.

211. Thucydides did not ignore the economic dimension, as some have argued (i.e., de Ste. Croix). As Finley notes, first the economic dimension may be found in the explanation of the Sicilian expedition, and, second, "economics were to him inseparable from politics"; see Finley, *Thucydides*, 117.

212. On "the critical role played by Corinth in igniting and sustaining the conflict between Athens and Sparta," see Andrew R. Novo, "Where We Get Thucydides Wrong: The Fallacies of History's First "Hegemonic War," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 27, no. 1 (2016): 1–21.

213. The argument about necessity for Athenians, Spartans, and Corinthians, and with a different meaning for each one, is clearly made by Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 12, 87, 163, and 180.

214. Randall L. Schweller, "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing," *International Security* 29, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 159–201, https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288042879913. For an analysis of three instances of surrendering in *The War* that challenges the logic of "underbalancing" as expressed by Schweller, see Koutsoukis, "Challenging Victor Bias."

215. See also Jaffe, Thucydides, 116–17: The conflict between Archidamus and Sthenelaidas reveals a tension at the heart of the Spartan regime between the competing imperatives of justice and advantage, between Spartan domestic policy, where justice and the law must rule without exception, and those of her foreign policy, where strategic necessity demands that she sometimes bow to her harder interests.

216. The Helots were a population living in Lacedaemon and Messenia, subjugated by the Spartans and functioning merely as their slaves. Controlling them and occasionally dealing with their revolts required a constant effort by the Spartans.

217. This is something that the Corinthians accuse the Spartans of doing: "it is only you who are not crushing the strengthening of your enemies in the beginning, but when their power has doubled" (1.69.4).

218. Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 177–80. Here Jaffe correctly points out that the Spartan "greatest cause" («μεγίστη πρόφασις») "is an adorned or magnified justification for war." This is obvious by the text, as, here, Thucydides uses the word «πρόφασις» with its third meaning that of the excuse (which is actually the dominant meaning of the word in Modern Greek); see also Hornblower, *A Commentary*, 203.

219. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 305.

220. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 305.

221. Cf. Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 215–7, who correctly speaks of Sthenelaidas "framing the war vote."

222. For Donald Kagan the war "was caused by men who made bad decisions in difficult circumstances. Neither the circumstances nor the decisions were inevitable"; see Kagan, *The Outbreak*, 356.

223. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 309.

224. Jaffe, *Thucydides*.

225. Gideon Rose, "Review: Neoclassical Realism," 147.

226. *Hobbes's Thucydides*, 18

227. Cogan, *The Human Thing*, 194, cited by Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 6.

228. Garst, "Thucydides and Neorealism," 6.

229. Desmond, "Lessons of Fear," 359.

230. Johnson Bagby, "The Use and Abuse," 153.

231. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 313, discusses whether Pouncy is right saying that "Thucydides is a difficult author to see *whole*"; see Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*. In my opinion he is.

232. For another recent work in International Relations that respects both discipline's approaches to Thucydides, see Koutsoukis, "Challenging Victor Bias."

233. See, for example, Jaffe who "attempts to follow Thucydides' own textual indications"; S. N. Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 8. For the discussions on the "antihistorical" or "immanent" reading of the text(s) that occurred under the influence of the "New Criticism," which was convenient for the "unitarian" interpretation of the text, see Connor, *Thucydides*, 4–5.

234. The fact that Thucydides is our primary source for the war, "coupled with the rhetorical mastery displayed in Thucydides' text, has allowed the text to take the foreground while the war has receded into the background"; see Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 662. Cf. Ruback, "Ever Since the Days of Thucydides."

235. "He has imparted to posterity not only a model for understanding the present on the basis of the past, but also the very notion of writing as an act that seeks complementation. Thucydides has written *The War of the Peloponnesians and Athenians*, each time that the work is read anew"; see Bakker, "Contract and Design," 129.

236. Welch, "Why International Relations theorists," 309, 310.

237. "We seek a reflection of our own views in Thucydides, but amplified, as in a funhouse mirror that transforms our own smallish countenance into a gigantic and powerful image with the air of authority that we crave"; see Dolgert, "Thucydides, Amended," 663.

238. Connor had adopted a rather similar approach: "if we wish to speak more systematically about the complexity of the work, we are forced to concentrate not on the author but on the work itself and on the responses it evokes from its readership"; see Connor, *Thucydides*, 12.

239. Welch, "Why International Relations Theorists," 312.

240. To put it in Ruback's terms, this is where my kind of an "inquisitor disposition" (i.e., "unearthing a theory of international politics") in the "Thucydides' industry" (i.e., the numerous studies of Thucydides) ends; see Ruback, "Ever Since the Days of Thucydides," 26–7.

241. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 57.

242. On the assumption of states been "like-units," see Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 93.

Chapter 4

The Thucydides' Decision-Making Schema

In this chapter I present the first schema of Thucydides' decision-making thinking.[1] I begin by determining the content and the elements of the schema, and then, solely on the basis of Thucydides' text, I present the nature of the factors influencing decisions, the causes creating these factors, the way they operate and influence human behavior and, finally, where possible, the described ways of their management.

The Thucydides' schema as to the reasons leading people, either alone or as a group, to decide, is revealed mainly in verses 1.75.3 and 1.76.2. These two verses are almost identical; the one explains why people decide to compete and seize power, and the other why, when they are in power, they want to maintain it.

Chapter 1.75 includes part of the Athenian response to the Spartans, when the latter, in the negotiations just before the outbreak of war, accused the Athenians for seizing and exercising power («ἀρχή»), in this case hegemony. The Athenians responded and reminded to them, first, that at the time the Greeks were facing the Persian threat, second, the fact that it was the Spartans who had abandoned the leadership of Greece, and, last, that the Athenians have not imposed themselves on the Greek allies by force, but it was the allies who came and proposed them to take over their leadership.[2] And they added:

> because of this (requested) undertaking we were initially compelled to advance[3] our hegemony up to this point, mainly from fear, then also for honor, and later for our interest too. (1.75.3)

The sentence and the idea of what makes one to decide and seek power are introduced with an expression of causality, «ἐξ αυτοῦ δέ τοῦ ἔργου»

("because of this undertaking"[4]), and the verb «κατηναγκάσθημεν»[5] ("we were compelled"). This choice of words and form of expression lead us to the concept of "necessity" («ἀνάγκη»), which, most of the times, is associated with the constraints existing outside the realm or the control of the decision-maker and may influence its decisions.

Necessity is followed by three other variables, the famous "triad,"[6] presented in order of importance and time, but also in a cumulative manner: fear, honor, and interest. Together with necessity, all four, led to the original decision («τό πρῶτον," "initially") of obtaining power, advancing it, and creating the Athenian hegemony.

As their speech to the Spartans went on, the Athenians returned quickly to the same theme, that of their hegemony over the Greeks, in order to explain again why they have undertaken hegemony and why now they refuse to abandon it. In 1.76.2, they first argue that the Spartans would have been "forced" to act in the same manner given the same circumstances. This view and the form by which it is expressed indicate that in Thucydides' logic the behavior and decisions of people as regards obtaining and maintaining power are similar, regardless of whether they are Athenians or Spartans. Why is this happening? The Athenians answer:

> We have not done anything different[7] from human nature by accepting the hegemony that was offered to us and now we refuse to leave, defeated by the three greatest, honor and fear and interest. (1.76.2)

It appears that the main reason for the decision and the pursuit of power, apart from necessity (which is also mentioned in the previous verse, 1.76.1), is human nature (or the "human way"). Again, however, a very important role is played, this time with a slightly different turn and with a form of writing showing their cumulative influence, by "honor and fear and interest." In this verse Thucydides first characterizes the specific causes as the three "greatest" («μεγίστων»), and then determines the intensity of their influence on people by using the word "defeated" («νικηθέντες»), that is, the Athenians could not but succumb to the pressure of these causes.[8]

From the combination of the above verses (1.75.3 and 1.76.2) emerges the following thought structure and, hence, the Thucydidean decision-making schema. The starting point is his two fundamental interactive causes or incentives: necessity, a factor linked mainly to the individual's environment and, thus, usually outside its control, and human nature, a purely subjective factor. These two causes' influence on humans is enhanced by the other three—"honor and fear and interest"—which act simultaneously, as in this case, or each one separately, as in others. This decision-making schema is captured in the following figure:

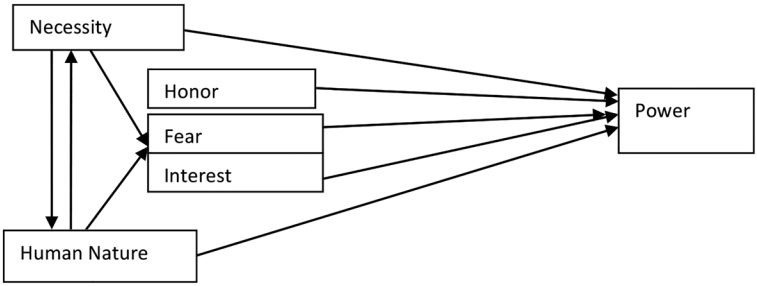


Figure 4.1 The Thucydides' Decision-Making Schema. *Source*: Author.

Therefore, the Thucydides' decision-making schema can be stated as follows: humans, because of necessity and/or their nature, and because of fear, honor, and interest, obtain, increase, and retain power. This is certainly a multicausal approach, since the result can be produced by each of the causes acting alone without the other, but also by different combinations and interactions, as particularly between necessity and human nature, or by all of them.[9]

The claim about Thucydides having a schema of thinking on decision-making may certainly be questioned. Why the views of the Athenians, which were obviously articulated in order to defend their policy and decisions, constitute a schema, in this case, of decision-making? And why from these two sentences, focusing on specific decisions regarding the Athenians' rise and holding of power, one may generalize and argue that this particular interpretation of their decisions, made by Thucydides, concerns, in his thinking, all decisions?

Responding directly, the two sentences articulate a decision-making theoretical schema for six reasons. First, Thucydides, as pointed out in chapter 3, builds his arguments on the belief that phenomena are repeating themselves, expresses his interpretations in the form of generalizations, and, moreover, given the involvement of human nature, he believes, in accordance with 1.22.4,[10] in their ability to predict.[11]

Second, in these two sentences, contained in two successive chapters of the same speech, we find a combination of the two basic motivations, necessity and human nature, with the other "greatest" three, fear, honor, and interest, leading to seizing or maintaining power. The two sentences have been written in a form showing cause and effect: because of these reasons, we ended up hegemons and we behave as human nature would lead all others too.

Third, these five causes, in different combinations or (mostly) individually, appear repeatedly in *The War*, either in the speeches or in the analysis and interpretation of events by the author himself, as the causes of many decisions or, as in the particular case of fear, of hundreds of them.

Fourth and subsequent, as it has been shown in the debate on the speeches in chapter 3, Thucydides used the speeches to describe the opinions of the orators, to examine dialectically the existing views of his time on the matter, but he had also enjoyed a degree of freedom to express his own views, for as long as he was close to the «γνώμη»; Thucydides was not present in this particular speech and anyone may presume that his creative freedom was larger than in other cases.

Fifth, these causes, although they are not mentioned again altogether anywhere else in the text, are present and pervade the letter and spirit of the most famous and leading expressions of his text, like the speeches of the Peloponnesians before the war vote, the speeches of the Mytilinean debate (3.3-8), the description and evaluation of the civil war (3.80-84) and, of course, the Melian Dialogue (5.84-113). Most important, the triad of causes is not contradicting, but it is completing or may contribute to the better understanding of the war's "truest cause" explanation.

Finally, as supported by the many examples in his text (Appendix 1) and by the fact that the five variables explain as a percentage most of the decisions taken (Appendix 2), Thucydides is applying them not only to explain decisions related to power, but he expands their use as the tools to interpret human decisions in general.

The five causes of decision-making and, more broadly, of human behavior, are examined below in the order of their importance, as this emerges from the content analysis of the entire text: necessity and human nature, interest, fear and honor. All of them—with the partial exception of necessity—are of purely of subjective or, better, of human character.

NECESSITY

Decisions are made by individuals, functioning and acting within a natural, social, political, economic, domestic, or international environment. Obviously, both the different factors composing the individuals' environment and the issue that the decision is attempting to deal with are taken into account and are influencing the decision-making process. Each person or group of people lives, thinks, decides, or acts in a geographical area, within a group that has an organization (state or other) and interacts with other similar formations, and as a person, group, or organization disposes of specific tangible and intangible capabilities (resources). Respectively, the decision, if taken, in its implementation, on the one hand, it may have an impact on the individual, on its environment (the place, the people, the organization, the resources), and their relationship, and on the other, it can be facilitated or hindered by the same factors.

Thucydides understands the situation in which the factors surrounding the individual influence its decisions as "necessity." He refers to necessity in all the verses (1.75.3, 1.76.2, 3.45.4) containing his decision-making schemata. While in the first and the second the Athenians explain that they took power (hegemony) and maintained it because, among others, of necessity, in the third, he considers that the necessity of poverty, gives humans abundant boldness, which, in synergy with other purely subjective factors (arrogance, passions, etc.), leads people to wrong decisions and put them in danger: "because of boldness caused by the necessity of poverty . . . people are driven into risks" (3.45.4-6).[12]

Next, I will determine the concept by examining analytically all the cases of decision-making in the text, resulting out of causes to which Thucydides attributes the meaning of necessity or he considers they cause necessity. I will also enquire when or under which condition are created the circumstances coming to compel the individual in his decisions.

The Causes of Necessity

The study of *The War* shows that in Thucydides' thinking necessity is created by variables outside the individual's control, as it results from the fact that he characterizes necessities as "involuntary" (3.82.2). This, however, does not mean that he who decides does not assess necessity subjectively, even without a lot of room for maneuver; this may also be concluded from the way the various leaders (i.e., Themistocles, Pericles, Cleon, or Diodotus) assess necessity, and, also, from the distinction he makes between necessity and interest: the various cities participating in the Sicilian expedition "have aligned with one or the other side . . . as, under the given circumstances, it was imposed to everyone by interest or necessity" (7.57.1).

In the text, 110 cases of necessity were recorded, particularly with the words «ἀνάγκη»[13] ("necessity"), «ἀναγκαῖον» ("necessary"), «ἀναγκάζομαι» ("I am forced"), «καταναγκάζομαι» ("I am compelled"), «βιάζομαι» ("I am pressed"), and «πιέζω» ("press"). Among them, sixty explain decisions, and the other fifty describe its operation or the use of the concept as an argument in the context of deliberations. According to this recording, necessity arises from a number of different causes.

External Threat

The first cause of necessity is the external threat. During the Persian invasion, all Greeks, because "of the big danger that was threatening them," have rallied around the Spartans, who then were "the stronger among the Greeks" (1.18.2). After the Persians' defeat, the Spartans have abandoned

the leadership and returned to the Peloponnese. Contrary to them, and given the leadership vacuum they left (1.75.2), the Athenians, because of the threat of the "remaining barbarians"[14] in Greece and in Minor Asia, accepted the offer made by the other cities to assume their leadership (in 478 BC) and, subsequently, their hegemonial tasks "compelled" them to heighten their rule (1.75.3). Here the question arises why the Athenians accepted to undertake the leadership, while the Spartans did not continue.

For the Spartans, one may think of explanations such as their national character and their desire to preserve it, as shown in the way they dealt with the problems created by Pausanias, when he led the allies against the Persians (1.94-95); or their secure geographical position at the very end of the Hellenic mainland, which protected them even during the invasion (1.74.3); or, as clearly stated by Thucydides, the Spartans wanted to be rid of the Persian war, and they considered the Athenians both capable of leading the Greeks and, at that time, their friends (1.95.7).

As for the Athenians, the possible explanation one could base on Thucydides is the historical context in combination with the leadership choices made by Themistocles. The Athenians were the target of the first Persian invasion in 490 BC (1.18.1) whom they defeated in the Battle of Marathon. After this victory, the Athenians, whose naval capabilities until then were limited, fought a war against their neighboring islanders, the Aeginetans.[15] It was then (488 BC) that Themistocles "convinced" the Athenians to build 200 ships (triremes) both for the needs of that war and for facing the "barbarian" who "was expected" again; and it was a big part of these ships which later fought against the Persians at Salamis (1.14.3). During the second Persian invasion (490 BC) Athens was completely destroyed by the Persians (1.74.2); consequently, the perception of the threat by the "remaining barbarians," to which the Athenian delegates in Sparta refer to (1.75.2), was more intense to the Athenians than to the Spartans. This is why, one may think, that the Athenians wanted to secure the Aegean and the western part of Minor Asia from the Persians, and, consequently, after the Battle of Mycale (479 BC), they continued their operations against the Persians, together with their allies and without the Peloponnesians, who returned home (1.89.1-2). Meanwhile, the Athenians decided to rebuild their walls, destroyed by the Persians; the Spartans mildly opposed this action, but they were outmaneuvered by Themistocles (1.90-91). Under his guidance the Athenians made the walls higher and larger and extended them until their port, Piraeus, to which he attached greater importance than to the city itself (1.93.3 and 7). It was him who believed that the fact the Athenians "had become seamen, would greatly contribute to acquire power" (1.93.3-4); it was him "who first dared to say that they must dominate the sea, and he immediately started building their hegemony" (1.93.4); and it was finally him who attributed great importance

to the ships as, in the opinion of Thucydides, he had observed that an attack by the Persians from the sea was easier than from land (1.93.7).

Similarly to the Persian invasion, the external threat, this time in the form of the Athenians' increase of greatness, has, as shown previously in the discussion of the "truest cause" (Chapter 3.6.2), influenced the Spartans and, after deliberations with their allies and among themselves, made them feel at that particular moment as "forced" to go to war (1.23.6). Thucydides repeats the very same explanation twice later, both in combination with the decision-making processes. First, at the moment when deliberations, on the one hand, between the Peloponnesian allies and, on the other, between the Spartans and the Athenians had been completed, and the Lacedaemonians voted that the peace treaty had been invalidated and that "they had to go to war" («πολεμητέα»), "because they feared that the Athenians would become even more powerful" (1.78). And second, when the Spartans invited their allies to decide altogether about the war and the actions to undertake. This is succinctly how Thucydides put the necessity of the Spartans to fight: "they then felt that they could not postpone it, but that the time had come to undertake with all their heart to destroy the (hostile) power, if they could, by starting the present war" (1.118.2).[16] Consistently, a similar view about necessity is echoed by Hermocrates, who in the public debate tried to convince his compatriots to build a fleet and face the Athenians even at sea. According to his argument, because of the external threat, the Athenians had decided to build a navy and thus familiarized themselves with the sea, even though they were in the past "more landsmen than the Syracusans"; in a social evolution type of process, he argued that "they were forced because of the Persians to become seamen" (7.21.3) and, thus, the Syracusans, who were under pressure, could chose to achieve the same.

Hegemony

The second source is the necessities or the tasks of hegemony, the way the ruling power understands them. As Thucydides put it, the Athenians argued that they have further heightened their rule because of the leadership's endeavors (1.75.3-5) and they could not abandon it because they were "defeated" («νικηθέντες») to do so by honor, fear, and interest (1.76.2).[17] Exactly the same argument—which is also an expression of hegemony's cynical exercise—appears in the mouth of the Athenian generals in the Melian Dialogue. They had to defeat the Melians not just because their power would increase, but because Athens was a sea power, the Melians were "among the weaker" islanders, and the Athenians had, in their view, to set an example for all the others (5.97).

The argument reappears later in 6.18.3—this time by Alcibiades—when the Athenians discuss whether or not to campaign to Sicily. Alcibiades argues

that leadership is not just the handling of things and may know how far its limits may reach, and that "we are in necessity (forced), because of where we are, conspiring against others and controlling others; for, otherwise, we risk, if we do not dominate others, to be dominated by them" (6.18.3). Seen from the opposite side, the thought is expressed also by Cleon; that is, as the rulers are forced to dominate, so are the opponents forced to be their enemies forever (3.40.3). This particular view of things, from the opposite side, leads Jacqueline de Romilly to talk about a "political" necessity, resulting out of the expected reaction of the subjugated toward hegemony, one that Pericles (2.63.2) and Cleon (3.37.2) consider that it was exercised as "tyranny."[18] Yet, these two, as other Athenian leaders too, had different considerations on the role of their city as a hegemon—considerations that are further exemplified in the Mytilinean debate between Cleon and Diodotus on the way Athens should treat the defecting allies. In fact, Thucydides, through the opinions of Diodotus, relativizes the concept of necessity and renders the decisions of the hegemon a matter of deliberations and choice. Thus, it is the same Athenians who, few days earlier had decided the destruction of the city and the execution of all Mytilineans, and after the intervention of Diodotus decided not to; and it was the Athenians, exercising their hegemony, who, about eleven years later, decided to destroy Melos, to execute all men, and enslave all women and children.

Wealth

The third cause is of economic nature. As indicated in 3.45.4, poverty breads necessity, and necessity boldness—a subjective factor in the decision-making process—that pushes people into dangerous paths. The same thought with 3.45.4 is made also in 8.57.1, whereby Tissaphernes hastens to satisfy the needs of the Peloponnesians as he has to maintain the alliance with them, to avoid them "being forced" to fight against the Athenians and be defeated, to prevent their crews deserting the ships and the Athenians reaching thus their aim, and, eventually, to prevent them plundering the region, because of the need to feed themselves.

The lack of material goods, caused by a blockade and the denial of any expectation for assistance, may, after the courage and resistance stocks are exhausted, lead to unwanted decisions. This happened with the Mytilineans "who were forced to capitulate," because ships with assistance from the Peloponnese did not arrive and food became extinct (3.27.1). Similarly, a little later, the Plataeans capitulated and surrendered "because their food was exhausted and could not resist the siege any longer" (3.52.1); and as they themselves are said to claim, they have been forced to choose the risk of surrendering, as they did not have where to turn (3.53.3).

Wealth influences politics, by creating relations of dependence and, thus, facilitating the rising of hegemons. The stronger used their wealth to subjugate the smaller cities, and the weaker, desiring profit, "the weaker tolerated dependence from the stronger" (1.8.3); in particular Pelops became the hegemon of the region, giving it even his name, "because of the amounts of money he brought when he came from Asia in a country with poor people" (1.9.2). Additionally, wealth influences positively or negatively the foreign and defense policy decisions. The Trojan War, Thucydides suggests, lasted long "not so much because of the lack of men, but the lack of money; because, given the food shortage, they brought a small army, just the size they hoped it could live off the land during the war" (1.11.1). He also records the Athenians' agony not to lose their allies' resources (1.143) and he is the first to point out the importance and the role of wealth in war. He repeatedly underlines this point:

> we see wealth more as an opportunity to accomplish the works rather than a reason for boasting (2.40.1); "war is won more with the mind and with plenty of money" (2.13.2); war is fought less with weapons and more with money, which make weapons efficient (1.83.2); and, gold and silver, . . . ensure the success in the war and in everything else. (6.34.2)[19]

War

Necessity, and particularly the necessity of poverty, may rise, among others, from a fourth source, war. Thucydides is using war, and is comparing it with peace and prosperity, in order to explain the reasons and describe extensively and impressively both consequences of the human violent behavior, the loss of wisdom and moral decadence:[20]

> For in the period of peace and prosperity, both the cities and the individuals have greater circumspection, since they are not under the pressure of unintended needs. But, war, taking away from people the daily welfare, becomes the teacher of violence and assimilates the moods of the many with their condition. (3.82.2)[21]

Geography

The fifth cause of necessity is geographical space. Necessity may be created by the lack of land space, or because, as mentioned in 7.62, land is controlled by opponents, leading the operations to be conducted from the sea and with nautical means (7.62.4), or by the absence of what is called today "strategic depth," that is, the space in front or behind the lines that may be used accordingly. The lack of land space influences decisions as it excludes other options;

the Athenian general Nicias says to his soldiers just before the final battle in Sicily: "you are compelled to be brave, because there is no nearby place where you can be saved" (7.77.7).[22]

The terrain's morphology sets limits or provides opportunities to those who need or want to operate in the particular setting. Demosthenes, the Athenian general, when he was planning to land from the sea on Sphacteria, was thinking that his opponents could hurt his larger army as they would be "attacking from undetected positions" and "their mistakes would be covered by the forest," while "all the errors of his own army would be in the open." Thus, "if he was forced to attack the enemy in the woods, he thought that the less numerous knowing well the terrain, would be stronger than the more ignoring it" (4.29.3-4).

Geographical proximity also creates necessities and influences decisions, with history recording most international frictions created between neighboring entities, cities or states. In Sicily, the Camarinaeans "were in favor to the Athenians" and not to the Syracusans, with whom they "always had differences because of neighboring" (6.88.1).[23] Contrary to proximity, distance can become an obstacle to the implementation of operations against faraway lands. Thucydides, as in his era, and perhaps even today, no actor could move unlimited numbers of manpower, observes that maritime expeditions present a low percentage of success as "those campaigning, can never outnumber their opponents and their neighbors" (6.33.5); moreover, the Athenians, having arrived at Sicily, acknowledged to their allies that they did not have the strength to remain there without their assistance, and, even if they subjugated the island, they would be "powerless to maintain it," "because of the distance of the sea journey" (6.86.3).

The geographical position of cities or of states may provoke the interest of others and could prove crucial in their decisions, as such a position may be deemed necessary for their interests or plans. The Athenians, in their controversy with the Corinthians, decided to support the Corcyraeans because their island was the solution to many of their necessities; it was "well placed for one to sail to Italy and Sicily, to prevent sending assistance with the navy from there to the Peloponnesians, to support naval operations thither and provides many other benefits" (1.36.2). The very same decided to besiege Potidaea, who defected to the Spartans, because its position "has great strategic value" for the coast of Macedonia and Thrace (1.68.4).

Finally, any land, given its position and morphology, is related with specific climate conditions, which in specific periods of the year have effects on the health condition of a population, in this case of the Athenian army, just outside Syracuse, in Sicily: "the army was under pressure from diseases . . . both because it was the time of year when people become ill, and because the place where stood their camp was marshy and unhealthy" (7.47.2).[24]

Population

Men, says Thucydides, "are the city rather than the walls and the vessels empty of men" (7.77.7). Without men, obviously, there are neither necessities nor dilemmas, nor decisions, nor their implementation. In military operations, the size of the opponent inhibits or prevents the implementation of decisions, as that of the Athenians during the siege of Syracuse, who had to interrupt the construction of the wall around the city, because of the number of the opponents, and because they could not use their whole army for that task, as guarding the already built walls required a part of the soldiers (7.11.3).

Population does not always function as a whole, nor is its operation unimpeded by geographical space or within it. This is the point made by the Spartan leader, encouraging his outnumbered soldiers, waiting for the landing of the Athenians, and underlining that "they will fight in small detachments, given their difficulty to land"; thus they wouldn't be facing a larger army ashore, fighting under the same conditions, "but an army battling from the decks of their ships," which is much more difficult; to conclude that "their disadvantages balance our small numbers" (4.10.4).[25]

The unity of the population is needed by leaders, as it facilitates the adoption and implementation of difficult decisions. One manifestation of unity is discipline, which is related to the number and quality of the population, but also to their temperament. "It is difficult to govern one people with your own character," Nicias wrote to the Athenians (7.14.2). Discipline is considered a prerequisite by military leaders for the successful accomplishment of operations; king Archidamus of Sparta advises his men: "follow your leader wherever he takes you, placing above all the discipline and safety and execute orders willingly; because nothing is more beautiful and safer than a numerous army appearing inspired by a single discipline spirit" (2.11.9).

Conversely, the lack of discipline and the consequent disorder facilitate the opponent, who is trying to take advantage in any kind of competitive situations. The Athenian army, after its defeat in the ultimate Sicilian battle has suffered because of it; thus the Syracusans "when they came into contact with the army of Demosthenes, which had stayed behind and walked with great slowness and disarray after the confusion in which . . . it had fallen the previous night, they attacked it" (7.81.2). If discipline lacks, then the consequences for a population of individuals, regardless of its size, can be devastating. Here is how Thucydides describes the disastrous consequences of indiscipline, combined with the necessity of thirst, the terrain's restrictive specificities, and the negative correlation of forces:

> once they reached the river they rushed in without any order at all, and everyone wanted to cross it first, and the enemies' attacks made crossing no longer easy. Because they were compelled to walk through together with many others, they

> were falling over each other and overstepping among themselves, or others were hitting on their small spears and died immediately, and others were trapped on what they have been carrying and were carried away by the river. The Syracusans, staying on the opposite bank that was steep, fired from above against the Athenians, most of who were drinking greedily and with great disorder and confusion, pushing one another into the deep river. The Peloponnesians descended . . . and slaughtered mainly those that were in the river. The water was quickly stained, but despite that it was mixed with clay and blood, they kept drinking greedily and many continued battling about who is going to drink first. (7.84.3-5)

Distribution of Power

The seventh cause creating necessity is the negative correlation of forces,[26] which essentially leads to the well-known balance of power strategy. Thus, Epidamnus, "being under pressure," sent ambassadors to Corcyra for help, "asking them not to be indifferent seeing them destroyed" (1.24.6), while the Athenian army, on its way to Potidaea, due to time pressure and the progressive change in the correlation of forces, "was compelled to make an agreement of peace and alliance with Perdiccas" (1.61.3).

The need created by the fragile balance of power and the possible destruction of existing human and material resources, is described by Nicias, when, before the last and most critical battle of the Athenians in Syracuse, is trying, by explaining the state of emergency in which they were, both to encourage his men and to make them responsible of their fate:

> I remind you, . . . that in Athens there are no more ships in the ports . . . nor other conscripts, and that if the outcome of the battle is for us other than victory, our enemies here will sail straight against Athens and our people, those remaining there, will be powerless to ward them off . . . And thus, you will immediately fall into the mercy of Syracusans . . . while they will be at the mercy of the Spartans. You are obliged in this one and very same battle to fight both for yourselves and for those there . . . and do not forget . . . that you, you are the army and the fleet of the Athenians, and upon you rests the whole city and the great name of Athens. (7.64.1-2)

Later and respectively, Athenians and Samians had to conduct a war in two fronts, against both the oligarchic regime of "The Four Hundred" in Athens and Sparta, because, as Thucydides specifies for them, otherwise "they would perish" (8.75.3).

The Power of Necessity

Necessity influences decisions as it does not leave many choices to the decision-maker. General Demosthenes, addressing his soldiers, underlines that "in necessity (emergency) situations like this one now, every calculation

is in vain and what is required is to confront immediately the danger" (4.10.1). It leads to the formation of alliances (7.57.4, 7.57.6, and 7.57.11), creates in practice and in theory the conditions of deterring the opponent (6.87.4), and leads competitors to initiate preventive strikes (6.69.1).

Its influence on people may determine what "reasonable" is (4.87.3), as well as what is "just."[27] Its existence is used as an argument of understanding or justifying injustice (3.40.6), as well as an argument for legitimizing the exploitation of the other's necessity. It is used as a pretext (7.57.7), but also as an argument to justify either the conflicts between allies, or to support requests for clemency by those judged for breaking the rules of law or of morality. Plataeans ask the Spartans for clemency, arguing that they are not enemies, "but friends, who out of necessity fought against" them (3.58.2); and the Athenians said to the Boeotians that "unlawful are bad acts committed without necessity rather than those ventured under the pressure of calamities" (4.98.6).

Finally, necessity plays an important role in the critical decisions about peace and war. Athenians and Spartans were "forced" by the circumstances to break the 421 BC peace treaty (5.25.3), while the Athenians out of necessity succeeded the unexpected and admirable, which was to conduct resolutely two wars simultaneously:

> what was more pressing on to them was the need to conduct two wars simultaneously, which they also waged with such insistence, that if one heard of before it was shown, he would not have believe it. (7.28.3)

Decisions within Necessity

All of the above suggest two things. First, that necessity influences decisions and even the course of events, creating new conditions; as Thucydides notes elsewhere, in life, in politics, "necessarily, like in art, the newest always prevails" (1.71.3). Second, that Thucydides, long before realist or Marxist authors noted it, took into account in the analysis of politics the role of necessity; and even more, he combined in his interpretation of decision-making the often external factor of necessity with purely personal ones, as we shall see further below.

Necessity, in his thought, is given an important role for human behavior, and, obviously, for decision-making as well. It is the one from which no one who makes or has to make decisions can easily depart. How indeed can anyone change the geographical, demographic, organizational, political, and economic context or correlation of forces at precisely the moment he wants or has to decide? Of course, thanks to the technological and other scientific knowledge of each era, one may prepare himself and better his capabilities, possibly in the medium term. But then, as today, those variables, which

surround the individual and some are outside its control, may define the parameters of a decision.

Within this compelling environment of variables, the individual is called to decide. It is obvious, however, that, even in a compelling situation, both the degree of freedom to decide and the decision-making abilities of the individual may play a role and cancel or reduce the influence even of external factors;[28] or, seen from the opposite side, even though one may have in his own favor all factors, such as human resources, wealth, favorable timing, and so on, he may be incapable of managing and exploiting them to his advantage. Indeed, decision-making abilities are different from one person to the other and from one group to another, and, eventually, their choices can make a difference. The Greeks, particularly the Athenians (1.18.2, 1.74.2), facing the Persians, had the choice either to fight or to surrender; they have chosen the first and they assumed the consequences. The Spartans and the Athenians, in 431 BC, had the choice not to go to war or, later, not to break the 421 BC peace treaty, without any of the two been enslaved by the other. The successors of Pericles could have followed different policies than those denounced from Thucydides (2.65.7). The Corcyraeans could have avoided the civil confrontation despite the constraints of the all-encompassing war, as did, for example, the Megareans, who handled differently their domestic political antagonisms (4.71). And the Melians could have avoided the necessity to fight for their survival had they been better prepared and had they ensured the assistance from their allies, before the Athenian expedition against them. Similarly, the Athenians in Sicily could have avoided ending up in such a necessity, had they avoided a series of many wrong decisions.

Yet, it is not just necessity influencing decision-making. It is also human nature, and honor, and fear, and interest. Let us examine now human nature.

HUMAN NATURE

The concept of human nature[29] appears in *The War* thirty-two times, six of which refer specifically to the nature of the Athenians, one to that of the Spartans (1.121.4), and another twenty-five to people in general; and, among the last, thirteen constitute an explanation of decision-making. The concept is expressed with the terms "nature of men" («φύσις ἀνθρώπων») and "human nature" («ἀνθρωπεία φύσις»), "human way" («ἀνθρώπειος τρόπος») and "human reason" («ἀνθρώπειος λόγος»), but also with the verb «φύομαι» ("I am born," "I grow by nature"), and in the third person singular («πέφυκε») and plural («πεφύκασι») of the past tense. Human nature, as indicated by a series of his generalizations, appears as the womb, the genetic cause of every facet of conduct of any subject, natural or collective. In Thucydides' ontology

human nature varies according to the subject and the circumstances and many choices depend on it. Next, I present how the power prone Athenians understood human nature, how Thucydides assesses its influence, and which, after all, was his perception of it.

Hegemony and Human Nature

For the Athenians, having established their rule upon the larger number of Greek cities, humans by nature seize power or, in the case of organized entities, hegemony.[30] In front of the Spartans they claimed that, assuming the leadership of the Greeks, they did "nothing different from human nature" as "since always, it has prevailed that the weaker is oppressed by the stronger" (1.76.2). They also replied to the Spartans that their arguments on justice collide with reality, as the principles of law "have never prevented anyone when he was presented with the opportunity to achieve something with power, not to do it" (1.76.2). There is nothing wrong in that they followed human nature; the positive or the negative is related to the way power is exercised, and "worthy of praise" are those who, after following their nature, dominated others, and did it in a fairer way than what their power allowed them to (1.76.3).

Moreover, according to the Athenians, humans, because of their nature, seek to dominate those who are ready to bow,[31] and because of it («υπό φύσεως ἀναγκαίας») to do so each time they are superior in power. Cleon maintains that people admire the rigid and disdain the servile (3.39.5), and the Athenians reiterate toward the Melians the same argument that was expressed earlier in 1.76.2: "as for people, we know well that they are forced by their nature to rule at all times when their strength prevails" (5.105.2).

Thucydides makes in particular a total of five references to the nature of Athenians. They are, according to the Corinthians, active, innovative, courageous, and in general they never stay quiet and do not let others to stay so (1.70.9); their life, according to Pericles, is governed by principles (2.36.4); according to Nicias, however, they are skeptical and ambitious (6.9.3) and difficult to be governed (7.14.2). From these verses, in combination with those relevant to human nature (1.76.3, 5.105.2, 4.61.5 and 6.18.7), Jacqueline de Romilly concludes that Thucydides considers that the Athenians by their nature had become, as an entity, imperialists;[32] hence, the ideas advanced by them on human nature reflect basically their hegemonic condition and have to be understood under this perspective.

The Influence of Human Nature

It seems that for Thucydides there are no means to prevent either the propensity of people to the violent exercise of power or to mistakes. Diodotus, in

his speech, replies to Cleon that all people by nature, in their private and in their public life, "are prone to mistakes and there is no law that can prevent it" (3.45.3); and, when closing his argument, he qualifies human nature as a very powerful factor in decision-making, definitely stronger than any fear:

> simply is impossible and is very fool whoever believes that human nature when strongly wants to do something, it can be prevented either by the force of the law, or by some other fear. (3.45.7)

This view, that human nature, under specific circumstances,[33] almost shapes behavior and decisions, is pushed by Thucydides to reach the extreme, when, in his account of the Corcyraean civil war, he observes that human nature can overtake limits and enjoy violating laws, especially when restrictions are lifted. This is due to anarchy and to both the personal and social decadence caused by war: "placing itself above the law, human nature, used to do injustice even when the law is upheld, complacently showed that it does not control passions, that it is stronger than laws and hostile to anything superior" (3.84.2).

Indeed, on this conclusion, Thucydides also bases the view that his work will provide knowledge about what happened in the war, but also about those that will happen during the war (or a war),[34] "similar and approximate," because of and according to human nature (1.22.4). With the same logic, that of repetition and predictability, he approaches the suffering brought about by human nature to people and cities; it is the result of the flawed decisions that leads them to make. For as long as human nature does not change, suffering will exist:

> during the civil war much and great suffering arose in many cities, which happens and will always happen, as long as human nature remains the same, more terrible or softer and different in shape, depending on the occasional change in circumstances. (3.82.2)

A similar idea, but also a warning, is echoed in Thucydides' comment on the costly consequences of the human violent behavior, especially when the circumstances change. This happened to the Athenians, who tried to conquer Sicily, but they were defeated and destroyed: "after doing what people by their nature do, they suffered all that people may suffer" (7.77.4).

Is Thucydides' View Pessimistic?

Thucydides' observations on human nature—as most of his work—have not disappeared throughout times. Many centuries later, elements of them have been adopted by classical realists, like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Morgenthau, and

even psychologists as Sigmund Freud,[35] without them taking into account that he was studying human nature basically in times of war or in the exercise of hegemony. Thus, examining Thucydides' views on human nature through the eyes of these authors has misled contemporary scholars who dubbed his view as "pessimistic" and concluded that he considered human nature "bad."[36] But, is it so?

This qualification is, on the one hand, incomplete and, hence, partially distorted, and, on the other, which is more important, counterproductive. It is incomplete because, Thucydides observed human behavior either in time of war or in the exercise of hegemony. It is incomplete because, for example, human nature in *The War* does not always appear submissive; it may efficiently react to rulers, as people, first, resist those who attack them and try to dominate them (4.61.5) and, second, they "continue the fight until the end, even contrary to logic, against arrogant opponents" (4.19.4). In addition, human nature can lead to reasonable behavior, such as willingness to compromise with people who want to compromise; which means that a reasonable decision will meet a reasonable response from the other: "their nature («πεφύκασι») pushes them willingly to retract when facing those who first show a spirit of compromise" (4.19.4).

The assessment by Thucydides' critics that he is considering human nature as "bad" is incorrect (at least partially), because, first, he distinguishes between the various phases of social and political life, that is, war and peace, and, second, he refers repeatedly to the virtues of people and of politicians, as in the Funeral Oration or when presenting the leading figures of Themistocles (1.138.3), Pericles (2.65.4), Archidamus (1.79), or Nicias (7.86.5). If there was not any good in human nature or if, at least, these same people could not control it, then, what is the reason referring to the quality of character of these leaders?

This assessment by the critics is also counterproductive, as it impedes the understanding of variations both in the actors' behavior or in the circumstances, and in the writing of Thucydides. What is important is to avoid labels which may obscure details, and, by observing what and how is described, to record and interpret the multifaceted and changing human behavior—in this case that of its decisions.

One such detail is highlighted by de Romilly. According to her, Thucydides attributes to human nature the characteristic of volatility of opinion, especially when it comes to people who behave or decide as a whole. She bases this view on six verses. In the four of them, Thucydides is using a similar expression: "what («οἷον») the crowd («ὅμιλος») likes («φιλεῖ») to do" (2.65.4), or the "mob" («ὄχλος», 4.28.3, 6.63.2), or the "people" («δῆμος», 8.1.4).[37] In the other two, he refers to people in general, who, either, as Pericles claims, "change their opinions depending on the calamities" (1.140.1), or, as

Hermocrates argues, "they are influenced by what is propagated" (6.34.7).[38] What we have here is, first, one more observation about the uncertainty of a debate's outcome, as happened in the Spartans' deliberation on going to war or in the Athenians' debates on the Mytilinean affair; and second, a type of description and explanation of the decision by what we, now, call mass or political psychology[39]—phenomena that are listed by Thucydides and were known to the ancient Greek thinking since the time of Homer.[40]

The above are correctly summarized by Reeve:

> Thucydides is not a pessimist, not someone who takes an unrealistically dark view of human nature. He does not think it inevitable that things go badly. But he is not an optimist either. He does not think that there are any cosmic guarantees that good judgment will be effectively exercised. What aids good judgment and strengthens it is knowledge of human nature and how it is likely to respond in different sorts of circumstances.[41]

And, further, as Connor has pointed out,

> Thucydides' history is perhaps unique among historical writings in its uncompromising demonstration of how deeply the sufferings of the war are rooted in human nature and in its simultaneous insistence that they are mistakes that ought to be avoided.[42]

Human nature does create its own necessities and in fact interprets situations as being necessities or not. Human nature presents negative aspects, which may dominate the benign aspects of it, and driving men to mistakes and dangers; yet it is not "bad" at all times, as Thucydides makes a clear distinction between the period of war and that of peace. His view, thus, is not that pessimistic, as the perception, which has become dominant, wants it to be. Otherwise, why would he refer to so many leaders or men with "good" human nature? It appears that the Athenian's perspective on human nature, to put it in modern terms, is not that realist (Machiavellian or Hobbesian), but it contains rationalist (Lockean)[43] elements, meaning that it can, given the circumstances and conditions, produce better behaviors. On this basis, when interpreting the two similar phrases, "what according to human nature will happen similar and approximate" (1.22.4) and "which happens and will always happen, as long as human nature remains the same" (3.82.2), one could think that Thucydides rather refers to the negative aspects of human nature and within the specific conditions of hegemony and war.

Does this mean that the Spartans could have interpreted the necessity of war differently and could have decided otherwise in the Apella? My answer is yes. Archidamus and Sthenelaidas were of the same national character; yet

these two had a different nature and they had proposed different things, the former putting emphasis on virtues, and the latter appealing to interest, fear, and honor. These Spartans in the Apella were of the same national character with those in Sphacteria, just six years later; yet, the latter decided to surrender, contrary to the Spartan national character's tradition. Furthermore, it was the same Athenians who first decided to exterminate all Mytilineans and few days later to punish only their leaders; the only difference is that the first debate in the Agora had been won by the hardliners, while the second by moderate Diodotus. And in the same affair, it was the crews of the ships made by Athenians, the first, carrying the "unnatural" («ἀλλόκοτον») order for the massacre, going slow, and the second, carrying the better decision, roaming without recess night and day and even eating while roaming, in order to prevent the disaster (3.49).

Certainly human nature, together with necessity, is used by the actors and by Thucydides—by the former sometimes as an excuse or justification and by the latter as a generalized explanation for decision-making, especially in conditions of hegemony and war. But Thucydides digs further into the details of human behavior and its decision-making, and adds three more purely human factors, interest, fear, and honor. Let us examine now interest.

INTEREST

The interest or the benefit, or whatever desirable for every human being and for each state or leader, is the motivation for decision-making (or not) and action (or inaction): "each one seeks his own interest" (1.141.6). Interest dominates the easy or tough decisions of people and it would be redundant here to provide historical examples for demonstrating the importance of the interest factor. It goes without saying that what is advantageous for each one—whether material or immaterial or combination of both— is determined by each individual, leader, or government.

As already explained, according to Thucydides, deciding and acting on the basis of interest, as well as of honor and fear, is influenced by necessity and human nature. Thus, the Athenians claim in 1.75.3 and 1.76.2 that they assumed hegemony («ἀρχήν»), first, because of necessity and of human nature, and, secondly, they increased it and tried to maintain it also because of honor, fear, and interest.

Interest within the "Triad"

Honor, fear, and interest became famous as the "triad" influencing human choices. Among the three, fear and interest seem to prevail in Thucydides'

thinking, as elsewhere he refers to the combinations of these two factors alone.[44] The mere reading or, better, the quantitative-statistical content analysis of *The War* would lead one to conclude that fear is the dominant factor in the thinking of the author, who, according to his critics, described a world full of fear. Indeed, throughout the entire text 248 decisions were identified that Thucydides attributes to fear, twenty-two that he insinuates fear being the cause, and another eighty-six that fear is mentioned for a variety of reasons. The references to interest, with the nouns "interest" («ξυμφέρον»), "benefit" («ὠφελία»), and "beneficial" («ὠφέλιμον»), and the corresponding verbs or adjectives,[45] are fewer: only forty-nine decisions are explained on the basis of interest, while in another sixty-nine instances interest is simply mentioned.

A qualitative reading, however, shows that Thucydides, in a cost-benefit analysis, considers that self-interest is a stronger incentive, a stronger factor in decision-making than fear:

> No one is forced (ἀναγκάζεται) to make war out of ignorance of its consequences and nobody is deterred by fear, if he believes he will gain more. (War) erupts when the ones consider that the expected gains are to be greater than the risks, and the others are determined to face the risks rather than tolerate any decrease of their interests (4.59.2); and, we know that those who of exaggerated fear suspect something, at that time they get carried away by the pleasure of words, but when the time for action comes they do what suits them. (6.83.3)

Furthermore, in a unique and single case in the entire text, interest is equated with necessity. The Greek cities have sided with the Athenians or the Spartans "not so much for reasons of righteousness or affinity of origin, but as, in the specific circumstance, imposed everyone's interest or necessity" («ἀνάγκη," 7.57.1).

Interest of course is distinguished in general and individual, with the people and their leaders called to serve the first. Thucydides shows Pericles as believing that

> a city that generally thrives is more beneficial to the people than if each citizen is happy in it, and the city in general is in misery. Because, despite how prosperous is a citizen in his personal affairs, if his homeland is lost and destroyed, he is destroyed too, while if he lives in misery in a homeland that prospers, he is very likely to survive. (5.60.2-3)

However, leaders and people choose their interest, and they are thus driven often to decisions with significant cost or with disastrous consequences. Referring to Pericles' successors, Thucydides notes that, on all the matters of the war, they did the opposite,

> but also on issues seemingly unrelated to the war, they followed, by personal ambition and for their own profit, detrimental to the Athenians' and their allies' policies, which if successful would bring value and benefit more to these individuals, but in case of failure they would harm the town in conducting the war. (2.65.7)

And when commenting on the disaster in Sicily, Thucydides considers that it occurred not by miscalculation of the opponents' power, but because those who decided the campaign in their subsequent and relevant decisions "did not take into account the interests of those who had campaigned," but their own interests, which led in disputes over the leadership of the city, which, in turn, weakened the campaign (2.65.7).[46]

The Content of Interest

But what is the content of interest? The primary ingredient of interest for people and entities is security,[47] whose main manifestation is salvation or survival. Here is how Thucydides describes the interests of the warring sides before a critical battle in Sicily:

> The Syracusans were fighting for the salvation of their country and, at that moment, everyone for his own and for freedom in the future. As for their opponents, the Athenians to become masters of the foreign country and avoid the damage to theirs in case they lost; Argives and the other independent allies fought to conquer . . . those against which they had campaigned, and to return victors to their country; the tributary allies were mainly fighting for their salvation, for which, if they did not win, they would have no hope, and they had as an additional incentive that, if they helped the Athenians to destroy others, their own servitude would be easier to bear. (6.69.3)

The content and the principal instrument or tool to meet the interest of people and entities is, according to Thucydides, power—a view through which the author connects interest to human nature. The struggle for the conquest of power causes competition and conflict;[48] maintaining power preserves them, while, to a large extent, it transforms even the interests of the actor holding hegemony. The interest of the ruler is to expand,[49] without thinking how much,[50] to wear his opponents through third parties,[51] to decide, depending on the case, with different criteria,[52] to install regimes favorable to him (1.76.1). To a state which rules, inaction («ἀπραγμον») is not in its interests (5.63.3).

Consistent with this, the Athenians say clearly that they campaigned against the Melians for the interests of their hegemony and that the purpose of engaging in negotiations is to subjugate them effortlessly and without destroying them, to the benefit of both (5.91.2). To the question of the Melians why is it

not to the advantage of the Athenians to let them live in peace, to be friends instead of enemies, without belonging to any alliance (5.94), the Athenians refused, stressing that "your hatred does not hurt us as much as your friendship, which το our subjects is proof of weakness while your hatred proof of our strength" (5.95). In fact, the reality of war leads Thucydides to record that there are no limits as to the content or the determination of the interests of the one who rules (the hegemon): "for a man or a city exercising power, nothing is irrational, if in the interest, and no one is a relative if not loyal; everyone must be a foe or a friend depending on the circumstances" (6.85.1).

Interest brings together cities and citizens[53] and is the ultimate guide either in dealing with risks[54] or in managing the affairs of hegemony, as in the subject of the supreme punishment[55] of defecting allies:

> The question that should concern us, if we are wise, is not whether they hurt us, but which is the best decision for us. Because, independently of how much guilty I proved they are, I would not recommend to kill them for it, if it is not in our interest, and if I proved them to have some extenuating circumstances, I would not recommend you to forgive them, if this is not good for the city. (3.44.1-2)[56]

The relationship between law and interest is weak, if not antagonistic and mutually exclusive,[57] as the interest takes precedence over law. This is what the Athenians unequivocally declare to the Melians: "we both know that in the human mind what is just is determined by equal necessity and that the strong do what is allowed by their power and the weak condone" (5.89).[58] Of course, this attitude is not common because, most of the times, the powerful try to support their interests with the cloak of legal arguments. On this topic, the Athenians repeatedly denounced the Spartans (1.76.1, 5.105.4). But they, at least in the time of Pericles, present themselves as supporters and fighters of freedom, an element that had not disappeared from their rhetoric (and that of great powers until today): "it is only us helping fearlessly others, not by calculation of interest, but by our faith in freedom" (5.40.5).

The most important, however, for the theory of International Relations is to record that, in addition to necessity and the possible predispositions of human nature, interest is one of the main decision-making factors, leading to conflict domestically and internationally: "originally we fought wanting each one to promote the interests of his city and now we are trying to conciliate; if we do not manage to leave from here having everyone equally satisfied his interests, we will fight again" (4.59.4).

The concept and the content of interest, as has been indicated, are influenced by the human nature of each individual or of many, in the case of human entities, and it may be transformed into necessity. The interest of the

Athenians was respectively different for Pericles and his successors, certainly different, as it is brilliantly exposed in the Mytilinean debate, for Cleon and Diodotus, and different for Nicias and Alcibiades, in their debate for the Athenians to decide over the Sicilian expedition (6.9-26).

Further, determining the interest of the city depends also of its position; the small cities' primary interest is to survive, while the stronger ones' is to expand or maximize their power. Certainly the Athenians fighting at Salamis had a different understanding of their interest from the one expressed later by those in Melos, and a radically different one from their compatriots who, after their total defeat at Aegos Potami (404 BC), were waiting for the Spartans to arrive, take over their city, and punish them for everything wrong they had done during the war.[59]

The Decision to Fight the War

Interest does not appear as such in the "truest cause" of the war in 1.23.6 or in 1.88; one could only think of an indirect presence, given that the fear the Spartans felt was provoked by the perception of a negative for them change in the balance of power—an observation directly related to their primary interest, security. Interest, however, appeared progressively, in the discussions between the Peloponnesians and among the Spartans. First, it is the Corinthians who referred to the Spartans' interests in order to mobilize them (1.68-71); then Sthenelaidas brought up the issue of the Athenians harming the Spartans and their allies (1.86); and, last, while explaining their final decision to fight a war, Thucydides referred to the necessity to deal both with the considerable increase of the Athenians' power and with the harming of their alliance (1.118.2). Archidamus, however, had a very different view from Sthenelaidas on how to deal with the Athenians' greatness and on how to serve the Spartan interests (1.80-85)—a view containing more elements of what is generally considered to be the Spartan way or character; but, it was Sthenelaidas who won the vote in the Apella.

Those who consider the expected gains to be greater than the risks cannot be deterred by fear (4.59), maintains Thucydides. It is certain that the Athenians deciding the expedition against Sicily thought that there will be gains for all of them (6.31), without having any fears about a possible failure of the expedition; the sole exception were those expressed by Nicias. It is also certain that in the "truest cause," one could only think that interest appears vaguely in the background and, if so, only indirectly. Should we then conclude that in this particular case Thucydides considered fear more important than interest? I think not. The Spartans did not fear war itself; they were trained for war. What they were afraid of was the uncertain future and further changes in the correlation of forces. Thus, at that specific moment, interest

could not have been put in the balance with fear; interest was a late comer as a cause of the war and has surfaced during and because of the deliberations; yet, not independently of fear, which is examined next.

FEAR

Fear is a feeling or a state in which every person, citizen or leader, may find herself, affecting behavior and decisions. In the text of *The War*, 248 decisions are directly and unambiguously explained by fear. In these cases Thucydides uses the words «φοβέω», «φοβοῦμαι», «φόβος, «φοβερός», «δείδω, «καταδείδω», «δέος», «ἀδεῶς, «περιδεής, «δεινός, «ὀκνῶ, «ὀρρωδῶ, «καταπλήττομαι», «ἐκπλήσσω», «ἔκπληξις».[60] To them another twenty-two must be added, in which, indirectly but clearly, it is understood that decisions were taken because of fear, twenty-nine cases recording fear as a situation or an event, thirty cases describing its operation, nine its use against others, and eighteen on efforts to deal with it or rationalize it. The totality of these cases generates a series of causes, of functions, and of management of fear, that are presented below.

Causes of Fear

The causes of fear, resulting from *The War*'s content analysis are ten in number. The first and most important reason is the danger to the city's survival and, obviously, of the people themselves and their freedom. The danger may also result out of natural phenomena, such as earthquake, extreme weather (6.70.1), or a fatal disease (2.51.4, 5.57.1), as well as, most often, out of the prospect of the city's occupation or destruction:[61]

> Because they were afraid for their people outside the wall, they sent a messenger (2.5.5); and, then flares were erected to notify Athens for the hostile raid, causing panic, no less than any other during the war. The people in town thought that the enemies had already entered the port of Piraeus, and those in Piraeus that Salamis was already occupied, and in any moment they would enter the port (2.94.1); and, while they had come to enslave others, they ended up fleeing for fear of the same happening to them. (7.75.7).[62]

The second cause of fear is the risk of loss of material goods and the wealth of natural resources. Such is the agricultural production (4.84.2), the shipbuilding timber (4.108.1), or the city's treasures; this is why, when the Athenians arrived, the Syracusans sent guard at the temple of Zeus (Olympieion), as "they were afraid of the Athenians taking over the money they kept there" (6.70.4).

A third source of fear is the danger, the cost, or the consequences for the life or the interests of the decision-maker, usually a leader. There is a plethora of examples: Cleon was trying to back out from the leadership of the campaign against Sphacteria, "because he started fearing, as he had never imagined, that Nicias would really dare to cede to him his position" (4.28.2); and, the Spartan and the Athenian delegation agreed to renew their vows for peace after the request of the Athenian Nicias, "who feared that if he returned to Athens without any result, his enemies would slander him" (5.46.4); Alcibiades abandoned the Spartans and fled to the Persians "because he was afraid" for his life (8.45.1); and, General Phrynichus "was afraid that . . . if Alcibiades returned from exile, he would harm him" (8.50.1).[63]

A similar fear, known in contemporary literature,[64] is the fear of responsibility or of failure: the one who has to make or implement a decision either defers it or delegates responsibility to others. Thucydides records this too, by showing two leaders, an Athenian and a Spartan, supporting peace for similar reasons:

> Nicias because he wanted to ensure his legacy, as yet had not suffered any misfortune and people honored him. . . . He believed that the best way to achieve this was to avoid risks and to trust as little as possible to chance. . . . Pleistoanax (the king of Sparta) because . . . his enemies slandered him and they turned against him the Spartans' anger every time they had a misfortune. (5.16.1)

The fear of assuming responsibility, with the procrastination it involves, causes the swelling of problems, the accumulation of new, and the subsequent inability to solve them, either because the opportunity has been lost or because the problem is no longer manageable.[65]

The fourth source of fear to man is the unknown. Brasidas, the Spartan general, acknowledges this as he addresses the Acanthians and he admits that they feared the Spartans "because they did not know them" (4.114.4); and, in another occasion, speaking and trying to encourage his soldiers facing an army of barbarians, accepts the fact that they "fear them" because they "do not know them" (4.126.3).[66] The unknown is related with the future, as has happened with the Athenian soldiers after their defeat in Sicily: "the evils they feared that they would suffer in the uncertain future were such, that tears were not enough" (7.75.4). It is also related to the new; Thucydides, assessing the arrival of the Athenian army in Sicily, states that "each army in the beginning causes great fear" (6.49.2); and he repeats this when the Spartans arrive and Gylippus, their leader, "knowing that now," as Nicias the Athenian before him, "on the first day, he too inspired the greatest fear to the enemies, he wanted to benefit as soon from the consternation that he caused" (7.42.3). Finally, the unknown is related to what is ambiguous or undetermined—an

element used quite often throughout history in order to frighten people or to exercise terror. It was used by the oligarchy of The Four Hundred (411 BC) in Athens, in order to secure their rule: "The Four Hundred neither wanted the Five Thousand to exist really, nor wanted to be known that they did not exist. Because they considered that so many sharing power would be pure democracy, while, in addition, the unknown would create fear between one another" (8.92.11).

The fifth cause of fear is the inexperience of men. Inexperience leads them to magnify the sense of danger they perceive, with the related consequences. This was the case of the inexperienced soldiers of both sides, Athenian and Syracusan, when, during the first battle of the siege, the intense phenomena of a storm "exacerbated the fear of those who fought for the first time and had little military experience" (6.70.1).[67]

Next, sixth, factor of fear for the individual and for those who make decisions are previous negative experiences, which should be avoided in the future. In a naval battle against the Athenians and the Corcyraeans, the Spartans, fearing of what has happened to them previously at the Battle of Naupactus (429 BC), where they were defeated at the last moment even though they had the advantage, "came fast to help" their ships, and with all their forces they attacked the Athenians (3.78.2). Such negative experiences are errors or omissions that led to undesirable results (1.95.7) or political deviations (6.53.3) or defeats and disasters (2.86.6, 7.71.1, 7.72.4).[68]

The seventh, major cause of fear is the opponent, the enemy, who may be near or far, a Greek or a barbarian (4.125.1, 4.126.3), a small or a great power, as well as its size, its power, and the type of its available power. Obviously, among the opponents an important position is held by major powers. In the world and in the text of Thucydides the most important position is held by the Athenians, exercising hegemony, and the Spartans, attempting to limit or to claim it. The Athenians were causing fear because of their power (1.67.2), because of the prospect of even greater increase of their hegemony (1.36.1, 1.88) and the submission of more cities to them (5.8.5), because of their maritime power (1.90.1) and their ability to undertake long campaigns (6.34.2) or, in combination with their power, because of proximity (5.52.1) or of differences in the past (4.79.2). For less, but corresponding reasons, fear was caused by the Spartans, mainly to the cities (5.29.1) or to some areas of the Peloponnese (5.50.3), to allies (5.38.3), and, toward the end of the war, to the Persians (8.56.3).

The eighth cause of fear is associated with the enemy forces during the conduct of military operations, particularly due to the negative correlation of forces. An army approaching (3.101.2) or the invading of the city (country) always creates fear (6.51.2). The fear is evident when the enemy's forces are superior in numbers (5.76.3, 4.10.4), in warships (5.88.1, 3.11.6, 8.52.1), in

men's training (8.89.2), or in war experience and moral (4.126.1-3). During the campaigns, fear is created as a result of cost-benefit calculations of the warring sides. Each side may fear the opponent's tactical advantage (4.29.3), not receiving eventually the expected assistance (3.105.4), finding itself disadvantaged in the battlefield (3.107.3, 5.71.3, 8.105.3), the relation of forces to deteriorate and the eventual cost of defeat to increase (3.113.6), losing the tactical advantage (4.105.1) or the opponent gaining it (4.1.2, 4.8.7, 7.73.3), war preparations to be delayed (6.100.1), and to suffer losses (4.11.4).

Fear is often created by the surprise attack against the opponent, as Lamachus maintains, expressing the certainty of victory against the Syracusans if the Athenians "attacked suddenly," while their opponents awaited them "frightened" (6.49.2);[69] also, by the way the battle is conducted: "the greater fear is caused by those who hit first and show from the beginning that they will resist" (6.34.7);[70] or by the sudden increase of the enemy forces, as "reinforcements arriving during the battle cause the enemy more fear than the force with which is already battling" (5.9.8). Surprise and fear are equally provoked by unexpected or unforeseen events, as it has happened to Spartans after the catastrophe at Sphacteria and the revolt of the helots in their own country: "the unexpected misfortunes . . . had scared them a lot and they feared not to fall again into failure. . . this is why they were reluctantly going to the battle and they were thinking that whatever they were trying they will fail" (4.55.3-4).[71]

Next cause of fear, the ninth, is the risks arising from power correlations due to the existence or not of alliances. Cities or, respectively, people, fear not to be isolated (1.31.2, 5.40.1), fear their allies not to be defeated and thereby to lose power factors[72] or, worse, not to defect from them to the benefit of their opponents (4.108.1, 5.14.2, 6.76.1); moreover, they fear the creation of rival alliances (5.44.3, 6.21.1).

Finally, tenth source of fear is domestic enemies and hazards. For the rival factions fear is provoked by the potential prevalence of one or the other (4.71.1), as for the democratic faction their losing power to the oligarchic (3.75.5) or the eruption of violence (3.93.2), and the attempt to impose tyranny (6.15.4). For the Spartans, especially, the permanent fear was a possible revolt of helots and the reversal of their regime.[73]

Functions of Fear

Fear permeates people, operates in their thinking, affects them, and produces effects, leading them to a range of behaviors. These I distinguish in two categories: the phobic behaviors, that is, those which testify retreat to fear, and the active, those expressing the reaction of men or entities to fear. I present them in order of the degree of reaction, to the one or the other direction, from the mildest to the most intense.

Retreat to Fear

First among those behaviors in which there is retreat to fear is the neutralization of the people and of their intellectual function, of their thinking: "fear paralyzes thought" (2.87.4). This leads to indecision, postponement of decisions or their non-execution; "we draw up the plans when we are safe, but we are undermining their execution by fear" (1.120.5), say the Corinthians to the conference of the Peloponnesians; and the Spartans, while "examining the case of campaigning against Athens, were hesitant . . . , and were considering the risks" (6.93.1). Fear also leads to confusion (7.80.3), to diminished self-confidence (4.55.4, 4.56.1), to increased insecurity (8.1.2), and to mistaken calculations, as the Athenians did after their defeat in Eretria, Euboea (411 BC), very close to Athens: "they thought that the enemy is arriving (in Athens) from one moment to the other" (8.96.3).

The second and associated negative consequence is observed in the freedom of expression and action, which are ensured by "sober" systems of government (8.64.5) or a calm international environment. However, in times of a deteriorated political climate and populism, of internal or external instability and of tension, freedom suffers. Among the first to be silenced by the fear of personal consequences are politicians, precisely those who should be able to properly advise the people (3.42.4, 6.24.4). This situation is exacerbated when the city is occupied by an external enemy or controlled by tyrants (8.66.2, 8.92.11).

The third consequence is the retreat of the party that is afraid and the acceptance of negotiations with the opponents. This may initially mean simply starting the conversations (3.80.1, 4.66.3), but it may also mean the direct acceptance of the opponent's proposals; the Athenians accepted the proposals of the Mytilineans, in the very beginning of the insurgency, "because they too feared that they were not able to fight against the whole of Lesbos" (3.4.3).

Fourth negative behavior provoked by fear is the disorderly retreat in the battlefield, the flight. Fear dominates the army, the soldiers panic, and leave their positions inadvertently; "fear drove" the Peloponnesians "to fly, as did most of their army" when the Acarnanes attacked them from behind (3.108.1); and when the Athenians entered the city of Megara (424 BC) "from the guards, few resisted at first . . . , but most of them feared and fled" (4.68.2).

Finally, fear is a powerful tool to scare others and, as a result, to lead those who fear to tradition[74] or to submission. According to Thucydides, the various rulers of Greece followed Agamemnon to Troy "not because of favor but because of fear" (1.9.3); the Mytilineans, addressing the Peloponnesian assembly, described their relation with the Athenians as a relation of fear: "the faith which toward others is guaranteed mainly by positive feelings, on us was imposed by fear, and by fear rather than by friendship we were allies"

(3.12.1); and tyrant Hippias (527-510 BC) was able to impose his rule "very easily" on the Athenians "because the citizens were used beforehand to fearing him" (6.55.3). Indeed, fear exerted by the powerful can work and bring its effects from a distance, protecting the interests of the powerful and its allies, and, in particular, limiting the action of their opponents. It is an operation, quite widespread throughout the centuries and known since the antiquity, as the text demonstrates:

> because everyone, in every place, even where we are not present, both the one who thinks he will be wronged and the one who thinks to offend, because the first rightly hopes to be helped by us and the other is afraid that, if we are involved, his operation will become dangerous, both are forced, the one unwillingly to hold back, and the other to be saved without even trying. (6.87.4)

In any case, whether from close or from a distance, contemporary International Relations record the policies of retreat as a consequence of fear, and among them the policy of appeasement from one state to another.[75] This is a policy that, at best, deliberately seeks to gain time. But it is usually due to the fear of coping with the opponent and rests on the hope that his appeasement will prevent bigger evil. The history of the twentieth century bequeathed the term "Munich" to political terminology, as the example of a policy of retreat by European leaders toward Hitler in their meeting in Munich (1938), because of their fear to assume responsibility of action against him. This soothing compromise had the effect of encouraging Hitler's conquest plans.[76]

Reaction to Fear

In the second category, that of reacting to fear, the mild forms are those associated with prudent behavior and reflection on how to react with sobriety; this is what the Syracusan general Hermocrates considers, leading his people to what he qualifies a "good" decision-making («εὖ βουλευομένοις»): "as, because of the uncertainty, we fear equally, we enter a conflict only after much thinking" (4.62.4). This reaction is rather rare and Thucydides attributes it to the quality of citizens and of the democratic system, when he presents the Athenians' reaction to the catastrophe of their army in Sicily: "the fear of the conjuncture, as is usually the case in democracies, turned them to a prudent conduct" (8.1.4). Relevant, and inextricably linked to the purpose of survival and of a successful reaction, is also the secrecy of thought and of action, as in the case of the Macedonian king Perdiccas, who "out of fear was working secretly" to bring Spartans to war against the Athenians (1.57.4).

A second form of reaction to fear and to the danger that fear is likely to cause, is the rallying of those who are afraid or feel threatened. Thucydides, apart from the interest, considers the opponent's fear as the main cause of

alliance formation in general (3.101.2). It is also the main cause of the Peloponnesians allying against the Spartans (5.29.1) or one of the two causes of the Hellenes' alliance against the Athenians (1.123.1), as well as the uniting of the Sicilians that led to the Athenians' destruction there: "those who campaign (from far) can never be more than their opponents and their neighbors, who are all united by fear" (6.33.5). In addition, the fear of the opponent also contributes to strengthening and maintaining existing alliances; "the fear of the adversary secures faith to the alliance" (3.11.2) states Thucydides. The citizens of Amphipolis maintained their alliance with the Lacedaemonians "for fear of the Athenians" (5.11.1), and some cities of Sicily were "still faithful" to the Athenians, even after their failure, "out of the fear of Syracuse" (7.77.6).[77]

The next form of reaction is to take initiatives, measures, and action. Unlike the paralysis of thought and silence in the face of fear, an energetic reaction is to discuss possible moves; "the moment the city is in danger, I will not stay silent" (6.33.1), says Hermocrates to his compatriots. Another, usual for centuries, reaction is to prepare to face the danger and safeguard the defense of the state (city); Hermocrates again thinks that "preparations you make because of the fear of danger is the most useful that may happen" (6.34.9). And, under extraordinary circumstances, extraordinary measures are taken to overcome any existing obstacles, as in the case of the Athenians after the Sicilian disaster:

> under the state of fear, they have immediately abolished the penalties prescribed by the law against him who would or would have put to vote a proposal to use the thousand talents, which with great persistence kept intact throughout the war, and voted to use them in order to equip many ships. (8.15.1)[78]

Finally, the fourth group or type of reaction is violent behavior. At the individual level, fear causes instinctive and foolish reactions on the part of the one who is afraid (6.59.1), causes acts of intimidation toward those defined as the cause of fear (6.59.2), or may attempt to produce fear aiming to cover up their own, as Athenagoras the Syracusan accuses Hermocrates in their debate: "those who, for their own reasons, are afraid, want to make the city afraid in order to disguise theirs under the general fear" (6.3.2). As to the level of collective entities, cities, or states, fear is causing war; after all, the fear of the greatness of Athens and its possible increase is at the epicenter of the "truest cause" of the war (1.23.6, 1.88).[79]

The Use and Management of Fear

From the preceding study of the causes and the functions of fear, it appears that fear was used by warring sides as a form of action against the opponent;

this is somehow what is currently known as psychological operations. It is logical, if one knows what is causing fear and the possible reactions to it, to also know that, by causing a specific type of fear, he will get specific reactions. The Corinthians, in order to prevent the alliance of the Athenians with the Corcyraeans, warn the former that the latter are provoking fear to them by invoking the prospect of war, in order to lead them into "unfair" acts against the Corinthians (1.42.2). The Athenian generals, seeking the tradition of the Melians, warn them of the suffering they will undergo if they do not surrender (5.103). Nicias, wanting to block the decision to campaign against Sicily and knowing how fear is created and operates, advises that the Greeks of Sicily would be more afraid of them if they did not go there (6.11.4). Finally, Alcibiades suggests that the Spartans build a fortress in Decelea, within Attica, which, as he claims, the Athenians have always been afraid and was the only evil of the war they had not experienced; and he adds: "the surest way for one to hurt his enemies is to find out exactly what they are most afraid of, and . . . do it" (6.91.6).

Knowledge existed also about the limits of fear. Starting from the qualitative hierarchy that Thucydides makes between fear and interest (4.59.2), it is clear that the first limit to fear is interest. Fear cannot prevent or contain behaviors, even war, if the anticipated benefits are expected to be greater than the cost that any decision or action may cause. The second limit to fear is the lack of morals, the despair, and the certainty of impunity, factors that emerged during the civil conflicts and were accumulated in the case of the plague of Athens:

> There was no fear of gods or any law of men to restrain them, on the one hand, because they concluded, seeing that they were all going to perish without exception, that it was the same to show respect or not, on the other, because no one expected he would live until he put to trial and punished for his lawlessness. (2.53.4)

A limit to fear is also the familiarity with the risk that causes it, resulting in its limitation and the possible ability to manage it. Everything that is known, ordinary, or close to the deciding person, is causing less or no fear than what is unknown and distant. If this is combined with the nonoccurrence of the risk, fear can be overcome and even lead to the contempt of the opponent. This is precisely described as having happened with the Athenians who attacked in Sphacteria the Spartans, whose reputation as capable warriors was the greatest possible and who initially appeared as being able to overturn the attackers' numerical supremacy:

> The Athenians had taken courage, more from their obvious numerical superiority, and because they had become accustomed to no longer see their opponents

> as awesome as before, because they had not suffered any losses from the very beginning as they expected . . . and their morale was (initially) low as they would be facing the Lacedaemonians, then, with contempt . . . they charged against them. (4.34.1)[80]

Within this framework, formed by the causes, function, and limits of fear, one has to look at the efforts to manage fear that Thucydides mentions. These are found in the leaders' speeches before the crucial decisions for peace or war and, more so, before the beginning of the battle, in order to encourage soldiers. A common feature of all is the management of fear with reason and the appeal to those present to deal with it.

Management starts with the denial of fear, even rhetoric. These are the cases of Cleon, who publicly stated that he is not afraid of the Lacedaemonians (4.28.4), but also of Alcibiades, who, perceiving the fear of the Athenians to trust him because of his age and their trust in the elderly Nicias, tried to compensate or neutralize their fear by appealing to interest, suggesting them to use both "in their own interest" (6.17.1).

A second step in the effort to tackle fear is discussion on possible reactions on a pragmatic basis. The logic of this approach accepts that those involved are in a state of emergency, the danger is the one that is, and there is no choice but to be dealt with, without error on their part (6.79.3), without very long consideration, instinctively perhaps, with determination and speed:

> no one at this critical moment should want to appear wise, considering the great danger that surrounds us; instead, he must confront the enemy both with hope and recklessness, believing that he will win in such a struggle; because in situations of necessity, such as this, every calculation is vain, and what is needed is to deal fast with the danger. (4.10.1)

The next step in the management of fear is to question the danger that causes fear, and indirectly its devaluation (6.33.4). If this is not enough, then an indirect denunciation of those who are afraid may follow or even a public appeal to the courage of those involved, as it is difficult for anyone to state publicly that he is afraid; this is what Gylippus does in order to encourage his men before the battle against the Athenians and their allies (413 BC): "nor the multitude of their ships will benefit them if none of you are afraid, because they will not combat with equal strength" (7.67.3). To the above, and in order to even alleviate fear, a reference may be added as to the fact that the opponent—indeed each opponent—is also afraid, and perhaps even more; Phormion, leading the Athenian navy against the Spartans at Naupactus (429 BC), is using this argument: "on the contrary, they are more afraid than you and justifiably so . . . because you defeated them beforehand and because they believed that you would not resist" (2.89.5).

Analyzing the situation, presenting the power correlation, or the extensive discussion of the causes of a failure or defeat is another fear management tactic that aims to rationalize fear. With a similar analysis of the causes of defeat, the Peloponnesian leaders tried to encourage their soldiers for the final phase of the Battle of Naupactus, considering their fear for the approaching battle unjustified; they made reference to their previous lack of preparation, their inexperience at sea, the lessons they learned from their mistakes, their bad luck, they announced the punishment of the cowards and the reward of brave, and they concluded:

> we have not, therefore, been defeated by our own lack of courage, and it is not right that the spirit that has not been defeated by the power, and which preserves in it the strength to strike back, to weaken because of a failure; on the contrary you have to think that people may suffer failures due to changes of fortune. (2.87.3)

Pericles is also included to those who adopted the tactic of encouragement and applied it when needed (2.65.9), in order to elevate the morale of his fellow citizens. Upon this logic are built his very important prewar and wartime orations, either by presenting and explaining the Athenian strategy and its sources of power (1.140, 2.13), or by praising the city (in the Funeral Oration) as a whole (2.35).

Finally, the role of a positive experience, such as a small military success, is also recorded in the text; Thucydides refers to the Athenians whose small fleet managed to defeat the Spartans, just outside Abydos (411 BC):

> This victory . . . came at the most appropriate moment. Because, until then, they were afraid of the Peloponnesian fleet, owing to their repeated small failures and their great destruction in Sicily; now they were relieved of blaming themselves and of considering their enemies more worthy in naval affairs. (8.106.1-2)

This means that Thucydides has detected this phenomenon or tactic, which does not seem to have been followed by the political and military leaders of his time, as nowhere else in the text the pursuit of small military or other successes, aimed at reducing fear and strengthening the morale of the soldiers, can be traced.[81]

Fear and the "Truest Cause"

Fear quantitatively constitutes the majority cause of the explained decision-making cases in Thucydides' work and it could not be otherwise. Thucydides is not assuming fear, as Hobbes did later. He is presenting and analyzing the war, and war has never been a happy enterprise; thus, diminishing the role of fear in his text would have made his work, perhaps, less close to reality and

less credible. Moreover, he is also presenting the concept of fear, its results, its function, and the ways people then understood its management; fear is omnipresent but not omnipotent.

Thucydides offers to fear a rather more prominent role than to the other members of the triad, by inserting it in the "truest cause" explanation. Why fear has deserved such a prominence? Indeed, the Spartans were facing the Athenians' greatness. But, if the most important fear results out of the danger for the city's survival and its freedom, no one may credibly argue that at that time the Spartans' independence was at stake, as it could have been, for example, during the Persian wars. Spartans at the time of the war's outbreak were a well respected land power. Moreover, it is not credible to argue that the Spartans' security interests were vitally harmed either by the Athenian-Corcyraean alliance or by the operations against Potidaea, which was a member of the Athenian alliance. What one may possibly think is that it was the Corinthians' interests that were harmed, and the Corinthians were trying to protect them by all means, including bringing the Spartans to war against the Athenians.

What happened is that during the period preceding the war, given the conflicts on Corcyra and Potidaea, the debates and the role of their Peloponnesian allies, particularly the Corinthians, the Spartans' perception of threat had increased: they voted to go to war "not so much" because they were convinced by their allies, but "more" because "they feared" that the Athenians, who "controlled most of Greece," "would increase their power even more" (1.88). Thus the increase of the threat's perception increased their fears, made the Spartans more receptive to arguments of interest, and altogether to the perception of a necessity to go to war, at that moment. Seen under this light, verse 1.23.6, presenting the "truest cause," could be considered as a succinct and initial explanation of the developments he was going to present.

What has also happened is that the crisis management undertaken by the king, in order to stop the precipitation to war, has failed. Unfortunately, Archidamus made the wrong choices for his speech; he was trying to manage the possible fears of the Spartans and their interests by appealing to wisdom and the values of their ancestors (1.85.1), while Sthenelaidas was increasing fear, was bringing interest into play, but mostly he aimed, as earlier the Corinthians, at the honor of his compatriots. And by appealing to honor, he won the vote to go to war.

HONOR AND SHAME

The pursuit, creation, preservation, and management of honor («τιμή»), what in the present day is understood as the sense of glory, recognition,

appreciation, positive reputation (prestige), admiration or, even, the attempt to avoid contempt, negative reputation, and disdain from others, is, according to Thucydides,[82] the third most important decision-making motivation of people and cities (entities) after interest and fear. The concept of honor, as contained in seven ancient Greek words, «τιμή» (honor), «δόξα» (reputation, glory),[83] «καλόν» (good, goodness), «φιλοτιμία» and «φιλότιμον» (love of honor and good will), «ἀξίωσις» (respect), «ἀκοή» (reputation), is found in sixty-two cases throughout the text of *The War*, and in twenty-six among them is the reason for decisions and actions.[84]

Often, however, an incentive for a decision is not the willingness to acquire glory or to be honored, but also to avoid "shame," not to be ashamed. The combination of the two, namely to avoid shame and obtain honor, has a multiplier effect in favor of the decision, as in the case of 1.5.1, where it is specifically explained that people were undertaking acts "because such acts did not bring shame, but some glory." Throughout the text, forty-eight references to the concept of "shame" were recorded, expressed by nouns such as «αἰσχύνη» (shame), «ὄνειδος» (disgrace), «κακότης» (malice), «ὕβρις» (hubris), «δύσκλεια» (inglorіousness, ill-fame, infamy), or by adjectives such «αἰσχρόν» (obscene, shameful), «ἀλγεινόν» (painful, shameful), and by their derivative verbs. In eleven of these cases avoiding shame is the cause of the decision.

Honor and shame are the two sides of the same coin. That is why in this section I will examine both subsequently as the cause of decisions. It is understood that what is considered honor or shame varies from one era to the next, from one group of people to another, and, of course, from one person to the other.

Honor

According to Thucydides, honor is one of the three great motivations for the Athenians to take over and preserve hegemony (1.75.3, 1.76.2). The honor of the city was also one of the major causes for the Syracusans' decision to resist and try to defeat the Athenian rulers:

> They believed . . . that if they managed to defeat the Athenians and their allies . . . their success would be considered glorious by the Greeks; for immediately, others would be freed from the slavery of the Athenians, others from their fear . . . and because all these would be attributed to the Syracusans, they would be greatly admired by both their contemporaries and the generations to come. (7.56.2)

The love for honor and ambitions is attributed mainly to persons and knows no limits, surpassing in some cases even the motivation of interest: "because only the love of honors never ages, and when one reaches the idle period of

life, it is not profit, as some say, but honors that please the most" (2.44.4). People are influenced by the pursuit of honor, which is leading them to act accordingly. This is why various leaders invoke it either in order to increase their men's urge to fight while in battle (7.71.1) or in order to mobilize them; thus, during the battle with the Athenians, the officers of the Syracusans and of their allies "shouted to their men that they would do a great accomplishment if they prevented the enemy from escaping, and each one, with their victory, would contribute to the greatness of his homeland" (7.70.7). Leaders refer also to glory in order to push others (8.12.2) or to persuade them to pursue their own goals or aspirations. Archidamus invokes honor when addressing the allies, saying that they should not appear to be worst of their fathers nor inferior to their reputation, that the whole of Greece is excited by their undertaking and has turned its attention to them (2.11.2); while, later, in the negotiations that followed their defeat at Sphacteria, the Spartans invoke honor and try to convince the Athenians to accept the peace deal they are proposing by saying: "you may safely leave the reputation of your power and of your wit into the future" (4.18.5).

In many cases, however, the love for glory, the ambition, leads to mistaken decisions and policies, with a corresponding and consequent cost. Ambition is one of the main reasons that led cities into the long and destructive war, as they "thought it would be honorable . . . to participate" (8.2.1). It has also led to civil conflicts, as stated eloquently in 3.82.8: "the cause of all this was the greed for power and ambition; it is from these two that the willingness of each side to prevail in the conflict is created." Finally, the "excessive ambition of those imposing oligarchic regimes," triggering the citizens reactions, is identified by Thucydides as the reason why these regimes "are led to their collapse" (8.89.3).

The thirst for power and the relative ambition obviously leads decision-makers as well. Thucydides underlines the fact that the ambitions of Pericles' successors led them to policies that if were successful would bring honor (and profits) for them, but in case of failure they would be damaging to the city (2.65.7). For the same reason, his successors adopted what we now call populist policies, namely "to retreat to and to please the people, even in the city's matters" (2.65.10). This was the cause of many mistakes in the Sicilian expedition, which failed mainly "because those who sent it, in their later decisions, did not take into account the interests of those who were in the campaign, but with the intrigues for the leadership of the city . . . they weakened it . . . and they struggled with each other" (2.65.11).

Due to the glory he was obtaining in the battlefield, the Spartan general Brasidas was opposed to the making of peace (5.16.1), Gylippus, another Spartan, was opposed to the execution of the captured Nicias and Demosthenes, after their defeat in Sicily, as, for his personal glory, he wanted

to carry them as prisoners to Sparta (7.86.2), and Alcibiades, the most well-known example, by egoism and ambition was in favor of the Sicilian expedition:

> Alcibiades, . . ., was pushing to campaign with great zeal, both because he wanted to oppose Nicias, as he disagreed politically with him, and because Nicias in his speech had attacked him personally, but, above all, because he wanted to take over the generalship and hoped that being a general he would conquer Sicily and Carthage, and at the same time, if he succeeded, he would personally benefit money and glory. (6.15.2)

When discussing Alcibiades' behavior, Thucydides criticizes those who decide with their ambition as their single criterion. Nicias accuses Alcibiades for being in favor of the campaign in Sicily because "he seeks only his own interest . . . to be admired for his horses and to . . . cover the expenses of his luxurious life" and warns that "such people are harming the city" (6.12.2).

The Function of Honor

Cities and people possess and radiate or emit to others their own glory, reputation, or prestige, and others understand it as such. Positive reputation works in favor of the cities having it, as Pericles recognizes in the Funeral Oration, creating a power factor for them. It also works in favor of persons, as in Themistocles' example, who, when persecuted from Athens, fled to the court of the Persian king, where he gained "a very important position . . . also because of his former reputation" (1.138.2).

Glory, the positive reputation, in a particular subject, is sought or is created. It is sought, as in the case of the Lacedaemonians, who above all sought "the reputation of bravery" (6.11.6). It is created when someone succeeds or excels in a field, as, again, the Lacedaemonians who "were very well known as a paramount land power for their powerful infantry," while the Athenians "as maritime power for the great supremacy of their fleet" (4.12.3).

Third parties operate on the basis of the reputation of those with which they interact, and demands or pressures are created so as to respond to the rumored behavior. This, according to Pericles, was valid and worked positively for the Athenians, who proved to be "superior to their reputation," and, thus, neither the enemies believed that were ruled by someone insignificant nor the allies thought that their leaders were unworthy (2.41.3). On the contrary, the inconsistency of reality in relation to expectations creates problems and leads to the wrong decisions of those who rely on a belied reputation. This is what the Corinthians, criticizing the Spartans, point out to them: "although it was said that you are people to whom one can rely, this reputation outweighed

reality" (1.69.5). Something similar happened when the Athenians and other warring cities did not expect and did not hope that the Spartans, on the basis of the existing reputation, would surrender in Sphacteria: "no fact of the war was more unexpected than that to the Greeks because they all expected the Lacedaemonians not to surrender either by hunger or by any other need, but to die . . . fighting . . . . They did not believe that those who had surrendered their weapons were men similar to those who had died" (4.40.1-2).

But honor has also its costs. It causes decisions of third parties, who react on the basis of their envy toward those who have it. Thucydides, through Pericles in the Funeral Oration, warns that hatred and rivalry are expected toward the glorious, and especially when honor or glory is considered unjustified or the result of vanity:

> But since you are citizens of a great city and you have been brought up in ways worthy of it, you have the debt both the greatest misfortunes willingly to endure and your reputation not to destroy (because people think it equally fair to criticize the one who by cowardice proves to be inferior to his reputation and to hate the one who by insolence desires to have a reputation to which he does not live up to) and . . . devote yourselves to the effort to save the city. (2.61.4)

Moreover, again in the Funeral Oration, he points to the Athenians that it is worth the necessary cost:

> To be hated and be disdainful in the present circumstances has been the fate of all those who have sought to lead others; whoever endures envy for the greatest aspirations is rightly thinking. Because hate does not last long, while the splendor of the present is transferred as a glorious honor into the future. You, then, foresee for the glory of the future and avoid shame in the present, and, with your courage today, obtain both. (2.64.5-6)

The Management of Honor

Reputation precedes its owner and, depending on its content, works positively or negatively for him. The positive reputation of General Gylippus in Sicily has worked in favor of him and of Sparta, as, due to his arrival, the cities of Sicily were "ready with much more willingness to ally with them . . . , and because it was obvious that Gylippus had come . . . to take over with zeal" (7.1.4). On the contrary, when bad reputation precedes a person, then problems arise and his efforts are negatively influenced, as in the case of Alcibiades when, at the last phase of the war, he tried to undermine the general leading the Athenian army in the island of Samos. The soldiers, however, considered that "Alcibiades was not credible, but, knowing in advance the plans of the enemies, he wanted, because of enmity toward Phrynichus,

to make him appear as an accomplice to these plans and, for this reason (not being credible), his letter not only did not harm Phrynichus, but on the contrary it has strengthened him" (8.51.3).

Cities and men are trying to protect their honor, their reputation or their prestige, which can be preserved for as long as it is not put in doubt by reality. This is the logic of General Nicias when, trying to prevent the campaign in Sicily, he introduced into the discussion the criterion of preserving the prestige of Athens. "We all know that those that are far and those whose reputation has barely been tested are admired more" (6.11.4), he said.

Preserving the prestige, especially of a ruling power, may function as the accelerator of a decision, occasionally of a harsh one. This was part of the Athenian rationale in their decision to take over Melos; addressing the Melians, they underlined the importance of how other cities would perceive a decision not to attack Melos:

> Those who maintain their freedom . . . think that they owe it to their power and that we do not attack them because of fear; therefore, us destroying you not only would have extended our hegemony but would have also provided security, as you, who are also islanders and weaker than others, you have not been able to confront us who are mastering the sea. (5.97.1)

A similar concern is expressed by a Spartan, General Brasidas, who is trying to avoid the negative impact to his prestige. Worried that his attitude may create doubts as to his true aims, abilities, and strength, the general presents this particular concern as the motivation for his decision to press the Acanthians to join the Peloponnesian alliance:

> Because it is not only that you resist, but that to anyone else I turn, they will show even less willingness to be on my side, because they will hesitate, since you, to whom I first came . . . have refused to accept me. And it will be considered that the cause I came about is not true, but either the freedom I am offering you is deceptive or that I have come here while I am incapable and powerless to defend you against the Athenians. (4.85.6-7)

Preserving the prestige has been also the motive earlier for the Athenians, who, when they understood that the Spartans were preparing to attack them with the navy "because they considered them weak," prepared an additional fleet, wanting "to prove to them that they have misjudged (them) and that they were able, without moving their navy which was sent against Lesbos, to easily repel the threatened naval attack by the Peloponnese" (3.16.1).[85]

Last but not least, avoiding the negative reputation is crucial for the projection of the will of the one who decides toward the one who will decide according to the behavior of the former. This is, essentially, the logic of the

opponent's deterrence, a prerequisite for the operation of which is the credible projection of the deterrent's determination:

> If you retreat, you will be immediately ordered something bigger, because they will feel that you have succumbed from fear to the first; but if you refuse, you will make them understand that they should rather treat you as equal to equal (1.140.5); and, do not send any more emissaries . . . for peace and do not show publicly that the current disasters are a burden to you; because those who in disasters bend little and during the action show that they endure, they, whether it is about cities or people, are stronger. (2.64.6)

Shame

Shame, the opposite of glory, is found at the other end of the spectrum. For someone, a man or a city, to avoid shame or to react because he has already suffered it, is a motivation for decision-making. This logic has been preserved to this day, of course in various ways in different societies, depending on their evolution.

At the time of Thucydides, cowardice in the battle, retreat in front of the opponent, or not fighting for the freedom of the city bring shame (2.61.1). This is known to have been particularly true for the Spartans, who, according to the laws of their city, preferred to die rather than abandon their weapons and run in order to save their lives. It was mainly expressed in the famous saying of the Spartan mothers when they were giving the shields to their sons "with it or on it" («ἢ τάν ἢ ἐπί τᾶς»), but also in the epigraph on the tombstone for the "300" at Thermopylae: "go tell the Lacedaemonians, stranger passing by, that here, obedient to their laws, we lie." Of the same spirit is the instruction given to the besieged Spartans in Sphacteria (425 BC): "you, alone decide for yourselves, without doing anything dishonorable" (4.38.3).[86] The idea of shame due to cowardice or retreat in the face of the enemy existed for the citizens of other cities too, as Pericles' view, expressed in the Funeral Oration, testifies, that "for a sensible man, humiliation caused by cowardice is much more painful than death" (2.43.6).

Avoiding shame is a reason for cities or human entities to decide. The Athenian soldiers in the battles "chose to fight and die rather than save themselves by retreating, avoiding the shame to call them cowards" (2.42.4). And the Melians decide not to submit to the Athenians because they would show "great immorality and cowardice" if they did not attempt everything in order not to become slaves (5.100.1).

Shame, that has already been caused, is another reason for decision-making. Such decision-making involves or leads to reaction, with the aim of eliminating shame and restoring honor. The Athenians abandoned the alliance with

the Spartans and allied themselves with the Argives because "they felt that the offense was heavy and that they did not deserve such behavior from the Lacedaemonians" (1.102.4). The Corinthian soldiers, on the other hand, after preparation, returned to the battlefield to set up a trophy, "because the city's elders accused them of cowardice" (1.105.6).

What applies to cities applies to men, both in their private and public life. In the private sphere, Thucydides mentions as the cause of the tyrant's murder the feeling of an important offense to the person of one of the perpetrators (6.57.3), and with the aim to "rinse" the personal shame. In the sphere of politics, the example is Alcibiades' reaction to the peace effort between Athens and Sparta. He opposed the treaty for personal reasons, according to Thucydides, because the Lacedaemonians had negotiated the peace treaty with Nicias and Lachis, "underestimating him" and "not honoring him as appropriate to him"; thus, "considering that he had been diminished in many aspects, he was from the beginning opposed to the conclusion of peace" (5.43.2-3). This explanation is confessed by him to the Spartans when, after fleeing Athens, he goes to them and says: "you negotiated it (the treaty) through my enemies and so you strengthened them and you disgraced me. That is why I was justly harming you" (6.89.3).

As in the case of honor, shame is used in the context of deliberations as a tool of pressure or motivation toward a specific decision. It is used by the Corinthians to force the Spartans to declare war against the Athenians; they argue that if the Peloponnesians did not go to war against the Athenians, then the other Greeks would say that the Peloponnesians "tolerate" their behavior "out of cowardice" and that they would prove themselves "inferior" to their fathers, who liberated Greece, while they are "incapable even to ensure their own freedom" (1.122.3). It is used by the Plataeans, in order to obtain a favorable verdict in the trial that they were brought to by the Peloponnesians, after the conquest of their city (427 BC); they argue that the Spartans, by sparing them and their city, they will "ensure" their "gratitude" which will "honor" them, as compared to the one of the Thebans which will "shame" them, and they will avoid the "bad reputation just to please others"; because "it is easy to take our lives, but it is difficult to eliminate the shame of this act" (3.58.1-2). It is also used by Alcibiades, who, in order to motivate his troops when arrived in Sicily (415 BC), argued that the Athenians, who had come in Sicily with such a great force, would be ashamed if they returned to Athens without accomplishing their mission (6.48.1).

From these generalizations, formulated for the sake of argument during the orations, results a series of views on what is shame in the time of Thucydides or for himself. Some may be gleaned as examples: it is not a shame to admit that one is poor, but not to try with acts to overcome it (2.40.1); it is more shameful for someone to lose something he possesses than to fail to obtain

it (2.62 .3) or not to give something upon request than not to receive when he requested it (2.97.4); it is a shame for someone to betray his benefactors (3.63.3) or not to repay the favors he has enjoyed (3.63.4).

In the famous Melian Dialogue, however, shame as a cause or a motive of decision-making is questioned, both in its essence and in its content. The Melians put forward two arguments, refusing to capitulate to the Athenians. The first is that the Lacedaemonians will come to their rescue "out of affinity and shame" (5.104.1). The second is that it would be a great shame if they did not do everything not to become slaves (5.100.1). For their part, the Athenians are sharply rejecting their first argument, that is, that shame will serve as a criterion for the Spartans' decision to send help, and indeed they call Melians naïf and insane (5.105.3). As to the second argument, they consider, just as in the case of their debate on the value of law, that shame may be important between those that are equal in power, and call upon them to decide wisely, at a moment when they will have to decide on their salvation (5.101.1). The two arguments of the Athenians, as well as the questioning of the significance of shame as a decision-making criterion, are condensed in the following verses:

> do not think of the shame that so often destroys people when they face humiliating and manifest dangers. For many, while still able to see clearly where they were driven, were carried by the so-called shame, by the inducing power of its name, and, defeated by the word, they voluntarily fell into untold misfortune and into even more embarrassing humiliation, more from foolishness than from chance. This you will avoid if you decide correctly and if you think it is not shameful to succumb to the strongest city that offers you moderate terms. (5.111.3–4)

A corresponding reasoning questioning shame as the right incentive for a decision to be made is also formulated by Phrynichus, who was pressured by the other generals to engage in a battle with the enemy fleet at a time he did not consider appropriate. He states, first of all, that he will not risk recklessly a battle out of fear of being considered coward (8.27.2), and, next, that it is no shame for the Athenians to retreat when it is imposed by the circumstances; because it would be more shameful to be defeated and, then, Athens not only would be ashamed, but, worse, it would be at risk (8.27.3).

The Decision to Fight the War

Honor is a factor that has been brought in the discussion by the Athenians addressing the Spartans. For them it was also a matter of honor to take over the leadership of the Hellenes and to maintain it. Yet honor, as interest earlier,

is not mentioned by Thucydides in the "truest cause," and the question is whether it played a role in the outbreak of the war or in other cases during the war. The answer again is clearly positive for the Athenians, the Corinthians or, later, for the Plataeans, the Melians, and the Syracusans. But, what about the Spartans, were they influenced by honor or shame?

Thucydides does not mention anything about honor in 1.23.6, 1.88, and 1.118.2. Yet, honor is there, present in the deliberations. It was the Corinthians who criticized the Spartans, to the level of provocation, on the grounds of honor. Addressing all Spartans in the Apella, before the determinant intervention of Sthenelaidas and their first decision for war (1.88), they told them that their "reputation outweighed reality" (1.69.5); and, next, they compared them with the Athenians, and the comparison was not very flattering: the Athenians take risks and aim above their strength, while the Spartans below their capabilities; they are decisive while the Spartans indecisive; expansive while the Spartans retrench themselves; when the Athenians win they get the most, while when defeated they concede the less; and they went on praising the Athenians' behavior and strategies, while criticizing the Spartans'.[87]

All this was said in public and the Corinthians were not addressing just the leaders. They were obviously addressing the average Spartan present, who, later, was going to vote. And, thus, they prepared the ground for Sthenelaidas, as Archidamus, who preceded him, despite his effort to address the issue of honor indirectly, did not succeed. Sthenelaidas, cleverly, did not refer directly to honor; if he was doing this, it would be like questioning Archidamus' or his compatriots' honor. Instead he did two other things. First, at the end of his crucial intervention, he invited his compatriots "to vote for war" as it is "worthy of Sparta" («ἀξίως της Σπάρτης») and in order not to "betray" their allies (1.86.5); which meant that those who would vote against were not worthy Spartans and they would be committing betrayal. Second, manipulating their sense of honor, he asked those in favor to stand on the one side, and those against on the other; and those who thought that the peace treaty was broken by the Athenians and, thus, they would go to war, were "many more" (1.87.3).

Finally, honor was also indirectly involved in the "greatest" excuse (1.126.1), the necessary pretext for the Spartans to start the war.[88] The Spartans, aiming at avoiding the accusation of not respecting the treaties and at accusing Pericles for the war (1.127), asked from the Athenians to purify the Cylonian «ἄγος» ("curse"), which, conceptually, included an offense against the honor of the gods and shame for the people (1.126). And, the Athenians responded by asking them to purify two other "curses," those of Tainaron (1.128) and of Pausanias (1.129-134).[89]

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the first schema of Thucydides' multicausal thinking on decision-making. His schema of decision-making is built on two fundamental causes: necessity, which often results out of external factors, and human nature, a purely subjective factor, the two either acting together, possibly with different intensity, or on their own. Together with these two causes, human behavior or decisions may be affected by the other three "greatest" causes, interest, fear, and honor—again by all of them or separately.

The specific factors which, according to a first reading of verses 1.75.3 and 1.76.2 influence decisions, particularly those related to power, were exhaustively presented and analyzed exclusively on the basis of Thucydides' text. An effort was made to look for and highlight first the nature of these factors, secondly the causes that create them in the minds and souls of people, thirdly how these factors work and affect human behavior and decisions, and, finally, something practically useful, as in the case of fear and honor, the possible ways to manage and deal with them.

Moreover, apart from the full presentation of the specific factors of decision-making, what is also revealed by Thucydides is when human nature, the satisfaction of interest, fear, and the pursuit of honor lead to erroneous decisions. It could be argued that, in addition to the weaknesses of human nature, which Thucydides does not consider "bad" under all circumstances, the common denominator of making wrong decisions is the exaggeration, that is, in simple terms, the insatiable desire to satisfy the interest, the uncontrolled fear, the excessive ambition. This is a situation in ancient Greek logic that constitutes hubris and which, according to Jacqueline de Romilly, on the one hand, permeates all Thucydides' work and, on the other, explains in general the attitude of the Athenians during the war.

Last but not least, in the cases where necessity, interest, or fear result out of external factors or pressures, their impact depends on the circumstances (i.e., war, peace, hegemony) and their reception by the decision-makers—people whose nature is also influenced (negatively) by the same circumstances. In the overwhelming majority of cases the influence of these factors depends on their understanding by the actors, individuals, or entities, and shape their decision-making or behavior, accordingly. This was shown especially in relation to what has been known as the "truest cause" of the war, by pointing out the complementarity of this cause with necessity, human nature, interest, and honor, and demonstrating how the decision-making process has led to war.

In fact, what the present holistic analysis has shown is that besides fear and necessity (mentioned in 1.23.6), the other factors, that is, human nature, interest, and honor, were in play—not with an equal preponderance—during

the decision-making process which led to war. The Athenians' greatness was there; yet, the why and when the Spartans felt it as a threat to be feared, to be harming their interests and their honor, and to end up considering it as a necessity to go to war, this was shown to be a matter of the decision-making process. This, in its turn, may confirm the corollary observation that the Thucydidean world, with just very few exceptions, is neither deterministic nor a neorealist world; it is a world of men who make the right or the wrong decisions by themselves. And it also confirms Kagan's view that

> the Peloponnesian War was not caused by impersonal forces, unless anger, fear, undue optimism, stubbornness, jealousy, bad judgment, and lack of foresight are impersonal forces. It was caused by men who made bad decisions in difficult circumstances. Neither the circumstances nor the decisions were inevitable.[90]

Thucydides' specific understanding of the relationship between human decisions and power, as revealed by the analysis of each factor, may present some aspects of why people may be led to erroneous decisions, but it does not focus and does not express his main view on why people make mistakes and are driven, as persons or as entities, to take risks and make mistakes. This is the subject of the next chapter, where the second Thucydides' schema on decision-making will be presented, based on verses 3.45.4-7.

NOTES

1. On the concept of schema and its use in International Relations, see Richard K. Herrmann, et al., "Images in International Relations," 406.

2. For the allies' discontent against the Spartans and particularly against Pausanias, as well as for the allies' proposal to the Athenians, see Thucydides, 1.95.

3. «Προαγαγεῖν» may also be translated as to develop, to build, or to increase.

4. «Ἔργου» (is in genitive case) may also be translated as work, task, situation, obligation.

5. The verb «καταναγκάζομαι» has as its root the word «ἀνάγκη», meaning need, necessity.

6. Zagorin notes that throughout the text the "triad" of fear, honor, and interest "is at work"; this observation supports the view on the unity of the composition and also that Thucydides applies his thinking on the matter throughout his entire text; see Zagorin, *Thucydides*, 150. For these three factors, see also Chittick and Freyberg-Inan, "'Chiefly for Fear, Next for Honour, and Lastly for Profit'", 69–90.

7. Also: "contrary to."

8. Forde notes: "The Athenians at Sparta are the first to voice the thesis that, in establishing their empire, they were simply acting in accord with certain universal compulsions that affect nations: fear, honor, and profit"; see Forde, "Thucydides on the Causes of Athenian Imperialism," 437.

9. "Thucydides is exceptionally sensitive to the complexity of political phenomena, and the changing mix of factors that can influence or determine any one event. Hence, there is rarely one 'right' response to political situations, and war is particularly complex." This observation obviously applies to both Thucydidean schemata; see Desmond, "Lessons of Fear", 360.

10. In 1.22.4 he maintains that his work will help those who want to look into "what according to human nature will happen similar and approximate" (1.22.4)

11. Wilson, "What Does Thucydides Claim for His Speeches?" 95–103.

12. Note that Richard Crawley in his version of the *Peloponnesian War* (Ware: Wordsworth, 1997) translates the phrase "as long as poverty gives men the courage of necessity"; Steven Lattimore (Cambridge: Hackett, 1998) translates «ἀνάγκη» as "compulsion": "but either poverty, which brings about boldness through compulsion . . . will lead men into danger."

13. For a philological analysis of the concept, see Martin Ostwald, *Ἀνάγκη in Thucydides* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

14. Thucydides refers to the Persians left in Greece and particularly in Minor Asia, after the victorious for the Greeks battles of Salamis (480 BC) and Plataea (479 BC).

15. Aegina was/is an island in the Saronic gulf, very close to Athens, which in the beginning of the fifth century BC was far superior in naval power than Athens. The Aeginetans were at war with the Athenians between approximately 489 and 481 BC, in between the two Persian wars.

16. For the "Athenian" and the "Peloponnesian" necessities, see S. N. Jaffe, *Thucydides on the Outbreak of War*, 180–92.

17. For the rise of the Athenians to hegemony, see Thucydides 1.89–1.117.

18. For the "political necessity," see de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 313, "men who have an empire are hated—consequently they are forced to maintain this empire by a policy of strength."

19. For the economic calculations before starting war, see how Pericles presents the economic dimension of the Spartans' power and their limitations, see 1.141.3-4; for his account of the Athenians' economic strength in 2.13.3-5. On this topic, see Lisa Kallet-Marx, *Money, Expense, and Naval Power in Thucydides' History 1-5.24 (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft3s2005h6/.

20. See Lowell Edmunds, "Thucydides' Ethics as Reflected in the Description of Stasis (3.82–83)," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 79 (1975): 73–92, http://www.jstor.org/stable/311130. See also Jonathan J. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

21. Domestic conflict reduces the ability of an entity to deal with external threats or issues; see 1.118.2.

22. For the geographical space, see also: 1.37.3, 2.17.1, 4.25.1, 4.30.2, 7.62.2.

23. See also Pagondas, a Theban general, emphasizing the negative relations with and the tradition of being attacked by the neighbors (4.92.4).

24. See also 7.50.3. As known ever since, geography and the related climate conditions have influenced decisions and the progress or outcome of warfare operations: "and as winter was ending and the spring was almost there, the Argives moved against Epidaurus" (5.56.5).

25. See also 3.74.1: "there was a battle and the democrats won, both because they kept the fortified positions and because they outnumbered them."

26. For an analysis of the impact of material pressures and how they were felt by decision-makers and their populations on three instances of surrendering to more powerful enemies during the Peloponnesian War, see Alexandros Koutsoukis, "Challenging Victor Bias and Status Quo Bias in Realist Accounts of Surrender: Re-Reading Three Cases of Surrender from the Peloponnesian War" (PhD diss., Aberystwyth University, 2016).

27. See 5.89: "in the human mind what is just is determined by equal necessity." Perhaps, it is precisely the understanding of the power of necessity that, in Modern Greek or in English, led to the translation of the word «ἀνάγκη», found in this famous verse, with the words "strength," "force," or "power."

28. Jervis questions the deterministic character of necessity: "If a situation were so compelling that all people would act alike, decision-makers would not hesitate nor feel torn among several alternative policies, nor would there be significant debates within the decision-making elite"; see Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 19–20.

29. See Reeve, "Thucydides on Human Nature." 435–46.

30. For the human nature in International Relations, see chapter 2, Mark V. Kauppi, "Thucydides: Character and Capabilities," *Security Studies* 5, no.2 (1995): 142–68, https://doi.org/10.1080/09636419508429265.

31. This idea is also advanced by Hermocrates of Syracuse, who maintained that "man always wants to dominate those who succumb" (4.61.5).

32. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 311–13, 322–9. Here, de Romilly, once again, has captured, what, long after, in decision-making studies, has been called the modus operandi. This is the dominant and recurring mode of action of an entity, which increases its efficiency, but also its predictability for others, including its opponents.

33. "Human nature is the strongest 'binding' concept in Thucydides' work, one with almost an architectonic force. The force lies precisely in this: Human beings will behave pretty much the same in similar circumstances in any age, and under pressure they will behave badly"; see Peter R. Pouncey, *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 20.

34. For the understanding of this section one should bear in mind that Thucydides is inserting it in a section speaking of the war he is dealing with; thus, "the similar and approximate" that will happen may refer to the future events of the same war or of any war, and does not imply necessarily human affairs in general and at any time.

35. See Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation, War, and Death* (London: Hogarth Press, 1939), 55, 77.

36. See Annette Freyberg-Inan, *What Moves Man. The Realist Theory of International Relations and its Judgment of Human Nature* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004). She dedicates chapter 2, 19–36, to Thucydides and maintains that for him the dominant concept in verses 1.75 and 1.76 is "heleia" (pp.24); yet, such a word does not exist; instead there is the word «ὠφελία» ("ophelia"), meaning "interest."

37. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 330.

38. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 323.

39. "Thucydides' presentation of Athenian imperialism in fact represents a prototypical study of political psychology in foreign and domestic politics"; see Forde, "Thucydides," 433.

40. See Homer, *Iliad*, 2.48–397.

41. Reeve, "Thucydides on Human Nature," 444.

42. W. Robert Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 250.

43. On human nature, see the relative chapter in Wight, *International Theory*, 25–9.

44. Consider: "all the rest of Greece will fight on your side, other cities from fear and others from interest" (1.123.1) and "here we define things based on our interests and . . . our fear of the Syracusans" (6.85.1).

45. One has to be careful, because these words do not always mean interest. For example, the verb «ξυμφέρω» in the present perfect simple or in the past present perfect often means "I have" or "I had contributed," while «ὠφελία» often means "assistance."

46. See also 5.17.1.

47. See: "interest is within security" (5.107); "now we are here for our security and we see that our interests are the same with yours" (6.83.2).

48. See 3.82.8: "because they were competing with all means in order to dominate each one on the other, they dared doing the most horrible things"; see also 2.2, and 6.28.

49. See 3.86.4: "they wanted to impede importing wheat from there to the Peloponnese and simultaneously to test if it was possible to prevail in Sicily."

50. See 6.18.3: "we can not estimate up to where we want to rule."

51. See 6.84.2-3: we want "to restore the Leontines to their homes . . . to become as strong as possible and to be able from their country . . . to harm (the Syracusans) for our interest"; and 6.85: "the enemies to become weaker because of the power of our friends"

52. See 6.84.3: "it is in the interest (of Athenians) the Chalcidians to be unarmed and only to contribute money, while here (it is in our interest) that the Leontines and other friends have the maximum autonomy."

53. See 1.124.1: "nothing rallies with greater certainty cities and citizens than the common interest."

54. See 1.75.5: "Nobody can blame the one who, in the greatest dangers, is trying to safeguard his interests."

55. See 3.40.4: "for your own interest you should punish them even if it is unfair, otherwise abandon your hegemony."

56. Similarly 3.47.5: "I find this much more in the interest of maintaining hegemony, to tolerate voluntarily an injustice than to exterminate justly those that we must not"; see also 3.56.6 and 3.68.4: "the severity of the Lacedaemonians against the Plataeans was affected because of the Thebans, because they considered them useful for the war."

57. See 3.82.6: "these organizations were not constituted in order to benefit their members on the basis of the existing laws, but to satisfy their greed, contrary to the

laws in force"; see also 5.107: "interest lies in security, while the just and honest mean hazards".

58. See in 1.77.2 the description of the self-help principle: "those who can use force, do not need to resort to lawsuits."

59. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, B.II.3.

60. A similar methodological approach is adopted by Desmond. Moreover, he considers fear as a "crucial ingredient in Thucydides' implicit political theory"; see Desmond, "Lessons of Fear," 359.

61. The survival of states is expressed and studied in the theory of International Relations, particularly in the realist paradigm as the "security dilemma." Waltz writes: "mutual vulnerability of forces leads to mutual fear of surprise attack by giving each power a strong incentive to strike first"; see Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Better*, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies—Adelphi Papers no.171, 1981), 5.

62. See also 1.74.3, 2.72.2, 5.3.1, 5.61.5, 6.83.4, 8.93.3.

63. See also 8.54.1-2, 8.68.3, 8.109.1.

64. See Dimitrios G. Kousoulas, *Power and Influence. An Introduction to International Relations* (Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1985), 85.

65. The consequences of not assuming responsibilities are described vividly by the expression of an American politician in the 1950s, Adlai E. Stevenson: "on the plains of hesitation lie the blackened bones of countless millions who at the dawn of victory lay down to rest, and in resting died." Conversely, the importance of determination is highlighted by the Hercules' decision to deal with the twelve works, or Alexander's to cut the Gordian knot.

66. See also 6.11.4, 6.91.6.

67. See also 4.125.1· for the opposite, the lack of fear due to experience, see 1.81.6.

68. For past experiences, see Dan Reiter, "Learning Realism and Alliances: The Weight of the Shadow of the Past," *World Politics* 46, no.4 (July 1994): 490–526, https://doi.org/10.2307/2950716.

69. See also 2.3.1, 2.4.2, 4.56.1, 4.96.5-6, 4.130.5, 6.34.7, 6.49.2, 7.43.6.

70. See also 4.34.2, 5.10.6, 7.42.2.

71. See also 2.91.4, 4.63.1, 5.11.2, 6.34.8, 8.14.2.

72. See 1.50.4, 1.60.1, 2.90.3, 4.70.1, 4.75.1.

73. See 1.102.3, 4.41.3, 4.55.1, 4.80.2.

74. See 4.69.3, 5.61.5.

75. See Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 162–4.

76. See Kousoulas, *Power and Influence*, 85.

77. In order to have a withdrawal from an alliance or a defection the interest must be stronger than fear (6.83.4) or other factors to contribute as well, as in 4.88.1 and in 8.14.2.

78. See also 8.97.1. In the category of dealing with fear through reaction, one may include all the cases in military history of "sacrifice" of few in order to avoid the negative or threatened consequences or the suffering of a larger number of people, such as the most well-known example of Leonidas' 300, in Thermopylae.

79. See also 1.33.3, 3.93.1, 4.79.2, 6.78.2, 6.85.3.

80. See a similar case in 6.63.2.

81. The tactic, however, has been used in our era, with governments seeking "easy" and quick military victories, with the aim to limit the negative consequences of their previous failures and to enhance the morale of their armed forces.

82. For the relation of honor, revenge, and freedom in Thucydides, see Aleksander H. Chance, "Motives Beyond Fear: Thucydides on Honor, Vengeance, and Liberty" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 2012), http://dlib.bc.edu/islandora/object/bc-ir:101441/datastream/PDF/view.

83. See Palmer, "Love of Glory and the Common Good," 825–36.

84. According to Bluhm, if what he calls "irrational ordering" prevails, then honor is a more powerful factor than interest or fear; see Bluhm, "Causal Theory in Thucydides' Peloponnesian War," 19.

85. See also 5.111.1: "you are well aware that the Athenians have never withdrawn from any siege from the fear of others."

86. For a Spartan to die in battle it was extremely honorable, even during the fourth century BC. This is revealed by Xenophon, who describes the mood in Sparta, after their defeat at Leuctra (371 BC): "the next day, one could see the relatives of those who were killed, to circulate with a bright and cheerful face, but you could see a few relatives, of those who were announced alive, who were walking around gloomy and humiliated"; see *Hellenica*, 6.IV.16, and 4.V.10.

87. The Corinthians did the same, after the second Spartan decision and after the Delphic oracle, just before the final decision by the conference of all Peloponnesian allies, saying that the reputation of all would suffer, as the other Greeks would think that they "tolerate" the Athenians' behavior "out of cowardice," that are "inferior" to their fathers, who liberated Greece, and they are "incapable even to ensure their own freedom" (1.122.3).

88. S.N. Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 167-70.

89. S.N. Jaffe, *Thucydides*, 170-80.

90. Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969), 356.

Chapter 5

The Thucydides' Schema on Flawed Decision-Making

Thucydides' thinking on why people take risks forms his second decision-making schema. As before, I begin by defining its content, and then I determine the nature of each of the factors influencing decisions, their causes, how they function and lead human behavior to errors; finally, wherever this emerges from the text, the possible ways of their management.

This second schema is found in verses 3.45.4-7 and is part of the oration by Diodotus, son of Eucrates.[1] The oration refers to the case of the Mytilinean uprising and defection. Thucydides, having previously stated that all men, by their nature, both in private and in public affairs, are making mistakes («ἰδίᾳ και δημοσίᾳ ἁμαρτάνειν», 3.45.3), explains in a concise manner why and how people resort to violence and, beyond this, more broadly, why and how they take risks or are involved in dangerous situations, which leads to his thoughts on why and how they are driven to wrong decisions. The reader needs to pay close attention to the text and the way in which the newly emerging variables—boldness, arrogance, passions, hope, and chance—are connected with those included in the first schema, namely, necessity, human nature, and power, but also to the decision-making process:

> [4] because of boldness caused by the necessity of poverty, (or) because of greed caused by the hubris or the confidence of power, or because of passions[2] that each time more irresistibly possess them in the various circumstances, people are driven into risks.[3] [5] In any case, desire[4] and hope—the one precedes and the other follows, the first is planning the threat, the second submits the idea that chance is going to help—they are the most damaging and, while invisible, they are more powerful from the visible calamities. [6] Acting upon them, chance does not contribute less to driving people to arrogance; because sometimes chance appears unexpectedly and pushes some to risk with inferior means, and cities (to risk) the greatest goods, such as their freedom or their power over

> others, as each person and all together are unreasonably overestimating their forces. [7] It is simply impossible and very foolish to believe that human nature, when it wishes strongly to do something, can be prevented either by the power of law or by some other fear. (3.45)

Thucydides begins this dense paragraph with reference to the cause of necessity and ends it with the impressive generalization on the role and the irresistible power of human nature. New subjective variables arise simultaneously for the process and the decision itself, and the author attributes to most of these concepts their maximum intensity (value). The first is boldness that results from the necessity of poverty, and, in this case, can be understood as "temerity." The second, greed, that is the willingness to satisfy their interests excessively, is caused by power, through hubris and self-confidence. Third, passions, feelings of excessive tension which are affected by and change according to the necessity of circumstance; in the text of *The War*, the passions are anger and hate, and all related references to them are made with the same meaning as today. Fourth, hope, which feeds and is fed by desire, namely the intense will to satisfy interests—the two together being calamities "more powerful than the visible" and "most damaging." Last, the fifth is chance, which in Thucydides' thinking is a concept free from any metaphysical or theological considerations; it is a factor outside the individual's control, but still subjective, since many people condone its role, increasing thus, when favorable, their arrogance.

The second decision-making schema of Thucydides is also based on necessity, human nature, and power. To these three, five new variables, boldness, arrogance, passions (intensive feelings, anger and hate), hope, and chance, are added. Power, as presented in the previous chapter, is assumed, served and increased by man for reasons that Thucydides explains in the first schema (necessity, human nature, interest, fear, and honor).

At this point, three questions arise, however. First, why is the content of these verses a decision-making schema? Secondly, why is it connected with the one previously presented as being the first? And, thirdly, how are the aforementioned variables related to each other?

It is a decision-making schema for the very same reasons developed in the previous chapter: there is abstraction and generalization, as well as a formulation that clearly states repetition in the future; it is characteristic in the text that, while chapter 3.45 begins by discussing in the first three verses the reasons for the Mytilineans' apostasy and whether the capital punishment for all of them is the right decision for the Athenians to take, Thucydides suddenly abandons these very specific issues and, in a different tone and style, expresses his generalizations as to the behavior of people. In addition, as regards the relationship between the orator and the author, due to the absence of any other information about Diodotus, increased

possibilities exist that Thucydides expresses his own views on the subject.[5] Similar, as to the existence of theoretical thinking, is the view of Jacqueline de Romilly, who characteristically states that "in Book III, in his speech on Mytilene, Diodotus puts forward a whole theory of unreasonable ambition. What he says includes all the different aspects of hubris that we have enumerated."[6] Furthermore, Thucydides uses the logic of this decision-making schema in other cases too, such as the Plataean debate and judgement, his description and analysis of the civil war in Corcyra, the Sphacteria deliberations and negotiations, the Melian dialogue, and, most important, the Sicilian expedition deliberations.

Another reason for considering it a decision-making schema, showing also how it is related to the previous and how the new factors are interconnected, is that Thucydides describes the paths of the decision-making process starting from necessity, human nature, and power. According to the text, the emerging paths or chains of the decision-making process are:

a. Necessity → boldness → risky decision.
b. Power → arrogance (hubris) or self-confidence → greed → risky decision.
c. Necessity → passions (anger, hate) → risky decision.
d. Human nature → desire and hope → risky decision.

Chance acts upon them («ἐπ'αὐτοῖς»), causing arrogance, which, "as each person and all together are unreasonably overestimating their forces," leads people and cities[7] to risk the greatest goods, such as their freedom or leadership.

Consequently, the previous chapter's figure 4.1, capturing the first decision-making schema, is transformed now, in accordance with the decision-making paths described in 3.45.4-7, in figure 5.1, which presents the combination of both schemata.

Thus, starting from the first schema, the sequence of decision-making is as follows: humans, because of their nature and/or necessity, but also/or because of interest, fear and honor, undertake, develop and maintain power. In addition, humans, due to their nature and/or necessity, and/or power, in a possible combination with chance, circumstances, and arrogance, dare, and/or become passionate, and/or become greedy, and/or hope unfoundedly, and (as a result) are led to false decisions and great risks.

There is, however, the question of how these new factors work. Answering it is the task undertaken below, presenting, examining, and analyzing each one, in order to uncover their meaning in all its fluctuations, their nature and their role in the decision-making process. Once this endeavor completed, a case study of the Sicilian expedition deliberations will be undertaken, in order to demonstrate how Thucydides used the same thinking in order to explain the processes which led to the disastrous Sicilian adventure.

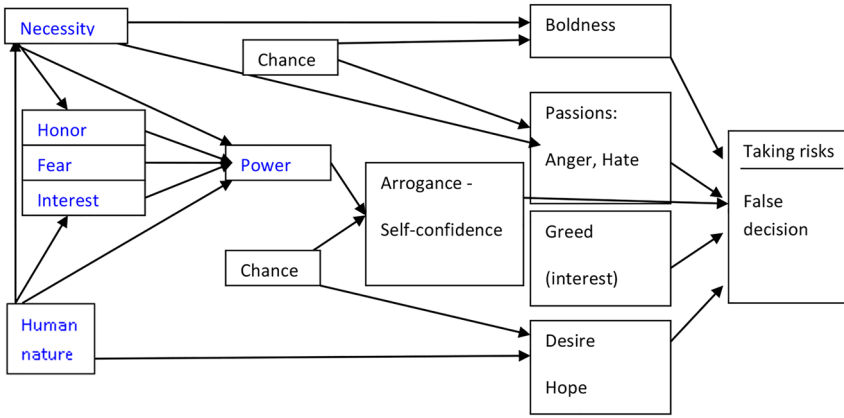


Figure 5.1 The Thucydides Decision-Making Schemata. *Source*: Author.

BOLDNESS

Boldness is the first of the factors that, according to Thucydides (3.45.4), influences decisions. It is a variable that has gained its own, rather prominent, position in human history. It is behind many victories or sacrifices and is considered to be a virtue of known and unknown men and women, but also of world-renowned leaders. In *The War*, the concept justifies directly thirty-eight decisions, while fifty-two cases describe its function, and a simple reference is made in another fifty-eight. The concept varies in intensity from courage, to bravery, and reaches valor and audacity, while, in ancient Greek, it is expressed with the words «τόλμα», «τολμάω», «τολμηρῶς», «ἀντιτολμῶ», «θάρσος», «θαρσέω», «ἀναθαρσέω», «παραθαρσύνω», «ἀνδρεία», «ἀνδρεῖος», «ἀνδραγαθία», «θράσος», but also «ἀγαθόν», «βέλτιστον», «ἀρετή», «ψυχή», «εὐψυχία», «ἀλκή», «γνώμη», «πρόθυμος» «ἐπιρρώννυμι» («ἐπιρρωννύω»), «ἀναρρώννυμι». On the other side of the spectrum is cowardice, which explains nine decisions and is found in another twenty-seven cases, with the words «ἀθυμέω», «ἀθυμία», «μαλακίζομαι», «μαλακία», «κακία», «δειλία», «ἄνανδρον», «ἀτολμία».

According to Thucydides, boldness is created by necessity (3.45.4). It also results out of strength, as evidenced by his reference to the Athenians, who were encouraged "by the magnitude of their power and from the multitude of those they could see with their eyes" (6.31.1); boldness does not precede strength, as "most opponents . . . attack by relying more on their strength than on their courage" (2.89.6).

The increase in power and, consequently, boldness, can arise from the strengthening of the warring parties' forces thanks to the additional troops they receive, such as the Syracusans, Nicias, or the Lacedaemonians, respectively,

from Sparta (7.2.1-2), Athens (7.49.1), or Syracuse (8.2.3). It may come from the reduction in the power of the adversary, as the Athenians saw it with the Spartans in Sphacteria (4.34.1, 4.35.2) or the Syracusans with the Athenians in Sicily (6.102.1, 7.51.1), from the increase of internal cohesion (3.82.7) or the change in the correlation of forces in the domestic political struggle (3.12.1, 8.89.2), but also from greater experience in an type of activity or an area of action; as stated by the Athenian general Phormion, encouraging his men before engaging the enemy's fleet, the Spartans do not excel the Athenians in boldness, nor is boldness the privilege of anyone, but the two adversaries are more courageous in that they are more experienced, namely the first on the land and the second in the sea (2.89.2). In addition, strength and boldness can be brought about by the good knowledge of the adversary and especially his weaknesses, such as when Alcibiades briefed the Spartans on his compatriots (6.93.1), by the previous successes in operations, such as those of the Syracusans (7.37.1, 7.46.1), by the failures of the opponent such that of the Athenians (5.14.2), or by the inaction of the opponent (3.6.1, 6.63.2).

Boldness as a factor of decision-making leads to a variety of actions and situations. It is the cause that pushes people to take risks, such as the Mytilineans to defect (3.12.1, 3.45.4) or not willing to compromise (3.25.2), the Athenians to campaign in Sicily (6.31.1), the Syracusans or the Corinthians to want to continue the war (7.2.1, 7.17.3) or even to seek revenge against opponents (7.82.7). Boldness is also responsible for increasing the combativeness (4.34.1, 4.35.2, 6.63.2, 7.37.1) and the determination (3.83.3, 7.46.1) of the fighters. In any case, boldness is causing fear to the opponent, such as to the Spartans who feared the Athenians for the boldness they had shown during the Persian wars (1.90.1), but also leads to success; Pericles boasts on behalf of the Athenians that they "forced every sea and land to open way" to their boldness, and they have "erected everywhere eternal monuments both for our successes and our failures" (2.41.4). The usefulness of boldness as a tool in the attainment of ideal goals also appears in another oration of Pericles, who tells the Athenians: "be farseeing both for your future glory and to avoid shame now, and with your daring, acquire both" (2.64.6).[8]

Boldness, moreover, is complementary to or enhances other power factors, such as experience. In the process of encouraging their men—a process known since Homer's era[9]—the Spartan generals, besides inviting and inciting their soldiers to be brave, note: "the enemy's experience . . . if combined with boldness, will allow them in the time of danger to remember and apply its teachings, but without a brave heart, no experience is sufficient in the face of the dangers" (2.87.4); and they add: "fear paralyzes memory, and art without boldness benefits nothing. So, oppose to their larger experience, your greatest courage" (2.87.4). Moreover, bravery, that is courage, skill, and will for self-sacrifice at the time of battle, is something that does not change and

the lack of experience can not affect it: "those who have bravery within them, ..., are always brave, and they can not, eventhough brave, by invoking their inexperience to show cowardice in some occasion" (2.87.3).

Thucydides' general view of boldness as a factor influencing decisions is not negative. In quantitative terms, among the twenty-three decisions that he explains on the basis of boldness, the majority, twelve cases, had, judging from the result, a positive outcome for those who made them, seven had a negative result, and four cases are left unclear. As already noted, however, he considers that boldness coupled with necessity, greed, arrogance and passions (3.45.4) or recklessness (6.65.1) leads to adventures. Into the same outcome leads the "temerity for the future" (3.39.3), that is to say the irrational or reckless boldness, which is "generated by ignorance" (2.40.3), or by hubris (2.65.9), or by power (4.92.5); Thucydides indirectly clarifies that this is not bravery (3.82.4), but it leads to vanity (1.120.4) and, in some cases, provokes reactions of hate (2.61.4). That is why Pericles, when he felt that his fellow citizens were becoming reckless, was frightening them so as to restrain them and, conversely, when they were afraid, he was encouraging them (2.65.9).

What Thucydides regards as positive is the combination of boldness with the studying and the good knowledge of the situation. He is boasting, through Pericles, that as Athenians they differ from the others "so as to be bold" themselves and "to study in depth" what they are going to undertake, and, then, he generalizes and formulates the idea that "bravest in the heart would be justly considered, those who knowing clearly the bad and the pleasant, nevertheless, they would not be deterred by the risks" (2.40.3). Similarly, elsewhere, he writes: "those who face (opponents) with lesser forces and without being forced, means that they have great determination in them" (2.89.6).[10] Moreover, he thinks that the combination of boldness with prudence, superiority of forces, and knowledge of the conditions, makes boldness more reliable: "under the same conditions, prudence out of a sense of superiority makes boldness more credible and is based less on the hope . . . but more on the knowledge of the real situation, whose provision is more certain" (2.62.5).[11]

Bravery or valor, the courage combined with skill and the disposition for self-sacrifice at the time of battle, have a particularly distinguished position in Thucydides' value system and, more generally, in that of ancient Greeks. This is particularly evident in the Funeral Oration, where the opinion is expressed that valor leading to the sacrifice of life is a human act of high value: "I consider that the present death of them here proves their valor, either revealing it for the first time, or stamping it for the last. Even for those who in different matters are inferior to others, it is fair that their valor shown in the wars should be placed first" (2.42.2-3). It appears also in the oration of

the Plataeans, who, in their defense, invoke before the Spartans' court their bravery during the Persian wars and the difference of their attitude from that of the Thebans, and remind to them that back then "more praised were those who, in the face of the attack, instead of doing what was in the interest of their security, willingly dared to risk the bravest acts" (3.56.5).

Finally, at the opposite of boldness there is the lack of it, the faintheartedness, and, a little further on the edge of the spectrum, cowardice, one of the three most important flaws (1.122.4). Conversely to boldness, cowardice is caused by failures or negative changes in the power correlation, as was the case with the Syracusans when the Athenians' reinforcements arrived (7.55.1). Faintheartedness itself can lead to negative situations, to defeat, as "many armies have so far been defeated by weaker ones because of their inexperience, some of them also because of faintheartedness" (2.89.7); it may lead even to humiliation, which is the worst in Thucydides' value system and the rest of the Greeks at that time:[12] "to a man with spirit, humiliation caused by cowardice is more painful than death which comes without understanding it in a moment of vigor and of common hope for victory" (2.43.6).

ARROGANCE

Arrogance is one of the variables influencing human decision-making according to Thucydides. In *The War* one finds all the varieties of its conceptual spectrum. It starts from the lowest level, which is the underestimation of the adversary, expressed by the words «καταφρονῶ» (contemn, scorn, underestimate), «καταφρόνησις» (contempt), «ὑπερορῶ» (disdain, snub, contemn); it goes to arrogance or vanity, expressed mainly by the verb «ἐπαίρομαι» (self-priding, self-praising), and it culminates with hubris («ὕβρις», «ὑβρίζω», και «ἐξυβρίζω»).

Hubris

Perhaps for many, hubris, the ultimate arrogance, is simply a concept that comes from antiquity and probably belongs to it. Everyone, however, with a quick flashback in the previous century, can realize the excesses committed. Humanity, within twenty years from the first world war, was led to bloodshed for a second time because of the hubris of totalitarian regimes, Nazism and Fascism; and at least ten genocides, more or less known, have been committed. During the Cold War, the arms race led the superpowers to conduct a large number of thermonuclear tests, with explosive power of dozens of megatons, which caused disasters to humans and the environment, to an extent that is difficult to assess the consequences over time. As for today, it

seems that contemporary experiments in biotechnology and genetics reach the levels of hubris. The list of excesses is long, but even the above few examples show that the study of hubris is timely and perhaps necessary.

Jacqueline de Romilly defines hubris as the temptation "which leads man to wish for more, in defiance of all reason"; it is "that of excess."[13] According to ancient Greeks, before Thucydides' era, hubris was not just the cause of wrong decisions, but it provoked the reaction of the gods, especially Zeus, who were sending to men the "nemesis," their punishment or vengeance. Both had a moral and religious dimension and, according to de Romilly, "the jealousy of a god was needed to give meaning to the first and its reality to the second." According to her, however, in the work of Thucydides this religious dimension is lost, without completely eliminating the relevant morality, both for the examined cases or for persons, such as Nicias (7.77.3-4); in *The War*, hubris is "a perfectly logical mechanism which might be called an imprudence born of success," while "nemesis is no longer the punishment sent by the Gods, but the logical result of human mistakes."[14] De Romilly suggests that hubris as a concept in Thucydides can be formulated as follows: "human nature being what it is, man allows himself to be so carried away by success that he conceives immoderate desires." The interesting aspect, which she emphasizes and becomes an interpretive tool in her work, is her understanding that Thucydides uses hubris "to explain all the political mistakes described in his work, and those of Athens in particular,"[15] that is, to interpret the Athenians' false decisions.

De Romilly groups, as her examples show, all the different expressions of arrogance,[16] and, by grouping them, she ends up talking about a theory of "unreasonable ambition."[17] Grouping them is not wrong, as it is the same phenomenon at different levels of intensity. However, I think that Thucydides, who, according to the classicists and her, chooses his words carefully, used with parsimony the term "hubris" and, as we have the ability, it is useful to distinguish the different intensity of the concepts, especially when we try to perceive the influence of a variable on a phenomenon. In fact, in the text, he explains decisions by hubris (solely) just in seven cases; in nine others he records the concept or his opinion about it; in another nineteen cases (ten directly and nine indirectly) decisions are explained by vanity, and in another eleven by the underestimation of the opponent; in addition, there are another twenty-four sections in the text, in which the functions of arrogance and underestimation are recorded or described.

Arrogance, even in its utmost manifestation, hubris, is interwoven with the nature of man and is caused to him or to cities when goals are achieved or favorable conditions arise either with little effort or unexpectedly. The following two sections highlight Thucydides' thinking on the subject:

> Usually, cities, and especially those which with little effort unexpectedly prosper, are deviating to hubris. The many happy outcomes occurring to humans according to reason are safer than the unexpected, and it can be said that people more easily face misfortune than maintain bliss. We should not have honored the Mytilineans so much more than other allies, and then they would not have reached such a point of hubris. For by their nature people despise those who serve and admire those who are inflexible. (3.39.4-5)

The rationale, that not only "unexpected" favorable luck, but also hope create arrogance in general, is present elsewhere in the text. Archidamus invites his compatriots not to be led by the hope that the war will end quickly (1.81.6) and praises the Spartans who, when in happiness, do not commit hubris («οὐκ ἐξυβρίζομεν») and are not arrogant to contemn the laws (1.84.2); similarly, Diodotus warns, as we have seen, that unexpected chance, along with desire and hope, pushes men to risk (3.45.6).

This particular view, that hubris in Thucydides results from happiness or success, is maintained by de Romilly. Her argument is based on different verses in which the author refers to the "unexpected" and with a minimal effort "well-being" (3.39.4), to those who experience "unusual success" and happiness "unexpectedly" (4.17.4), to "success during the war" (1.120.4), to the "unreasonable" will for "more happiness" (4.65.4), to the "present happiness" (5.14.1), as well as to the advantageous position of increased (4.18.2) or of superior power (7. 45.4).[18] In addition, it is worth noting that de Romilly rather contradictorily argues that, besides happiness, hubris is also caused by "excessive sorrow," something like a "hubris inversed," as she writes. According to her, Thucydides expresses it when, referring to the plague, he writes that "everything abrupt and unforeseen and what happens in the most unexpected way overwhelms morality" (2.61.3), when the Athenians in Sicily, despite their power, are disillusioned precisely because things do not go as they expected (7.66.3), and when Nicias, as always happens in difficult situations, considered that many other things were to be done before the beginning of the crucial battle (7.69.2).[19]

Hubris, that is, the arrogance in its supreme appearance, is one of the factors that lead people to wrong decisions and to put themselves at great risk. We saw it at the beginning of the chapter, in 3.45.4, when Diodotus points out that power generates greed, which hubris and self-confidence strengthen. The same reasoning of the cause and effect process is adopted and used by the Corinthians when, before the Athenians, they argue against the Corcyraeans in order to prevent the alliance between them, saying that the latter "have wronged them on many occasions," "because of their hubris and their power of wealth" (1.38.5). However, the most important consequence of hubris were

the major crimes that were committed, for the first time, during the civil war in Corcyra; and this was the result of retaliation by people who had been ruled "more by hubris than by reason" (3.84.1).

Arrogance and underestimation

Arrogance and/or underestimation are causes more frequently encountered than hubris, both in history and in everyday decisions, in many and different areas of activities, ranging from politics and administration to business, sport, and interpersonal relationships. In *The War*, arrogance drives leaders and peoples into disastrous behaviors and decisions. An example among the first is the Spartan Pausanias, the victor of the Battle of Plataea. Due to the honors offered to him by the Greeks, he "had become so arrogant" that he could not confine himself to the Spartan way of life, and every time he was away from his homeland, especially in Asia, he behaved as a Persian (1.130.1)—a behavior that led him to a terrible and bitter end. Regarding the peoples' arrogance, Thucydides mentions a number of such decisions made by the various warring sides (2.81.4) and especially those of his fellow citizens. The Athenians, therefore, due to their great naval supremacy, had left the port of Piraeus completely unprotected at the beginning of the war, and because of it came very close to suffering a great defeat (2.93.1); later, they wanted to gain more and did not accept the very favorable proposals made by the Spartans, when they had defeated and captured the Spartans in Sphacteria (4.21.2); or, in a crucial battle in Sicily, because they were fighting as if they had already prevailed, they were eventually defeated (7.43.7).[20] At one point, the Athenians had wrongly decided to exile their generals, who returned from their first campaign in Sicily, believing that they failed because

> driven by the happiness of the moment, they had the pretension that nothing happens contrary to their desires, but also that all their undertakings, both the easy and the very difficult ones, should be attained, regardless of whether they attempted with the necessary or with lesser preparations. The reason for this was that many and unexpected successes had created very strong hopes.(4.65.4)

False decisions are also produced by the underestimation of the opponent, which, as in the case of hubris and arrogance, is due to unexpected successes. Nicias is trying to draw the attention of his countrymen on this and to warn them, when they deliberate on whether to undertake the expedition to Sicily or not; he argues that their plan "to conquer" Sicily is a result of underestimation of the Peloponnesians, because the Athenians, contrary to their "initial fears," have prevailed against them "unexpectedly" (6.11.5). Underestimation arises also out of military (6.104.3) or spiritual superiority (3.83.4), or

even out of foolishness (6.35.1). The adversary may also contribute to his own underestimation either because he did not demonstrate the expected strength (6.34.8) or because, according to his reputation, is not fit to fight (8.8.4, 8.25.3).

One's arrogance or his underestimation of the opponent is essentially a weakness that can be exploited by the opponent. As it is generally stated by Thucydides, "many times a smaller force, because of fear, defended itself more efficiently against a greater one, which was unprepared as it had underestimated its adversary" (2.11.4). Such is the case of Brasidas, who had anticipated that Cleon would underestimate his smaller army, and prepared his men accordingly; Cleon acted as expected, and Brasidas defeated him (5.6.3).

This particular observation offers Thucydides the opportunity to warn against arrogance and the opponent's underestimation. First, it is through the Spartans who go to Athens to negotiate the future of their men in Sphacteria; they invite the Athenians "not to behave as those who experienced an unusual success do"; because, men "given their unexpected present happiness, always crave and hope for more" (4.17.4). Then it is through Hermocrates who invites the Syracusans to be careful and "not to be unprepared" because "they have underestimated" the power of the Athenians (6.33.3). Thucydides also notes, through the Spartans again, that arrogance causes a stronger reaction on the part of the others, who "continue the struggle to the end, even contrary to logic, against arrogant opponents" (4.19.4). He considers that avoiding arrogance is an advantage and a sign of prudence; people who "commit the fewest mistakes" are those who "are not boasting of their successes" (4.18.4). On the contrary, through the Corinthians who address the Peloponnesians' conference, he formulates the general view that the adversary's contempt is the most devastating of three major errors (stupidity, cowardice, and negligence) and, indeed, because it has hurt many, has come to be called "by the opposite name, insanity" (1.122.4).

Arrogance and underestimation of the opponent may, however, have some positive effects, under specific circumstances and conditions. Positively, they can work when the inferior group, understanding that the opponent is not that awesome or competent, takes courage by underestimating him and deals with him successfully. This is the case of the Athenians, who, after understanding that they outnumbered the Spartans of Sphacteria, after getting accustomed to them and not having suffered what they feared, "scorned" them and attacked them (4.34.1). The same happened to the Sicilian soldiers who came to disdain the Athenians because they were not attacking them (6.63.2). They also work positively when arrogance turns into emulation, as happened with the Athenian citizens in the preparation of the campaign in Sicily: "so they came to compete with each other in what everyone had committed himself, so that

the entire preparation was considered more as a demonstration of power and wealth to the other Greeks than as a preparation against an enemy" (6.31.4).

Finally, the underestimation of the adversary (even arrogance) may function positively or, in any case, without risk, when, according to Thucydides, it is based—just as in the case of hope (5.103.1)—on the relevant power. The Corcyraeans were "boasting" about their naval tradition and superiority and, knowing their advantage, continued to develop it (1.25.4). Archidamus, addressing his compatriots before the war began, finds it obvious that the Athenians, because of pride and experience, will not spare any sacrifice and will not fear the war (1.81.6).

This positive function of underestimation is used by leaders to cope with the fear that their fellow citizens may have. Pericles calls upon the Athenians to confront the enemies not only with confidence but also with contempt (2.62.3). And Nicias asks his soldiers to despise the Corinthians and the Sicilians: for they have prevailed over them many times, for they did not dare resist when the Athenian navy flourished, but also in order to demonstrate that their naval ability is superior to the force and the good fortune of their enemies (7.63.4).

In the latter cases, it seems that Thucydides, while in most of his accounts highlights the problems and warns against arrogance, distinguishes the arrogance from the underestimation of the opponent and justifies the existence and role of the latter. The distinction is based on the connection he makes of the arrogance with the luck of the ignorant or of the coward, while he interconnects the underestimation with the knowledge and the faith of the mighty: "arrogance may appear to an ignorant man out of luck or to a coward, but contempt only to the one who, because he knows, believes in his superiority towards the adversaries, as it happens with us" (2.62.4). If the distribution of power is one of superiority, then "under the same conditions, intelligence (acumen) based on a sense of superiority makes courage more stable as it is based not so much on hope . . . but more on the knowledge of reality, whose providence is more certain" (2.62.5).

PASSIONS

Passions are considered the feelings or moods resulting from an intense condition, positive, such as love or a great desire for someone or something, or negative, such as anger, hatred, and the associated mood of revenge. Leaders' and peoples' passions, as well as the other variables examined, had and continue having their own share of influence on developments. These passions, according to Thucydides, are created and influenced by circumstances, and dominate the subject. But which are the passions he refers to? It is difficult

to say, as in several cases Thucydides is using the word «ὀργή» with three different meanings.

The first is of a generic nature and covers all intensive feelings of various content and origin, as particularly in 3.45.4, dominating human nature.[21] With this meaning the concept has been recorded in the text nine times and, in five of them, it has been used to explain decisions. Passions is among those factors leading men to take risks. At the individual level an example offered by Thucydides is the account given for tyrant Hippias' assassination by Harmodius and Aristogeiton (6.57.3); the first acted against the tyrant motivated by the passion of love (strong desire, «ἔρως») for Aristogeiton, while the second was motivated by anger and the necessity to restore his honor, harmed by Hippias' conduct toward him. At the collective level, passions in the form of «ἔρως» can lead to the supreme risk of war, as it is the explicitly mentioned case and cause, present in the Athenians' expedition in Sicily.[22]

Passions during war cannot be controlled (3.84.2) and may lead the belligerents to behaviors that harm their interests. Such a behavior is the indifference to anything but victory and the unrestricted alliance changes:

> In such circumstances people fighting their enemies are indifferent to everything except victory; they consider as friend the one who helps them, although previously he was an enemy, and as enemy the one who opposes them, although he happened to be a friend, as they come to aggravate even their interests by that moment's passion for victory. (1.41.2-3)

This is why Thucydides generalizes and warns that "whoever manages the war with sobriety is more confident of the result, while whoever conducts it with passion (or anger) falls into greater mistakes" (1.122.1). The only window of hope he leaves open for a change of this passionate condition is through Pericles' observation that people do not conduct the war with the same passion as when they decided to start it, but "change moods (or, their anger is diminished) in accordance with their misfortunes" (1.140.1).

Thucydides is giving, most of the times, a second meaning to the word «ὀργή," which, as in Modern Greek, is anger, in all the conceptual expressions of the word. Yet, there is a third meaning to the word «ὀργή»," latent in 3.84.2, 3.85.1, and 5.70, which is hate. Certainly, as it is shown below, hate is expressed basically by the word «μῖσος». But hate, on the one hand, is very close to the concept of anger, and, on the other, as it is a concept very often used in the text, it would be strange to completely ignore it and not to refer to it specifically in his generalization of line 3.45.4, if Thucydides did not think of it as one of the passions. It is on this basis and in this context, that, after the concept of anger, I am examining here the concept of hate. Besides, the most typical case of the manifestation and recording of passions in *The War*,

the civil war in Corcyra (3.81-84), as well as every civil war before and after, is permeated by hatred and, furthermore, by the moods of revenge and retaliation.

Anger

The concept of anger is found in the text fifty-seven times, mainly with the words «ὀργή» (anger, rage, fury, wrath) και «ὀργίζομαι» (getting angry), but also the words «θυμός» (anger) και «χαλεπαίνω» (becoming mean). Among these fifty-seven cases, twenty-nine decisions are explained by the concept, while the remaining twenty-eight either describe its function or simply record it.

Anger in *The War* is due or results from two basic and broader causes. The first cause is the lack of education; in one verse there is reference to the anger which is paired by "lack of education and narrow mindedness" (3.42.1), and in another about the "wrath of the uninstructed" (3.84.1). The second source of anger, generally stipulated, is the unexpected negative outcome or event, as "all people are getting angry when they see with their own eyes an unexpected evil (suffering) hitting them" (2.11.7). To this cause belong the rest of the cases found in the text, varying, of course, on a case by case basis. Thus, anger is provoked by the defection of colonies, such as that of Epidamnos from Corinth (1.26.3), or of allies, such as the one of Mytilineans from the Athenians (3.36.2, 3.43.5, 3.44.4), and by anything that the angered regard as injustice committed upon them by their opponents (5.44.3, 5.46.5). It may also be provoked by the negative evolution of war operations, such as that of Corinth against Corcyra (1.31.1) or the defeat of the Athenians in Sicily (8.1.1); by the behavior of the leading powers, Athens (2.8.5) or Sparta (5.29.2), toward their allies; or, finally, by unpopular decisions of leaders such as Pericles (2.21.3), Archidamus (2.18.5), Agis (5.63.2), or Lichas (8.84.5).

Anger, as the cause of decision-making, leads, most of the times, to wrong decisions, entailing conflict. War operations, as Thucydides underlines, are "decided upon anger" (2.11.4), while "those who, due to anger, think less, more in the action (of war) are trapped" (2.11.7); this was, for example, the case of the Corcyraeans' decision to sail against Epidamnos (1.26.4) and the Corinthians' to build ships in order to prepare for war (1.31.1). Anger explains the shift of alliances or the prevention of the new ones; some Peloponnesians, abandoning the Spartans, moved to join the Argives (5.29.2), as did the Athenians (5.46.5), while the Spartans, fearing the anger of the Athenians, sought to prevent the alliance between Athens and Argos (5.44.3). Similarly, anger may be a cause of counteraction or reaction, as shown by the fact that, at the beginning of the war, several cities were standing by the Spartans mainly because "most were angry with the Athenians" (2.8.5).

The anger of citizens leads them to accuse their leaders, as happened after the Athenians' disastrous defeat in Sicily, when the people blamed the orators, who had advised them to undertake the campaign, forgetting that they, the citizens, had voted in favor of it (8.1.1). But the same has happened with leaders such as Agis and Pericles. Against the former, the Spartans, "dominated by their anger, they immediately decided, contrary to their habits, that they should demolish his house" (5.63.2). Against the latter, despite the decisions they made in the Agora, the people held him responsible "and considered him to be the cause of everything they suffered" (2.21.3). Pericles, for his part, did not convene any assembly to deliberate on the issues "for fear that if they were assembled, anger would prevail much more than rationality and they would make erroneous decisions" (2.22.1). Finally, an extreme reaction to a leader is that of the Milesians who, because they were angry with the Spartan Lichas for a number of reasons, when he died, they "did not allow him to be buried in the place where the Lacedaemonians, who were in Miletus, wanted to" (8.84.5).

Anger also shifts to the negative people's opinions about what is just, as it is aptly observed in the oration of Diodotus (3.44.4), or as Gylippus publicly accepts in order to encourage his army: "against the enemies, one is absolutely legitimized to decide to satisfy the anger of his spirit in order to punish the invader" (7.68.1). In the state of anger, therefore, very tough decisions can be made, as in the case of the Mytilineans, who had defected; the Athenians, initially, "under the state of anger, decided to kill not only those who were in Athens, but also all other adults, and to sell the children and the women as slaves" (3.36.2).

Hate

The concept of hate, precisely with the same sense that it has today, is found in the text one hundred and seventeen times, predominantly with the words «μῖσος» (hate) και «μισῶ» (to hate), «ἔχθος» and «ἔχθρα» (enmity, rivalry), «φθόνος» (envy) and «φθονῶ» (to envy), «κακοτροπία» (ill will), but also, in the conceptual dimension of revenge, with the words «τιμωρία» (punishment), «τιμωροῦμαι», «ἀντιτιμωροῦμαι» (been punished), «ἀμύνομαι» και «ἀνταμύνομαι» (defend oneself against another). Among them, hate explains thirty-nine decisions, it is recorded or its function described in another thirty-two, while revenge has been found in forty-seven cases, in ten of which it explains the decisions made.

Hate may be due, first, to the different racial origin, as it was believed to have existed between the Ionians and the Dorians.[23] It may be due to bad experiences, such as the failure of the colony, the Corcyraeans, to offer the foreseen honors to the metropolis, Corinth (1.25.3), the defeat and subsequent

persecution, as in the case of the Ambraciots whom the Argives had sold as slaves (2.68.2), or to the bad behavior by allied forces, as in the case of the Spartan soldiers, who destroyed their allies' land, because the Macedonians had retreated during battle (4.128.5). Naturally, hate provokes the involvement in the affairs of another city and the support of its opponents, which has the effect of reducing its relative power. Such was the case of the Corinthians, who developed an "intense hate" against the Athenians, for they strengthened, allied with, and protected their opponents, the Megarians, who consequently, while being members of the Peloponnesian alliance, defected (1.103.4).

Hate and envy is provoked by the superiority of either cities or people. Spartans, Athenians or Syracusans, because of their hegemony, regionally or further afield, caused the hate of many other cities. Thucydides formulates the certainty, as expressed by the Athenians in their deliberations with the Spartans, that if the latter had continued to exercise hegemony they would be as hated as them (1.76.1) and continues into concluding with several interesting generalizations on the subject. As expressed by Pericles, according to the first, people "hate the opponents, while they honor with favors those who do not impede them" (2.45.1). In the second generalization he notes that "to be hated and to be detestable has so far been the fate of all those who have sought to lead others (2.64.5); in fact, continuing in the third, he considers that the envy of others may well be a criterion of a right decision: "whoever receives the envy for the greatest pursuits thinks correctly" (2.64.5). And with a fourth he explains it, by comparing hate with splendor and glory: "because hate does not last long, while the splendor of the present is left behind as a memorable glory into the future" (2.64.5). Later, at the time when the Athenians were in the middle of the war and have accepted the hostile reactions of the different cities as being normal, they ended up, addressing the Melians in another, fifth generalization, that their hate did not hurt them as much as their friendship, since, for the others, the subordinates' friendship "is proof of weakness, while hate is proof of strength" (5.95.1). Eventually, Pericles and the Athenians are followed later by Hermocrates, who, speaking of his city, Syracuse, also recognizes that "the strong ones are causing both emotions," hate and fear (6.78.2).

Two other generalizations concern the creation of hate for anything that seems to excel, according to everyone's subjective view. Pericles, in the Funeral Oration, defines the limits of his praises for the fallen, based on the view that even the praises concerning others "are tolerable to the point that one thinks he is capable of doing something of what he has heard about"; beyond this point, the man who listens the praising, "disbelieves" for anything that goes beyond him, because of envy (2.35.2). However, soon, he comes to restoring things by claiming that people are disdainful of those who pretend something that they are not: "because people think that it is equally

right to criticize the one who, from cowardice, proves to be inferior to his reputation and to hate the one who, by insolence, wants to have a reputation he does not respond to" (2.61.4).

A major cause of hate and of its outbreak certainly is, in general, the war, which "becomes a teacher of violence" (3.82.2), particularly the civil war. Thucydides transfers to us this situation with the civil war in Corcyra, and observes, among many others, that "because of the civil wars, all forms of malignancy were manifested in the Hellenism" (3.8.1.1), and that in Corcyra men avenged in every form they could (3.84.1).

The consequences of the existence and recording of hate by opponents have multiple implications and actions. Most of these stem from the logic that "the enemy of my enemy" is a friend or ally and they are a basis for theories on the creation, maintenance, or change of alliances. The first consequence is the occasional reinforcement of the hated enemy's opponent; Corinth supports Epidamnos out of hate for Corcyra (1.25.3), and the Amphissans support the Spartans because of their hate against the Phocians (3.101.2). The second consequence is the formation of stable alliances; the Plataeans, albeit Boeotians, were almost always allies of the Athenians and were fighting with them in Syracuse against other Boeotians out of hate for them (7.57.5); the Corcyraeans, throughout the war, fought together with the Athenians and against the Corinthians out of hate (7.57.7); so did the Argives, who followed the Athenians against Syracuse, because of their hate for the Spartans (7.57.9). The third consequence is the creation of broader counter-alliances. The Athenians took over the leadership of the Hellenes with the will of the allies, because of their hate against the Spartans and especially against Pausanias (1.96.1); and vice versa, the Peloponnesian alliance was geographically enlarged and strengthened because of the hate of other Greeks against the Athenians (2.11.2). The fourth consequence is defection, such as that of Amphipolis (5.11.1), but also the reversal of alliances, even against interests, as Thucydides points out in the case of king Perdiccas of Macedonia, who out of hate abandoned the Spartans and allied against them with the Athenians (4.128.5).

Counter-allying because of hate is believed to be almost inevitable, and that is why it comes in both the power calculations of the various competing sides and in their arguments. Thus, the Corinthians initially claim before all the Peloponnesians that "the whole" of Greece is in favor of their alliance "out of hate for the Athenians" (2.11.2), and a few years later they argue to the Argives that many would join their alliance out of hate for the Lacedaemonians (5.27.2), while Alcibiades persuades his compatriots that, among other things, "many barbarians, out of hate for the Syracusans" will join them and together they will attack the latter (6.17.6). Moreover, because the Athenians suspected the hostility of the Potidaeans and the prospect of their

defection, they proactively moved and ordered them to demolish part of the walls and offer hostages (1.56.2).

For the same reason, hate is also used as the basis of decision-making and a tool for pursuing "divide and rule" strategies. The Corcyraeans perceive that the Corinthians want to prevent their alliance with the Athenians, to which both are propelled by the hatred of the Corinthians, and enter into discussions with one another (1.33.3); and the Locrians (in the region of Calabria) because of their enmity to the inhabitants of Rhegion, attempt to turn against them the Syracusans (4.24.2).

In addition to being a cause, the obvious consequence of hate is the (further) increase of violence, that is, war between cities and civil wars within them; they are essentially two interdependent sizes. Indeed, the Abracians will attack on the grounds of hate the Argives (2.68.2), the Thebans will argue that the Plataeans have turned against them out of hate (3.67.5), and the Locrians will attack for the same reason the Rhegians (4.1.2). Domestically, violence begins by limiting the freedom of expression of the orators (3.43.1) and ends with the manifestation of "all forms of malignancy" (3.83.1). This meant murders for both political and personal reasons,[24] "unjust condemnations" of opponents to "satisfy the hatred of the moment" (3.82.8), murders of citizens "who did not belong to either side," "either because they were not fighting with them, or by envy because they would survive" (3.82.8) and, of course, a multitude of retributions (3.84.1).

Similar consequences may also arise for reasons of personal hostility and hate toward leaders or between leaders. The Lacedaemonians did not send aid to Brasidas, among other things, "because the most eminent citizens envied him" (4.108.7); Perdiccas made peace with the Athenians "because of his hate for Brasidas" (4.132.1); the Spartans ordered Alcibiades to be killed "because he was believed to be unfaithful," but also because he was an enemy of Agis (8.45.1); Alcibiades, out of enmity to Phrynichus, "wanted to incriminate him in the eyes of the Athenians" (8.51.3); Hermocrates, when he found himself fighting at the side of the Spartans in Ionia, was "hostile" to Tissaphernes and acted accordingly (8.85.3).

Those who hate seek either to hurt their adversaries, or to punish them and, thus, to "wise them up" (6.78.2), or to avenge them.[25] The power of hate is great, and Thucydides, in yet another generalization on people's behavior, calls it "devastating": "if envy did not have a devastating power, no one would prefer revenge from piety and profit from righteousness" (3.84.2). And he has come to this generalization because of the events and the extremities in Corcyra. He had already observed that "for someone to avenge was more important than to prevent evil," and indeed, despite any agreements, if someone "saw the opponent unprotected, he was avenging with more pleasure" (3.82.7); and that people in order to avenge others without

consequences "they try to abolish previously the laws so as they do not apply in such circumstances" (3.84.3).

Finally, the power of hate mobilizes or is used skillfully and accordingly, to achieve goals. The Corinthians worked intensively and secretly to avenge the Corcyraeans and the Athenians (1.56.2). The Thebans used hate and at the same time they attempted skillfully to connect it and conceal it under the concept of justice, in order to lead the Spartans to condemn the Plataeans (3.67.1). And the leaders of the Argives told their soldiers before the battle against the Spartans in Mantineia (418 BC), that they would "avenge hateful neighbors for the many injustices against them" (5.69.1).

HOPE

Hope, the desire for something to happen or to be achieved, or the opposite, appears as the strongest motivation of all, outweighing the influence even of fear. Hope, as a factor of decision-making, is absolutely and directly associated, according to Thucydides, with human nature. In *The War* the concept is recorded one hundred and forty times, mainly with the words «ἐλπίς» (hope), «ἐλπίζω» (to hope), «εὔελπις» (hopeful). The concept, as a criterion, directly explains decisions in sixty-six cases and indirectly in another eight; fifteen cases in the text describe its function and in another fifty-one the concept is simply recorded.

A motive for decision-making, however, is also the opposite of hope, namely its lack or despair. This concept is expressed in the text by the words «ἀνέλπιστος» (unexpected, unhoped for, despaired) και «ἀπόνοια» (despair, desperate) and is found in eighteen cases; twelve justify decisions, two describe its function and four just record it.

Hope as a motive

The goal and content of hope or the object of desire varies for cities, leaders and people, as is shown by those cases where Thucydides determines it as a cause for decision-making. At the level of cities and their leadership, it usually involves improving or consolidating their position in the correlation of forces among the international actors and the success of the operations under way. The Persian king welcomes Themistocles to his court hoping that he will help him to rule over Greece (1.138.2) and the Argives change alliance hoping to rule in the Peloponnese (5.28.2). When the war began, the Athenians hoped to defeat the Peloponnesians (2.42.4) or later that their campaign would succeed (6.24.3) and would defeat their opponents in Sicily (6.30.2); they were also hoping that by breaking up the relations between the cities of

Sicily they would acquire new allies (6.77.2), and, later, the Spartans hoped that they would increase their power by enticing Rhodes into their alliances (8.44.1). From the point of view of the allies, in the decision and during their defection, the Mytilineans hoped that they would prevail over the Athenians (3.39.3), as were the allies of the Athenians in Halkidhiki (4.108.4).

Hope is present in the calculations and decisions of military leaders in the course of operations. The Athenians hoped that they would surprise the Mytilineans (3.3.3), the Spartans that they would easily take over a fortification (4.8.4), the Syracusans that they would successfully siege Rhegion (4.24.4), and king Agis of Sparta hoped that he would disrupt the Athenians and would force them to accept his terms (8.71.1). Accordingly, in another direction, the Spartans' allies expected their leadership and assistance (1.69.5), Amphipolis, during the siege of Brasidas, hoped for the help of the Athenians (4.105.1), the Melians the help of the Spartans (5.102.4), the powerless expected the intervention on their behalf of the ruling Athenians (6.87).

Hope is certainly present in the citizens' calculations, either individually or in groups. The Athenian soldiers hope to earn money from the campaign and, later on, stable salaries (6.24.3), the economically powerful in Athens that they would take over power (8.48.6), the citizens that they will soon change the political situation (8.54.1), that they will be saved from tyrants and will avenge them (8.82.1) or that their desires will be generally met (3.45.5, 4.108.4).

The lack of hope, as mentioned, is also a strong motivation for decision-making. The Plataeans, besieged by the Peloponnesians, because "they did not hope for any help or any other salvation, decided initially, together with the besieged Athenians, all to exit (from the city)" (3.20.1). The Melians, considering that a "direct retreat means loss of any hope," decided to resist the Athenians (5.102). The Athenians' allies in Sicily "were mainly fighting for their salvation for which, if they did not, they would have no hope" (6.69.3); and General Nicias seeing that "after the arrival of Gylippus, the war in land had much less hopes of success" turned his attention more to the war at sea (7.4.4).

An even more powerful motivation for decision-making and action is obviously despair—not necessarily the most appropriate. Those who were found in Sicily, along with the Athenians, driven by the expectation of earning money, "seeing the enemy's unexpected resistance in land and even at sea," were disappointed and began at any given opportunity to defect or return to their homeland (7. 13.2). In the analysis of the Spartan general Gylippus, the Athenians decided to face the risk of defeat as they could entrust their fate on chance and not on their military preparation, because of the desperate position they had come to, the many evils they had suffered, and the increased pressure this difficult position added on them (7.67.4). Finally, despair was

even greater in Athens after the disaster in Sicily. The Athenians "not seeing enough ships in the naval yards, the public treasury empty, and the lack of crews for the fleet, they despaired about their survival at that time. . . . But despite the limited means, they decided they should not retreat" (8.1.2).

The function of hope

Hope for Thucydides, as shown in the text of *The War*, is interwoven with human nature: "people are accustomed to entrust what they wish in the reckless hope and to reject what they do not want, by submitting it to rigorous logical analysis" (4.108.4). This inseparable relationship of hope and human nature is captured by the contemporary and current expression "hope dies last." In the words of Thucydides, the Melians do not surrender to the Athenians because, as they say "the immediate retreat means loss of any hope, while if we fight, there is still hope to stand aright" (5.102).[26]

Hope is linked to desire. The two are essentially identified to each other, like the two sides of the same coin, and, "in every circumstance," the one acts as a reinforcement for the other, as we have seen in 3.45.5: "desire and hope—the one precedes and the other follows, the first is planning the threat, the second submits the idea that chance is going to help."

Hope, however, appears more easily in the foreground when it is reinforced by other reasons or realities, which, obviously or probably, are taken into account by the decision-makers. These reasons vary, others are rather unfunded or circumstantial, and others are more substantial and certain. Nicias, because he was practicing a virtuous life, honoring the gods and being righteous to the people, believes, and announces it to the army, that his hope "for the future remains unshaken" (7.77.3); moreover, because he also believes that the opponents have been favored, while the Athenians had already been punished enough, stated to his soldiers that "it is reasonable to hope now that the gods will appear more lenient toward us, as we have come to deserve their compassion more than their envy" (7.77.4).

Hope is understandably strengthened from the previous successes of the actors involved. The Athenian general Demosthenes proceeds to the implementation of his plans "hoping for his good fortune, as nothing had gone wrong" (3.97.2); or the Athenian citizens made wrong decisions because of the "very strong hopes" they had, as a result of their unexpected successes (4.65.4). On the other side, Gylippus encourages his army, claiming that their morale is more intense and "everyone's hope has doubled," because, "having defeated the most powerful," they had the conviction that they are strong (7.67.1); moreover, the Spartans, after their success in Sicily, "receiving hope from everywhere, they were thinking to continue decisively the war" (8.2.4).

A safe cause of hope is the poor preparation and the relative weakness of the opponents. The Spartans "hoped to easily conquer a fortress that was hurriedly built and guarded by a few" (4.8.4), and Nicias was basing whatever hopes he had on the fact that he knew the enemy "more than others" (7.48.2). The safer basis, however, for one to hope, is, according to Thucydides, power; but even this is not always valid, and Thucydides warns: "not even power provides certainty, just because it creates hope" (4.62.4).

The existence of any factor supporting hope is used by leaders, both politicians and military, to encourage their fellow citizens, as, on the one hand, hope is "consolation when at risk" (5.103), and, on the other, "most times, in operations, the maximum of hope inspires the greatest zeal" (7.67.1). Some do it without measure, such as Nicias, trying to revive the hopes of the overwhelmed, almost defeated Athenian troops. And others, in order to control the impact of hope, do so in a measured way, such as Pericles in the Funeral Oration (2.42.4) or Hermocrates when he addressed the Syracusans (4.62.4).

Finally, Thucydides knows that hope is a powerful motivation, always in relation to the future. This is pointed out by the Athenians to the Melians: "your most powerful hopes belong to the future" (5.111). For this reason, when the Athenians discuss their action against the Mytilinean alliance defectors, Thucydides, through Diodotus, argues that even the renegades should not be denied from the hope of changing their stance in the future and return to the Athenian alliance (3.46.1).

Critique to hope

Hope is the factor on which Thucydides tends to exercise the strongest criticism. According to him, hope lures people to unknown risks because it makes people believe in the success of their undertakings: "people, however, carried away by hope undertake risks, and no one has so far moved to a dangerous undertaking considering that he will not succeed" (3.45.1). Indeed, people are lured while their capabilities are much smaller than those required or inferior to those of their opponents: "with temerity for the future and with hopes reaching further than their power, but were lesser than their desires, they began the war" (3.39.3).

Thucydides considers hope to be a bad counsellor and an erroneous motivation or decision-making criterion, and, criticizing it strongly, warns against decisions made on the basis of hope. In 4.17.4 he invites people not to be trapped, as is usual, by the happiness of the moment in hopes and desires without limits. In 4.108.4 he characterizes hope "reckless" and, in 3.45.5, as one of the two "most damaging. . .calamities." There are several cases that he refers to false decisions because of hope (and desire). The most critical false decision appears to be the campaign in Sicily:

> everyone without exception was overwhelmed by the intense desire («έρως») to participate in the campaign, the elders because either they would conquer the areas against which they were campaigning or because such a military force was impossible to be defeated, while the younger because of the desire to see and know, together with the hope that they will return, while the great crowd, the soldiers, expected presently to earn money, but also, by the expansion of the hegemony, to secure steady salaries in the future. (6.24.3)

His criticism, however, culminates in the Melian Dialogue. He believes that decisions based solely on hope, and without having based them on the knowledge of the situation, on power or on other factors, are understood only "when there is a deadlock." However, if any of the above conditions is not present, such decisions are catastrophic, as he impressively describes in yet another generalization of the Melian Dialogue:

> Hope . . . even if it hurts those who, having a surplus of strength, rely on it, it does not destroy them. But those who risk everything (because of its nature is overgenerous), they come to know it when they are destroyed and nothing is left to preserve from the one they have known. Do not want to suffer this, you who are weak and whose existence depends on a slope of the scales, nor do like many, who, while still able to be saved by human means, once they are in a dire condition and abandoned by substantiated hopes, resort to uncertain ones, to divination and to oracles, and to other similar, which, by creating hopes, lead to destruction. (5.103)

CHANCE

Chance («τύχη») is the unpredictable, unexpected, and incalculable factor that man does not control. Unexpected events have changed not only the course of wars, but also, sometimes, as in the case of many discoveries, the whole evolution of human history. From Xenophon we learn that a storm prevented the Athenian victors in the naval Battle of Arginusae (406 BC) to assist the shipwrecked and to gather the dead from the sea,[27] and as a result, in order to avoid the «ἄγος» (the curse), the city condemned to death and executed almost all the involved generals, except Conon, who fled to the Persian king; the fact was that Athens was deprived of a new team of capable military leaders, critical for the continuation of the war.

In the time of Thucydides, for many people chance can take on dimensions of superstition. This does not apply for him, as is evidenced mainly by the impressively accurate and objective descriptions of natural phenomena, in which many of his contemporaries would most likely give other interpretations, as in the case of the excellent description and explanation of a tidal wave (3.89).[28]

The notion of chance is imprinted in the text ninety-nine times, in twenty-one of which decisions are explained by it and the words used are «τύχη» (chance, luck, fortune) and «εὐτυχέω» (been lucky or happy), but also «ἀπροσδόκητον» (unexpected), «αἰφνίδιον» (sudden, surprising), «παράλογον» (unreasonable, implausible), «παρά δόξαν» (paradoxical, absurd), «ἀδοκήτως» (paradoxically); among the other references to chance, twenty-one describe its function, and fifty-seven simply record it. In addition to these, however, a series of natural phenomena and other events are described which, according to Thucydides, explain decisions; these phenomena, given the lack of prediction methods (even today) or the perceptions at that time, can be integrated into the chance factor. The first category is the earthquake, in six cases;[29] the state of the sea, stormy or calm, in five cases;[30] and the storm, again in five cases.[31] The second category consists of the omens and the outcome of sacrifices. The destruction of the stone herms before the Sicilian expedition (6.27) and the eclipse of the moon before the departure of the Athenian troops from Syracuse (7.50.4) was considered a bad omen and led to the revoking of Alcibiades and, respectively, to the suspension of the operation; moreover, there are three cases of unsuccessful sacrifices (5.54.2, 5.55.3, 5.116.1) which led to the suspension of military operations.

In the world of Thucydides, as in today's world, chance is considered a cause but also an excuse for success or failure. The Spartan generals, trying to encourage their soldiers, argue that their defeat is partly due to the adversity of chance, of whose changes people "may suffer some failures" (2.87.3). The same is done by the Athenians, who remind to their troops the "implausible" things happening in wars and call their men to fight "hoping that this time chance will be on our side" (7.61.3).

These shifts of chance, its favor or contrariety, are associated with the gods. The Melians hope in the equal chance with that of their opponents because they are pious (5.104), and because they also believe that their city was and is protected against the Athenians by the fortune of the gods (5.112). On the contrary, Nicias and the Athenians believe that the successes of their opponents are due to the favor of chance and their own failures are their punishment due to the envy of a god they have provoked (7.77.3). The same applies obviously to sacrifices, but also to natural phenomena. It has already been reported how Nicias and the seers have postponed for seventeen crucial days the operation of the Athenian withdrawal from Syracuse due to the eclipse of the moon (7.50.4); shortly afterwards, the intense weather phenomena was considered to be a divine will destined to their destruction (7.79.3).

Beyond, however, the interconnection of fortune with the divine or what we would call nowadays superstition, there are verses in which the random, the circumstantial and undefined are recorded. Syracusans captured an advanced Athenian fortification, but they could not capture the next

because of the presence there of Nicias, who initially did not go to battle and "happened to . . . stay there because he was sick" (6.102.2). The circumstantial is described by Thucydides in the events of Sphacteria (5.75.3), where, unexpectedly, many things have been reversed: "this is how chance made things happen, so that the Athenians on land, and even on Laconic territory, defended against the attacks of the Lacedaemonians from the sea, while the Lacedaemonians attempted to disembark against the Athenians on their own territory, which had been occupied" (4.12.3).

Thucydides is cautious even toward the unexpected (a more rational perception of chance), especially in relation to war. This is because "everything sudden and unexpected and whatever happens in the most unexpected way enslaves the moral" (2.61.3). His cautiousness against the unexpected or the fortuitous in war emerges in the negotiations between Athenians and Spartans about whether or not to go to war. The Athenians tell them: "think in advance of the unexpected while the war lasts, before you get involved. For as the war lengthens, the more it ends up depending on the fortunes, from which we are at equal distance, and whatever turns out, we will not know the dangers" (1.78.1-2). Something similar is also expressed in another case, this time by the Melians in their negotiations with the Athenians: "we know however that sometimes the evolution of wars is determined by chance which is common (for all), rather than by the different size of opponents" (5.102). It is this specific, cautious view of chance which, in addition to his confrontation with Alcibiades, makes the conservative and rather superstitious Nicias to try to limit as much as possible, during the discussions about whether to campaign in Sicily, the factor chance, to which he gives an equal role with that of the right decision. The instrument he proposes in order to remedy it is the increase of military power: "knowing that in many things we have to make the right decisions, and even more so to have good luck (which is difficult when it comes to people), I want to campaign relying as less as possible on chance, but with preparations that seem to safeguard the expedition" (6.23.3).

His caution, however, turns into criticism and warning when the influence of good luck goes beyond bounds and leads to arrogance and then to hubris. As stated in 3.45.6, Thucydides considers that chance is equally responsible with desire and hope for "arrogance," that is, to induce people into things or decisions that are false because they are caused by a feeling of success or superiority. Describing the mechanism of influence of chance on people, he argues that chance "sometimes appears unexpectedly and pushes some to risk with inferior means"; but it also pushes cities to risk "the greatest goods, such as their freedom or their power over others," because "each person and all together," in a condition that we would call today of mass psychology, "are unreasonably overestimating their forces" (3.45.6).

Similarly, he considers that cities that "with little effort and unexpectedly prosper," that is to say they have the favor of chance, tend to deviate to hubris and cannot easily manage those happy outcomes that arise unexpectedly; on the contrary, the happy outcomes "occurring to humans according to reason are safer," as "people more easily face misfortune than preserve bliss" (3.39.4). He warns, finally, that people cannot determine the course of events as they wish, especially of war, as its course is determined by "chance," and advises them to pursue and conclude peace as long as conditions are fortunate for them (4.18.3-5).

APPLYING THE SCHEMA: THE SICILIAN EXPEDITION DECISION-MAKING

Thucydides has applied his schema on the making of risky decisions to several events of the war. However, the failed Sicilian expedition represents the best exemplar of his approach. Next, I will present a case study account of the deliberations on Sicily, under the light of Thucydides thinking, which was first presented in another context, that of Diodotus' speech on the Mytilinean affair (3.5.4-7). The account shows not only how the various factors of the schema are related to each other in the making of the decision for the expedition, but also the consistency of his thinking, as well as, given the implementation of the schema in a different case, his theoretical nature.

As with the outbreak of the war, Thucydides announces his "truest cause" explanation for the expedition. But he no longer gives to this "truest cause" the same content as in the very beginning or the war (1.23.6), that is, the Athenians' greatness and the Spartans' fear, which forced them to go to war. Instead, he introduces the Athenians' desire for more power and proposes a new explanation for this phase of the war, that of hegemonic expansion: their "truest aim" («ἀληθεστάτῃ προφάσει») was "to conquer the entire Sicily" (6.6.1).[32]

The question is when has this "truest aim" been formed? It seems that the aim existed in the minds of at least one leader, Alcibiades, and of those who had previously sailed under Laches and Eurymedon to Sicily. The Athenians, as Thucydides also announced from the very beginning, wanted to conquer Sicily while "ignoring its size and the number of its inhabitants" and not realizing that they would undertake a war "slightly less important than the one against the Peloponnesians" (6.1.1). Yet, the military operation was shaped in a different form than initially planned. What started as a small force of sixty ships has evolved into a major invasion. Thucydides reveals for us how this larger expedition became crystallized in the minds of the Athenians, and embraced by their overwhelming majority through and during the decision-making process. Here is how.

The three main protagonists in the Sicilian deliberations were Nicias, Alcibiades, and the Athenians, individually or assembled («δῆμος»). A much secondary role is given to the Athenian emissaries who had returned from Sicily together with the representatives from Egesta, a Sicilian city, in the spring of 415 BC. The Egestans, been in necessity and in enmity with the Selinuntians, brought to Athens sixty talents of silver as a one-month salary for the crews of sixty ships, whose expedition they sought in order to defeat their opponents. In addition, fearing their enemies, and trying to satisfy their interests and to restore their honor, they did not restrain themselves from purposefully misinforming the Athenians—as they had earlier with their emissaries (6.46)—about their richness and their ability to further finance the expedition. The Athenians voted in favor of the expedition and named Alcibiades, Nicias, and Lamachus as its leaders. They gave them full power to help their friends in Sicily, and more broadly to arrange matters there, as "they considered best for the Athenians" (6.8).

Five days later, the assembly of citizens was again convened, in order to delineate the specifics of the expedition. It is there that Nicias, Alcibiades, and other citizens took the floor and, through these discussions, the Athenians ended up not with an ad hoc limited expedition involving sixty ships, but with a grandiose force and a full engagement in Sicily.

Nicias was thinking that the city "had not decided rightly" («οὐκ ὀρθῶς βεβουλεῦσθαι," 6.8.4) and he was against the expedition. Alcibiades was in favor. Both gave their own, very different accounts of the international situation, of the distribution of power, and of what was best for the Athenian interests. An analysis of these accounts, in combination with the deliberations and the eventual foreign policy decision, confirms the specific view that Thucydides had on the international level of politics and the "transmission belt" function of decision-making.

Thucydides, interpreting Nicias, says that he opposed the decision because he thought that Egesta was just a "weak" but "decent" pretext (6.8.4),[33] and because he had understood that their aim was, as Thucydides had announced a little earlier (6.6.1), "to conquer the entire Sicily," which was "a great" or a "difficult task" (6.8.4). He first clarified to the Athenians that he was honored by his appointment among the leaders and that what he was going to say was not motivated by fear for his life. Then he stated clearly that their decision was rushed, that further thinking was required for such a difficult expedition, and that their decision had to be revised in accordance with their interests and not those of the Egestans (6.9).

He advanced several reasons for his disagreement, reflecting his view of the situation. First, campaigning against Sicily meant not only leaving many enemies behind (in mainland Greece), but attracting many more from Sicily to come over and fight against them. Second, the peace of 421 BC was not

secure, as its terms, given the Peloponnesians' military misfortunes, were rather forced upon them; some of them considered the treaty as a disgrace, others were already violating its terms, and anyone could easily withdraw from it (6.10.1-3). Thus, if they suffered a defeat, their enemies would rush to attack them. Third, their military force would be divided between the mainland and Sicily, while their opponents' forces would be increased with men from Sicily (6.10.4). Fourth, instead of going to Sicily and fighting for the Egestans, they should better deal with their affairs in the mainland and particularly with some allies who had wronged them (6.10.5). Fifth, it was "foolish" («ἀνόητον») to undertake such an operation, because, even if they defeated the Sicilians, they would not be able to control them, given the distance and the island's large population (6.11.1). Six, even if Syracuse dominated Sicily, this was not so negative, because there were less chances one hegemony to turn against another; if they allied with the Spartans and defeated the Athenians, then the Spartans could turn against them (6.11.3). Seven, the Lacedaemonians, who pursue the reputation of bravery, were waiting for their opportunity to repel their humiliation (6.11.6). Eventually, Nicias advised them to further recover from the war and the plague and replace their losses in material and human resources. He also pointed out that the Egestans had an interest to lie in order to gain their support (6.12.1) and they were not a useful ally for them in a time of necessity (6.13.2).

Others took the floor after Nicias. Most of them supported the operation, and a few were against (6.15.1). After them, Alcibiades invited the Athenians not to change their opinion, and he, as Nicias had done earlier, gave them his view of the situation. According to him, Sicily was not a great force; the island's population was of mixed and continuously changing composition, with problems of cohesion, with constraints in decision-making, and profound divisions, which, given the appropriate policies, will lead them to join the Athenians (6.17.2-4). Further, the number of soldiers reported was overestimated, as has happened before in Greece, not to mention that many of the barbarians, out of enmity for the Syracusans, would join the Athenians in attacking them (6.17.5-6). In addition, the Peloponnesians, as in the past, were unable to hinder their operation; they could anyway invade Attica, but they could not achieve anything further, because the Athenian naval force left behind was capable of opposing them (6.17.8). Moreover, conducting an expedition in Sicily was also a matter of credibility toward their allies there, whose role was not to assist the Athenians in the mainland, but to weaken by attrition their enemies there (6.18.1). Last, the Athenians' security there, both in success and failure, was guaranteed by their navy, which anyway would dominate the seas, even if all Sicilians' naval forces were united (6.18.5).

These were the two opponents' views of the situation. Yet, it was politics at the domestic level that decided the course, and the Athenians maintained their

previous decision, to move against Sicily. Nicias has tried hard to avert them and advised them in a manner reminding us of the speech of Diodotus, as he referred to almost all the decision-making factors leading to risks. He advised them first of all not to behave or decide in accordance with their "Athenian" human nature[34] and, instead of seeking and hoping for uncertain and distant benefits, to safeguard and secure their present possessions (6.9.3). Then he suggested that while they had still had the favor of chance, they should not take risks, not try new conquests, and to deal with existing defections (6.10.5). Next, he reminded them that they had defeated the Spartans unexpectedly and contrary to their original fears and, thus, they should not underestimate their abilities and pursue the conquest of Sicily (6.11.5); instead of behaving arrogantly because of the adversaries' misfortunes, they should base their confidence upon the excellence of their plans (6.11.6). In addition, addressing the older members of his audience, he invited them not to be influenced by feelings of shame or fears of being considered cowards if they did not vote in favor of the war. Moreover, he advised them not to be carried away by the "sick desire" (or "love," «δυσέρωτας») of distant things, knowing that desire accomplishes less, and forethought the most (6.13.1). And, last, he denounced Alcibiades as being one who was seeking to satisfy his own interests and his pursuit of glory, while putting the city at risk (6.12.2).

Alcibiades replied to Nicias, addressing both the allegations made against him and the views about how to conduct the expedition, and more broadly their policy. Feeling personally offended, Alcibiades started speaking about himself, in a clearly egoistic manner, confirming Thucydides' observation that his support for the operation was motivated by his political antagonism with Nicias, who had previously attainted his honor, by his desire to exercise leadership in order to conquer Sicily and Carthage and, through his future achievements to serve his own interests of acquiring wealth and glory (6.15.2).

He argued that he deserved and was worth to be a general, and that he was unreasonably accused by his opponents as his achievements brought honor to his family and his city (6.17.1). He had participated in the Olympics and he had won several prizes, thus projecting the honor and the strength of Athens (6.17.2-3); he was also the sponsor of many activities of the city, which were also considered by foreigners as a proof of strength; without any cost for the Athenians, he had formed a block of Peloponnesian cities against the Spartans and even though the latter prevailed in battle, the block remained a source of worry for them (6.17.6).

Alcibiades continued in the same manner and gave signs of hubris; he publicly acknowledged his ambitions and justified his arrogance by saying he did not consider "unjust the one who thinks highly of himself to refuse to be equal with the rest" (6.17.4). He has also challenged those who accused

him for his way of life, to demonstrate whether there was anyone superior to him in the conduct of public affairs (6.17.6). As for his youth, he invited the Athenians to combine the élan of his age with the chance of Nicias and use both for the good of the city (6.17.1).

But Alcibiades knew how to please the Athenians and made them dream through his vision of the Athenian hegemony.[35] They created their hegemony by assisting anyone who asked for it, Greek or barbarian, he said; while if they remained inactive or made distinctions as to whom to assist, not only they wouldn't have expanded, but they would have put it at risk (6.18.2); and they had to prevent attacks, instead of being attacked. Thus, having reached that level of power, they could not know the limits for the expansion of their rule; because if they did not rule over the others, they were risking being ruled (6.18.3). And what was the purpose of the expedition? For Alcibiades it was to increase their power in the mainland, to humiliate the pride of the Spartans, and to become the masters of Greece, once the expected new power resources from Sicily were added to existing ones. In any case, the expedition would harm the Syracusans, and this would be beneficial to them and their allies (6.18.4). Finally, he argued that Athens would quickly decay if it fell into inactivity, while if it continued struggling, it would continue increasing its power and become accustomed to defending itself with deeds rather than words (6.18.6).

After the two speeches and the additional pleadings by the Egestans and the Leontines, the Athenians were even more in favor of the expedition (6.19.1). But the deliberations were not over. Nicias, feeling that the Athenians were not going in the direction he thought right, made a last effort in order to stop them (6.19.2), by presenting the difficulties of the expedition. Affirming that he was seeking the interest of the expedition, he gave them an account of the expedition's requirements, based on the worst possible assessment of the conditions such an expedition would encounter in Sicily (6.20-23); and he ended up asking for a size of forces, which would allow him "to campaign relying as less as possible on chance, but with preparations that seem to safeguard the expedition" (6. 23.3).

Yet, what happened was the opposite of what Nicias was aiming at, just to confirm Diodotus' conclusion that "it is simply impossible and very foolish to believe that human nature, when it wishes strongly to do something, can be prevented either by the power of law or by some other fear" (3.45.7)! The Athenians instead of abandoning the expedition, they became more enthusiastic («ὥρμηντο») about it! They considered that his advice was correct, but they interpreted it as they wished: they had to make sure that the expedition would be safe (6.24.2). Thus, they voted and gave full authority to the generals to decide on the size of the force and on everything, as they

thought best for the interest of the city (6.26.1). And why were they so "enthusiastic" and "everyone without exception was overwhelmed by the intense desire" («ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν», 6.24.3) to participate? As we have seen earlier in this chapter, everyone had his own reasons: the older citizens because they hoped they would conquer areas against which they were campaigning or because they arrogantly thought that such a military force was impossible to be defeated; the younger because of the desire to see and know new things, together with the hope that they will return; and the soldiers expected to earn money in the short term, but also, with the expansion of the Athenian rule, to secure steady income in the future (6.24.3) and better their economic condition. Weren't there any who disagreed? As it always happens in public deliberations, they remained silent, as they were afraid that their opposition to the expedition would be considered an unpatriotic act (6.24.4).

The deliberations were over. The overseas expedition had been decided, and it turned out to be the most expensive and most splendid of any other that one city alone had ever managed to organize. Everyone attended its departure out of admiration for its unimaginable size (6.31.1). In fact, the Athenians were competing with each other in accomplishing as best as they could their tasks and obligations for the expedition; and the whole preparation had become rather a show of force and wealth toward the other Greeks, than a preparation against the enemy (6.31.4). Thus, the expedition became known to all the Greeks not just because of its boldness and its splendor, but also because of its overwhelming strength in comparison to that of their Sicilian opponents—an expedition undertaken by the Athenians with the hopes of expanding their hegemony, considerably further than the present one (6.31.6).

The preparations were made with eagerness. Yet, it was at the moment of the departure that the men started feeling the reality of their condition. They were walking to the ships hoping to conquer Sicily and, at the same time, considering the distance of the trip, they were crying about whether they would see again their own people (6.30.6). It was then for the first time, Thucydides notes, that the perception of the campaign hazards filled their souls with anxiety, "which they had never experienced, when they voted for the campaign" (6.31.1).

This then was how the Sicilian expedition has been decided. Deliberations started with the purpose of sending sixty ships to support some allies and, progressively, expand the Athenians' rule in Sicily. They ended up with launching the largest ever expedition that one city had ever organized, thanks to human nature (including its Athenian dimension) and personal antagonisms; interests, honor, and fears of leaders and citizens; arrogance, greed, boldness,

and hope, because of their power and their recent successes, as in Sphacteria; necessities of the hegemony and of its allies; and, perhaps, chance, as the old and reserved Nicias had to face in the public the overwhelming and extremely capable Alcibiades.

Were the Athenians making a false decision by sending the expedition to Sicily? Given the ensuing disaster, the answer would seem to be yes. But they could not know what was going to happen, one may justifiably counter argue. This is true; yet they could have, despite their motivation to conquer the entire Sicily, considered at least some of the Nicias' well-founded warnings, such as those on the distance and their ignorance about "the size of the island or the number of its inhabitants" (6.1.1), and could have decided not to launch the expedition; thus, perhaps, they could have avoided risking their "greatest goods, such as their freedom or their power over others" (3.45.6).

They have not done anything of the above. They were carried away by Alcibiades' attractive vision of their hegemony (which included even Carthage), their arrogant ambition and hope to rule over all. Yet, even before the expedition sailed, the Athenians compromised it with their accusations against Alcibiades for the broken herms. It was their envy for his life style, their fear for his further political domination, and passions of political antagonism that led to the accusations against him (6.27-29). Thus, the following paradox resulted: while they were appointing him general with great powers, while sharing his vision of the Athenian empire and were convinced by his arguments to send the expedition, they were preparing to accuse him after his departure, without allowing him to deal immediately with the accusations. When, after the departure, they recalled him back to Athens, Alcibiades fled to the Spartans and both the expedition and their ambitions were left without their instigator. As Thucydides notes, his excesses, but also the Athenians' decision to entrust the city's affairs to others, less capable, brought the city to disaster (6.15.3-4).

Thus, the appetite for expansion and the conquest of Sicily had opened initially in the minds of few; but, it became the desire of the many in the course of the deliberations, after Alcibiades' vision was presented, and especially after Nicias made his strange intervention, which, despite its purpose, turned out to become in the Athenians' minds the guarantee for the expedition's success. And, as for the outbreak of the war, it was the deliberations which led to the final decision for Sicily and to its shaping. In this case, however, given the arrogance, the hopes, the passions, and the human nature of leaders and citizens, the decision, as provided by the Thucydidean second schema, was not only risky, but destined to fail, as it has been compromised from the very beginning.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the second schema of the Thucydides' thinking for decision-making. The second schema is built upon the first, that is to say on necessity and human nature, which, together with interest, fear, and honor, lead to the pursuit and the exercise of power. Thus, these factors, together with five new, boldness, arrogance, passions, hope, and chance, express the author's overall view on decision-making—a view that in the first schema starts from a simple basis, and dynamically evolves into something more complex, reflecting the Thucydides' multi-causal thinking.

The chapter has thoroughly delineated and analyzed the specific, additional factors, which, according to a very careful reading of lines 3.45.4-7, influence decision-making. This was done exclusively on the basis of the text and by highlighting, wherever possible, first the meaning and nature of the specific variables, secondly the causes that lead people to these behaviors, thirdly the way in which these factors work and affect the behavior and the decisions of people, and, finally, wherever it existed, Thucydides' criticism or possible suggestions for managing or dealing with them.

Moreover, at the end of the chapter, Thucydides' thinking schema has been used in order to interpret one of the most important decisions during the war, that on the Sicilian expedition. Thus, it was demonstrated that, besides the Mytilinean affair, he used the schema in the explanation of at least one more case—opening the way to the use of his schema as an explanatory tool in other cases of *The War* and, perhaps, of contemporary issues.

The second Thucydidean schema on decision-making, in contrast to the first, focuses and expresses the author's main view of why people are taking risks and may be led to false decisions. Of course, people are being sometimes pressured by external conditions; yet, in this schema the primary role is played by purely subjective factors that are difficult to quantify. It is possible, however, through qualitative analysis and the distinction of intensity in each of the concepts—such as arrogance, ranging from underestimating the other to arrogance, and, beyond it, to hubris, or boldness ranging from cowardice, to boldness, to bravery, and to temerity—to reach a better understanding of them and a possible useful application of this understanding in the prevention of errors. It is also possible, by gathering and grouping the many different cases of decisions listed in the text, in which these concepts appear and act, to clarify the way these concepts vary and how they work in general. Finally, it is precisely the variation in the intensity of each concept that allows Thucydides (and us) to separate those cases in which the specific variables, usually in their most intense value (i.e., temerity, hubris, passion, or "reckless" hope), lead to false decisions from those which, possibly combined with

some other factors, can lead to correct or, at least, to decisions that make sense; to determine, thus, in this indirect way, even when the false decision is probable.

NOTES

1. The name "Diodotus" comes from the adjective «διόδοτος», that is, the one given or sent by Zeus. The adjective «διόδοτος» occurs before Thucydides in Aeschylus and in Pindar as «διόσδοτος». Synonyms of it are «διόπεμπτος» (sent by Zeus) and «διοπετής» (originating from Zeus). Moreover, "Eucrates" means the one who prevails by goodness or the one who makes good prevail.

2. In the ancient Greek text, the word is «ὀργή», which, in this verse, everyone translates as "passion(s)".

3. Hobbes translates the phrase «ἐξάγουσιν ἐς τοὺς κινδύνους» as "impels people to danger". The word «κινδύνους» may be translated as "dangers" as well, which is its common meaning even in Modern Greek.

4. In ancient Greek «ἔρως»; the word is used similarly in 6.13.1.

5. "The central portion of Diodotus's speech is a highly theoretical discussion of the relation of human nature to law and restraints of all kinds. It is, in fact, the most sustained theoretical treatment of this issue in Thucydides"; and "Diodotus's implicit account of the basis of Athenian imperialism and its relation to human nature in general is fundamentally the same as that of Thucydides"; see Forde, "Thucydides on the Causes of Athenian Imperialism", 444–45, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1958267. As Forde further maintains (446f) the opinion that "within the context of the debate over Mytilene, Diodotus's speech reflects Thucydides' own views" is held by a number of scholars, such as Shorey (1893, pp. 67–70), Romilly (1963, pp. 329f), Cornford (1907, pp. 121, 135), Grene (1950, pp. 59, 66), Ehrenberg (1947, p. 51), Bury (1909, p. 137), Finley (1963, p. 83), and De Ste. Croix (1972, p. 21). Bolotin comments on Diodotus: "his speech is characterized by a gentleness, and even serenity, that are unparalleled within Thucydides' work and that seem to mirror these qualities in Thucydides himself"; Bolotin, "Thucydides", 28. For the speeches of Diodotus and Cleon, see Paula A. Debnar, "*Diodotus*' *Paradox* and the Mytilene Debate (Thucydides 3.37–49)," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 143 (2000): 161–78, http://www.rhm.uni-koeln.de/143/Debnar.pdf.

6. De Romilly continues and enumerates all the variables of chapter 3.45.4-7; see de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 329.

7. Diodotus thinking clearly applies to men and cities as shown by Bolotin, "Thucydides," 31.

8. In the literature "daring" has been related to the "character" of the Athenians; see Forde, "Thucydides," 434.

9. See *Iliad*, B.48-397.

10. These ideas are reflected by the nineteenth-century Greek poet Constantine Cavafy in his poem *Thermopylae*: "And even more honor is due to them, when they foresee (as many do foresee) that in the end Ephialtis will make his appearance, that

the Medes will break through after all"; Onassis Foundation, Official Website of the Cavafy Archive, http://www.cavafy.com/poems/content.asp?id=69&cat=1.

11. Desmond points out that "τόλμα is most effective against weak opponents, but in the wrong conditions can be disastrous"; see Desmond, "Lessons of Fear", 376.

12. The other Greeks have been accusing the Spartans, after their defeat in Sphacteria, for cowardice, lack of will, and slowness; see 5.75.3.

13. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 322.

14. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 327.

15. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 322.

16. As, for example, in the two cases of 1.120.3 and 4 where Thucydides is using the verb «ἐπαίρομαι» or in the case of 6.11.5 where he uses «καταφρονῶ»; see p. 326, note 4.

17. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, 329.

18. De Romilly, 324.

19. De Romilly, 322, note 1; I do not count these three cases among those of arrogance.

20. See similarly for the Syracusans in 7.41.3.

21. In one case, the word «ὀργή» («τὰς ὀργάς») merely approaches the meaning of human nature (3.82.2); see in the previous chapter under "necessity" and "human nature."

22. On this topic see William Desmond, "Lessons of Fear", who considers this collective «ἔρως» as an ingredient of the Athenian national character. See also Steven Forde, "Thucydides," 439–40.

23. The importance of this cause is underestimated by Thucydides, as in several cases, either because it was rejected by the protagonists themselves, such as Hermocrates (4.61.3), or because it did not prevent the formation of alliances for other reasons, such as hostility or interest; see characteristically in 7.57, in which he describes the composition of the two allied camps, beyond and above common origins.

24. "They were killing those of their fellow citizens who considered their enemies" (3.81.4); and "in reality some were killed by personal enmity" (3.81.4).

25. See the relative to revenge text by Cohen, "War, Moderation, and Revenge in Thucydides", 270–89, DOI: 10.1080/15027570601081127.

26. On this point see Scott Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche Owe Thucydides?", 40, Project MUSE.

27. See Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.VI.35.

28. In Thucydides "a 'chance' event may be understood either as an objective fact, or due to subjective ignorance"; see William Desmond, "Lessons of Fear," 371.

29. See 1.101.2, 2.8.3, 3.89, 5.45.4, 5.50.5, 6.95.1.

30. See 2.25.2, 3.49.4, 4.3.1, 4.4.1, 6.104.2.

31. See 2.77.6, 3.22.1, 6.70.1, 7.79.3, 8.42.1.

32. The words used in 6.6.1 are «ἀληθεστάτη προφάσει» in their first meaning, "true cause," as in 1.23.6.

33. Here, in 6.8.4, the word «προφάσει» is used alone and takes its third meaning, "pretext," as in the "greatest cause" of 1.126.1.

34. The words chosen are «τοὺς τρόπους τοὺς ὑμετέρους», which may be understood also as "your ways" or "your character." The use of words certainly allows one to think in terms of the Athenians' national character, something confirmed a little later by the speech of Alcibiades.

35. See Steven Forde, *The Ambition to Rule. Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989).

Chapter 6

Is There a "Right" Decision?

Having previously discussed the two Thucydidean decision-making schemata and having examined why people make false decisions and undertake risks, the next obvious question to tackle is what Thucydides considers to be a right decision.

Thucydides and the protagonists of his era, leaders and people, are anguishing over and are struggling to be good decision-makers («εύβουλοι», 1.84.3), to reach the right decision («εὖ βουλεύεσθαι», «εὐβουλία», 3.42.1, 3.44.1), or the excellent («ἄριστα βουλεύσεσθε», 1.43.4), or the best decision («κράτιστα βουλεύσεσθε», 1.85.2). The right decision, according to the great Athenian, makes us stronger, increases our benefits and creates problems to the opponents. Diodotus, at the end of his oration, offers us a first ingredient for a right decision by inviting his fellow citizens to try the Mytilineans "with calmness" (or "with serenity," «καθ΄ήσυχίαν», 3.48.1). He argues that such a decision will be "beneficial in the future" and "scare away their enemies," because "whoever decides correctly is more powerful against his enemies than he who recklessly attacks against them with acts of power" (3.48.2). Archidamus thinks the same when discussing about whether to start a war with the Athenians, and advises his compatriots not to rush to make a decision, underlining, instead, that "these decisions will be the best for you and the most terrible for your enemies" (1.85.2).

Thucydides, like others who, after him, have dealt with or have studied decision-making, gives advice and proposes criteria for the "right" decision. In his thinking, the first and dominant element or necessary component of the right decision is undoubtedly prudence («σωφροσύνη», sobriety, 1.80.2);[1] its manifestation is the rationalized, the "wise prudence" («σωφροσύνη ἔμφρων»), as he, using a noun and an adjective of the same root, calls it, and

attributes it to Spartans. Its characteristic components and, at the same time, the right decision criteria are the avoidance of haste and the examination of all issues with calm,[2] the rejection of arrogance and flattery, the sangfroid and the management of anger,[3] stability in opinions, the feeling of honor and shame, the obedience to laws, the commitment to acting, the respect for the opponent, the preparation and foresight,[4] the previous experiences.[5] Thucydides, through Archidamus, maintains:

> As for the slowness and procrastination for which we are blamed a great deal, do not be ashamed. Because, if you rush, you will end the war later, since you undertake it unprepared, and, besides, we always live in a city which is free and very glorious. And this precisely is wise prudence; because of it, us alone, in happiness we are not committing hubris and in the misfortunes less than others we are receding; if one tries with praise to put us in danger contrary to our opinion, we are not drifting because of the charm of his words; and if one attempts to push us with accusations, we do not change our opinion because of this pressure. Out of decency we become good in war and in the making of right decisions; good at war, because shame is a greater part of prudence, as bravery is of shame; good in judgments, because we do not learn so much as to despise the laws out of arrogance, and because of our rigor we become prudent and do not violate them. . . . Let us always prepare as if we had to deal with rivals who are making right decisions: and we must not base our hopes on the errors that they will make, but on how we provide for our own security; we should not believe that a man differs greatly from another man, but the one who prevails is the one who is prepared for the most demanding difficulties. (1.84)

Another characteristic of prudence is the reserved, grounded, management of success: "prudent are those who manage the successes as if they did not consider them completely secured (and the same are also more sensible in the misfortunes) and they understand that the war is not confined to the limits that they want, but its course is determined by their fates" (4.18.4). And a precondition for it is the responsibility and the sanctions for erroneous decisions: "we give our advice responsibly, and you hear them irresponsibly. For if he who persuades, and he who follows, were punished the same, you would decide with greater prudence" (3.43.4).

The opponents of prudence and of the right decision are many. The first on the list is folly («ἄνοια»), which Thucydides places at the forefront of the most characteristic generalization on the war and the decision to undertake it; it is a criticism on war which may surprise those who do not know Thucydides well:

> those who have the choice, if in all else they prosper, it is great folly to go to war. (2.61.1)

It is followed by stupidity, cowardice, and negligence, with the gravest of all errors being the opponent's contempt. All of them together form the opposite of prudence, insanity:

> We do not know how such a policy can be free from the three major errors: stupidity, cowardice and negligence. For in order to avoid these mistakes, you have fallen in the most devastating, the contempt of the enemy, which, because it has hurt many, it has come to be called by the opposite name, insanity. (1.122.4)

The long list of vices that run counter to prudence is completed by haste, anger, folly (again), lack of education and narrow mindedness: "I consider two things are against the right decision, haste and anger, from which the first one is usually accompanied by folly, while the second by lack of education and narrow mindedness" (3.42.1).

Beyond prudence, certainly a second element for a right decision is intelligence («ξύνεσις», cleverness, acumen, foresight).[6] Thucydides presents it both as a criterion of a correct decision, often invoked by the orators, inviting their fellow citizens (1.140.1) or their opponents (4.18.5, 4.85.6) to demonstrate it, and as an element that one can use to his advantage (1.75.1). In fact, he praises those with intelligence, leaders or peoples. He praises Themistocles, possessing "native intelligence" (1.138.3), Brasidas for his virtue and intelligence (4.81.2), Hermocrates, "not inferior in intelligence from anyone" (6.72.2), or even the Peisistratids, tyrants of Athens, who "demonstrated virtue and intelligence" (6.54.5). Interestingly, he also commends, in just one case, a "barbarian" people, the Scythians, for whom he writes that, as to how they managed their lives, no other people could compare to them in judiciousness («εὐβουλία») and intelligence (2.97.6). Yet, Thucydides warns against those cases that people, thinking that they are intelligent, disobey the laws or disregard the common interest, which may result in "harming" their cities (3.37.4).

The third element or the means for a right decision is the process itself. He considers that the logical and thorough discussion of the matter creates the conditions for a right decision:

> We ourselves judge or examine things correctly, believing that what harms the works is not the discussion, but not to be enlightened beforehand with the discussion of what is to be done (2.40.2); and, whoever insists that reason should not be the guide in our actions, he is either stupid or selfish. Stupid because he thinks he can otherwise shed light into the hidden future. (3.42.2)

Also, conditions for a right decision are created when those who decide have a more holistic view of the issues and look ahead, or, as we would say today, have some medium- or long-term planning:

> for the sake of the great interests of the city and in circumstances like this, you must demand from us (who advise you) to look farther from you, who are examining them for a while (3.43.4); and, I consider that we should think more about the future than for the present (3.44.3).

Finally, among the factors contributing to the right decision, leadership is undoubtedly very important. Let's see what Thucydides considers as virtues and qualities for two extremely charismatic personalities. Themistocles, in addition to his native intelligence, could quickly find solutions to everyday problems and could predict the evolution of things in the future (1.138.3). Pericles was moderate and possessed too the ability to predict (2.65.5), had a strong intellect, was incorruptible, did not pursue power with unorthodox means and, above all, he was not driven by the people but he was the one who led the people (2. 65.8).

The above-mentioned elements proposed as ingredients for a right decision certainly attract attention. It is difficult to refute that a thorough discussion of a matter by prudent or intelligent people with the widest possible understanding of the subject can help to make a right decision. But what one may observe is that most of the attributes of prudence are primarily identified as avoiding those negative factors which he has already detected and that have been analyzed in the previous chapters. We are, thus, returning to the logic of avoiding the causes leading to a flawed decision. This means, on the one hand, that Thucydides does not contradict and does not cancel himself, since essentially, based on the quoted excerpts, he recommends that the influence of the factors leading to the risks be excluded or limited, and, instead, to use in the decision-making certain virtues, such as prudence, intelligence, sobriety, patience, foresight. On the other hand, he leads us to wonder whether these virtues or benign elements are useful in making the right decision.

It seems that it is in fact impossible for everyone to agree, on the one hand, what, at any given time, is prudent, and, on the other, that whatever is prudent leads also to a right decision in any case that such a need arises; and it is rather difficult someone, anyone, who must decide and finds himself within the pressing environment of a crisis or of negotiations, to have the time so as to avoid rushing, to have the necessary pre-training, and to assemble the necessary material power factors. Moreover, especially today, technological developments and the speed of information leave very little time to prepare for any reaction.[7]

Thucydides realizes that prudence alone is not always enough and makes some other suggestions. Thus, in one case, he introduces the concept of the "thoughtlessly optimistic" (hopeful, «ἀπερισκέπτως εὔελπις»)—a concept resulting out of a combination of two, at first appearance, contradicting words, since it refers to that person who, by combining opposing features,

moves deliberately, not outside, but rather above the level and limits of prudence: "none in such a necessity should not want to appear as been intelligent, by calculating all the dangers surrounding us; instead, everyone, being thoughtlessly optimistic, must face the enemy, convinced that he will come out of such a struggle a winner" (4.10.1). In a similar case, he expresses the view that one who thinks or decides rightly («ὀρθῶς βουλεύεται») is he who pursues the greatest goals, even if, because of his aspirations, he receives the envy of men; because hate does not last long, and the splendor of achievements is left behind as "a memorable glory into the future" (2.64.5).

The right decision, moreover, is often judged by the result and more often after a long time. The issue, however, is not what someone thinks or what we will think after years. The question is how to judge what is right at the time one has to decide. This is extremely difficult, and Thucydides distinguishes two situations in 1.120.5. In the first he categorizes those operations which, although badly planned, succeeded "because the opponents happened to be more foolish" than those who had planned them. In the second, he includes the well-planned operations that failed in their implementation, due to an overconfidence that is not matched by the actual implementation. In his text, however, there is also a third possibility, of those people who followed all the rules and decided very carefully for their future, taking into account all the available parameters, and yet, because of what has happened unexpectedly, it turned out they made a tragic and very costly mistake. Such was the case of the Chians, described by the great author:

> Next to the Lacedaemonians, only the Chians . . . succeeded at the same time to prosper and to be prudent. . . . And they dared to defect, if anyone thinks they did it without considering their security, only when they were going to undertake the risk together with many and brave allies, and they understood that even the Athenians themselves, after the disaster in Sicily, did not deny that things undoubtedly did not go very well for them. And if, because of the absurdities of the human condition, they were wrong, this they committed with many others, who also believed that the Athenians were fast moving towards their disaster. (8.24.)

Based on all the above, it seems that there is no a priori right decision and, above all, that the "right" decision cannot be defined or determined in advance. That is why the idea of recommending ways or courses of action toward making the right decision is vague and uncertain. Because it is different and rather ineffective to recommend to someone, without knowing in advance the circumstances, to be prudent, lucid, or patient when making decisions, and different to point out that greed, arrogance, passions, baseless hopes, or trust in chance often lead to flawed decisions and risks. It is

different, for example, to invite the members of a government, the executives of a corporation or the crew of a vessel to cooperate with one another, and different, based, for example, on the studies on bureaucratic politics, to advise to control, as much as possible, individual, group, or institutional antagonisms, as they lead to conflicts, inaction, and, possibly, to flawed decisions.

Instead, what one can generally consider are the undesirable or damaging phenomena in the decision-making process, as well as the mistakes that occur in the process or in the decision itself, which, phenomena and errors, have been recorded in the relevant literature. Therefore, relying on Thucydides' view that "the fewer mistakes one makes, the more he serves his interest" (1.42.2), if one knows the processes of the decision-making, the why, how, and when people are led into mistakes, he may then be able to avoid them, thus improving his ability and, above all, his chances of deciding correctly.

NOTES

1. Wilson, who translates it as "safe thinking," maintains that «σωφροσύνη» appears in Thucydides as a Spartan concept, as he is not using the word in the speeches of Pericles and he makes, exceptionally, a general reference in the speech of Diodotus; see John R. Wilson, "Sophrosyne in Thucydides," *The Ancient History Bulletin* 4, no. 3 (1990): 53–4. On the concept, see Helen North, *Sophrosyne* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966).

2. Or with serenity, with leisure; see also for example: "decide then slowly because it's not about unimportant things" (1.78.1); "we, who are going to bear the greater responsibility for the good or the bad (of the war), let us look at them calmly" (1.83.3); "let us not rush to decide in one day for many people and money and cities and glory, but let us think calmly" (1.85.1).

3. See 1.122.1: "whoever manages the war with sobriety («εὐοργήτως») is more confident of the result, while whoever conducts it with passions falls into greater mistakes."

4. See also 6.13.1: "With desire very little is attainable, with forethought (foresight) too many."

5. See also 4.17.4 and 2.89.7: "many armies have so far been defeated by weaker ones because of their inexperience."

6. As seen in the previous chapter, "intelligence based on a sense of superiority makes courage more stable" (2.62.5).

7. This phenomenon is commented by Henry Kissinger in his most recent book: "new methods of accessing and communicating information unite regions as never before and project events globally, but in a manner that inhibits reflection, demanding of leaders that they register instantaneous reactions in a form expressible in slogans"; see *World Order* (London: Penguin, 2014), 2.

Conclusion

For centuries the study of Thucydides was circumscribed by the stereotypical perception formed in the Hellenistic and Roman periods on him and his work: Thucydides was a historian who had written the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. It was in the second half of the twentieth century, with the development of Political Science and of International Relations, that academics started thinking of him as something more than a historian, as someone who at least had a precursory scientific method, and, further, as someone who had theoretical insights on matters of war and peace. Until then, discussions of classicists and historians had centered on whether his work was unitary, accurate, whether the ideas included in the speeches were his or those of the orators, and whether he had a scientific method or not.

International Relations theorists have basically moved away from these discussions and centered on the essence of his contribution, which is his explanatory insights about politics at the international level and the behavior of organized entities, especially in relation to war. This approach opened the way to an extremely fertile period in the study of Thucydides, as many saw him offering the basis for the competing paradigms of International Relations: Thucydides thus became a classical realist, a neorealist, a constructivist, and, lately, a neoclassical realist.

In the context of these inter-paradigm debates four things occurred. First, some international relations theorists reached ahistorical conclusions, crediting him with a structural view of international politics. Others, seeking intellectual ammunition against the former, returned to the previous classicist and history debates, thus enlarging considerably the scope of the discussions. A third group, given their enthusiasm, the attractiveness of Thucydides' authority, and the use of misleading translations, came to abusive readings or uses of his work. Most importantly, however, it was the overlooking, with

very few exceptions, that Thucydides, with his different intellectual and writing tools and in a very different political and scientific context, had his own approach to the international level of politics.

In this Thucydidean approach, the role of the decision-making processes in dealing with matters of war and peace is present and important. It is certain that classicists—among the first Jacqueline de Romilly—spoke of the psychological dimensions in the behavior of the warring parties and, later, political scientists of their particular "national character." Yet, overall, the role of deliberations was underestimated, if not completely disregarded, despite the fact that it could give answers to important issues, such as the content of the "truest cause." Perhaps, this may have happened because many thinkers, until the middle of the twentieth century, had not in their intellectual quiver the conceptual arrow of decision-making or because they had not observed the repetitive use of Thucydides' schematized thinking in the explanation of events.

The latter observation was the point of departure for the present study, whose main aim was to present Thucydides' thinking about how people decide, as structured by him in two schemata: the first about how decisions are made in politics (1.75.3, 1.76.2), and the second, connected with the previous, on the reasons why people are making decisions that drive them into risks (3.45.4). This aim was combined with two others; first to provide a different, holistic approach to Thucydides, and, by using it, to reach a satisfactory explanation of the events he wrote; and, second, to highlight some of its exaggerated or even abusive readings, in order to counter possible unwanted theoretical and practical implications, such as those related to the discussions about the inevitability of war.

The itinerary to reach these destinations started with the sketching of the meaning of decision-making, its difficulties in terms of uncertainty, lack of information, and cost, and showing that Thucydides and the Hellenes of the fifth century BC had a clear idea for the role of these parameters. Then, the second chapter has put Thucydides' work in the historical perspective and offered a brief account of the mythological, theological, literary and scientific background of decision-making, showing how his contribution was an important turning point for moving from the supernatural to the rational.

In the next stage the book has dealt with all the discussions made in the secondary literature on Thucydides, which were structured and presented for the first time as the seven debates on Thucydides. Presenting the arguments and the counterarguments in the context of the seven debates was the opportunity to clarify some methodological issues and adopt the necessary stand for the continuation of the study. First, the book adheres to the unitary view; second, it accepts the veracity of Thucydides' text; and, third, as to the

authenticity of the speeches, it accepts the opinion that Thucydides, although having a degree of creative freedom, respected and reproduced the main ideas of what was said when he was present, or what was expected to be said in the particular historic moment, when absent. As to the fourth debate, based on nine different points, the conclusion reached is that it is impossible not to recognize in his work a degree of scientific and theoretical quality and, therefore, his contribution as one of an early social scientist has to be acknowledged. This conclusion and stand was further supported by the observation that Thucydides' conception of politics at the international level was unique, placing him above present-day categorizations.

Indeed, in the International Relations inter-paradigm debate, Thucydides was claimed by classical realists, neorealists, and constructivists. Despite the fact that classical realists, followed by constructivists, have more reasons to claim him, academics of all three tendencies have missed the point of Thucydides' particularity. Thucydides is one of a kind! He certainly privileges power and human nature; but in both his narrative and political analysis he also privileges deliberations—meaning the expression of what in his time was the most formal and common expression of decision-making. Deliberations involving leaders and citizens function in Thucydides as the transmission belt between politics at the international and the domestic levels. Deliberations are a consistent characteristic of his work, through which citizens determined their behavior. Archidamus and Sthenelaidas, Cleon and Diodotus, and Nicias and Alcibiades, had different views about what the international context and what resulted as their city's policy was produced by and through deliberations, meaning through decision-making. This particular Thucydidean characteristic was observed by neoclassical realists, who, under this perspective, rightly added their claim for Thucydides being the archetype of neoclassical realism.

It was also in this debate that the ahistorical approaches and some of the observed abusive readings were initially discussed in order to find a way on how to read Thucydides. The two remedies proposed by the study at hand is, first, a holistic approach, that is, having a good and precise idea of the entire text and taking under consideration other disciplines' approaches, and, most importantly, second, a self-disciplined involvement of any interpreter, consisting primarily in avoiding the projection of personally convenient opinions or conclusions through or under the authority of Thucydides.

A holistic interpretation would had avoided or would never had opened the discussion about the inevitability of war and, instead, would have focused on what had created the "necessity" or "forced" («ἀναγκάσαι») the Spartans to go to war. Equally, such an approach would have avoided limiting the discussion of the "truest cause" just in the verse of 1.23.6, but it would have

extended at least in the entire first book, as did Jaffe for his "national character" interpretation or in the entire work, as did Jacqueline de Romilly for her interpretation based on Athenian imperialism.

My approach in this book, based on Thucydides' decision-making thinking, shows that the war between the Athenians and the Spartans was not inevitable and, among others, at a later stage, the Sicilian expedition—for another "truest cause" (6.6.1), that of Athenian expansionism—was not inevitable either. Thucydides' work is primarily about men deciding on war and peace; it is either individuals as leaders or groups as the Athenians, the Spartans, the Syracusans, the Argives, the Corcyraeans, and so many others, deciding all over the text, and not any rational, unitary "like-unit" called city-state, whose behavior is determined by the pressure of the international system's "structure."

It is at this point that the book enters the presentation of Thucydides' decision-making thinking and focuses on the way in which he has interpreted, in hundreds of different cases, the decisions taken for and during the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians. Thucydides, in order to understand and explain, has schematized that men living within a natural, social, political, and economic environment (domestic or international) decide or behave, individually or collectively, according to necessities and their nature, especially when it comes to the quest, exercise, and preservation of power. Together with these factors, Thucydides added three more, in order of importance: interest (as necessity and the person's nature may define it), fear (as each one receives or develops it), and honor (as a person within a given society and time feels it). All five factors were exhaustively presented and analyzed as to their nature, as to how they are created in the minds and souls of people, how they affect human behavior and decisions, and how they can be dealt with.

The study of each factor has revealed that in most cases their influence depended on their understanding by the actors, individuals or entities, and shaped their decision-making, accordingly. This was also confirmed by examining how each was related to what has been known as the "truest cause" of the war (1.23.6). Inquiring over the specific relationship has uncovered the complementarity of the "truest cause" with necessity, human nature, interest, fear and honor, and demonstrated that these factors were present and influenced the decision-making process which led to war; or, to put it differently, it has shown how the first schema could unveil the true meaning of the "truest cause." In fact, besides fear and necessity, the other three factors, human nature, interest, and honor, were also in play—not with an equal preponderance—during the decision-making process leading to war. The Spartans felt the necessity to go to war when they perceived the Athenians' greatness as a threat not only to be feared, but also harming their

interests and honor. It appears that Thucydides' world is neither deterministic nor a neorealist world; it is men making the right or the wrong decisions by and for themselves.

The question of the wrong decisions is addressed by the second Thucydides' decision-making schema, when power is combined with or produces, according to 3.45, hubris, arrogance, and self-confidence, but also boldness, passions, hope, even safety against chance. All these factors, either individually or in different combinations, can lead to flawed decisions, putting a person or people at risk and imposing cost(s) on them. As for the first schema, the new factors were also studied thoroughly on the basis of the text and by determining their meaning and nature, their causes, the way they affect men's decisions, and Thucydides' criticism or possible suggestions for managing them. What was observed is that these factors, alone or in combination, lead men to undertake risks when they take their most intense value (i.e., temerity, hubris, passion, or "reckless" hope).

The second schema was announced by Diodotus in the context of Thucydides' analysis of the Mytilinean affair. This is why the schema was used to interpret one other of the most important decisions during the war, that on the Sicilian expedition. The account of this decision-making process has demonstrated that Thucydides was consistent in his thinking and his methodology. He first announced the "truest cause" of the expedition, namely the conquest of Sicily and the increase of their power; and then, by presenting the deliberations, he has shown how the Athenians' view on the necessities of their hegemony, the workings of their nature, their fear of losing their rule and being ruled instead, the preservation of their prestige and the honoring of their alliances, but also how their power and the resulting arrogance, boldness, hopes and passions, have led them to undertake such an unprecedented and risky expedition.

Finally, the book's itinerary ended with examining another possibility: whether Thucydides actually had a "right decision" theory. It seems that for him there is no a priori right decision and, above all, that the "right" decision cannot be defined or predetermined; that is why ideas or recommended ways toward making the right decision are disparate, vague, and, occasionally, contradictory. Instead, what appears to be a constant in his thinking are the undesirable phenomena appearing in and influencing the decision-making process. Thus, what one can do is to rely on Thucydides' insight that "the fewer mistakes one makes, the more he serves his interest" (1.42.2).

This generalized view is possibly the result of his observation that the war he "wrote" was catastrophic: for himself, a young wealthy Athenian who, exiled and dishonored, lived to see the destruction of his homeland; for his city, which lost its hegemony and almost never recovered from its destruction; and for his contemporary Greeks (1.23.1-2), who, despite their advanced

understanding of politics, have failed, as many others since then, to conduct their individual and public affairs in a way to avoid war and eventually agreed to a dishonoring peace with the king of Persia (387 BC).

Thucydides' men are certainly influenced by the factors he has presented, such as necessity, human nature, and all the others. Yet, they are free to choose between happiness and the irrationality of war. Thucydides, in an analogy with his contemporary Hippocratics, gave two warnings for the plague of war: first, that "for those who have the choice («αἵρεσις») and who prosper in all others, it is great folly to go to war" (2.61.1) and, second, that the way things turn in war is "unknown" (2.11.4).

In that sense Thucydides is not as many misreadings want him to be the warmonger realist or the unrestrained imperialist, as expressed by the ideas of the hubristic Athenians in Melos or by Alcibiades in the Agora. He shows why men are attracted by power, how they choose to behave once they have it, and why and how they end up taking risky decisions. But he also shows that men have the choice.

It is basically for this reason I maintain that Thucydides' ideas resonate with the twenty-first century. Men, leaders or citizens, may choose as to whether they want to be influenced by arrogance, temerity, passions and reckless hopes. And citizens may certainly choose as to who is going to govern them or as to whom they are going to entrust their future, to listen to, and to follow: Pericles or his power-hungry successors, Archidamus the experienced and wise or Sthenelaidas the populist, Cleon the brute and uneducated or Diodotus the bright and foresightful, Nicias the reserved or Alcibiades the cunning, but also extravagant and ambitious? This is why, ultimately, it is choice and the avoidance of the wrong decisions that for Thucydides (and for all of us) may render war not inevitable.

Appendix 1

Index of decision-making factors/ concepts in the text of *The War*[1]

Human Nature—of the Athenians
1.70.9, 2.36.4, 6.9.3, 7.14.2, 7.14.4, 7.48.4, 1.121.4

Human Nature—mob, mass, people's assembly
1.140.1, 2.65.4, 4.28.3, 6.34.7, 6.63.2, 8.1.4

Information—evaluation by Thucydides
1.10, 1.20, 1.21, 1.22

Information—lack of, interpretation
1.1.1, 1.22.4, 2.62.5, 4.68.2, 4.126.4, 6.11.4, 6.41.4, 6.104.1-3, 7.8.2, 8.14.2, 8.66.3

Information—as misinformation
2.33.3, 3.22.8, 4.46.5, 4.80.3-4, 6.8.2, 6.46.3-4, 6.64.2-3, 8.108.4

Interest—as a cause
A.3.2, 1.19.1, A.28.3, A.31.2, A.73.2, 1.75.3, 1.76.1, 1.76.2, A.90.3, A.91.6, A.92.7, 1.123.1, 1.141.6, 2.7.1, 2.29.3, 2.37.3, 2.40.5, 2.61.1, 2.65.7, 2.65.11, 2.89.8, 3.43.1, 3.68.4, 3.82.6, 3.84.1, 3.86.4, 4.59.2, 4.59.4, 4.60.1, 4.61.3, 5.17.1, 5.37.3, 5.40.3, 5.81.2, 5.91.1-2, 6.69.3, 6.83.2, 6.83.3, 6.83.4, 6.84.2-3, 7.5.3, 7.51.1, 7.57.1, 7.57.9, 8.41.1

Interest—as a function or reference
1.9.2, 1.22.4, 1.74.1, 1.32.1, 1.32.3, 1.33.1, 1.35.5, 1.36.1, 1.39.3, 1.42.2, 1.73.2, 1.75.5, 1.123.1, 1.124.1, 2.43.1, 2.44.3, 2.51.2, 2.60.2-3, 2.63.3, 2.89.9, 3.13.5, 3.14.1, 3.37.3, 3.38.1, 3.40.4, 3.44.1-3, 3.47.5, 3.56.3, 3.56.6, 3.56.7, 3.71.2, 3.95.3, 4.17.1, 4.26.5, 4.31.2, 4.44.1, 4.59.3, 4.60.1, 4.87.1, 4.108.1, 4.120.3, 5.9.4, 5.9.5, 5.38.2 5.90, 5.92, 5.93, 5.95, 5.98.1, 5.105.4, 5.106.1, 5.107, 5.112.3, 6.13.2, 6.16.1, 6.17.1, 6.80.2, 6.85.1, 6.85.3, 6.87.3, 6.92.3, 7.47.4, 7.62.4, 7.64.2, 7.69.2, 8.45.5, 8.70

Necessity—as a cause
1.23.6, 1.28.3, 1.32.5, 1.37.1, 1.37.3, 1.49.7, 1.61.3, 1.75.3, 1.136.2, 1.137.4, 2.17.1, 2.83.1, 2.83.3, 3.2.1, 3.4.2, 3.27.1, 3.32.2, 3.53.3, 3.58.2, 3.71.1, 3.82.2, 3.90.3, 4.25.1, 4.30.2, 4.74.3, 4.125.1, 5.7.1, 5.25.3, 5.84.2, 5.89, 6.10.2, 6.18.3, 6.44.1, 6.69.1, 6.87.2, 6.87.4, 7.13.1, 7.21.3, 7.27.4, 7.28.3, 7.47.2, 7.50.3, 7.57.1, 7.57.4, 7.57.6, 7.57.11, 7.62.2., 7.62.4, 7.81.3, 7.84.3, 8.61.1, 8.95.2, 8.95.3, 8.99

Necessity («βιάζομαι», «πιέζω» or indirectly)—as a cause
1.24.6, 1.28.3, 1.49.7, 1.76.2, A.88, 1.118.2, 3.52.1, 7.84.2

Necessity—as a function or simple reference
1.33.1, 1.71.3, 1.76.1, 1.99.1, 1.107.2, 1.118.2, 1.144.3, 2.15.2, 2.75.3, 2.89.6, 3.33.3, 3.39.2, 3.39.7, 3.40.3, 3.40.6, 3.45.4, 4.10.1, 4.12.1, 4.27.4, 4.40.1, 4.59.2, 4.87.3, 4.98.5, 4.98.6, 5.35.3, 5.7.3, 5.104, 5.105.2, 6.21.2

(εμμέσως), 6.24.1, 6.92.3, 7.38.2, 7.39.2, 7.48.5, 7.51.1, 7.57.7, 7.60.3, 7.64.1-2 (εμμέσως), 7.71.2, 7.71.4, 7.77.7, 8.3.1, 8.27.3, 8.41.3, 8.57.1, 8.75.3, 8.76.1, 8.76.4, 8.88, 8.90.5, 8.96.4

Passion—as a cause
1.41.3, 1.122.1, 3.45.4, 6.17.1, 6.57.3

Passion—as a function or reference
1.140.1, 3.84.2, 7.68.1, 8.83.3

Population
2.11.9, 2.13.2, 2.35-46, 2.87, 3.74.1, 4.10.4, 4.126.5, 5.66.4, 7.5.3-4, 7.11.3, 7.14.2, 7.77.7, 7.81.2, 7.84.3-5, 8.94.3

Revenge—as a cause
1.56.2, 1.96.1, 2.42.4, 2.67.4, 3.84.1, 3.84.3, 4.62.3, 6.57.3, 6.76.3, 8.82.1

Revenge—as a function or appearance
A.53.2, 1.121.5, 1.132.1, 1.136.4, 1.136.4, 1.141.7, 2.42.4, 2.53.4, 2.74.3, 3.38.1, 3.40.5, 3.46.5, 3.47.5, 3.56.2, 3.58.2, 3.63.1, 3.67.1, 3.67.3, 3.67.5, 3.82.3, 3.82.7, 3.84.2, 4.19.2, 4.62.4, 4.63.2, 4.63.2, 5.69.1, 6.80.4, 8.50.3
1.120.4, 2.40.3, 2.61.4, 3.39.3, 4.92.5, 7.21.3

Land space
1.36.2, A.68.4, 3.13.5, 4.29.3-4, 4.92.4, 5.56.5, 6.33.5, 6.86.3, 6.88.1

Uncertainty
1.2.2, 1.50.1, 1.84.3, 4.62.4, 4.63.1, 6.1.1

Underestimation—as a cause
2.11.4, 3.83.4, 4.34.1, 6.11.5, 6.34.8, 6.35.1, 6.63.2, 6.104.3, 8.8.4, 8.25.3, 8.82.1

Underestimation—as a function or reference
1.122.4, 2.62.3, 2.62.4, 3.39.5, 5.6.3, 5.9.3, 6.33.3, 6.34.9, 6.49.2, 7.63.4

Wealth
1.8.3, 1.9.2, 1.11.1, 1.83.2, 1.141.3-4, 1.143, 2.13.2, 2.13.3-5, 2.40.1, 6.34.2

Valor
2.39.2, 2.39.4, 2.42.3, 3.57.1, 3.64.4, 5.72.2, 5.101, 6.69.1, 6.72.2, 6.72.4

NOTE

1. When the same concept appears twice in a verse, then it is recorded once. If more than one concept appears in a verse, then they are both recorded.

Appendix 2

Decision-Making Factors in *The War*

Table 1.1 Appearance of Variables Influencing Decisions in Thucydides' Text

		As a cause		*As function And/or reference*	
	Total	*Frequency*	*(%)*	*Frequency*	*(%)*
Anger	54	29	(53,7)	25	(46,3)
Arrogance	21	11	(52,4)	10	(47,6)
Boldness	148	38	(25,7)	110	(74,3)
Chance	120	42	(35,0)	78	(65,0)
Cowardice	36	9	(25,0)	27	(75,0)
Hate	71	39	(54,9)	32	(45,1)
Hope	140	74	(52,9)	66	(47,1)
Hubris	16	7	(43,8)	9	(56,3)
Human Nature	32	13	(40,6)	19	(59,4)
Fear	356	270	(75,8)	86	(24,2)
Honor	62	26	(41,9)	36	(58,1)
Interest	118	49	(41,5)	69	(58,5)
Necessity	110	60	(54,5)	50	(45,5)
Passion	13	6	(46,2)	7	(53,8)
Pride	33	19	(57,6)	14	(42,4)
Revenge	47	10	(21,3)	37	(78,7)
Shame	48	11	(22,9)	37	(77,1)
Underestimation	21	11	(52,4)	10	(47,6)
Unexpected	18	12	(66,7)	6	(33,3)

Table 1.2 Appearance of Variables Influencing Decisions in Thucydides' Text

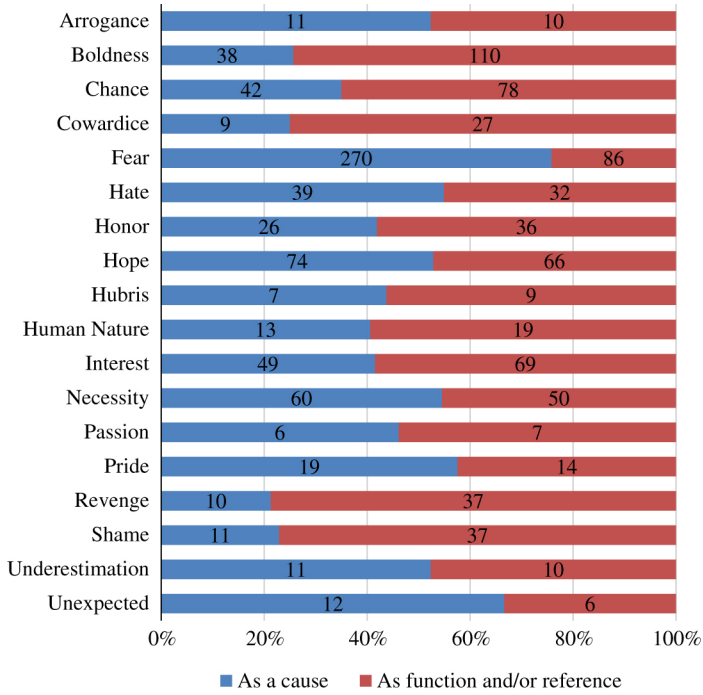
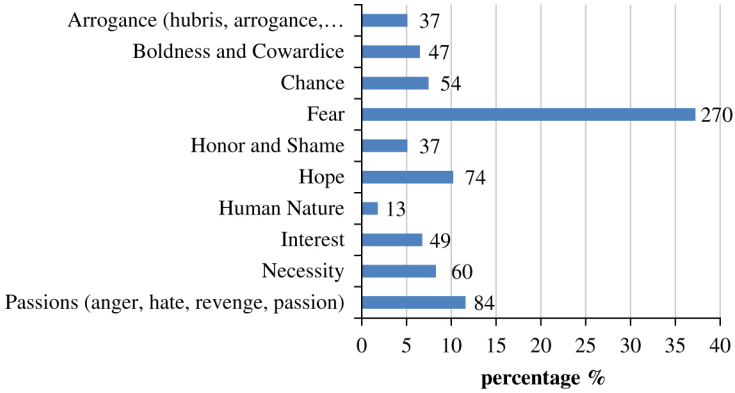


Table 1.3 Percentage of Explained Decisions in Groups of Related Factors

	Explained Decisions	*(%)*
Arrogance (hubris, arrogance, underestimation)	37	(5,1)
Boldness and Cowardice	47	(6,5)
Chance	54	(7,4)
Honor and Shame	37	(5,1)
Hope	74	(10,2)
Human Nature	13	(1,8)
Fear	270	(37,2)
Interest	49	(6,8)
Necessity	60	(8,3)
Passions (anger, hate, revenge, passion)	84	(11,6)
Total of explained decisions	725	

Table 1.4 Explained Decisions



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