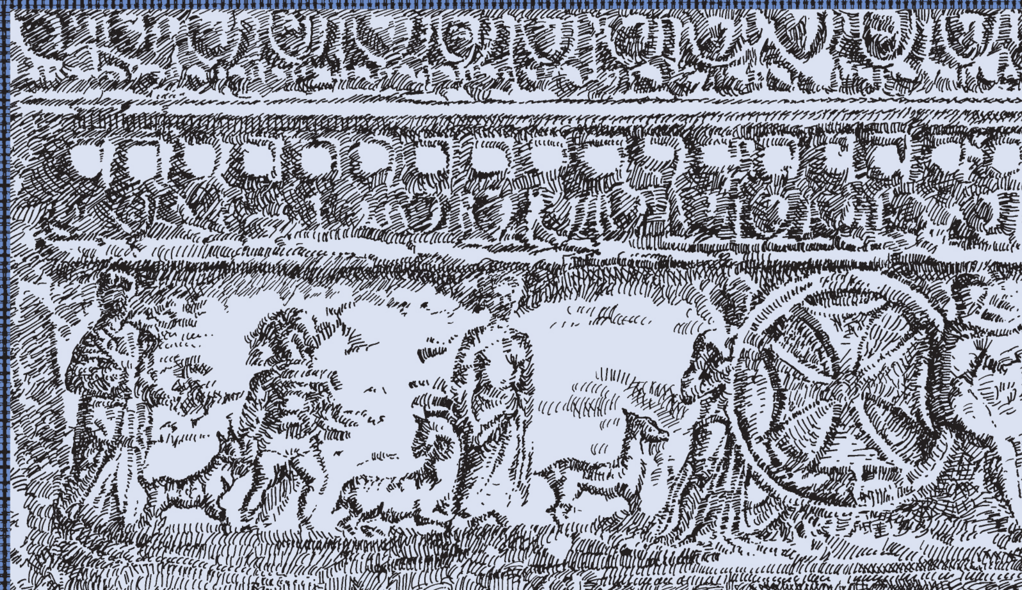
The Tragedy of the Athenian Ideal in Thucydides and Plato

John T. Hogan



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Preface

This study aims to show that Thucydides has written the Athenian speeches in the *Histories* so that they reveal a progressive decline in political discourse in Athens and among the Athenian speakers during the Peloponnesian War. This decline conforms to his description of the effects of *stasis* or political revolution on the valuation (ἀξίωσις transliterated *axiosis*) of words in 3.82. Thucydides' interest in the change in the *axiosis* of words should be understood as part of a revolution in values, and not as a change in the meanings of words.

The Peloponnesian War, Corcyraean and Athenian political revolutions, and the decline in values that Thucydides revealed became part of the philosophical, political, literary, and social ferment of late fifth-century Athens and influenced the ideas of an entire generation of thinkers, including especially Socrates and Plato. As part of this movement, the collapse of the Athenian Empire had tragic consequences for many in the Greek world, though as some modern scholarship has pointed out, democracy itself recovered afterward and became stronger in Athens especially.[1] Aristotle or his students comment on this in *The Athenian Constitution*: "For the people themselves have made themselves masters of everything" (41.2). Outside of Athens there was acute political class struggle in the fourth century BC that was resolved with internal peace and democracy in the third century BC, but essentially without self-rule.[2] After Athens was defeated at the Battle of Crannon in 322, Athenian democracy and her self-rule or freedom were essentially terminated.[3] Even though democracy was strong in Athens for a while, the long-term trend in the Greek world after Athens' loss in the Peloponnesian War was away from democratic self-rule and toward various forms of rule by tyrants and cabals. This ended in Roman domination of Greece of course.[4]

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Yet the failure of the empire had profound intellectual and life consequences for Socrates, Plato, and Thucydides, among others, which tended to overshadow the Athenians' basic recognition that they needed to improve their form of government. These consequences projected new forms of thought and expression beyond the modes that had been available to Aeschylus and Sophocles. Both Plato and Thucydides thought deeply and extensively about the lesson of imperial democratic Athens so that as we consider how political revolution in Athens led to a revolution in values that can be seen decline in Athenian political discourse, we may look to Plato in particular to help in understanding the complex reaction of Thucydides. We may wonder at the mystery that Plato does not mention Thucydides, though their analyses of the problems in Athenian life clearly reflect the same experience and share many insights, and both were Athenian citizens.[5]

Thucydides presents speeches and other reports of communication, including his own views that he rarely but very pointedly introduces as part of a large, open discussion of Athenian values, challenges to those values, political views, and views on how to conduct foreign war policy in particular within and for an empire. This discussion typifies the free and open debate characteristic of Athenian life. It is also in particular a characteristic of Socrates' conversations in the dialogues of Plato. The basic concepts are παρρησία (transliterated *parrhesia*), freedom of speech with implied equality,[6] ἰσηγορία (transliterated *isegoria*), equality of speech and political equality generally,[7] ἰσονομία (transliterated *isonomia*), equality before the law,[8] and κοινωνία (transliterated *koinonia*), a sense of shared, community identity.[9] These are important aspects of what it means to live in a democracy. The conversation among the Athenians has some epistemological implications also regarding the nature of common truths, according to Hannah Arendt:

> The assumption [of Socrates] was that the world opens up differently to every man, according to his position in it; and that the "sameness" of the world, its commonness (*koinon*, as the Greeks would say, common to all) or "objectivity" (as we would say from the subjective standpoint of modern philosophy) resides in the fact that the same world opens up to everyone and that despite all differences between men and their positions in the world—and consequently their *doxai* [opinions]—"both you and I are human."[10]

This understanding of the relationship of the world we all appear to inhabit to the world of truth and being in philosophical terms seems also to apply to Thucydides. What Arendt appears to be suggesting here is that the world opens itself up to everyone differently. What this implies for discourse is a radical intersubjectivity that supposes that we are all part of the same world, but we have differing perspectives on the same words and deeds. In Socratic

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terms, we believe that there is a world of being and that abstract concepts like excellence (ἀρετή, transliterated *arete*), the Form of the Good (ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα, transliterated *he tou agathou idea*, Plato, *Republic* Book VI, 502e), and other Forms of thought are part of it, but we exist in such a way that we interact with a world of what seems to each of us to be the case. In this view of what being in the world is, we live in a world of opinion (δόξα, *doxa* in transliterated Greek), but we believe our opinions approximate the truth, the world of Being. Socrates, Thucydides, all of Thucydides' speakers, and Plato also are in conversation with one another and with us about how the world reveals itself to our understanding. *Stasis*, because it so deeply undermines our shared reality and even our ability to share that reality with one another, challenges the entire basis for understanding the political world especially. Understanding how this process of challenge and destruction takes place helps us preserve the common world we believe in so that we may live together in it.

Through close readings of the Athenian political speeches, it is shown that Thucydides portrays the development of *stasis* at Athens as an organic, long-term process full of complications, such as those Plato highlights in the *Republic* in particular, in Book VIII (559d–62e). Frustration with the myriad failures of political discourse in Greece generally and in Athens in particular may have concentrated Plato's rejection of long discursive presentation of the sort favored by political figures. He adopted a second-best and retiring imitation of Socrates' private but partly public style of philosophical engagement, which Socrates describes in the *Phaedrus*. Many other dialogues, notably the *Statesman*, the *Symposium*, and the *Meno*, can help shape our understanding of Thucydides' *Histories*, which "doth secretly instruct the reader," as Hobbes puts it, and can be as elusive as some of Plato's dialogues. Like Plato, Thucydides rarely describes or states his meaning. Instead, he illustrates it "more effectually than can possibly be done by precept."[11]

We will consider the following speeches of Thucydides in detail: the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1, all three of Pericles' direct discourse speeches, the Mytilenean debate, the Melian Dialogue, Nicias' and Alcibiades' speeches in Books 6 and 7, and Euphemus' speech at Camarina. The speeches of Pericles and the Athenian ambassadors function as a standard or reference for mapping the degeneration of political discourse, though an examination of the implications of the portrayal of Pericles' policies reveals a deep problem with an unleashed desire for more (πλεονεξία or *pleonexia* in transliterated Greek) in Pericles' actions and speeches. Socrates and Plato identify this problem too in Pericles as a political leader and as a moral force in several dialogues notably the *Symposium*. Furthermore, Plato's *Statesman* provides a theoretical framework for understanding Pericles' strengths and weaknesses. For Thucydides, Cleon serves as a model of the demagogue, while Alcibiades

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and Nicias represent an Athens in which the energy and moderation of Pericles have been separated into two men. The absence of speeches in Book 8 is interpreted to reflect Thucydides' desire to show the declining importance of *logos* (Greek λόγος, "account," "reckoning," "reason," "proportion," "debate," "reasoning," and "speech," among other senses of the word) on political action, though it is of course possible that in a final version of the text Thucydides would have indicated the decline through speeches in direct or indirect discourse. In a separate chapter, the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton and the relationship Thucydides establishes between it and Alcibiades show Thucydides' objective stance as an author with respect to the words and deeds he describes. Thucydides also opens up some questions about the accuracy and value of a founding myth or story of the Athenian democracy. This in turn leads to an explanation of Thucydides' view of the roots of Alcibiades' failure in his inadequate education. For Thucydides, correct knowledge and a sound political education are essential for the continuation of good rule.

Thucydides thus agrees with Plato in that both see the weakness of Alcibiades' education as an image for Athens' brilliant failure. Through a comparison of Plato with Thucydides, it can be established that while for Thucydides Pericles' *logos* represents an ideal moment, that moment fades quickly in word and in deed due to political deficiencies of the same type as those Plato and Socrates saw in Periclean Athens and to some extent in democracy generally. Thucydides sees his own endeavor as being on a philosophically higher level than Pericles' words and deeds. Thucydides approaches the Peloponnesian War with some of the tools of a tragic poet, while Plato differs from almost every philosopher since his time in that we must respond to his writing as a complex interplay of actors, deeds, and ideas in order to understand his view of political excellence. This view ultimately resembles Thucydides' though Plato emphasizes the value of true knowledge for political life while Thucydides seems to align himself with freedom tempered and interpreted by true knowledge obtained by careful examination of facts and speeches.

NOTES

1. Ober, Josiah, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*, Princeton: Princeton University Press reprint edition 2016, pp. 52, 73, 266–67, 269 and in particular concerning Athens, pp. 273–80. Most of this evidence is economic.

2. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981, pp. 298–327.

3. Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, 1993, pp. 10–11. The idea that

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the Greeks of the era beginning with the rule of Alexander were spreading cultural enlightenment including advanced political thought is interesting but not justified overall. See Peter Green's comment: "The . . . overwhelming motivation that confronts us in these Greek or Macedonian torchbearers of Western culture, throughout the Hellenistic era, is the irresistible lure of power and wealth, with sex trailing along as a poor third and cultural enlightenment virtually nowhere."

4. For the apparent prevalence of various forms of democracy in the fourth century BC, see Eric W. Robinson, *Democracy Beyond Athens: Popular Government in the Greek Classical Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 182–216. For a discussion of the many democratic city states in the third century BC, albeit often without full self-rule, see Philippe Gauthier, "Les Cités hellénistiques," in Mogens Herman Hansen, *The ancient Greek city-state*, Copenhague, Commisionner Munksgaard, 1993, pp. 211–31 and in particular pp. 217–18.

5. See Hornblower, Simon, "The Fourth-Century and Hellenistic Reception of Thucydides," *Journal of Hellenic Studies,* 1995, Vol. 115, pp. 47–68, for a thorough review of Thucydides' influence while Plato was writing.

6. Euripides' *Hippolytus* in *Euripidis Fabulae, Vol. 1, Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromacha, Hecuba*, edited by J. Diggle, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984, Euripides *Bacchae*, edited with an introduction and notes by E. R. Dodds, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960. In Thucydides, cf. Pericles' Funeral Oration 2.40.2. For the early fourth century and Plato, see *Republic* 557b. See also Polybius 2.38.6. For a modern discussion see Michel Foucault, "Discourse and Truth: the Problematization of Parrhesia." Six lectures at University of California at Berkeley, CA, Oct–Nov 1983, https://foucault.info/parrhesia/ (accessed October 10, 2019). Arlene Saxonhouse discusses the speech of Theseus on this topic in Euripides' *Suppliant Women.* See *Free Speech and Democracy in Ancient Athens*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, Location 1788–1819 (Kindle edition). She notes that the ability to speak freely generally marks those who are politically enfranchised but here Euripides seems to raise the question of why women are not allowed to speak freely.

7. For the fifth century BC, see Herodotus, 5.78. For the fourth century, see Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 1.3.10. The word means equality or equality in speaking. See also Polybius 2.38.6.

8. Thucydides 3.82.8, cf. 2.37.2 (Funeral Oration). Plato, *Republic VIII.562b* (political equality for men and women).

9. See, e.g., Plato *Republic* I.343d, V.466d, *Symposium* 182c, Thucydides 7.69.2.

10. Hannah Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics." *Social Research* 71, no. 3 (2004), p. 433, Accessed November 1, 2019. www.jstor.org/stable/40971709.

11. Thomas Hobbes, *A History of the Grecian War in Eight Books*, *Written by Thucydides*. Translation by Thomas Hobbes. "Of the Life and History of Thucydides," p. xxii. London: 1629, imprinted to John Bohn, 1843.

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A Note on the Use of Ancient Greek

Wherever an ancient author is quoted, the quotation is printed in polytonic Greek with accents and breathing marks. For Greek words that are not quoted and that denote difficult-to-translate concepts, such as *polis* (πόλις, city or city-state), *kinesis* (κίνησις, movement), and *polupragmosune* (πολυπραγμοσύνη, meddlesomeness), the transliterated word has been italicized. The first time the word appears here I have included the original Greek, generally in the nominative case but not always, as when it is taken directly from an important quotation. After that the Greek words are printed in transliterated Greek. When such words are actually taken from a section of an ancient Greek text, I have printed them in Greek. Translations of Plato and most other authors are mine except where otherwise noted. Translations of Thucydides are those of Richard Crawley, though on occasion I have modified them and noted that. ἀξίωσις (transliterated *axiosis*) is a special case as the word is rare but of particular importance for Thucydides. Its meaning is valuation, estimation, or act of assigning value, as we shall see.

I have generally included references to Greek texts, for example, Plato, Thucydides, Aristotle, in the text rather than in footnotes, though there are exceptions to this. The references follow standard numbering systems such as the Stephanus page number in Plato, Bekker numbering for Aristotle, and the Oxford Classical Text book, chapter, and section identification elsewhere. References to Thucydides and Plato are generally to the Oxford Classical Text editions as noted in the bibliography.

I do not use a line over a vowel to indicate that the vowel is long in transliterated Greek.

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Introduction

PART 1. SUBJECT AND METHOD

In Thucydides' *Histories*, the relationship between *logos* (plural *logoi*, Greek λόγος, cf. Thucydides 1.22.1) and *ergon* (plural *erga*, Greek ἔργον or "work, work of war, deed, action," Thucydides 1.22.2) is of fundamental importance, since the book, which is also a *logos*, is concerned primarily with the life of the *polis*, and political life depends on *logos* to articulate political action. Thucydides presents in dramatic form two interdependent truths—that man is political and that he is endowed with speech.[1] He shows how these truths supplement one another and presents the various forms of the relationship between *logos* and *ergon*, from excellent to degenerate types. Using the opposition between *logos* and *ergon* as a key for examining the philosophical bases of different types of political arrangements, he reveals a distinctive political philosophy that has many points of similarity and some differences with Plato's *Republic* and certain other dialogues, notably the *Statesman*, the *Menexenus* for its presentation of the origin of Pericles' famous Funeral Oration, the *Symposium* for its depiction of Alcibiades, the *Charmides* for its discussion of *sophrosune*, and the *Laches* because Nicias takes part in the discussion of courage in it.[2] Plato's *Statesman* provides a clear conceptual framework for understanding how we can think in general philosophical terms about what Thucydides presents in a mixture of facts, speeches, interpretation, narrative history, and speculative political philosophy.

In one of his most striking comments on the nature of the polis and war, Thucydides asserts: καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇ δικαιώσει (3.82.4),[3] which should be translated thus: "Men changed the customary valuation of words in respect to deeds in judging what right was." This statement, occasioned by the civil strife in Corcyra in 427,

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is an important indication both of Thucydides' view of the nature of political discourse and ultimately of his political philosophy. It applies not only to the degeneration of political discourse in Corcyra but also to the Hellenic world at large, and is exemplified in the Athenian speeches in the *Histories*. By comparing these speeches (including the speeches by Athenians, wherever they are, and the speeches of certain others in Athens) with one another, we can see how the use of common political phrases and ideas, especially when Thucydides has one speaker echo another, reveals a progressive degeneration in the value of *logos* in Athens. These points of comparison are like vertebrae that help to organize a picture of the whole political man as Thucydides sees him.[4] This analysis intrinsically supports the view that no one speech in Thucydides can reliably represent for us what Thucydides thought. Thucydides' narrative depends on his ability to address the actual facts he sees and uncovers. Here the insight of Friedrich Nietzsche that "courage in the face of reality" distinguishes Thucydides, who sees "reason in reality" and then hides his thought in the reality of the facts he tells us, reveals a difference from the Plato that Nietzsche emphasizes: Plato retreats, he thinks, into the ideal.[5] Thucydides wills himself to see this "reason in reality." Plato sees the elimination of the cares, concerns, and any influence of our bodies as an enabling step in the struggle to know. Since we cannot know anything purely when our souls are in our bodies, we find there are only two possibilities for knowledge, either we cannot attain it anywhere or we can only attain it when our souls separate from our physical selves (*Phaedo*, 66e–67a, cf. 107b–c). This then leaves us with the goal of purifying ourselves as much as possible in this life so that we can come closer to knowing.

While Nietzsche sees Thucydides as a representative of the older Sophist culture,[6] Thucydides' commitment to accuracy leaves him in the position of needing a measure or measures against which to test information and *logoi* that may represent facts or interpretations based on facts. This puts him in the tradition of Ionian science, including Anaxagoras and the medical writers, much more than in the tradition of Protagoras and his yarn about how Zeus made us so that we can be moral, as Plato presents him in the *Protagoras* (322c–d). The very idea that Zeus could encourage ethical conduct seems ruefully comic considering his violence and his conduct toward women in general and his wife in particular, though it is reasonable to conjecture that the gods whose tale Protagoras told wanted to have worshippers. Zeus would perhaps also appeal to the male audience that Protagoras acquires. On the other hand, Protagoras, like Socrates in the *Meno* and elsewhere, sees humans as having a divine allotment in them (*Protagoras* 322a, ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ ἄνθρωπος θείας μετέσχε μοίρας, πρῶτον μὲν διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ συγγένειαν ζῴων μόνον θεοὺς ἐνόμισεν, "since men got a divine allotment, [and] first through his kinship with the divine alone of living things worshipped the gods"). At the end

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of the *Meno* Socrates makes a similar point to Meno, who lives in a dim world of ignorance and popular opinions.[7] First we need to be reminded that "he is talking to Meno."[8] Socrates concludes: "Virtue [or 'excellence'] appears to be born in us by divine allotment, in those to whom it is born" (θείᾳ μοίρᾳ ἡμῖν φαίνεται παραγιγνομένη ἡ ἀρετὴ οἷς ἂν παραγίγνηται, *Meno* 99e–100a). The link here between the *Meno* and the *Protagoras* is the divine allotment to men, which starts us off aiming higher than ourselves. Protagoras, as the kind of teacher Meno wishes to have, though he does seem to have a particular preference for Gorgias (see *Meno*, 70b, 71c–71e),[9] presents the idea of this allotment. Meno hears it from Socrates, who wishes to be nothing like Protagoras, who, it seems, shares a kind of opinion with Socrates. The fact that they in a way share an opinion, that we have a divine allotment, is a very good example of why it is hard to capture the Sophist and to know how he or she differs from the philosopher (cf. Plato, *Sophist*, 216c).

The *Meno* introduces the hypothetical method as a way of answering questions about what virtue is (ἀρετή, "excellence" or "virtue," transliterated *arete*) and whether it can be taught (86e–87b),[10] but Socrates performs his introduction or initiation by means of a difficult and somewhat obscure mathematical problem.[11] The point seems to be that just as Meno should have been abashed when he saw his slave learning geometry (85e–86d) but was not, he now must more fully face the question of whether he can be initiated or whether he will be turned away from philosophy in general and political philosophy in particular because he cannot rule himself (86d). He does not have the disposition to learn, so he himself turns himself away. This results in the final lesson of his execution at a young age after betraying his army's interests in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (II.6.21–29). At the very end of the *Meno*, Socrates again alludes to Meno's difficulties in separating knowledge of *arete* from his desire for power carefully presented by Plato as his goal to find out first whether or not he can buy a teacher of *arete*. Learning the truth of the matter (τὸ σαφὲς) requires this separation (100b). Meno's failure to learn is a failure of virtue, and what we would term moral virtue in particular. Indeed, his failures or weaknesses, that is, his physical beauty and the effect that it produces on men, his clear desire to dominate his wife at home and to rule men in his public life (*Meno*, 71e), and his troupe of slaves, all reflect deep conceptual weaknesses in Athenian life that are expressed in predictable and disastrous ways in the Peloponnesian War.

Thucydides also asks us to accept his claim that "those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge (τὸ σαφὲς) of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it" (1.22.4), can rely on his work. He reemphasizes this point in his second introduction (5.26.5).[12] In order to understand his work we must also ascend a kind of philosophical, and in his case also historical, ladder

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of understanding. It would seem that some of the notorious complexity and intellectual density of Thucydides' conclusions, and also of the speeches, serve as an intellectual initiation while they also force the reader into a dialogue with Thucydides and some of his chosen speeches.

Understanding and possibly solving some or all of these political and social problems—all of which seem to derive from a desire for power over others and the complications that arise from the Peloponnesian War—requires that we start from clarity about what moral terms mean. Yet this is very hard during civil war (*stasis*) where suspicion and violence rule. In this light, we can see Thucydides' reflections on changes in political discourse in Corcyra as an example of an incipient social science applying also to Athenian political rhetoric. In order to understand what went wrong at Athens we must consider that there are moral terms that reflect real moral and immoral conduct, and we must at least accept the principle that we can agree on what moral terms mean, or else there can be no real discourse. This then leads naturally to consideration of how the relationship between the description of *stasis* at Corcyra and the Athenian political speeches can help in the analysis of Thucydides' political philosophy. In such discussions we must assume that Thucydides has given much care and attention to the dramatic and rhetorical coherence of his work, and that his arrangement and emphases carry a great deal of meaning.[13] The goal here is thus primarily to understand what Thucydides has to say about the political sphere. In attempting to understand Thucydides, reference to Plato can be very helpful or perhaps crucial, since to start with at least many of Plato's concerns explicitly relate to those of Thucydides, for example Athens' greatness, her failure, the complex core of that failure in the spirit of Alcibiades, and the disappointing end of Nicias (7.86.5).

Friedrich Nietzsche made significant use of Thucydides in formulating his own ideas. Nietzsche also devotes an important part of his thought toward praising what he sees as Thucydides' pre-Platonic, Sophistic virtues and condemning what he seems to believe was Plato's soft rejection of ancient Greek masculine and even violent values in favor of what turned out to be in Nietzsche's view a forward shadow of Christianity in Plato.[14] Nietzsche's contrast of Plato with Thucydides also serves as a useful interpretive tool for understanding Thucydides' larger purposes.

One significant question that lies at the heart of the implied discussion between Plato and Thucydides on value or excellence *arete* in political life and its manifestation in deeds and in political speech (λόγος, transliterated *logos*) is whether there is in fact a measure for deeds and in language that exists and is important in allowing us to formulate what we think are abstract general truths. An important passage in Thucydides that bears on this arises in his discussion of the development of revolution or *stasis* (στάσις in Greek, i.e., internal revolution deriving from political faction) in Corcyra (3.82) and

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the way that development affects political speech. This discussion of *stasis* in Corcyra clearly applies widely in Thucydides to his presentation of *stasis* in Athens, as we will see.

Yet the development of *stasis* in Athens raises the further question of whether the same kind of decline in the value and valuation of discourse or *logos* in Athens occurs also in the larger Greek world during the Peloponnesian War. This then exposes differences between war (in Greek πόλεμος transliterated *polemos*) and revolution or *stasis*. The clearest Athenian discussion of the distinction between *stasis* and war in ancient Greek thought occurs in Book 5 of the *Republic* (470b–d) when Socrates and Glaucon are talking. Socrates speaks first:

> "It appears to me that just as two different names, war and *stasis*, are discussed, so also there are two things, indicating two different things. I mean the two, on the one hand, that which is one's own and kin, and, on the other hand that which is different and foreign. The name *stasis* is said for the hatred of one's own, and war applies to the hatred of the alien."
> "And you are saying nothing," he said, "off the point."
> "Now look if this thing I say is also to the point. For I assert that the Greek stock itself is kin to itself, and to the barbaric, foreign and different."
> "Yes," he said, "fine."
> "Then Greeks fighting with barbarians and barbarians with Greeks, we will assert are at war and are enemies by nature, and this hatred must be called war; but Greeks fighting with Greeks, we will assert are by nature friends, but in such a situation Greece is sick and factious, and in *stasis*."

This passage in the *Republic* suggests that from Plato's point of view at least, the Peloponnesian War should be considered a kind of *stasis* and not simply or primarily a war. And in fact, one of the major differences between war and *stasis* is that in war the combatants usually do not seek to obliterate the other side, while in revolution the complete elimination of the other side often becomes the goal because there has been a breakdown of fundamental human relationships. To use Thucydides' prime example, the *stasis* in Corcyra ends when there is nothing left of the aristocratic party (4.48.5). The sources of the breakdown can be deep-seated ideological differences, familial antipathies (especially in aristocracies), and racial, tribal, or nationalistic differences to name a few.[15] At the very least, it seems reasonable to see the deteriorating and then sometimes violent relationship between Athens and her allies or subjects in the Delian League as some kind of internal conflict with many resemblances to *stasis*, whether we look at the violent convulsions of the Greek world during the Peloponnesian War as kind of *stasis* in every respect or not. Thucydides does call the conflict a war (*polemos*, 1.1),

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however, which means that the fighting between Athens and Sparta at least starts off as a war even if later it develops some of the awful characteristics of *stasis.*[16] In fact, the entire Sicilian Expedition resembles a civil war in that it ends in the destruction of one side, the forces of the Athenians, and the destruction is so complete that "few out of many returned home."[17] The great and famous war of earlier times, the Trojan War, engulfed all of Greece but homecoming and peace was the result.

What then is *stasis*? The most useful definition of what it is relative to Thucydides' and Plato's thought is what Thucydides says after the Spartans defeat the Corcyraeans at sea. The Athenian commander Eurymedon arrives with sixty warships (3.80.2). This prompts the "Corcyraean *demos*" (ὁ δῆμος τῶν Κερκυραίων, or the Corcyraean people and not their leaders, 3.80.1) to attack their enemies, who seem to include anyone whom they regarded as their enemies, whether the hatreds were private, based on debt, or more strictly political (3.81.4). Thucydides then announces what seems to be the cardinal characteristic of *stasis* for him, which is the extremes to which violence goes in it. This violence has no limit, which Thucydides shows us by the examples he chooses: Fathers kill sons and temple suppliants are dragged away and killed or even just walled up in a temple and left to die (3.81.5).

Stasis breaks down human conventions, whether they are of the most sacred type, familial and religious, or whether they are broader important conventions such as respect for public discourse, legal rules, social structures, or even the basic values through which people express praise and blame (cf. 3.82 generally). What underlies this is a psychological paradigm, as Thucydides presents it, part of which is a kind of "frantic movement or violence" (τὸ . . . ἐμπλήκτως ὀξὺ).[18] Today we might call a city or country in *stasis* a population that exhibits a syndrome or a collection of symptoms, if we follow Thucydides' definition. He defines *stasis* as a set of behavioral characteristics in chapters 3.81.5 to the end of 3.83. *Stasis* is marked by a breakdown in norms, which the Greeks called *nomoi*, the plural of the Greek word νόμος, which means usage, custom, law, human statute, and even melody.[19] Thucydides' behavioral definition is very abstract in that it includes many abstract words,[20] but he does not offer a single complete political definition of *stasis* except to note a variety of political characteristics among other characteristics that we today might think are psychological such as an increasingly violent way of solving problems or a predisposition to favor extreme methods.

The observational focus in Thucydides' definition, which is the definition of *stasis* we will use here, results from a confluence of factors. In the first place, the heritage of Ionian science emphasized observation. Thucydides himself was an observer and he takes up the position of an observer "at rest" (καθ' ἡσυχίαν, 5.26.5) to pay attention to the war and then to draw

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intellectually vigorous and active conclusions. He is also reviewing some political phenomena in depth for the first time in writing that relies on what he attempts to determine is objectively true information. In addition to all of this he inherits the model of Greek Tragedy, which emphasizes showing difficulties through the interaction of word and deed rather than observing, describing, and stating conclusions. Plato too shares this approach deriving from Tragedy. Once one had seen the unfolding decline of a great empire that embraced or even invented many new and life-affirming arts and values (and of course failed to see its blind spots), it seems reasonable for someone like Thucydides to try to think about how to elaborate his program as stated in 1.22.4 and apply new types of thinking to this failure so as to help people prevent it from happening again. Political philosophy seeks to help us solve political problems in new ways that may include structural reforms, economic changes, and even changes in the relationship between external political values (foreign affairs) and internal political values. Thucydides' research seems perhaps to have reached all the way to the idea of a mixing of the values of the few and the many (8.97.2), a problem that still affects us today in powerful ways.[21] On the other hand, Thucydides famously offers only a few openly stated conclusions. One reason for this may be that conclusions we as readers reach for ourselves can be firmer and more sound, because we make some effort to reach them. Thus, the first efforts he is making in the development of the new field of history arise as a form of drama, which is a quite natural outgrowth of thought about how to present the human political predicament in a culture that first developed Western tragic plays. What this implies for understanding Thucydides is that the meaning of the work appears in our interaction with it through the questions we are trying to answer, our own preconceived ideas, and our place in history. This interaction occurs in the space that inevitably separates the knower from what we seek to know.[22]

While Thucydides' use of a scientific gathering of information and evaluation of the results clearly informs his work, he also introduces a significant moral dimension, which he represents descriptively as changes in *nomoi*, quite similar to the changes in the *axioseis* or valuations of words. An important subject here is one part of this moral dimension, the use of language in political and military contexts in the Athenian speeches. Those who would eliminate or reduce in importance the question of morality from Thucydides face a difficulty in particular in relation to his narrative and summary of the *stasis* in Corcyra. One of the clearest statements Thucydides makes on the subject is καὶ τὸ εὔηθες, οὗ τὸ γενναῖον πλεῖστον μετέχει, καταγελασθὲν ἠφανίσθη (3.83.1), "the simplicity of which nobility has the largest share, was laughed at and disappeared" (3.83.1).[23] The alternative translation here, favored by a number of commentators, is "the simplicity which is so large an element in a noble character, was laughed at and disappeared." While the first

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translation seems more plausible for a variety of reasons, the second can seem correct too. Why would Thucydides write this way? It seems quite possible that we are to ponder both possibilities so that we consider very carefully a large number of questions, such as why simplicity would be laughed at in the first place, and what is nobility?[24] What types of leaders who are not noble rely on appeals to simplicity? How important is simplicity, if it is important at all, in political life? Where else is it important? The answers to these questions will have many ramifications, notably in considering Nicias, but use of this type of ambiguity as a rhetorical device focuses our attention and brings us into a dialogue with Thucydides and some of the figures in the *Histories*. We then return to the question of morality and *nomoi* or customs in public life. What are their roles?

In the first place, Thucydides would not necessarily see an understanding of morality and values as conforming to our modern distinction between facts and values. In other words, it is quite reasonable even today in our modern terms to see the values that people have individually and in groups as phenomena that may be investigated using means that approach the scientific method. David Hume, for example, begins his most well-known work with the point that moral philosophy is the "science of human nature" when he says that "MORAL philosophy, or the science of human nature, may be treated after two different manners; each of which has its peculiar merit, and may contribute to the entertainment, instruction, and reformation of mankind."[25] The first manner of treating human nature is what Hume calls a consideration of "matters of fact" based on the observation that we are active beings. The second manner focuses on "relations of ideas" where we think of ourselves as reasonable beings who are the proper subject of speculative thought. While the basic distinction here has become a field of study all by itself, Thucydides begins his focus on facts, deeds, and words he observes and records. This then leads him to what some might call (and praise or deplore) speculative judgments about what is better and what is worse in human affairs. The continuity between these two modes of thought in Thucydides depends on measures and various types of standards, all of which can be observed or perceived in actions and then later reviewed in thought.

Thucydides anticipates Hume's approach to considering human conduct scientifically by observing carefully first and attempting to record faithfully the things he sees and hears. Thus, for Thucydides, morals or habits of mind and conduct may be observed, classified, and reviewed in a way that is similar to any other set of acts and views of action. Thucydides as an observer works within the intellectual tradition of Ionian Empiricism, that is, the empiricist tradition in pre-Socratic philosophy including Hippocrates of Cos and other contributions to the Hippocratic corpus.[26] Of course, the empiricist tradition in Ionia was larger than one of its most famous aspects, medicine, as

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when Anaxagoras states that generally "appearances are a sight of the things that are unseen."[27] If Thucydides gives the moral dimension of humans an additional position of importance in human life separate from a scientific interest in values and how they change, as many think that he does, then we may see his work as hypothesizing or propounding values and indirectly and artistically commenting on how those values change in revolutionary situations.[28] It is clear that Thucydides sees human nature as definable and a subject for understanding, but clearly not the only such subject since he also considers causes for natural phenomena, for example, surges in the sea, as subjects amenable to study and what we would call scientific understanding (3.89.2–5). Human nature appears in regular forms that are amenable to reason and that can be measured or understood through standards.[29] Whether his examination of acts, speeches, and values leads to a kind of moralizing is an interesting question.[30] One clear approach that Thucydides seems to foster is review and consideration of words and deeds in particular for their effects on the way we speak and act, which is, from the scientific point of view at least, a review of mores or conduct and character. What we can or should do with what we learn from that internal discussion is somewhat dependent on our circumstances and resources. It is quite possible that one effect of Thucydides' sometimes difficult and elusive style, a never-ending discussion of what he means, is something he intended as a way to make his work useful (1.22.4). The technique engages our speculative habit of mind and entangles his readers in a conversation.

The method I have adopted here to test these theses is a literary and philological analysis of Thucydides' use of speeches, in particular Athenian speeches, as a reflection of his statements in his discussion of *stasis* in Corcyra. The details of the method are philological and analytical in style. The goal, however, is philosophical in the sense that Thucydides clearly wanted to create a work of general use in relation to one of the most fundamental aspects of our species, our political conduct conceived very broadly to include most if not all our efforts to get along with one another in practical and productive ways. Some basic conclusions would inevitably follow from showing how this characteristic of degeneration of political discourse manifests itself in Thucydides' Athenian speeches. No one speech or speaker speaks for Thucydides; this includes even Pericles, whose political discourse is subordinate to Thucydides'. In a catalogue of degenerate types of discourse, some measure or standard is both implied and necessary. This standard seems to be the same as what the Stranger calls "measure" in the *Statesman* (e.g., 284e), as we will see. Plato's discussion of the adversarial approach of one side in a revolution calling in outside aid from ideological allies, that is, democrats calling upon outside democratically inclined populations and aristocrats calling for help from other aristocrats (*Republic*, Book VIII, 559d–560a), seems

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to derive partly from Thucydides' observations. This adversarial approach in *stasis* distorts and then ruins political discourse in almost exactly the same way in the *Republic* (Book VIII, 560c–561b) as it does in Thucydides.

This may then lead to speculation as to what kind of epistemology lies behind Thucydides' choice of a dramatic mode for presenting philosophical truth that arises from historical accounts. Here one likely conclusion is that for Thucydides truth is not relative as Protagoras is said to argue when he says that "man is the measure of all things" (Plato, *Theaetetus* 152a, *Cratylus* 385e–386a). Yet for Thucydides truth is still dependent on the observer or participant also and not simply abstract and separate from us.[31] This makes truth something we believe exists, strive to reach and sometimes approach in contexts that are relevant to the type of truth being sought. Thucydides seems to agree with Socrates on this point: We should search out what we do not know and not accept that we cannot know or that we must not try to know (*Meno*, 86b–c). Thucydides certainly makes clear the effort required to ascertain the truth in both of his introductions (1.22 and 5.26) and by implication also in the pathos of his explanation of how he understood the plague both as a victim and as an observer of its effects (2.48.3). If the truth we wish to understand is social and political then we aim at that truth and approach it as social and political beings. If the truth involves a measurement, we are limited by the structure and moments of the measuring devices. In fact, the measurement of certain new kinds of military power depends on the action required to create such power. A significant portion of this action depends one *techne* (τέχνη, "skill," "craft," or "art") or another. Military power, especially with the introduction of navies as important or even crucial parts of military power, results from the projection of various skills and arts. Such skills depend on measurement and measuring devices of various types. Pericles himself, as a general aiming to use military power to create political power, provides Thucydides and us with one example of this point. In his last speech, Pericles seeks to bolster the courage of the Athenians by showing them that their innovations in naval warfare have created a new type of power, a power that is constrained only by the will of the Athenians. Their navy can go anywhere ships can reach (2.62.1–3). This power is measured differently from power on land. Technology and training become the measuring stick, but the measure exists only after the idea of such a force has been put in place.[32] Politics also depends on skill or *techne*.[33] In this sense, a general, such as Pericles, works like a political leader. The complex revelation of the political leader or statesman in Plato's *Statesman* sheds further light on the qualities of Pericles, as we will see, but prior to the discussion of the statesman Plato seeks the Sophist in the dialogue of that name and catches him in a web of reason by equating Non-Being with the Other (*Sophist*, 257b, 258e–259a).[34] This approach to Non-Being defines it as partly personal for each of us so

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that what we think does not exist is in fact what is other or different in relation to us.[35] This organizes and makes rational the confusions of relativity and relativistic thinking.[36] What we do not understand is other or different. Far from being a Sophist, Thucydides seems to anticipate the issue of the Other in political life at the very beginning of his *Histories* when he observes the same point that many young readers of Homer have wondered about, "Why doesn't Homer call the Greeks Hellenes? And why are only some of them Hellenes?" Thucydides' answer is that at the time of Homer the Greeks were neither conscious of themselves as a separate group nor conscious of foreigners as barbarians (1.1.3).[37] What is not us or ours is what is "other" in regard to us. That "other" can be categorized and quantified, which enables us to understand it. One of the most important applications of Plato's assignment (in the *Statesman*) of Non-Being to the concept of Other occurs in the political world with the statesman serving as the type or model of the political being:

> Ξένος (The) Stranger:
>
> πότερον οὖν, καθάπερ ἐν τῷ σοφιστῇ προσηναγκάσαμεν εἶναι τὸ μὴ ὄν, ἐπειδὴ κατὰ τοῦτο διέφυγεν ἡμᾶς ὁ λόγος, οὕτω καὶ νῦν τὸ πλέον αὖ καὶ ἔλαττον μετρητὰ προσαναγκαστέον γίγνεσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἄλληλα μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ [284ξ] πρὸς τὴν τοῦ μετρίου γένεσιν; οὐ γὰρ δὴ δυνατόν γε οὔτε πολιτικὸν οὔτ᾽ ἄλλον τινὰ τῶν περὶ τὰς πράξεις ἐπιστήμονα ἀναμφισβητήτως γεγονέναι τούτου μὴ συνομολογηθέντος.
>
> Νεώτερος Σωκράτης (The) Younger Socrates:
>
> οὐκοῦν καὶ νῦν ὅτι μάλιστα χρὴ ταὐτὸν ποιεῖν.
>
> Ξένος (The) Stranger:
>
> πλέον, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἔτι τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον ἢ 'κεῖνο—καίτοι κἀκείνου γε μεμνήμεθα τὸ μῆκος ὅσον ἦν—ἀλλ᾽ ὑποτίθεσθαι μὲν τὸ τοιόνδε περὶ αὐτῶν καὶ μάλα δίκαιον. (284b–284c)
>
> (The) Stranger:
>
> Then, just as with the Sophist we compelled that which is not to be, when the argument escaped us on this point, so now also the greater again and the lesser must be compelled to become measurable not just relative to one another but also to the genesis of measure. For, it is not possible, at least, for either the statesman or any other person to have become without dispute knowing of things concerning actions unless this has been agreed to.
>
> Younger Socrates:
>
> Then now too as much as possible we must do the same thing.

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> (The) Stranger:
>
> This work, Socrates, is still more than that—and yet we remember the length of that, how great it was, but to set down just such a point concerning them is also very just. (284b–284c)

The Younger Socrates then asks what sort of thing the Stranger means. And the Stranger replies that he will need to explain more fully later but for now the answer is adequately and beautifully shown, that all the arts are in a similar state and our argument says that the "greater and the lesser are at the same time measured not only in relation to one another but also in relation to the coming into being of the mean" (μεῖζόν τε ἅμα καὶ ἔλαττον μετρεῖσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἄλληλα μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ μετρίου γένεσιν, 284d).

This crucial passage in the *Statesman* explains that what is better and what is worse can arise politically and that we can learn how to measure them. The epistemology derives from the *Sophist*, to which the Stranger makes a specific reference ("the Sophist" in 284b, cf. *Sophist* 235). The Stranger's next step in the argument is to undertake a division between the sciences that rely on mathematics and measure with "number, length, depth, breadth, and thickness" (284e), and those sciences that measure in regard to "the moderate," "the fitting, and the needful" and all the other standards that are situated in the mean apart from the extremes (284e).[38]

What is the subject in Plato to which we apply these considerations of the standard of what is moderate, fitting, and needful? It is the character and action we see in human life and our broadly conceived political relations with one another. The analogous word for Thucydides that helps us supply the mean or the moderate is what he calls human nature, or the human, or nature (φύσις, transliterated *phusis*). He refers to "the human" (τὸ ἀνθρώπινον) in his discussion of his method (1.22.4) and to human nature when he explains the characteristics of *stasis* (ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ, "as long as human nature remains the same," 3.82.2). A number of times important speakers in the speeches he reports refer to "the human" and "human nature," for example, the Athenian ambassadors at Sparta (1.76.3), Diodotus in his response to Cleon (3.45.7), Hermocrates at the conference at Gela (4.61.5), and the Athenians at Melos (5.105.2). Of course, in the last three instances, the speakers are emphasizing one part of human nature in one degree, but overall Thucydides presents a picture of human nature as something that can be known and characterized in our relations with one another even when we disagree. In fact, as Simon Swain has pointed out, the word *phusis* in Thucydides refers in "all but one" [case] to "man in human society" not to "biological man" or "to nature itself."[39]

Thucydides a not a Sophist nor is he like Protagoras. Thucydides aims at truths that may be unattractive to his readers because unlike Protagoras and

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other teachers searching for money and power, Thucydides aims at "the truth" (τὸ σαφὲς, 1.22.4) not popularity, political power, or money, like Protagoras in the *Protagoras*. He also gives no impression of doing his writing for money. His view of his work resembles Plato's in spirit and in its goals, though the methods focus on historical events because he wrote a history of the Peloponnesian War. The *Statesman* and its view of political life and leadership will be helpful when we consider Pericles' role, which seems at first to be the apparently archetypal statesman in Thucydides' *Histories*, though he later emerges as a more complex figure whose memory is tinged with tragedy.

One further way to consider the issue of what the truth (τὸ σαφὲς) is for Thucydides and how it relates to what the truth is for Plato is to consider what each of them appears to present as the claim writing can have on reaching the truth. That issue is complicated in both cases as both Thucydides—rather obviously—and Plato—not quite so plainly—aim to relate what they experienced and learned through their experience of the people around them. They have differing modes and approaches, Thucydides seeking to discover facts, deeds, and words in the lives of many figures, and relate them to one another, and Plato seeking to learn from Socrates and to convey in a dramatically convincing way, who Socrates was and what he thought and believed. Yet for both writing is both an opportunity to express complex truths and a tool that can be used to reveal various different points of view about the same words and deeds. Plato presents this theory of writing most clearly in the *Phaedrus* (275d–277a), while in Thucydides the force and meaning of what he writes—especially when he writes in his own voice directly to the reader—can be just as elusive as it is in Plato. Formally, they have some differences in that Plato does not speak directly to his readers (outside of the "Letters"), while Thucydides does occasionally address his readers directly, but with intense ambiguities that still remain challenging even after they are parsed.

Part of the reason for Thucydides' elusiveness seems to be that he was a participant in the war (5.26), which led to his position as an Athenian exile that gave him a broader view (5.26.5). He does seek to know the "exact truth" (Crawley, ἀκριβές τι), on which to base his conclusions, but he is remarkably restrained in his direct statements as to what that truth is, seeming to prefer that his readers learn by going through the deeds and speeches for themselves rather than by being told the correct viewpoint, if indeed there is only one, which seems doubtful in a number of cases. He wants us to believe that he has worked diligently to get the facts but his readers all inevitably feel that understanding the meaning of major and minor events and speeches is difficult as he drives us to ponder what he presents.

To return to Thucydides' method at a more everyday level, I have made certain assumptions about the speeches in Thucydides. While Thucydides does not knowingly report anything false, he has selected rigorously from

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what must have been an enormous amount of material in order to further his philosophical and artistic goals. For instance, he apparently thought that it was important to emphasize the destruction of Melos (5.84–5.116) and not the depopulation of Scione (5.32.1). To understand what Thucydides thought about the conduct of the Athenians at Melos, it will be assumed that for him the events there were more important than those at Scione, and that his rhetorical and dramatic emphasis is a sign of this.[40]

More generally, Thucydides' well-known statement of his method of presenting the speeches allows him latitude in their actual wording (1.22.1). He says that he stays as close as possible to "the general sense of what was actually said" (τῆς ξυμπάσης γνώμης τῶν ἀληθῶς λεχθέντων), but that he could not record the exact words, and hence made his speakers say what was necessary in the given circumstance (ὡς δ' ἂν ἐδόκουν ἐμοὶ ἕκαστοι περὶ τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων τὰ δέοντα μάλιστ' εἰπεῖν, "However each speaker seemed to me concerning the circumstances at the time to say doubtless what was required").

While Thucydides certainly does not misrepresent speakers, he did choose which speeches to include. He also composed them in such a way that they illuminate his general themes and concepts.[41] It also appears to be the case that what he is saying here is that, as it seemed to him (i.e., Thucydides), each one doubtless said what was required in each circumstance, so he wrote it, keeping as closely as possible to the general sense of what they actually said. While his memory is not perfect, his world was a world of speech and not many books, so his memory was practiced and he tried to pay attention to what he remembered, what others told him, and what was required in each circumstance.

PART 2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF *STASIS* AT ATHENS

Thucydides says that many terrible things happened because of *stasis* in the cities during the war, things that occur and always will occur, as long as human nature is the same. These experiences will be harsher or milder and will vary in their forms in accordance with the difference in the individual cases (3.82.2). Thucydides' description of *stasis* in Corcyra covers a number of phenomena, including the change in the ἀξίωσις or *axiosis* of words, and he himself indicates that this applies not just to Corcyra but to all states that fall into *stasis*.[42] We are justified in thinking he meant this description to include Athens, although some dissent from this. In fact, there is apparently a parallel decline in the level of discourse of the Greek world at large during the war, which finally crushes the ideals that united the Hellenes during the invasion of the Persians,[43] though this decline is not the main focus here.

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Before we turn to the subject proper, however, it will be useful to review the status of political discourse at Athens as Thucydides presents it, and to show in outline how Athens declined into *stasis*.

Directly after Pericles' third speech (2.60–2.65), Thucydides mentions the *stasis* that engulfed Athens after the Sicilian Expedition (2.65.12), although traces of the disturbance appear at least as early as the first visitation of the plague. Thucydides represents prewar Greece as embodying a respect for *logos*, and in Athens this respect reached a very high form, as revealed most clearly in the Funeral Oration of Pericles. In a broader sense, this aim at an ideal *logos* appears in Athens with the birth of tragedy and the growth of philosophy through Parmenides, Anaxagoras, and Socrates. While Thucydides has Pericles use a number of apparently traditional themes to glorify Athens and to praise those who have died for her, the use of these themes should in no way be seen as reducing the impact of his words.[44] On the most basic level, Thucydides has only praise for Pericles, his plans, his words, and his deeds (e.g., 2.65), although he presents a number of disquieting themes and indications that foreshadow eventual defeat and raise questions about the depth of Pericles' statesmanship and some of the qualities of his rhetoric. In Pericles' Athens word and deed are almost equal (2.42.2), and *logos* is a vital preparation for action (2.40.2). *Logos* is essential for spiritual prosperity, and freedom is the precondition for the exercise of political speech. Since it is as a political being that man reaches his highest level, and freedom is the basis for the political life, freedom is happiness (2.43.4). Courage guarantees freedom (cf. 2.43.4), and true courage depends on the free exercise of the mind (2.40.2), which reveals itself publicly as responsible political discourse.

While she does not always reach these high ideals, Athens is an education for Hellas (2.41.1), that is, her very existence both as a force and as an example raises the entire level of Greek culture. This is bold and, as we will see, hubristic, but as Thucydides presents the war, there is truth in the claim. Two sentences later in the Funeral Oration, Pericles says that Athens' subjects cannot complain that they are ruled by those who are unworthy of rule:

> For Athens alone of her contemporaries is found when tested to be greater than her reputation, and alone gives no occasion to her assailants to blush at the antagonist by whom they have been worsted, or to her subjects to question her title by merit to rule. (2.41.3)

The *hubris* here is quite clear. Pericles professes that freedom is the highest value but we wonder, not for everyone, not even for all Greeks? Political freedom that depends on the submission of others is an expression of power. Athens did not gain the leadership of the Greeks by enslaving her subjects but within forty years more some of her Greek subjects were chafing under her

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rule. Euboea and Megara revolted in 446 (1.114), Samos and Byzantium in 440 (1.117). There is also dramatic irony in Pericles' statement that Athens' subjects accepted her worthiness to rule, because Athens' defeat inevitably raises questions about why Athens lost. Socrates' serious criticisms of Athens underscore these questions.

Pericles' eloquent invocation of the political life in Athens shares a respect for freedom, participatory democracy, and equality at law, unwritten laws, friendliness toward foreigners, free political speech, and open borders among other crucial aspects of a free society that is thoroughly modern.[45] The ideas of *parrhesia*, *isonomia*, *isegoria*, and *koinonia* lead to these more complete political ideals. One important flaw, however, in Pericles' political ideas was obviously that he did not see the danger that an aggressive and even destructive foreign policy that fostered manipulation of the Delian League from an alliance in to an empire would pose for the internal political life of Athens. As Madison (or possibly Hamilton) explains in Federalist #63,

> An attention to the judgment of other nations is important to every government for two reasons: the one is, that, independently of the merits of any particular plan or measure, it is desirable, on various accounts, that it should appear to other nations as the offspring of a wise and honorable policy; the second is, that in doubtful cases, particularly where the national councils may be warped by some strong passion or momentary interest, the presumed or known opinion of the impartial world may be the best guide that can be followed. What has not America lost by her want of character with foreign nations; and how many errors and follies would she not have avoided, if the justice and propriety of her measures had, in every instance, been previously tried by the light in which they would probably appear to the unbiased part of mankind?
>
> Yet however requisite a sense of national character may be, it is evident that it can never be sufficiently possessed by a numerous and changeable body. It can only be found in a number so small that a sensible degree of the praise and blame of public measures may be the portion of each individual; or in an assembly so durably invested with public trust, that the pride and consequence of its members may be sensibly incorporated with the reputation and prosperity of the community.[46]

Madison's argument here is that the proposed new Constitution of the United States would remedy some inherent shortcomings in legislative government by a "numerous and changeable" body, an Assembly, if it had a Senate composed of members who were more permanent and more deeply connected to the "reputation and prosperity of the community" than an Assembly or House of Representatives. While most citizens in republics

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today would not want the original form of election of U.S. senators by selection of state legislatures, Madison's argument is that a smaller body than a House or Assembly with longer terms and deeper connections to the long-term interests of the nation would more reliably lead to a spirit of honor and wisdom in relation to the judgments of other nations. The tension between a single Executive and a larger and very popular House or Assembly would more often lead to a failure to observe the need for the respect of other nations. Whether or not we agree with the solution as presented in the U.S. Constitution, the point seems well taken that some mediation of the inherent conflict between the one and the many is needed in regard to this issue as well as a number of others outlined in Madison's essay. Pericles' rule lacked a mediating representative chamber, a Senate. This then led to various suppressive acts by Athens toward her allies, which then weakened the fundamental appeal of Athens that Pericles proclaims rests on her many virtues.

This weakness in the structure of the government, if we consider Madison's theoretical argument, developed historically as the strength of democracy grew in the late sixth and early fifth century BC. The complicated history of the development of the organs of representative government before Pericles' rule, and the outcome of that development, fostered democracy but it also had the somewhat unplanned result of a very powerful role for the "generals," the *strategoi*. After the major democratic reforms of Kleisthenes, the Assembly or *ecclesia* decided on proposals brought to it by a "random and representative cross-section of its own members."[47] The senior council had been the Council of the Areopagus since the time of Solon. Kleisthenes' democratic reforms in 508–507 had reduced the powers of the Council of the Areopagus and moved them to the Council of the Five Hundred, or the *boule*.[48] But the *boule* was either originally chosen by lot or switched from election to choice by lot shortly after its formation by Kleisthenes.[49] The democratic forces in Athens promoted the reforms of Ephialtes in 462/461 that further reduced the power of the Council of the Areopagus, which was composed of former government leaders, the archons. The archons themselves had earlier been reduced in power when the method of choosing them for office was changed to election by lot in 487/86, though the precise motivations for this change in electoral procedure are unclear.[50] In addition, the *boule* or Council, whose function was to initiate and propose legislation, had a membership chosen by lot from the citizens with a term of office of one year.[51] Each of the ten tribes contributed fifty members to the *boule*, which meant that it represented the people (and not the elite) more than it had in the constitution under Solon. As power of the *boule* increased after the reforms of Ephialtes in 461 when it took over many of the functions of the Council of the Areopagus, the entire government became more democratic.[52] The *boule* originated legislation by proposing it to the Assembly (the *eccelsia*),

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but because of its composition, it was inherently democratic and did not introduce (by design at least) a concern for the long-term values of the state that could curb the initiatives of the radical democrats or the leader of the city.[53] Pericles was either opposed to continuation of the power of a mediating representative chamber, which the Athenians had had in the Council of the Areopagus, or did not have the foresight to see the need for such a power, or, if he did, he seems not to have had the ability to open the debate on such a subject. What Pericles did was to become a *strategos*, which was the position that rose in power starting with Themistocles' policy of a large fleet in 483/482. This newly powerful force in Athenian government, the office of the *strategoi*, oriented the forces of democracy toward military power in the hands of one leader, who turned out historically to be Pericles. This change was the result of the need for a large fleet that Themistocles saw and persuaded the *ecclesia* to implement along with the fortification of the Piraeus (Thucydides 1.93.3).[54]

Thus, the Athenian government was complicated both in form, in the mid-fifth century BC, and in its history. It lacked a Senate but had as a substitute a formally very democratic body, the *boule*, to propose legislation and thereby to control the tendencies of the *demos*. This then, as we saw, left the government without a representative body that could promote the long-term, moderated, general interests of Athens as a whole. The office of the *strategos* took on that role, but inappropriately in some ways, as generals solve problems with war and weapons of war. This Pericles himself attempted to do in response to the growing power of Sparta. What Athens needed was a second reform of its government to moderate the powerful democratic forces in Athens and to control the powerful navy, which had the port, Piraeus, as its center, and the expression of military power as its goal. The central contradiction of the Athenian Empire thus became the confluence of powerful forces in the Piraeus, which was a center for resident aliens, commerce, and democratic politics that could be exported across the Mediterranean. But since the time of Themistocles, it had also been the center of Athenian military power. Athens exported an ideal of democracy, but its military power arose in the same place and grew without formal moderation. Pericles did not attempt a second reform on a level with Kleisthenes' to make permanent some long-term perspective in the government and to control the military. Pericles himself became the control of the expression of Athenian military power, and though he did fulfill the role of general admirably and honorably, his death unleashed forces that had no institutionalized control. As the Stranger says in the *Statesman*, the art of the statesman is to decide whether something should be done or not (304d) while the art of the *strategos* is to wage war (304e). The art of the general is to subordinate the art of the statesman (305a). The art of the statesman also decides whether the citizens ought to learn or not

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and controls the art of what is learned or taught. In Athens, the basic political principle is democracy; the statesman decides what is to be learned or taught. The politicians rely on the art of rhetoric, which includes telling stories or myths (304c–d). This can hint at why Socrates disturbed the Athenian government so thoroughly. He implicitly and sometimes openly challenged the controlling ideas of the entire state.

Plato's *Republic* begins with Socrates' visit to the Piraeus, the home of the democratic forces in Athenian politics and a place that trade and the navy dominated (327a–b). The Piraeus was the location of great contradictions in Athenian public life as it was the center of Athenian expansionism in political power, the navy, and in trade. This is where Socrates was free to pursue his ideas but constrained by the dynamic, dangerous contradiction between Athens as she was and Athens as she aspired to be. So in the *Republic* Socrates goes down to the Piraeus where he discusses a just state. One Platonic irony here is that the Piraeus was the seat of commerce, the home of many foreigners who were attracted to the sense of commercial equality and concomitant financial opportunity, and also general human equality and freedom of Athens. It was also the center of the democratic movement in Athenian politics.[55] The Piraeus was theoretically the safest place for Socrates to present his view of human justice, since the largest degree of apparent freedom resided there, but one freedom that was not allowed in Athens generally, as it turns out, was to question the underlying principles of that freedom and the nature of the Athenian Empire that generated all the political freedom and the time and means to pursue it.

In the first speech in Athens that Thucydides reports, the debate in Athens in 433 between the Corinthians and the Corcyraeans, the central facts that control the decision in favor of Corcyra are the recognition or simple belief that war was inevitable and the sense that Athens should not sacrifice the naval power of Corcyra to the interests of Corinth (1.44.2). In addition, as Thucydides notes, the island of Corcyra was conveniently located on the way to Sicily (1.44.2). Even as the war is beginning, the Athenians focus on practical, material advantage, an approach to life that war encourages. Here we see the war in one view: Naval and commercial expansion to Sicily are enabled by Corcyraean and Athenian support for the aristocrats (the ruling party) in Epidamnus, while the Corinthians supported the *demos* in a civil war. Athens here acts against the general direction of her broad social and political force for democracy (cf. 1.24.5–1.25.1). She acts for her imperial power. Corcyra, a naval power, offers more naval power to Athens, and, since war is the chosen method for solving problems of state here, Corcyra receives support.

In the first debate at Athens, both the Corinthians and the Corcyraeans implicitly acknowledge the force of *logos* or argument as such. The fact

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that there was a debate at all, and indeed a rather complicated one in which both sides appeal to justice (1.32.1, 1.34.1, 1.37.1, 1.40.1, etc.) in addition to expediency, shows that even at this late period just preceding the war there was among Greeks and especially the Athenians (to whom these speeches are addressed) a respect for discourse even if the Athenians' decision is for military and economic advantage.[56]

The war eroded respect for *logos*, however, and pushed the Athenians toward unsafe and radical actions, most notably the Sicilian Expedition. Thucydides shows this process beginning among the Athenians with his account of the plague following directly upon the Funeral Oration. After describing the various aspects of the attacks of the plague (2.47.3–2.50), Thucydides turns to its effect on the morale of the people (2.51), and then to the way it upset the rites of burial (2.52, and especially 2.52.4). The rite of burial had provided the occasion for the Funeral Oration (2.35.1), in which Pericles praises the ideal of Athenian adherence to written and unwritten *nomos* (2.37, and especially 2.37.3), while the rite itself symbolizes this adherence. The plague, by disrupting this most important *nomos*, led to a general *anomia*: πρῶτόν τε ἦρξε καὶ ἐς τἆλλα τῇ πόλει ἐπὶ πλέον ἀνομίας τὸ νόσημα ("Nor was this the only form of lawless extravagance which owed its origin to the plague," 2.53.1). The plague marked the beginning of the lawlessness that survived it.

There are many parallels between the effects of the plague and of *stasis*.[57] Both were violent. Both decreased respect for religion (2.52.3, 2.53.4; cf. 3.82.8), and both were lawless (2.53.1, 2.53.4; cf. 3.82.6). In both situations, people thus became more daring (2.53.1, 3.82.4). In general, each of these phenomena destroyed established *nomoi*, that is, customs, rules, and laws. The swiftness of the plague caused a swift revolution in values so that people, thinking of their bodies and wealth as ephemeral, considered what was pleasurable, and what would lead to pleasure, as both honorable and useful.[58]

The plague, together with the first invasion of the Peloponnesians, changed the spirit of the Athenians (2.59.1–2), and for the first time in the war broke the unity of the *polis* of Athens. Pericles' third speech was only partly successful in restoring the mood of the people, as they gave up the idea of settling their disputes with the Spartans, but also fined Pericles for his conduct of the war (2.65.2). In the chapter after Pericles' last speech Thucydides details the political failure at Athens that followed his death. He had told them to be patient, to pay attention to the fleet, not to try to extend the empire, and not to risk the fortunes of the city during the war (2.65,7; cf. 1.144.1). The Athenians did the opposite of this. They allowed private ambition and private interests to lead them into activities unrelated to the war. When these projects were successful, they profited individuals, when unsuccessful, they injured the state (2.65.7). Thus, the desire for power arising from greed and ambition

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led to *stasis*. Thucydides' analysis of the causes of decline in Athens corresponds to his general portrait of *stasis* in 3.82.

While Pericles was alive, he led the people rather than being led by them (2.65.8). But his successors, being roughly equal to each other, and desiring to be first in the city handed over the affairs of state to the whims of the multitude. Since the popular leaders after Pericles were interested primarily in their own advancement rather than in the prosperity of Athens, they brought the city into many blunders, in particular the Sicilian Expedition.[59] Because they were ambitious, they recalled Alcibiades. For the first time, the city fell into civil discord (2.65.11).[60] By 411 the city was already in *stasis*, which finally cost it the war.

Stasis is an organic development in a city and does not arrive full grown in one day.[61] Because of his method Thucydides does not call attention to each stage of the emergence of *stasis* at Athens, although he does indicate, as they occur, certain incontrovertible signs of the political degeneration there. Once he has described the *stasis* at Corcyra and drawn out its general features, he assumes the effect of his description on the remainder of his narrative. He "state[s] the general character of an event in its first appearance and thereafter assume[s] it as the underlying condition of his narrative."[62] For him, the chief characteristics of *stasis* are its lack of moderation (3.82.3), its violence (3.82.2, 82.8), its emotional concentration on swift, thoughtless action (3.82.4–3.82.8), the overthrow and abuse of *nomoi* in order to further those actions (3.82.6), and the ultimate disregard for the political discourse that Pericles saw as the essential preliminary for all successful action (2.40.2).

Even before Pericles' death, there are other serious signs of disturbance in Athenian politics beyond the fine that he suffered.[63] After Potidaea capitulated, the Athenians, apparently because of their growing bitterness at their situation, blamed the generals for accepting the terms (2.70.4). They did this even though the generals had what appeared to be good reasons (2.70.2), thus providing an example of the Athenians' punishment of their leaders, which reaches a crisis in Thucydides with the recall and condemnation of Alcibiades in absentia.[64] The dangers of democracy are manifold, but in Thucydides' narrative two of the most serious problems with this form of government are, first, that the people are fickle (2.65.4) and inclined to choose as leaders those who pander to their desires and reward them with money and, second, that democracy leads to tyranny by demagogues. In this respect, Thucydides' ideas come close to Plato's in the *Republic* (562c–d, 564e–566c). This raises the question of how comparing what Plato writes with Thucydides' work can be useful in understanding Thucydides. One clear way of understanding Plato's work as being related to Thucydides will be in the idea that both came into a world in which religious plays, that is, Greek Tragedy, provided

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Athenians and others with an important way of understanding the world in which they had lived, their current world, and perhaps what the future might hold. Plato's dialogues are unusual in format in Western philosophy. He was clearly influenced by Greek Tragedy in many of the earlier dialogues such as *Meno* and *Euthyphro* and also the relatively later dialogues like *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and *Protagoras*.

Plato openly addresses the failure of the Athenians to educate their children well. Thucydides implies a variety of concerns in this area in his discussion of Athenians' incorrect beliefs regarding the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. His portrait of Alcibiades, while recognizing Alcibiades' capabilities, suggests deep problems in his character.[65] Aristophanes' *Clouds* presents a comic version of the general case of Alcibiades and his failed education.[66] This famous case of a failure of education links the two thinkers and Aristophanes. Both Thucydides and Plato, presumably like many in Athens, identified Alcibiades as the young man who could show that democracy could produce good leaders. Their views of *eros* as Alcibiades' deepest problem are quite similar. Alcibiades desperately wants to be erotically attractive and to be loved, at least as Plato presents him in the *Symposium*, and as Thucydides presents his efforts, but he has no vision at all of what he would want to do with an Athens that loved him. He is the signal failure of the wealthy Athenian patriarchy.

Another way in which Plato's work can be helpful is that Plato defines a way of living in the world as centered on knowledge or at least the belief that we may attain it (*Meno* 86a–c). This serves as a culturally relevant counter to the relativistic thought of Thucydides' contemporaries in attempting to educate the Sophists. Plato thus serves as a philosophical point of comparison who can help readers understand both what Thucydides was attempting to respond to and how he attempted to create his response.

The position of Pericles in Thucydides' estimation is somewhat more puzzling than it seems at the first reading, as several scholars have noted.[67] While much of what Thucydides says supports the portrayal of Pericles as a very superior leader, there are some strong disquieting aspects and views of his leadership in the narrative and in some of the speeches, for example, the emergence of the plague right after Pericles' famous Funeral Oration, a plague that subverts many of the most sacred human customs related to burial. Even in his last speech in Book 2, he explains the contradiction between the active life of power politics that animates an imperial state and the incompatibility of this life with the quiet life of a person at home.[68] Professor Martha Taylor writes an extensive and persuasive analysis of the conflict between the idea that many Athenians had of Athens as a particular geographically located place and Pericles' ideal of a city that exists primarily in the minds and hearts of her people as an extended domain that could be an

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empire of all the world and a tomb for her famous men (Thucydides 2.43.3).[69] This conflict shows itself as a kind of *hubris*, in which the Athenians aspire to rule the known world but in doing so lose their sense of who they are as their ideal of democracy becomes a reality of the very powerful democracy of Athens attacking another important democracy, Syracuse.[70] Thucydides presents this conflict as a tragedy in which many moments of dramatic irony create a sense of foreboding that is realized in the great practical mistake of recalling Alcibiades.

One powerful example of the contrast between Pericles' idealistic view of the city aspiring to become a city residing in the minds and hearts of its citizens instead of in Attica is the movement of people back into Athens from their own local city (πόλις or *polis*, 2.16.2).[71] This movement, necessitated in many ways by Pericles' war itself, intensified a tension at the heart of Athenian civilization, a tension that Thucydides presents as going as far back as Theseus, who abolished the magistrates of the local cities in Attica and relocated them in Athens proper (2.15.2).[72] Indeed, Theseus prefigures Pericles in that his intelligence was a match for his power (2.15.2). His earlier relocation of the seat of government from the small cities of Attica to Athens presents Pericles with an opportunity, when the need arises at the start of the war, to complete the task by moving the people themselves. Edith Foster's elegant description of the power of the country establishments for those who live there is understated and powerful: "Such attachments [to their local country homes] would tend to make them satisfied with what they have."[73] But Pericles' failure here is a want of moderation. Theseus the king had moved the power of the local magistrates and council offices to Athens, but the people were allowed to keep their homes and live in them (2.15.2). This established the political center. Pericles moved the people themselves, which was a necessity in war but immoderate as the long-term step it turned out to be. It was too costly emotionally for the people and then imposed the dreadful practical problem of concentrated population in Athens, which aggravated the difficulty of the basic living situation during the plague (2.52.1). The crowding together from the countryside into the city (2.52.1) echoes very similar wording in the description of Pericles' transport of people from their farms into Athens (2.14.1).[74] This then is an example of dramatic irony as the ritual celebration of the first glorious deaths of the war is transmogrified into the horror of dead bodies piling up from the plague. Thucydides emphasizes the ominous danger of Pericles' crowding of people into the city by quoting a Pythian oracle that portends great danger to the city from inhabiting a special area below the citadel, the "Pelargikon parcel" (2.17.1–2). Thucydides himself says that the oracle referred not to danger from the unlawful habitation of the area but rather to the risks associated with inhabiting the area as the result of the war (2.17.2).

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In a broader way, Thucydides implies by the parallel actions here that Pericles serves as a sole ruler or king like Theseus. But Theseus was wiser than Pericles in this all-important matter of homes for his people. While moving the residents of rural Attica to a place of safety was advisable, here also we may think forward to Thucydides' later and more famous comment on Pericles' rule: ἐγίγνετό τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή ("what was in word a democracy was becoming in deed rule (*arche*) by the first man," 2.65.9, translation mine). The connection between Pericles' *arche* or rule and Athens' tyranny (τυραννίδα 2.63.2) is close but not exact, and also clear, but to ascribe to Thucydides here a complete criticism of Pericles' government makes too strong a point.[75] Pericles was working with the structure he had, but he did not do very much to change it if he found it wanting. He certainly did not revive the power the Council of the Areopagus, for example, or arrange for a different method of selecting members of the *boule*. This may provide an insight into how to read Thucydides. Pericles lived the active life. Events pressed in and limited some of his choices. Then in war he faced necessity regularly. On the other hand, he chose war or at least did not seek either to delay it or to set a power in the middle between the main executive of the government the *strategos*, Pericles, and the democratic Assembly. Though he did tell his people to "wait quietly" in the war (ἡσυχάζοντάς, 2.65.7), he seems to have lacked something of Archidamus' "moderation": "Archidamus their king . . . was held to be both an intelligent and a moderate man" (Ἀρχίδαμος ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν, ἀνὴρ καὶ ξυνετὸς δοκῶν εἶναι καὶ σώφρων," 1.79.2, translation Crawley, modified so as to render σώφρων as "moderate" and ξυνετὸς as "intelligent").[76]

Archidamus believed at that point in 432/431 that invading Attica was unjust and that the gods would not support this injustice.[77] The attack appeared to be unjust because the Athenians were prepared to submit to arbitration, and to proceed against a state that has taken that stance does not conform to "legal usage" (νόμιμον, 1.85.2). Archidamus remains moderate. Although Pericles believes war is inevitable and is not as moderate as Archidamus, he argues strenuously against adopting a militarily aggressive campaign.[78]

While Cleon embraces the opposite of this type of moderation, his relationship to Pericles' ideas is not as clear. The growth of Cleon's power marks for Thucydides the rise of the demagogue in Athens. Cleon transcends his historical role and becomes the type of the violent demagogue who appeals to the passions and self-interest of the people.[79] He was the most violent of the citizens and the most persuasive with the people (3.36.4). But this does not at all mean that Cleon was only a foil for Pericles or only a type and not a particular person. While Thucydides does have overriding themes and concerns, he also emphasizes the importance of individual leaders to determine the path of the Peloponnesian War. Thus, Pericles' particular way of

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responding to what he believed was an inevitable war enabled him to restrain the worst impulses of the people that can arise in wars.[80] Cleon, on the other hand, exploited those impulses.

The debate between Cleon and Diodotus suggests political division within the state. Two opposing points of view divide the people almost into halves (3.49.4). Furthermore, since Cleon takes over the high ground with his simplistic appeals to justice, Diodotus is forced to retreat to the argument from expediency. He does this because he must gain the trust of a people who are somewhat "hardened" to the crude appeals of Cleon.[81] The debate also illustrates Thucydides' statement that in *stasis* the violent, angry man was trusted, and the one who spoke in opposition was suspect (3.82.5). Cleon himself argues that the one speaking against his point of view (3.38.1) has too much confidence in his own rhetoric or has been impelled by his hope of gain (3.38.1–3.38.2). He even hints that those who have reopened the debate are serving Mytilene's interest, thus encouraging suspicion, which is one of the clear signs of political decay for Thucydides (3.83.1, cf. 3.82.5). It was absent from the Athens of the Funeral Oration (2.37.2), but by the time of the mutilation of the Herms, it had overcome the Athenians, particularly in their attitude toward Alcibiades (6.53.2, 6.60.1, 6.60.3, 6.61.4).

The sufferings of the Athenian democracy during the first few years of the war promoted the Athenians' weakness, their *pleonexia* or the desire for more, which is one of the chief characteristics of *stasis* (3.82.6). After the Athenians' good luck at Pylos and the armistice of 425, Spartan envoys came to Athens and proposed peace. But the Athenians, led by Cleon, refused the offer and "grasped at something more" (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο, 4.21.2).[82] This *pleonexia* hardened during the aftermath of the Pylos affair when the Spartans kept sending emissaries to try to recover the prisoners, while the Athenians would not accept their proposals and continued to grasp at something more (4.41.4). *Pleonexia* thus developed into an important factor in Athenian politics and eventually led to the Sicilian Expedition (6.24.3–6.24.4).[83] In the *Republic*, Socrates ascribes this general development toward *pleonexia* in democracy to an original focus on the acquisition of money in oligarchy as that regime replaces a regime based on the love of honor, a timocracy (553b–c). In the oligarchic regime those who rule become rulers through their money, but they are unwilling to control their children by managing their spending (555c). In the case of orphans, the oligarch's worst characteristics would come into view, their lack of restraint (*Republic*, 554c). While Alcibiades was not an orphan he was turned over to Pericles when his father Kleinias died (*Alcibiades I*, 104b). Plato does not even mention Alcibiades' other protector, Ariphron.[84]

In 424, the Athenians banished the generals Pythodorus and Sophocles and fined Eurymedon for having taken bribes and for not having subdued Sicily.

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They had left Sicily, as Thucydides makes clear, because the Sicilians had taken the advice of Hermocrates and ended their conflicts (4.65.1–4.65.3). But the Athenians blame their generals anyway because, as Thucydides says, the people had let their success confuse their strength with their hopes (4.65.3–4.65.4). They had already this early in the war lost their sense of what was rationally possible. The frustration with the generals recalls both the earlier criticism of the generals who had accepted terms at Potidaea (2.70.4) and the fining of Pericles (2.65.3). The Athenians' growing severity toward their leaders bespeaks increasing irrationality and political disunity, which Thucydides reinforces by implicitly contrasting the Athenians' attitude with the unity of the Sicilians (4.65). The freedom the Athenians feel to take part in public debate is perverted into contempt for leaders, revealing an inherent weakness of democracy, which Plato too sees when he has Socrates describe the democratic city in Book 8 of the *Republic*. There the democratic city thirsts for freedom, and when it gets bad wine pourers as leaders it becomes drunk, punishing its rulers for not indulging the people (*Republic* 562c–d). Plato's account of the succession of regimes, from oligarchy to democracy and from there to oligarchic tyranny, parallels what seems to have been the general historical flow of internal conflict in Athens and what is the flow of internal conflict in Athens according to Thucydides. The last stage in that particular sequence involves ostentatious expense in Plato's account and a kind of seemingly religious procession (560d–e). Plato names *hubris* first at the start of a parade of vices (560e1). This befits Alcibiades' presentation of himself in the debate regarding the Sicilian Expedition where he claims that his expenses and Olympic victories show the power of Athens (6.15.1–3) and his extraordinary superiority to others puts him above them (6.15.4).

Thucydides' view of democracy has important implications for how we are to understand his portrait of Pericles. It seems clear that for him democracy is not the highest form of government (8.97.2). Under Pericles, when the city was ruled in name by a democracy (2.65.9), there was rule by the first citizen, and Athens reached her peak. For Thucydides, the question of the highest form of government may not be the same as an enquiry into his view of the highest historical manifestation of the political life in the *polis* in the middle to late fifth century BC. He differs from Plato in that, for him, in a democracy a very high-type leader such as Pericles may emerge, although such an emergence is almost an accident, not dependent upon the institutions of government. He sees the same forces in the decline of democracy that Plato sees, however, as in the end Athens falls into an internal war of factional passions.

Plato and Thucydides experienced the collapse of Athenian political life at the end of the fifth century in very different ways but they share a sense of catastrophic loss. For Plato the crux of the loss is the death of the most profound thinker of the age, which then comes to symbolize the uncertain

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and sometimes fateful relationship between philosophy and political life. Plato's apparent solution is to conclude that until philosophers rule as kings or kings philosophize and at the same time political power and philosophy occur together, there will be no end of ills in cities and among humans generally. This presents us with what seems like a similarity between Plato and Thucydides in that they both appear to see a deeply thoughtful ruler as one possible solution to the political problems that human life presents. But Pericles is far from a philosopher in Plato's or Socrates' view, and in reading Thucydides we must ponder the ways in which he presents the Athenians' catastrophic loss in Sicily as inevitable. This leads the reader back to the text to see what causes the impression of impending tragedy.

The *Menexenus*, which includes a parody of Pericles' Funeral Oration, is most likely Plato's, although the authorship is still disputed.[85] Socrates questions Pericles' raising of children in the *Protagoras* (320a) and states that Pericles was the author of Athens' troubles in the *Gorgias* (519a). In the *Menexenus* Socrates delivers a speech that he attributes to Pericles' courtesan and companion Aspasia (236b), composed of remnants of the speech she wrote for Pericles, his famous Funeral Oration. The attack on Pericles is purposeful and relentless.[86]

Although *stasis* as a fully defined condition or syndrome may not have developed until 411, the recall of Alcibiades represents the beginning of very dangerous *stasis* in Athens.[87] Thucydides had said this in the chapter on Pericles' successors. He repeats this judgment in the introduction to Alcibiades' speech at the assembly held to consider the best way to equip the ships bound for Sicily. Alcibiades' indulgence of his desires had much to do with the ruin of Athens:

> ὢν γὰρ ἐν ἀξιώματι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀστῶν, ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις μείζοσιν ἢ κατὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν οὐσίαν ἐχρῆτο ἔς τε τὰς ἱπποτροφίας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας δαπάνας: ὅπερ καὶ καθεῖλεν ὕστερον τὴν τῶν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν οὐχ ἥκιστα.
>
> For the position he held among the citizens led him to indulge his tastes beyond what his real means would bear, both in keeping horses and in the rest of his expenditure; and this later on had not a little to do with the ruin of the Athenian state. (6.15.3)

The people, fearful of the magnitude of his *paranomia* and ambition, thinking that he aimed at tyranny, became his enemy. Although he was the best general Athens had, the people entrusted others with the affairs of state. This soon destroyed the *polis* (6.15.4). Soon after the Sicilian Expedition the city fell into a formal condition of *stasis* during which, although she held out for a number of years, her power declined (2.65.12). Athens finally gave in and

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lost the war as a result of internal disputes among the citizens. Thucydides implies a medical model for understanding *stasis* as a disease. Plato explicitly calls the class warfare of *stasis* a disease in the *Republic* (νόσημα, 563e), and in the *Sophist* (228a–b).

In general, Thucydides depicts a decline in political life in Athens during the war. This movement is not a straight line, however, but full of peaks and valleys. Alcibiades, for instance, stands out for his ability, and once even for his service to Athens (8.86.4), yet he appears late in the *Histories*. Cleon, on the other hand, has his most significant moment in Book 3 in the debate over Mytilene. The Melian Dialogue, which as we shall see, represents a serious falling off from the tone and substance of speeches near the beginning of the war, occurs near the middle of the *Histories*.

Although the dramatic progress of political degeneration at Athens does not follow a straight line, there are two overriding factors that support such an overarching interpretation of how Thucydides presents political discourse in Athens during the war. In the first place, we have Thucydides' explicit statements in 3.82 of the effect of war on men's emotions and their ways of using *logos* during political revolutions. Second, the dramatic force of the *Histories* is such that Thucydides' portrayal of the war has a sense of inevitability about it. Thucydides presents various aspects of the decline in Athens' fortunes. He describes the plague and the loss of Pericles, then he shows us Cleon, who serves as the form of the demagogue. After this we have the Melian Dialogue, and finally the Syracusan adventure, which seems doomed from the start. All this contributes to a general impression that Athens will lose the war.[88] The decline in political discourse or rhetoric during the war forms part of this picture. The resolution of the apparent conflict between Thucydides' high praise of Pericles and the feeling we have as readers of the *Histories* that Athens will lose the war represents one of the most important intellectual challenges that Thucydides sets for his readers.

Thucydides selects and emphasizes in order to develop his own philosophical account of the Peloponnesian War.[89] The decline of political discourse at Athens plays, as we shall see, a significant role in this account. This decline mirrors several other movements in the *Histories*: from political power to pure violence; from *arche* or "rule" to tyranny; from being to becoming; from orderly rest combined with moments of rest to disorderly and then frantic political and military motion; from trust to suspicion; from public to private; and from a *polis* presented as an organized one in the Funeral Oration to inhabitants of Athens each pursuing their many dreams and recoiling from their many fears at the start of the Sicilian Expedition (6.30.1–2).

For Thucydides, a well-ordered *polis* and freedom from internal contention provide the essential bases for political achievement and power. Therefore, an examination of his description of the development of *stasis* and how it relates

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to other movements in the *Histories* is vital for a full understanding of his political philosophy. Faction or *stasis* is the opposite pole to the well-ordered state. Thucydides presents a view of *stasis* as generally spreading from the early clear instance of it in Corcyra to Athens and the Athenian Empire and eventually to the entire Hellenic world (3.82.1).[90] In modern times, James Madison in *Federalist* #10 rightly sees faction or *stasis* as perhaps the most serious problem facing all types of popular government:

> AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate, as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations.[91]

While Thucydides' account of *stasis* certainly details many of its horrors, one of the more terrifying outcomes is that it leads to a desire for the elimination of the other side. Thus, in Corcyra the revolution ended when there was nothing left of the aristocratic party (4.48.5). For many it is impossible to stay neutral, which is another kind of finality (3.82.8).[92]

Two of the clearest signs of *stasis* are the overturning of established *nomoi* ("customs" and "laws") and the loss of faith in reason and discourse. These two phenomena converge in the effect of *stasis* on the language of political debate. Thucydides discusses this effect in his chapters on *stasis* in Book 3. Thucydides' idea here anticipates Socrates' clear point in the *Phaedo* that hatred of reason (*misologia*), which parallels hatred of humans, is one of the worst fates that can befall us (89d–90c). Socrates and Plato locate reason in speech or *logos* specifically because it is in spoken discourse that Socrates locates reason and the attempt to understand the Good and live in it.

NOTES

1. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253al–18. Cf. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), pp. 9–10.

2. Currently, the Menexenus is believed by scholars to have been written by Plato. See George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton

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University Press, 1963), p. 158. The argument relies on the fact that Aristotle refers to the speech twice in the *Rhetoric*, 1367b and 1415b. In the second instance, he says, "For as Socrates says in his funeral oration, it is not difficult to praise Athenians among Athenians, but it [is difficult] among Lacedaemonians [i.e., Spartans]." The mention of Socrates' "Funeral Oration" (ἐν τῷ ἐπιταφίῳ), seems conclusive barring some new evidence. For a recent and important review of the Menexenus, see Frances Anne Pownall, *Lessons from the Past: The Moral Use of History in Fourth-Century Prose* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 38–64.

3. For the convenience of the reader this and almost all subsequent references to Thucydides (and in most cases to other Greek authors) will be in the body of the text. The translation of this sentence is the subject of a large scholarly controversy. We will return to it, but for now, the meaning of the sentence καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇ δικαιώσει should be taken as I have done on the text and not as "Words had to change their ordinary meaning and to take that which was now given them." This is the more popular translation of Richard Crawley, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0199%3Abook%3D3%3Achapter%3D82%3Asection%3D4, accessed July 24, 2019. Thomas Hobbes' translation is better for ἀξίωσιν: "The received value of names imposed for signification of things was changed into arbitrary." (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0247%3Abook%3D3%3Achapter%3D82, accessed July 24, 2019). Hobbes is clearly more correct than Crawley or the standard *Greek-English Lexicon* of Liddell, Scott, and Jones ((*LSJ*), 9th ed. With a Supplement. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), which follows Crawley's way of looking at the issue of how to translate ἀξίωσις, which is a very rare word in Greek before Thucydides.

4. While inclusive language might be more appropriate for modern egalitarian ideas, some of which derive directly from Thucydides' portrait of Pericles, the fact that Athenian political life was almost exclusively male has some important bearing on its successes and failures. This was a type of weak psychological strength for the men, but generally a political deficiency of the highest order.

5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, translated with introduction and commentary by R. J. Hollingdale, "What I Owe to the Ancients," 2 (New York: Penguin 1968), pp. 106–107.

6. Nietzsche, "What I Owe to the Ancients," *Twilight of the Idols*, 2, p. 107.

7. Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), p. 211.

8. Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, p. 255.

9. For a review of some of the complicated relationships between the *Meno* and the *Gorgias*, see E. R. Dodds, *Plato Gorgias* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 23, and pp. 359–60, commentary on *Gorgias* 516e9.

10. This is of course a vexatious passage mainly (but not only) because of the complicated mathematics involved. The clearest exposition of the mathematics can be found in Sir Thomas Heath, *A History of Greek Mathematics*, Vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, 1981), pp. 298ff. (This is a republication with corrected errata of the 1921 edition published by the Clarendon Press.) One very clear point is that

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Socrates' explanation is somewhat obscure and seems to leave one or two points out. See also the thorough and very helpful discussion of this passage and most of the preceding scholarship in G. E. R. Lloyd, "The 'Meno' and the Mysteries of Mathematics," *Phronesis* 37, no. 2 (1992): 166–83.

11. For the interpretation of the exchange as an initiation, see Lloyd, "The 'Meno' and the Mysteries of Mathematics," pp. 178–83. The best translation is literal, and Heath's cannot be bettered: "When they are asked, for example, as regards a given area, whether it is possible for this area to be inscribed in the form of a triangle or a given circle. The answer might be, 'I do not yet know whether this area is such as can be inscribed, but I think I can suggest a hypothesis which will be useful for the purpose; I mean the following. If the given area is such as, when one has applied it (as a rectangle) to the given straight line in the circle [. . . it cannot, I (Heath) think, meaning anything other than the diameter of a circle] it is deficient by a figure (rectangle) similar to the very figure which is applied, then one alternative seems to me to result, while again another results if it is impossible for what I said to be done with it. Accordingly, by using a hypothesis, I am ready to tell you what results with regard to the inscribing of the figure in the circle, namely, whether the problem is impossible'" (from Heath, *A History of Greek Mathematics,* Vol. 1, pp. 299 ff). For a very clear account of the logic of the passage and its application to epistemology, see Charles H. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 paperback reprint of 1996 edition), pp. 309–13.

12. See June W. Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press for the American Philological Association, 1997), pp. 192–93, who argues that τὸ σαφὲς characterizes *logoi* "only when Thucydides determines that the attribution is true."

13. Hornblower, *Thucydides* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 34–72, reviews the entire subject and comments that there is a "fluctuation between massive subjectivity and massive comprehensiveness, or perhaps between extreme subjectivity and extreme objectivity" in both the narrative, the recounting of deeds, the *erga*, and the speeches or *logoi.* See also Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 141–144.

14. See: "But the struggle against Plato, or, so to speak more clearly and for the 'people,' the struggle against the Christian-ecclesiastical pressure of millennia—for Christianity is the Platonism for the 'people,'—has created in Europe a magnificent tension of the spirit, the like of which has never yet existed on earth: with so tense a bow we can now shoot for the most distant goals." Translation Walter Kaufman, "Preface" to *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 193 in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: The Modern Library, 1968).

For a thorough review of Nietzsche's thoughts on Thucydides, see Scott Jenkins, "What Does Nietzsche Owe Thucydides?" *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 42, no. 1 (2011): 32–50. doi:10.5325/jnietstud.42.1.0032.

15. Jonathan J. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 71–73. Price compares in substantial depth partisans' psychology and actions in factional disputes with the conduct of soldiers and their state of mind.

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16. A. W. Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1950, 1956, 1940, 1981), 3.82.l n., say that the clause διαφορῶν οὐσῶν ἑκασταχοῦ τοῖς τε τῶν δήμων προστάταις τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐπάγεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ὀλίγοις τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους, which explains the clause ἐπεὶ ὕστερόν γε καὶ πᾶν ὡς εἰπεῖν τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐκινήθη implies that "formally at least . . . Athens is not included among the sufferers from *stasis*." He does, however, refer the reader to 2.65.11–2.65.12. But this is not right, as the clause διαφορῶν οὐσῶν ἑκασταχοῦ τοῖς τε τῶν δήμων προστάταις τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐπάγεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ὀλίγοις τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους merely explains how it happened that *stasis* disturbed all of Hellas. Thucydides does not mean that *stasis* did not occur in the states that did not call in the Athenians as allies of one party or another, but that the availability of the Spartans and Athenians as allies helped to cause and perpetuate *stasis* in many states. For descriptions of *stasis* at Athens, see John H. Finley, *Thucydides* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1963 reprint), pp. 186–87, and Felix Wassermann, "Thucydides and the Disintegration of the *Polis*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 78 (1947): 46–55.

17. The translation is by Richard Crawley from the 1910 edition of his earlier translation, *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War* (London: J. M. Dent; New York: E. P. Dutton), available online at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu (accessed July 27, 2019). All subsequent translations of Thucydides are Crawley's except where I have relied on Hobbes or modified the translation somewhat in accordance with a modern scholarly correction or argument. In those cases, I have indicated the fact of an alteration.

18. τὸ . . . ἐμπλήκτως ὀξὺ means literally "the strikingly swift or sharp." See *LSJ* s. v. ἔμπληκτος II, "frantic." ἔμπληκτος derives from the verb ἐμπλήσσω, which means "to strike." One very clear delineation of the characteristics of a society that is fracturing along revolutionary lines can be found in Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 71–74.

19. *LSJ* s. v. νόμος.

20. See Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, pp. 167–69. Prof. Allison notes that Thucydides indicates that theoretical nature of his discussion by eliminating specific singular terms referring to concrete things and replacing those sorts of nouns with abstract singular terms, many of which are conceptual words in Greek ending in "-sis" or abstract concepts composed of a neuter nominative adjective together with an article so that we have an abstract concept like τὸ δ' ἐμπλήκτως ὀξὺ, "the strikingly swift (or sharp) or the plain τὸ ὀξὺ "the swift" or "the sharp."

21. See Josiah Ober, "Thucydides and the Invention of Political Science," Version 1.0, Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics, November 2005, https://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/pdfs/ober/020702.pdf (accessed July 1, 2019).

22. On this subject the work of James V. Morrison in his *Reading Thucydides* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006) is invaluable. See, e.g., pp. 3–15.

23. See Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume* I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003, reprint of 1997 paperback edition): 3.83.1n. See also his further comments on this subject in *Thucydides*, pp. 186–90, in particular p. 186n.100. Hornblower here follows Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge:

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Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 507f. and n.24. I follow Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 3.83.1 n., on this point. Hornblower's and Nussbaum's translations, while quite reasonable grammatically, make Thucydides say that "simplicity [is] so large an element in a noble person or nature." But this would mean that Thucydides is here asserting that a word that can include a sense of contempt for the person so characterized in it, especially if the person who is doing the characterizing is an ambitious, aggressive person like Thrasymachus (Plato, *Republic*, I.348d), contains an important characteristic of a noble character, more important than *sophrosune*, courage, honesty, and the beautiful, which seems hard to accept. See also the comment of E. C. Marchant: "πλεῖστον μετέχει—'in which nobility of character is the chief element.' Or, less probably, 'which is a very important element of a noble mind.'" Cf. I. 84, 3, for a parallel grammatical usage (*Commentary on Thucydides Book 3* [London: MacMillan & Company, 1909], 3.83.1 n.) For this type of simplicity as a kind of weakmindedness, see Plato, *Republic*, Book 3 400e.

In ethical terms, one important point that is not modern about the ancient concept of the person of virtue is the sense that that person's actions are beautiful (*kalon*). See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1100b–1101a.

24. This is in effect the somewhat hesitating suggestion of Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*: 3.83.1n. See also Morrison in his *Reading Thucydides*, p. 25.

25. David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding in Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995 [based on the original edition of 1777]), p. 5. For a more recently edited text, see https://davidhume.org/texts/e/1 (accessed November 21, 2019).

26. Simon Swain, "Man and Medicine in Thucydides," *Arethusa* 27, no. 3 (Fall 1994): 303–27.

27. Patricia Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae: A Text and Translation with Notes and Essays by Patricia Curd* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, 2010), p. 29 (Fragment B21a) and pp. 75–76, where Curd notes that "the workings of our understanding hint at the nature of *Nous*."

28. See L. Hau, "Thucydides," *Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2016), pp. 194–215, for a very good overview of this issue in scholarship on Thucydides.

29. See, e.g., 1.22.4, 3.82.2, cf. 1.76.3 (Athenian ambassador's speech at Sparta), cf. 3.45.7 (Diodotus' speech), 4.61.5 (Hermocrates' speech at the conference at Gela), and 5.105.2 (the speech of the Athenians at Melos).

30. See Pownall, *Lessons from the Past: The Moral Use of History in Fourth-Century Prose*, pp. 6–9.

31. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, 3.83.1n., observes that just because his speakers make the various moves of the Sophists we are not justified in concluding that he has a Sophistic view of relativistic moral values.

32. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Statesman: The Web of Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 133–34.

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33. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman: The Web of Politics*, p. 151.

34. Mary-Louise Gill, "Method and Metaphysics in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*," 2005, 2015 revision, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-sophstate/ (accessed December 1, 2019).

35. Plato, *Sophist*, translated with introduction by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1996), "Introduction," pp. 11–12.

36. Plato, *Sophist*, translated with introduction by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem, "Introduction," p. 12.

37. Seth Benardete, *Plato's Sophist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), "Commentary," pp. 150–51.

38. A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), pp. 399–400. Taylor makes the important points that in the *Nicomachean Ethics* this is called Aristotle's Principle of the Mean; and Aristotle never lays claim to proposing this Platonic principle.

39. Swain, "Man and Medicine in Thucydides," 114. See n. 48 for the references to the occurrences of *phusis*.

40. Price in *Thucydides and Internal War* fully develops the theory that the Peloponnesian War can and should be considered as a kind of *stasis*. See in particular pages 30ff. He argues very persuasively that the psychological characteristics of the war and the conduct of the combatants in Thucydides reflect the kinds of character and conduct associated with *stasis*.

41. See Simon Hornblower's discussion in *Thucydides* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 45–47. See also Hornblower's remarks in *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, on 1.22.1, pp. 59–60. I do not think that what Thucydides says here reflects some kind of incompatibility between two methods or points of view. Thucydides is being very precise about what he actually did to remember or ascertain what was said in the speeches and then reconstruct them. Hornblower is of course right that τὰ δέοντα refers to what was required by the situation. It seems possible to me that ἂν belongs with the phrase in which it is placed, ὡς δ' ἂν ἐδόκουν. This is a common iterative usage. See William Watson Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (London: Macmillan, 1965 reissue of original 1889 edition), para. 199, page 66; and para. 162, page 56. It is true that ἂν can often be displaced grammatically to a dependent infinitive (*LSJ* s. v. D. I. 3). Charles Morris, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 1* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1891), takes it so here and pins ἂν to εἰπεῖν expressing a conditional sense but this seems less like a grammatical point that it is a support for the idea that what Thucydides is saying here is that he is to some extent inventing what the speakers doubtless (μάλιστ') would say. It is plainer and more clear to see Thucydides saying, "However each speaker seemed to me concerning the circumstances at the time to say doubtless what was required, so it was written [by me, Thucydides] keeping as close as possible to the general sense of what each speaker actually said." The use of ἂν with the main verb, generally in the imperfect, to express an iterative condition has a parallel also in Thucydides at 7.71, as noted by *LSJ*. This reading makes Thucydides' statement more internally consistent. I believe that Thucydides in a manner more often seen in poets uses complicated language to make his readers pause and think. Professor Hornblower's *Thucydides*

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and Pindar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) seems like the general case of this point. Hornblower in *Thucydides*, pp. 34–72, reviews the entire subject and comments that there is a "fluctuation between massive subjectivity and massive comprehensiveness, or perhaps between extreme subjectivity and extreme objectivity" in both the narrative, the *erga*, and the speeches or *logoi*. See also the discussion of Strauss, *The City and Man,* pp. 141–44.

42. For a recent overview relevant to this theme generally and then to the debates in Sicily (6.33.–40), see Gottfried Mader, "Fear, Faction, Fractious Rhetoric: Audience and Argument Thucydides' Syracusan Antilogy (6.33–40)," *Phoenix* LXVII (2013): 236–59, and in particular pp. 258–59.

43. Cf. James Boyd White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 80–81.

44. Cf. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia*, Volume I, trans. Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 408.

45. H. Flashar, *Der Epitaphios des Perikles: seine Funktion in Geschichtswerk des Thucydides* (Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sitzungberichte, Philos.-Histor. Klasse 1969, Abh. 1, Heidelberg), p. 46.

46. *Federalist #63*, usually now ascribed to Madison, sometimes also to Madison and Hamilton together. From *The Debate on the Constitution*, Part 2 (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1993), p. 318. See also https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-63.

47. David Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), reprint with corrections, p. 29.

48. Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, p. 30.

49. This is a matter of dispute, but the dispute does not affect the main point, which is that well before the time of Pericles the members of the *boule* were chosen by lot. For the suggestion that the original choice was by election, see P. J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 251. For the view that the choice was originally by lot see Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, p. 26.

50. Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, pp. 30–32.

51. See, e.g., Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 77–78.

52. Robert W. Wallace, "Councils in Greek Oligarchies and Democracies," *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, ed. Hans Beck (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), pp. 199–201.

53. Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy,* pp. 25–27.

54. Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, pp. 31–32.

55. Allan Bloom, *The Republic of Plato Translated with Notes and an Interpretive Essay* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 440 n. 3.

56. White, *When Words Lose their Meaning*, pp. 62–68.

57. Cf. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 160–161.

58. This point is made by Walter Müri, "Politische Metonomasie," *Museum Helveticum* 2 (1969), p. 66. It is also interesting to note that ἠξίουν ("they deemed

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it worthwhile [or right]") from ἀξιόω ("think or deem worthy") is the first verb in this section, which describes how the disruption of the burial *nomos* eventually led to the loss of force in other *nomoi* (2.53). This entire description of the plague and the implicit comparison with *stasis* relies in many ways on Thucydides' apparent knowledge of the medical writers of his time and earlier. The thorough reviews of Hornblower, on ii.47.3–54, pp. 316–326, and Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 16–20, summarize the substantial discussion of the subject. For a review of the relationship of *stasis* and the plague, see Clifford Orwin's "*Stasis* and the Plague: Thucydides and the Dissolution of Society," *The Journal of Politics* 50, no. 4 (November 1988): 831–47.

59. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 160–61.

60. For the political significance of the statement τὰ περὶ τὴν πόλιν πρῶτον ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἐταράχθησαν ([they] "first introduced civil discord at home"), see *LSJ* s. v. ταράσσω I.5.

61. Cf. Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 186: "he [Thucydides] did not think of revolution as bursting unexpectedly upon Athens towards the end of the war, but as the slow culmination of earlier party strife." This is quite an important point or position on the subject. It is often overlooked or neglected. Mark Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides: Narrative and Analysis of Factionalism in the Polis" (Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1980), uses a very restrictive definition of *stasis* (see, e.g., pp. 34ff. and especially pp. 38ff.). Thus, for example, he does not see *stasis* in Athens until the first use of στασιάζειν (*stasiazein* or to be in a state of revolution) in 411 BC (8.78). It is a useful to make sure that in interpreting Thucydides we do not expand the definition of *stasis* beyond Thucydides' own definition of the phenomenon. On the other hand, as we will see, the effects of incipient *stasis* in Athens (and elsewhere) can be seen before full-blown *stasis* itself breaks out.

62. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 180–81.

63. See Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 326–27.

64. See Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 329; and Martha Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 2014), pp. 270, 272, who goes farther even than Price in seeing important signs of *stasis* in Athens even before the death of Pericles.

65. Cf. Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume III* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2008), 6.15 general note. For the relationship between Aristophanes' *Clouds* and the criticism of Alcibiades, see Mary P. Nichols, "Philosophy and Empire: On Socrates and Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium*," *Polity* 39, no. 4 (2007): 502–21.

66. See the persuasive argument of Michael Vickers, *Aristophanes and Alcibiades: Echoes of Contemporary History in Athenian Comedy* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), pp. 35–36 and 161–62, that Aristophanes based Pheidippides to a large extent on Alcibiades and Strepsiades on Pericles.

67. For example, see Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 19–20, generally following Thucydides' support, and Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, generally and persuasively suggesting an important subtext of criticism of Pericles in Thucydides. See also Craig Waggaman, "The Problem of Pericles," *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, ed. Lowell Gustafson

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(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), pp. 197–220, reviewing Pericles' work as a political strategist; Andreas Avgousti, "A Text for the City: Plato's *Menexenus* and the Legacy of Pericles," *Polity* 50, no. 1 (January 2018): 72–100; and S. Sara Monoson, "Remembering Pericles: The Political and Theoretical Import of Plato's *Menexenus*," *Political Theory* 26, no. 4 (August, 1998): 489–513.

68. "Besides, to recede is no longer possible, if indeed any of you in the alarm of the moment has become enamored of the honesty of such an unambitious part. For what you hold is, to speak somewhat plainly, a tyranny; to take it perhaps was wrong, but to let it go is unsafe" (Crawley's translation of ἧς οὐδ᾽ ἐκστῆναι ἔτι ὑμῖν ἔστιν, εἴ τις καὶ τόδε ἐν τῷ παρόντι δεδιὼς ἀπραγμοσύνῃ ἀνδραγαθίζεται: ὡς τυραννίδα γὰρ ἤδη ἔχετε αὐτήν, ἣν λαβεῖν μὲν ἄδικον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἀφεῖναι δὲ ἐπικίνδυνον. Thucydides, 2.63.2). There are several points that can be made about this, of course, not the least of which is the apparent derivation by Cleon of a similar point in Book 3, chapter 40.4, where he uses the very same word as Pericles did, ἀνδραγαθίζεσθαι. One large issue here appears to be how power politics applied to foreign affairs fosters the growth of a similar kind of political calculus within the state. See, e.g., Clifford Orwin, "Democracy and Distrust," in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, edited by Lowell Gustafson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), pp. 98–114 and especially pp. 100–2.

69. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 60–65.

70. See Eric Robinson, "Democracy in Syracuse, 466–412 B.C." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 100 (2000): 189–205, for a complete review of the tradition that Syracuse was a democracy as that compares with what seem to the actual historical facts, which are more complicated than the tradition.

71. For the discussion of the contradiction between the goal of Pericles to make the idealized and theoretical Athens the focus of all civic life and the apparent actual sense of the people of Attica that their land was as much a part of their definition of themselves as Pericles' vision, see Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 62–65 in particular.

72. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 64–66.

73. Edith Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 176 (Kindle location 1994). The entire section with the title "Thucydides on Attica and Athens" (pp. 174–83, Kindle location 1974–2075) contrasts the discussion of Theseus and his early political unification with Pericles' later and more complete unification that included moving the people themselves.

74. Cf. ἡ ξυγκομιδὴ ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν ἐς τὸ ἄστυ (2.52.1) and ἐσεκομίζοντο ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν (2.14.1) as noted by Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I:* 2.52.1 n. See also Morrison, *Reading Thucydides*, pp. 147–48.

75. Cf. Morrison, *Reading Thucydides*, pp. 148–49: "Thucydides offers a glowing tribute to Pericles, yet if his leadership of Athens was analogous to Athens' role as an imperial city, was Pericles then in some sense an enslaver? Does he retain a touch of the tyrant? If Thucydides admires Pericles, does this suggest that Thucydides admires aggressive power figures? These possibilities are at least suggested by the application

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of the term *arche* to the Athenian statesman." This seems like a very fruitful way to consider such echoes and relationships. Was Pericles actually a tyrant? No, he was not, but some of his acts necessitated by the war that he accepted led him to take steps that in retrospect may suggest improper rule.

Note the imperfect tense of ἐγίγνετό ("was becoming"). Had Thucydides wished to contend that Pericles' rule had solidified into the rule of one man, he might have used the perfect tense or perhaps the aorist.

76. As Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 1.79.2 n., remarks, following E. Badian, *From Plateia to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentecontaetia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 230 n.40, "Archidamus is the only individual in Thucydides to be called σώφρων," i.e., "moderate."

77. Robert C. Bartlett, *The Idea of Enlightenment: A Postmortem Study* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2011), p. 80.

78. Bartlett, *The Idea of Enlightenment: A Postmortem Study*, pp. 78–83.

79. Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 171.

80. See Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, "Fathers of International Relations? Thucydides as a Model for the Twenty-First Century," in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, p. 29.

81. Orwin, "Democracy and Distrust," p. 112.

82. Finley, *Thucydides,* p. 195: "The phrase expresses the instability born of the sufferings and demoralization [of Athens], and its emergence is the sign that these experiences had radically affect Athenian democracy."

83. Virginia J. Hunter, *Thucydides, The Artful Reporter* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1973), p. 80.

84. See Nicolas Denyer, *Alcibiades* (commentary) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 88–89.

85. See, e.g., Monoson, "Remembering Pericles: The Political and Theoretical Import of Plato's *Menexenus*," pp. 489–513 and in particular, note 1 on page 508. Prof. Monoson notes that there is a reference to Socrates in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1367b8). Yet this is not completely conclusive as the reference is to what Socrates said in the *Menexenus* not that Plato wrote it. But Prof. Monoson is correct that today the general view seems to be that the dialogue is by Plato.

86. See Monoson, "Remembering Pericles: The Political and Theoretical Import of Plato's *Menexenus*," pp. 500–2, who explains the attack on Pericles very clearly in terms of Socrates' focus on regular family relations as the core of love in the city and on the Athenians' claim of autochthony and the land they have in common with one another as a city as the counterpoise to the inequalities and injustices of family relations and positions in society.

Two other issues that are to some extent outside the boundaries of the topic here are Plato's rejection of female inequality, which was a significant issue in Athens, his positioning of the family as a fundamental building block of sound *polis* in *The Laws*, and his rejection of the inherently sexual nature of the relationship between older, powerful men in Athens and the young, attractive and often rich and powerful objects

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of their attention, the boys born into the upper classes of Athenian society. The *Meno* reveals these issues as basic concerns related to education in Athens.

87. Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 225. While Thucydides' definition of *stasis* in 3.82–3.83 is clear and full, he does not offer an articulated theory as to the stages in its development. On the other hand, he provides some clear examples, e.g., Corcyra and Athens. It is quite likely, to judge from his analysis of *stasis* and from the histories of later revolutions, e.g., the Roman Revolution and the French Revolution, that a psychological and sociological analysis would reveal some patterns in the emergence of *stasis.* The pattern we are exploring here is how one observer, Thucydides, saw changes in the emotion, violence, and values expressed in political speeches.

88. W. R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 89 n. 24, 157, 159–61. See also Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp.60ff, where Taylor examines in detail the way in which the people of the outlying cities (as Thucydides calls them [2.16.2]) seem to respond to the idea that they must give up their land and move into Athens in order to fulfill certain important military objectives early in the war and also to live out the vision of Athens that Pericles lays out in the Funeral Oration. See also Monoson, "Remembering Pericles: The Political and Theoretical Import of Plato's *Menexenos*," pp. 500–2, who explains that the speech composed by Aspasia (whom Socrates also here names as the author of the Funeral Oration for Pericles) praises the autochthony of the Athenians whose mother is earth (237b–238b). In addition, the *Menexenus* also focuses on the family as the foundation of the bravery for the state (246a–249c).

89. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 139–41, 240–41. See also Jacqueline de Romilly, "Les problemes de politique interieure dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide," in *Historiographia Antigua (Commentationes Lovanienses in Honorem W. Peremans)* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1977), pp. 77–93, esp. p. 93. Nevertheless, Thucydides is subject to limitations by the history of the period about which he is writing. It is in this sense that we should understand Aristotle's remark that history is more particular than poetry (*Poetics* 1451b).

90. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 69–74 et passim.

91. James Madison, "Federalist #10," https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10, *The Federalist Papers*, originally published in *The New York Packet*, November 23, 1787.

92. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 72–73.

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Chapter 1

Stasis in Corcyra Modeling Revolution for Thucydides and Plato

Thucydides inserts into his account of the *stasis* at Corcyra a series of reflections on the effect of war and revolution on people's characters and actions. Corcyra fell into *stasis* when the Corinthians set free the prisoners they had taken at Epidamnus (3.70.1). Then the Corcyraeans provided the first full examples of the effects of revolutionary passion (3.85.1), giving Thucydides the occasion to provide a very characteristic, abstract interpretation of the events.

Thucydides sees the revolutions throughout the Greek world during the war as a kind of movement:, since as he says, "later at least the entire, so to speak, Hellenic world was set in motion" (ἐπεὶ ὕστερόν γε καὶ πᾶν ὡς εἰπεῖν τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐκινήθη, my translation, combined with Crawley, 3.82.1). Thucydides links *stasis* with the war as a whole, which he also sees as a movement, in fact, the greatest "movement" up to his time (κίνησις transliterated *kinesis* 1.1.2). In opposition to this movement excited by war and *stasis* stands the rest and orderly activity of research and writing, which exile gave to Thucydides (5.26.5).[1] This opposition of orderly activity to disorderly movement is one of the central contrasts of Thucydides' work, along with the relationship between *logos* and *ergon*. Because the work is composed around such antitheses, some have questioned whether Thucydides tries to resolve the antitheses or leaves them in place as a rhetorical device to stimulate thought.[2] As we shall see both in the passage on *stasis* and in other sections, however, the oppositions are a rhetorical tool of Thucydides to engage his readers, but one which he also uses to lead toward certain philosophical conclusions, although the conclusions to a number of his presentations have more than one meaning and form. They are polyvalent as part of his method.[3] This certainly seems true of the many echoes within the various speeches. Echoes indicate decline in political discourse between Pericles and Cleon, but they

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also hint at some disturbing similarities, while at the same time also making the reader wonder if some of the differences between the two men are more matters of degree. It is also interesting to consider some of the passages that we will encounter in which the language of one or two words or sentences is what Hornblower reflect a quality he calls "polyinterpretability."[4]

The disturbances of *stasis* overturn a great number of customs (3.82, especially 3.82.6), including the *axiosis* of words (3.82.4). This entire dense passage describing the horrible effects of *stasis* on all political order and achievements stands as a contrast to the Funeral Oration, which is an exaltation of the custom of burial. While in the Funeral Oration Pericles reaches for the timeless expression of beautiful devotion to the city (e.g., 2.41.4, 2.43.3), in the description of *stasis* Thucydides shows how when the state fails, people degenerate into the pleasures of immediate and emotional action (3.82.6–3.82.8).

A number of the words Thucydides uses to portray *stasis* emphasize his concern in this passage with the movement and disturbance of *stasis*. *Stasis* moved forward savagely (οὕτως ὠμὴ <ἡ> στάσις προυχώρησε) until it engulfed all that was Hellenic (πᾶν . . . τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν, 3.82.1). This neuter phrase, which is Thucydides' customary way of referring to Greece as a whole (cf. 1.1.1), has implications here beyond the entire physical Greek world. It also implies that *stasis* overturned all that was Greek, the customs and civilizations of the Greeks, and made the people more barbaric. Plato's identification of strife between Greek cities as a kind of faction or *stasis* (*Republic* V.471a) makes the same point through the many particulars of any Greek conflict with Greeks.

The war made it easy for partisans to bring in outside forces to change or revolutionize a state.[5] In contrast to this change, Thucydides places the constant of human nature (ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ, "as long as the nature of humans is the same" [my translation], 3.82.2), which allows him to see the general forms *stasis* takes as part of a larger stable picture of man.[6]

The clinical nature of the description of *stasis* recalls the description of the plague, which first challenged the customs at Athens and weakened the people (2.54.1, 2.61.3). Like *stasis*, the plague has differing particular manifestations (2.51.1, cf. 3.82.2), but also like *stasis* it has a general form (τοιοῦτον ἦν ἐπὶ πᾶν τὴν ἰδέαν, "Such then, . . . were the general features of the distemper," 2.51.1; cf., μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἡσυχαίτερα καὶ τοῖς εἴδεσι διηλλαγμένα, The sufferings of *stasis* appeared "in a severer or milder form, and varying in their symptoms" 3.82.2). Like *stasis*, the plague overturned customs and pushed the people toward immediate actions for their satisfaction (2.51.2–2.51.3). *Stasis* is a political illness characterized by the examples Thucydides provides, which naturally raises the question of the nature of a healthy *polis*. We will consider this more thoroughly in connection with Pericles' speeches and

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the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1, but for now it is enough to recognize that the frantic violence of *stasis* represents the lowest type of political action for Thucydides. The destruction in Corcyra did not end until one party had killed almost all the other (4.48.5). One forward-looking result of the narrative of the plague is to give the reader a sense when reading the discussion of *stasis* in Corcyra that we have seen this process before. Indeed, Thucydides' comment at the end of his introduction to the description of the plague creates an ironic sense of foreboding:

> λεγέτω μὲν οὖν περὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς ἕκαστος γιγνώσκει καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ ἰδιώτης, ἀφ' ὅτου εἰκὸς ἦν γενέσθαι αὐτό, καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἅστινας νομίζει τοσαύτης μεταβολῆς ἱκανὰς εἶναι δύναμιν ἐς τὸ μεταστῆσαι σχεῖν: ἐγὼ δὲ οἷόν τε ἐγίγνετο λέξω, καὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἄν τις σκοπῶν, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις ἐπιπέσοι, μάλιστ' ἂν ἔχοι τι προειδὼς μὴ ἀγνοεῖν, ταῦτα δηλώσω αὐτός τε νοσήσας καὶ αὐτὸς ἰδὼν ἄλλους πάσχοντας. (2.48.3)
>
> All speculation as to its origin and its causes, if causes can be found adequate to produce so great a disturbance, I leave to other writers, whether lay or professional; for myself, I shall simply set down its nature, and explain the symptoms by which perhaps it may be recognized by the student, if it should ever break out again. This I can the better do, as I had the disease myself, and watched its operation in the case of others. (2.48.3)

As students, or literally "someone looking" (τις σκοπῶν) we can see the effects of *stasis* as a kind of disease, a social and psychological disease perhaps, "if it should ever break out again," or a moral disease in a deeper sense, that has effects quite similar to the plague. Or if we are in an army or leading an army, we might see incipient suspicion as the beginning of a collapse of order.[7]

One of the singular fatalities of *stasis* is the customary use of words: καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇ δικαιώσει (3.82.4).[8] Thucydides' perception of this change or perversion of language is, as we shall see, central to his entire understanding of the war and its effect on the *polis*. Before we can consider the larger implications of the statement, however, it is important to look into exactly what it means.

It is often stated that Thucydides here asserts that the partisans in the various *staseis* changed the *meanings* of the words they used and by this is understood the denotations of words or their referents.[9] Thus, taking Thucydides' first example, acts that once were called "rash boldness" (τόλμα ἀλόγιστος) were in *stasis* considered "courageous loyalty" (ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος). In other words, the first phrase was abandoned while the second changed its referent. This interpretation is imprecise. The root of *axiosis* (ἀξίωσις) suggests that

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it ought strictly to mean "act of assigning worth or value." To express this in idiomatic English, *axiosis* should be translated "valuation," "estimation," or "evaluation."[10] The virtue of these translations in place of the customary 'meaning' is that "valuation" and "estimation" carry with them implications of judgment and opinion, while "meaning" is too close to "dictionary definition."[11] For Thucydides, writing before our modern fact/value distinction,[12] it is possible or even likely that there was no fixed difference between what we would call the meaning of a value-laden term and its actual moral significance. Yet this should not in any way obscure Thucydides' intensely expressed interest in the moral significance of the words and deeds in his *Histories*.[13]

Different and specialized meanings have also sometimes been given to τῇ δικαιώσει (*dikaiosis* in the nominative case).[14] *Dikaiosis* basically means "making or setting right," and Thucydides' use of it conforms to this core meaning.[15] τῇ δικαιώσει is a type of instrumental dative, the dative of cause, expressing a motive.[16] Since this dative is frequently used with verbs of emotion, it is appropriate here in the context of the heightened emotions of partisans in *stasis*.[17] Because people made their own self-serving judgments of what right was, they changed the *axiosis* of words to suit and support their judgment.

The phrase ἐς τὰ ἔργα (transliterated *es ta erga*) "for the things or deeds" has also created some difficulty. Classen-Steup take the phrase with τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων (the customary evaluation of words) and translate it "für die Dinge." Gomme, on the other hand, asserts that ἐς τὰ ἔργα (transliterated *es ta erga*) goes surely with ἀντήλλαξαν ("they exchanged") "with a view to their actions," not with τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν.[18] But ἐς (es) often means "with respect to" in Thucydides and it can easily mean that here. There is no reason to regard *es ta erga* as narrowly referring only to the purposes of each party and to say that party members changed the *axiosis* of words in order to accomplish ("with a view to") certain ends (*ta erga*). Rather *es ta erga* goes with τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν and with ἀντήλλαξαν.[19] The partisans changed the sense of words as applied to deeds, but they had their own purposes in mind. Another real point of *es ta erga*, however, is that valuations of words were changed in respect to the true sense or value of the deeds (in the eyes of a neutral observer).[20] Thucydides uses the ambiguity of grammatical reference to make the reader stop and consider how disturbing it can be when speakers change customary valuations of moral and emotional terms both relative to the deeds they describe and at the same time with a view to furthering those deeds.

ἀντήλλαξαν literally means "exchange" rather than "change," but the latter translation better conveys the import of the sentence, for "exchange" requires that what a thing was exchanged for be specified, which Thucydides does not

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do. He only implies that the customary senses of words were exchanged for new ones. The sentence may now be translated: “Men changed the customary valuation of words in respect to deeds in judging what right was.”

Thucydides’ full meaning becomes clear in an examination of his examples: τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀλόγιστος ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ἐνομίσθη, μέλλησις δὲ προμηθὴς δειλία εὐπρεπής (“Reckless audacity came to be considered the courage of a loyal ally; prudent hesitation, specious cowardice,” 3.82.4). The traditional interpretation of these clauses originates with Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who understood the introductory sentence to mean: τά τε εἰωθότα ὀνόματα ἐπὶ τοῖς πράγμασι λέγεσθαι μετατιθέντες ἄλλως ἠξίουν αὐτὰ καλεῖν (“Changing the names customarily applied to deeds they deemed it right to call them by new names”). They gave new names to the *erga*.

Friedrich Solmsen asks the following question about the examples Thucydides offers:

> The longer we look at the sentences purporting to acquaint us with the new meanings of words, the more we are bound to wonder whether people really developed the habit of praising a man for ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος (“the courage of a loyal ally” [translation Crawley]) or blaming him for δειλία εὐπρεπής (“specious cowardice” [Crawley])
>
> Had they ever, when discussing ruthless daring, spoken of τόλμα . . . ἀλόγιστος? (“reckless audacity” [Crawley])[21]

No satisfactory answer to this question can be given unless it is kept in mind that Thucydides does not use the verb “to call” or “to name” but rather νομίζω, which means to “think” or to “consider.” If he had used “was called” or “was named,” this would have supported Dionysius’ interpretation: deeds were called by new words and a change in referent occurred.

But ἐνομίσθη (“was considered [to be]”) invokes not what men said but what they thought,[22] and Dionysius’ interpretation is not so much wrong as incomplete. During *stasis* citizens confounded in thought previously distinguishable concepts. This confusion revealed itself in two different ways. When men saw an action that was objectively τόλμα ἀλόγιστος (“reckless audacity”), either they thought (or pretended to think) that it was ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος (“the courage of a loyal ally”) and called it that (Dionysius’ interpretation), or they considered reckless audacity to be a good thing and when praising it called it by its right name. Certainly the latter is not an impossible occurrence, and Thucydides knew of examples similar to it. Cleon, for instance, in his speech concerning the Mytileneans, praises stupidity (ἀμαθία) (3.37.3–3.37.4) and urges the Athenians not to show themselves soft.[23] In a similar fashion, during normal times men would consider μέλλησις

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δὲ προμηθὴς ("prudent hesitation") a good thing, a sign of intelligence and wisdom, while in *stasis* they might sometimes have called it μέλλησις δὲ προμηθὴς ("prudent hesitation"), but used the phrase to express disapproval. It is precisely because Dionysius does not take account of this common phenomenon, in which there is no change of denotation or referent, that his interpretation is insufficient.[24] Yet of course his interpretation is partly correct. Politicians very often call bad deeds by good names (or vice versa), as Thucydides was well aware: ὥστε εὐσεβείᾳ μὲν οὐδέτεροι ἐνόμιζον, εὐπρεπείᾳ δὲ λόγου οἷς ξυμβαίη ἐπιφθόνως τι διαπράξασθαι, ἄμεινον ἤκουον ("Thus religion was in honor with neither party; but the use of fair phrases to arrive at guilty ends was in high reputation," 3.82.8).

To reinforce the point that in commenting on the change in the *axiosis* of words Thucydides has in mind a change in habits of praise and blame, that is, a change in values, it is instructive to consider several of his examples.

> τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀλόγιστος ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ἐνομίσθη, μέλλησις δὲ προμηθὴς δειλία εὐπρεπής, τὸ δὲ σῶφρον τοῦ ἀνάνδρου πρόσχημα, καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἅπαν ξυνετὸν ἐπὶ πᾶν ἀργόν: τὸ δ᾽ ἐμπλήκτως ὀξὺ ἀνδρὸς μοίρᾳ προσετέθη, ἀσφαλείᾳ δὲ τὸ ἐπιβουλεύσασθαι ἀποτροπῆς πρόφασις εὔλογος. [5] καὶ ὁ μὲν χαλεπαίνων πιστὸς αἰεί, ὁ δ᾽ ἀντιλέγων αὐτῷ ὕποπτος. (3.82.4–3.82.5)
>
> [4] Words had to change their ordinary value and to take that which was now given them. Reckless audacity came to be considered the courage of a loyal ally; prudent hesitation, specious cowardice; moderation was held to be a cloak for unmanliness; ability to see all sides of a question inaptness to act on any. Frantic violence became the attribute of manliness; cautious plotting, a justifiable means of self-defense. [5] The advocate of extreme measures was always trustworthy; his opponent a man to be suspected. (3.82.4–5, Crawley, except that "meaning" has been replaced with "value")

In the first example, words that normally have negative connotations acquire a positive cast. In the second, third, and fourth, a good quality is considered bad. Thucydides thus repeats his pattern in which a good phrase or concept acquires a bad connotation, or words of blame develop positive associations. With καὶ ὁ μὲν χαλεπαίνων πιστὸς αἰεί ὁ δ᾽ ἀντιλέγων αὐτῷ ὕποπτος ("The advocate of extreme measures was always trustworthy; his opponent a man to be suspected"), he turns from abstract noun formations to participial nouns referring to people, but still emphasizes a change in values.

Thucydides observes that as it overturns the values of a peaceful *polis*, *stasis* also makes people suspicious of one another (3.82.5). When he introduces suspicion, he moves beyond words to more general comments about how people act and feel in *stasis*, while at the same time emphasizing his remarks

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about the revolution of values in Hellas.[25] He who anticipated an evil-doer, or who provoked someone who was not intending a crime, was praised (3.82.5).[26] Kinship began to have a weaker hold on people than party or faction (3.82.6), while revenge was of more account than not suffering at all (3.82.7). Catching an enemy off guard was sweeter (i.e., ἥδιον or "sweeter," 3.82.7) revenge than if it had been accomplished in the open. Oaths lost their power (3.82.7, 3.83.2). No longer did men practice piety, but those who used fair-seeming words had a better reputation (3.82.8).[27] Finally simplicity (τὸ εὔηθες), in which honor holds the largest share, was ridiculed and disappeared (3.83.1). This clearly prefigures the death of Nicias and Thucydides' comments on his virtue.

In Book 8 of the *Republic*, Socrates' discussion of the democratic man and the *stasis* in his soul parallels Thucydides' description of what happens to political discourse in *stasis*. Both Thucydides and Plato (556e) see that *stasis* is fostered when parties in the state bring in outside allies, and that in *stasis* political discourse degenerates. In Plato (Book VIII 560d), the boasting speeches in the soul of the democratic men do battle with the speeches of the older (and by implication aristocratic) men and at last conquer them. As Socrates outlines in the *Republic*, the boasting speeches, calling shame (αἰδώς, transliterated *aidos*) simplicity (ἠλιθιότης, *elithiotes*), they thrust out *aidos* or "shame" as a fugitive with dishonor (ἀτίμως, "with dishonor");[28] calling "moderation" (σωφροσύνην) a lack of manliness, they spatter mud on it and exile it.[29] We can see here that an important part of Plato's analysis parallels Thucydides': Moral qualities that in normal times were honored are treated dishonorably during *stasis.* The partisans also drive out measure and well-ordered expenditure, while castigating them as "rustic and illiberal" (ἀγροικίαν καὶ ἀνελευθερίαν). After Adeimantus agrees with Socrates' description, Socrates recounts the corresponding new praise of what had been blameworthy: the boasting speeches next in blazing light bring back insolence from exile, along with anarchy, wastefulness, and shamelessness directly praising them and also calling them by fair names. They call insolence a good education, anarchy freedom, wastefulness magnificence, and shamelessness manliness.[30] In Plato as in Thucydides, *stasis* engenders changes in the values of political and moral expressions. Socrates' analysis of the way human characteristics are honored and blamed with words opens up one of Thucydides' densest passages. Socrates explains that values such as shame are treated dishonorably (ἀτίμως, "with dishonor"), while partisans cast out moderation. Then partisans bring back into the city a swarm of bad characteristics as if they have religious values or, as James Adam notes, as if they are deities to be worshipped in religious mysteries.[31] In other words, Socrates makes explicit what in Thucydides hangs on the word *axiosis*, a great change in values that results in the use of new names and in replacements of old names with new ones.

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In Thucydides we may, as the result of modern social science, wonder whether the values ascribed to these political and moral expressions should be seen as facts. Thucydides certainly appears to have real conviction about what good values are and what bad values are as expressed in political speeches generally. The changes he records are facts. But are the values assigned to words before *stasis* correct? Thucydides quite clearly views these values as grounded in correct evaluations of good and bad conduct. This then makes the reader wonder if some conduct is objectively good and other conduct objectively bad. How are we to understand the basis for the comparisons Thucydides makes in his review of changes in language and values during *stasis* in Corcyra? The acts committed during *stasis* are evaluated in such a way that they match an idea like manliness (3.82.4).[32]

The word that reveals the process Thucydides has in mind here is ἐνομίσθη (3.82.4), which is the aorist (or past) passive form of the Greek verb νομίζω ("think," "enact," "to be customary [in passive forms]"). The process of creating or supporting a custom (νόμος, "custom," "law," "practice," transliterated *nomos*) begins with thinking.[33] Customs begin in practice with groups conducting themselves in similar ways.[34] What enables us to make these distinctions in value is a kind of measurement. The measure is not either *nomos* or *phusis*, which are the opposed candidates for the source of meaning in the *Cratylus*, but a third quality, a mixture of inherent or natural order, customary order, and whatever order there is in a series of events, all of which are anchored in our human, physical beings and what appear to be our eternal or common needs and desires along with our aspirations and our weaknesses, in short the measure of a human being. In clothing, the measure is the female or male child or adult.[35] In political life, the situation is more complex but the individual person and the people in a given *polis* or state are at the very least the basis for the mean, though we must add to that special consideration for our needs, desires, aspirations, and weaknesses. Politically we must also add some kind of founding myth or account for almost every type and instance of a civic unit (*Statesman*, 273e4–274e3). Such archetypal stories work their way into our customs or *nomoi* and our language to become part of the measure of our words, our ideas, and our deeds. When we use the resulting concepts, we are using the art of measurement (*metretike*) as applied to human life (*Statesman*, 283e).[36] This is the art or measurement that the Stranger divides into two parts, the part that concerns arts that measure number, length, breadth, and thickness as compared with their opposites, and the other part that measures in relation to "the moderate, the fitting, the appropriate, the timely or needful and all the other arts that lie in the mean between the extremes" (*Statesman*, 284e). This second group of qualities against which things are measured presents those qualities to us through language. These are the qualities that generally relate to what are called moral

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values. The revolution in values engendered by *stasis* challenges these values in particular, which are the fundamental values of the family, social, and political worlds. The revolution in language makes it difficult and verging on the impossible at times to live in a stable moral universe and to describe normal and deranged or disturbed actions and words. Plato's *Statesman* helps to elucidate the complex meaning of Thucydides' description of the collapse in *stasis* of descriptions and discourse of actions and words that represent and identify values.

While Plato in the *Republic* sees *stasis* as a disease specifically of the democratic *polis*, Thucydides makes no such limitation. But this is a superficial disagreement that arises out of the differing aims of the two books. Plato in Book 8 is describing the various forms of government and the types of souls analogous to them, while Thucydides is extracting philosophical and permanent truths (1.22.4) from actual events. As we will see later, however, Plato and Thucydides do seem to agree about certain aspects of the highest type of *polis*. And while Thucydides does not say so, *stasis* is the political disease most characteristic to democracy, because in democracy there is a well-developed party of the commons.[37] There are also frequently parties of disaffected nobles. And finally, as Thucydides does show, there are in democracy unscrupulous politicians of varying political persuasions with access to public fora. These politicians are willing to take advantage of popular animosities and oppositions. Factions can also arise from various business interests, especially a moneyed interest. In the United States, one of the largest examples of faction would be the partisans of slavery and the consequent Civil War, which had as a result one of the first instances of total war including wide destruction in noncombatant areas delivered by General Sherman to the inhabitants of Georgia.[38]

Many of the characteristics of *stasis* Thucydides mentions show up in Athens during the war. Pericles told the Athenians to stay at home during the war and to attempt no new conquests, recommending in essence a policy of quietism and rest with respect to anything outside the war (2.65.7). The Athenians did the opposite, allowing a private desire for gain and honor to overwhelm their public spirit (2.65.7). The *pleonexia* of the Athenians is notorious for its role in their downfall (cf. 4.21.2, 4.41.4). This desire for more motivates many of the participants in *stasis* (3.82.6, 3.82.8). Disturbed motion again replaces orderly public spiritedness.

Thucydides then stands himself as a principle of orderly activity and the ordering process of political contemplation through writing in contrast to the increasingly frantic violence of Athens in her war against Sparta and the Peloponnesians. But the question of the fundamental position of Thucydides must be addressed from the start. His book has had many champions. Some see in him the beginning of what is called scientific history, others see him

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as primarily a political realist, while still others see in him either a political idealist who views Pericles as the ideal leader or a complex historian with a little bit of all of these ideas. There are also no doubt many parallels between Thucydides and the Greek tragedians.[39] Another view is that Thucydides is a type of Sophist. Friedrich Nietzsche embraces this view:

> My recreation, my preference, my *cure* from all Platonism has always been *Thucydides*. Thucydides, and perhaps the *Principe* of Machiavelli, are related to me closely by their unconditional will not to deceive themselves and not to see *reason* in reality—not in "reason," still less in "morality." . . . For the deplorable embellishment of the Greeks with the colors of the ideal which the "classically educated" carries away with him into life as the reward of his grammar-school drilling there is no more radical cure than Thucydides. One must turn him over line by line and read his hidden thoughts as clearly as his words: there are few thinkers so rich in hidden thoughts. *Sophist culture*, by which I mean *realist culture*, attains in him its perfect expression—this invaluable movement in the midst of the morality—and ideal swindle of the Socratic schools which was then breaking out everywhere. Greek philosophy as the *decadence* of the Greek instinct; Thucydides as the grand summation, the last manifestation of that stern, hard matter-of-factness instinctive to the older Hellenes. *Courage* in the face of reality ultimately distinguishes such natures as Thucydides and Plato: Plato is a coward in the face of reality—consequently he flees into the ideal; Thucydides has *himself* under control—consequently he retains control over things.[40]

Thucydides' obvious interest in opposed arguments can mislead, however, in the sense that it does not provide a full account of his use of arguments or *logoi*. The meaning and importance of the speeches arises from comparison of them to one another and to the narrative, which is quite similar to the way in which Greek tragic plays work at least on a formal level. It is also similar to the way in which the action of Plato's dialogues complements the arguments, though there action in itself is usually not the main focus. No speech by itself presents us with Thucydides' viewpoint.[41] Similarly, the notion that he is a kind of scientific historian is not a full account of what he does by any means. That is not to say that he is not interested in science and scientific ways. He clearly is, as his discussion of the plague and *stasis* demonstrates. But his method of thought resembles Socrates' as explained in the *Phaedo*. Thucydides uses the hypothetical method to understand both general causes and causes in particular cases, as when after the Peloponnesian invasion of Attica turns back, the sea comes up at Orobiae in Boeotia in a tsunami (3.89.2). Thucydides famously speculates that this must have been the result of an earthquake: "Without an earthquake I do not see how such an accident could happen"(3.89.5). While his object is to understand an event in the world

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he figures out through thought that at earthquake must have caused the sea to rise up. This is abstract reasoning about a hypothesis applied to physical events, yet the scientific insight serves an interpretive or even symbolic purpose as the Peloponnesian War is a war of the Athenian powers at sea with the Spartan forces of the land.

Socrates and Plato use the hypothetical method to understand the formal causes of things (*Phaedo*, 100d), the idea of cause itself in other manifestations (e.g., teleological causes), and also "concerning all the other things that are."[42] While there is some debate about the meaning of the "second sailing in search of the cause" (τὸν δεύτερον πλοῦν ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς αἰτίας ζήτησιν, 97c–d) that Socrates undertakes and explains in the *Phaedo* as part of his response to the failure in his eyes of Anaxagoras to live up to his promise of explaining the world in terms of Mind (97b–98b), the hypothetical method is clearly just what Socrates sets it out to be, a method of taking a hypothesis and seeing where it leads.[43] The "second sailing" is the inquiry into the formal causes of things, that is, the Forms themselves, but this leads us back to ourselves and to an inquiry into one crucial value, justice, which is the primary object of the *Republic*.[44] Socrates' first effort or sailing was thus an attempt to explain all the things that are in terms of the Good. For these types of explanations, Socrates is still looking for a teacher at the end of his life (99c), which I take to be first a kind of Socratic irony as Socrates attempts to understand his death as good, and second an example of Platonic irony, a kind of dramatic irony, as Socrates' search for a teacher contrasts with the many failures of misguided Athenian fathers to find teachers for their sons.[45]

Thucydides' *Histories* abound in such ironies that raise important questions about the Periclean enterprise, for instance, in the way the narrative of the Plague follows the Funeral Oration and prefigures the undermining of important civic customs by contrasting the formality and grace of the Funeral Oration with the chaos of death everywhere destroying the rite of burial (2.52.4).[46] Athens' greatness and appeal derives from the moral energy of the people, but in unleashing that energy Pericles induces and exhorts the people to gaze upon the power of the city and become her lovers.[47] The question then is whether this idea leads to what the Greeks called *pleonexia*, which is a generalizing abstract noun combining what we might call greed, arrogance, and an exaggerated sense of entitlement and political and military aggrandizement, in short, a desire to have more. In his chapter on *stasis*, Thucydides concludes that the cause of the ruin of revolution comes from *pleonexia* and ambition or love of honor (φιλοτιμίαν, transliterated *philotimia*, 3.82.8).[48]

Even an active state like Athens must have, in Pericles' view, a component of order or it will wear itself out. *Stasis* is constant political motion within the state, and as such it eventually leads to ruin. If the valuations of words

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themselves change, we lose our grasp on the moral status of things and events, since we can no longer even describe or discuss them.

Thucydides places his work in opposition to these tendencies in order to fix forever the events he describes. For him, the sense, valuation, and meaning of words must be relatively constant, or else we could not read what he wrote. His picture of the degeneration of political language has two broad lines. First, there is the decline within Athens itself, but there is also a decline in the political discourse of the Greek world as a whole (3.82.1). One purpose of this study is to show how Thucydides' description of the degeneration of political language in 3.82–3.83 applies specifically to Athens, but the question naturally arises whether the general model of *stasis* extends to the Greek world as a whole, as Socrates suggests in Book 5 of the *Republic* (470b–d).[49] To the extent that the Greek world was united against the Eastern powers, and it certainly was, the model has a proper political framework since the ties that bound the Greeks were not merely ties of political and military expedience but ties based on kinship and a shared cultural heritage specifically including the Greek language.

The crucial separation between Pausanias and the Spartans and the rebounding disgrace of Themistocles among the Athenians shows the leaders of the alliance against the Persians to be broadly ambitious (1.130.1–2 for Pausanias and 1.137–138 for Themistocles) and grasping for more, which also matches political motives in *stasis*. The two leaders exemplify some of the ways in which *stasis* arises and seem to prefigure a general separation among the allies. From there it seems clear the erosion of fellow feeling among the allies of Athens and their eventual discontents and rebellions lead to internal warfare in the Delian League that clearly resembles *stasis* more than it does war between independent and militarily powerful states.

In order to understand how Athens in particular changed during the war, we must first look at the speeches of Pericles, which represent for Thucydides the highest achievement of Greek political speech if we set aside Thucydides' own *logos*, which then parallels the *logoi* (plural of *logos*) of Socrates and Plato.

Before we do this, however, it will be best to address briefly certain questions about how to interpret the speeches in Thucydides. In general, he invites comparisons of speeches by making them abstract and general, and by using a number of verbal echoes. Many scholars have taken the position that the speeches can and should be compared.[50] Yet in making such comparisons, one must also consider the different rhetorical demands made on each speaker or group of speakers, because according to Thucydides' own account, his composition of the speeches is not a simple matter.

Thucydides says that in writing the speeches he made the speakers say what seemed to him to be necessary (τὰ δέοντα, *ta deonta*) in each case,

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while keeping as close as possible to the overall intent, purport, or thought (τῆς ξυμπάσης γνώμης) of what was really said (τῶν ἀληθῶς λεχθέντων, 1.22.1). Thucydides distinguishes here three aspects of each speech: (1) what was actually said, (2) the overall intent or general purport of the speech, and (3) what seemed to him to be necessary to say. Thucydides' program for his speeches has been the subject of thorough scholarly examination. While the first two aspects of the speeches seem clear, the third still occasions some dispute. Here, however, I will take *ta deonta* as referring to what was rhetorically necessary in order to support the purport of the speech.[51]

The rhetorical demands on each speaker have an important influence on the speeches as Thucydides presents them. This means that in comparing the speeches one must be sensitive to the requirements imposed on the speaker by the situation in which Thucydides places him. Even rhetorical considerations must be used with care in interpreting the speeches, however. For instance, Thucydides puts both Diodotus and Cleon in front of the same Athenian audience in the same situation, but they make very different speeches. Their different characters and the goals of their speeches distinguish them. Thucydides presents their speeches because he wants us to see the differences in the characters of the speakers and in the general wisdom and humanity of the courses of action they recommend.[52] These speeches, and indeed all the speeches, reflect more largely the speaker's general intent (τῆς ξυμπάσης γνώμης) than they do the rhetorical demands the speaker faces.[53] Thucydides uses the general intent of Pericles' speeches to articulate a political ideal. It is to these speeches that we will turn next.

NOTES

1. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 140ff.
2. White, *When Words Lose their Meaning*, pp. 87–89.
3. Morrison, *Reading Thucydides*, p. 25.
4. See Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar*, pp. 80–81 and 367, as well as his comments in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume 3* at 6.24.4, 7.86.5, and 8.97.2. See also 2.43.1 where Pericles asks his people to become lovers of the city or, on another interpretation, lovers of the power of the city.
5. Thucydides uses the word νεωτερίζειν (3.82.1), literally, to do something new, to revolutionize a people or a situation. The word is often associated with violence. See *LSJ* s.v., νεωτερίζω.
6. For a relatively recent and very thorough review of the apparent influence of Greek medical thought on Thucydides, see Simon Swain, "Man and Medicine in Thucydides," 303–27. On page 317, Swain notes that Thucydides describes the general form that *stasis* takes. He uses the plural of the word εἶδος (transliterated *eidos*), which is the same word Plato frequently uses for his forms. Swain says that

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Thucydides "gazes on the teratology" of the social symptoms of *stasis* and compares them with the "constancy of human nature."

7. E. Greenwood, *Thucydides and the Shaping of History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), p. 41. See also Hans-Peter Stahl, *Thucydides: Man's Place in History* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2009), p. 219.

8. I have taken and somewhat adapted what follows in chapter 1 largely from my article "The ἀξίωσις of Words at Thucydides 3.82.4," John T. Hogan, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21 (1980): 139–49, though I have deleted some of the more specialized or technical points. I have copied (without quotation marks) or only slightly modified significant portions of the text here from pp. 139, 143–45, and 147–48 of the original article, which the thoughtful copyright policies of *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* and Duke University made possible. Duke kindly makes all issues of *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, among other journals, available online: https://grbs.library.duke.edu/.

9. Cf., e.g., Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.82.4 n.; Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 229; and Albin Lesky, *History of Greek Literature*, trans. James Willis and Cornelis de Heer (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1963), p. 463. See also *LSJ* s. v. ἀξίωσις IV where τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων is translated "the established meaning of words." For a general discussion of the nature of linguistic reference and its relation to value, see Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*, pp. 67f. and 114–15. In addition to Hogan, "The ἀξίωσις of Words at Thucydides 3.82.4," pp. 139–49, see John Wilson's "The Customary Meanings of Words Were Changed. Or Were they? A Note on Thucydides 3.82.4," *Classical Quarterly* 32 (1982): 18–20, and, e.g., Dino Piovan's "The Unexpected Consequences of War. Thucydides on the Relationship between War, Civil War and the Degradation of Language," or "Las inesperadas consecuencias de la guerra. Acerca de la relación entre guerra, guerra civil y degradación del lenguaje en Tucídides," *Araucaria. Revista Iberoamericana de Filosofía, Política y Humanidades* 19, no. 37 (2017): 181–97.

"This view is followed now by most scholars, among whom also Nussbaum, 2004, p. 751, n. 24 (this reference is from the 2004 Spanish translation of Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). However Orwin 1994: 177 n. 11 is against their interpretation" (Piovan, p. 187 n.19). See also Lisa Irene Hau's *Moral History from Herodotus to Diodorus Siculus* (Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 212, where she adopts the translation of "values" as the standard one provided by J. Mynott in his new translation of *Thucydides* (Cambridge University Press, 2013). Cf. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume 1:* 3.82.4 n., who now also relies on the translation "valuation."

More generally, see June Allison's careful review of the subject of Thucydides' comments on language here: *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, pp. 163–80 and esp. p. 169 n. 15.

10. See Piovan, "The Unexpected Consequences of War. Thucydides on the Relationship between War, Civil War and the Degradation of Language," pp. 181–97.

11. Thomas Hobbes' *The History of the Grecian War in Eight Books, Written by Thucydides* (1629) translates as "value." Cf. again also John Wilson, "Thucydides

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3.82.4," (*Classical Review* 32, 1982), pp. 18–20, who translates the entire phrase as the "usual verbal evaluations."

12. Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 39ff.

13. Bagby, "Fathers of International Relations? Thucydides as a Model for the Twenty-First Century," pp. 39–41.

14. "At their will and pleasure," *LSJ* s.v. δικαίωσις III; Cf. Müri, "Politische Metonomasie," 67f. "nach ihrer Willkür." J. Classen and J. Steup, Thukydides (Berlin, 1885–1914) ad loc.: "die subjektive Auslegung, wie sei nach dem Umstanden recht d.i. gelegen war."

15. Δικαίωσις occurs in four other places in Thucydides. At 1.141.1, it means "claim of right." See *LSJ* s. v. δικαίωσις II, cf. Classen-Steup ("eine mit dem Anspruch auf ein Recht . . . gestellte Forderung"). The same meaning is present at 5.17.2. At 4.86.6, ἰσχύος δικαιώσει must mean "by the right of the stronger," that is justification consisting in strength. For 8.66.2, *LSJ* (s.v. I. l) translate "condemnation, punishment." The word could easily be understood here as "judgement of right" (which would lead to punishment). In any case, "condemnation" implies a "judgement of right."

16. Its grammar resembles the second dative in the following expression from Thucydides: οἱ μὲν ἀπορίᾳ ἀκολούθων, οἱ δὲ ἀπιστίᾳ: "some [carried their own food] because they lacked servants, others through distrust of them" (7.75.5).

17. See R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Aüsfurliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache* (Hanover and Leipzig, 1898), II.l, pp. 438–40 (section 11). The example and its translation are from H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, revised by Gordon Messing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), para. 1517. The first dative (ἀπορίᾳ) expresses external cause.

18. But cf. Müri, "Politische Metonomasie," pp. 67–68, who argues successfully against Gomme.

19. I believe that this type of ambiguous or polyvalent construction occurs in a number of places in Thucydides. Hornblower, following I. L. Pfeijffer, *Three Aeginetan Odes of Pindar: A Commentary on Nemean V, Nemean III, and Pythian VIII* (Leiden, 1999), uses the term polyinterpretability to describe this rhetorical device, in which the author seems to intend that the readers or hearers of the work may interpret some words in more than one way at the same time. See *Thucydides and Pindar*, pp. 80–81 and p. 367. This view of one of Thucydides' apparent rhetorical devices would support the reading I have provided for 3.82.4 despite the persuasive points against it by June Allison in *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, p. 170n.17. See also the Hornblower's discussion of this same rhetorical device in his review of the political judgment of Thucydides at 8.97.2: "then for the first time, at least in my lifetime, the Athenians seem to me to have had a good constitutional arrangement" (translation Hornblower at 8.97.2).

20. S. Simon Swain, "Thucydides 1.22.1 and 3.82.4," *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, 46, no. 1 (1993), p. 36 and p. 36n.8.

21. Solmsen, *Intellectual Experiments of the Greek Enlightenment*, p. 110. Solmsen decides in favor of the traditional interpretation both here and in the

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article "Thucydides' Treatment of Words and Concepts," *Hermes* 99 (1971): 395. He describes Thucydides' observation as the discovery of a "new type of synonym." For Solmsen, the synonymy consists in, for instance, τόλμα ἀλόγιστος (reckless audacity) being called ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος (the courage of a loyal ally) during *stasis* and τόλμα ἀλόγιστος (reckless audacity) in normal times. But I think that Thucydides means that these different words were used at the same time and under the same conditions (*stasis*) to describe the same deed. Jaeger, *Paideia*, pp. 335–36, seems to have interpreted Thucydides along the lines later suggested by Solmsen's question, although he does speak of "a change in the meaning of words."

22. See Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, pp. 178–86, esp. p. 180.

23. See Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.82.2n.

24. For Pericles' view of the lack of intelligence, cf. 1.140.1; of intelligence, 2.40ff. For Thucydides' own opinions, cf. 1.138.3 and 2.65.13.

25. See Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 10, 42, 268, 309–10, and elsewhere. The last two pages (309–10) are important as there Price cites Thucydides' general description of *stasis* in Athens (8.66.2–5) and notes the important themes such as the idea that speaking in opposition to proposals can be dangerous in revolutionary states, pretexts are available for "judicial murder," people's ability to think clearly deteriorates, violence shows that a partisan is reliable, revenge is rewarded, trust evaporates, and suspicion becomes one of the most dominant psychological states.

26. Cf. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 147n.8.

27. For a persuasive interpretation of οἱ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι προστάντες μετὰ ὀνόματος ἑκάτεροι εὐπρεποῦς, πλήθους τε ἰσονομίας πολιτικῆς καὶ ἀριστοκρατίας σώφρονος προτιμήσει ("The leaders in the cities on both sides contested for the commonwealth, which they pretended to be serving, by employing specious slogans: the one side, constitutional government with the equal sharing of power by all people; and the other side, government by the best men, which is responsible by reason of preferment" [translation Graham and Forsythe]), see Graham and Forsythe, "A New Slogan for Oligarchy in Thucydides 3.82.8," pp. 25–45. Graham and Forsythe argue that πλήθους τε ἰσονομίας πολιτικῆς ("on the one side with the cry of political equality of the people") and ἀριστοκρατίας σώφρονος ("on the other [with the cry] of moderate aristocracy") are parallel expressions, and that the τε . . . καὶ ("both . . . and") clause is epexegetical to the first clause in the sentence (p. 31). προτιμήσει thus has a function parallel to πλήθους in terms of sense, and the translation of the passage as a whole is: "The leaders in the cities on both sides contested for the commonwealth, which they pretended to be serving, by employing specious slogans: the one side, constitutional government with the equal sharing of power by all people; and the other side, government by the best men, which is responsible by reason of preferment" (p. 45).

28. See *LSJ*, s.v., ἄτιμος III. ἀτίμως (the adverbial form), "dishonorably, ignominiously." Allan Bloom's translation of the *Republic* renders it "without honor."

29. With Plato's σωφροσύνην δὲ ἀνανδρίαν καλοῦντές ("calling moderation cowardliness," translation Bloom) (560d) compare Thucydides' τὸ δὲ σῶφρον τοῦ ἀνάνδρου πρόσχημα ("moderation was held to be a cloak for unmanliness,"

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translation Crawley, 3.82.4), noted by James Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, vol. 2 VIII.560d23 n.

30. Cf. Syme, *The Roman Revolution,* pp. 139–61, esp. pp. 153–56.

31. Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, vol. 2, VIII.560d27 n.

32. See, *LSJ* s. v. μοῖρα V. ("share," "lot," "fate"). In this example (τὸ δ' ἐμπλήκτως ὀξὺ ἀνδρὸς μοίρᾳ προσετέθη), "frantic violence became the attribute of manliness" (translation Crawley). See the full analysis by June Allison in *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, pp. 169–70, in particular. I suspect that the use of μοῖρα here suggests in addition the idea of Μοῖρα as the Goddess of Fate also so that Thucydides implies that frantic violence is added to the Fate of a man or of all the states including Athens that fall into *stasis*.

33. Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, p. 176.

34. Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), translation of original 1988 publication in French, pp. 113–16.

35. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, p. 125.

36. Rosen*, Plato's Statesman*, pp. 119ff.

37. See, e.g., Madison, *Federalist #10*, "But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government." https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10.

38. See the essay "From Limited War to Total War in America" by James M. McPherson, chapter 14, pp. 295–311, in *On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861–1871*, ed. Stig Förster and Jorg Nagler, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), for the argument that Sherman's march approached the concept of total war. See also his review of *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction*, by Mark E. Neely, Jr. (Harvard University Press, 2008) in *The New York Review of Books*, February 14, 2008.

39. Darien Shanske, *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 74–116. There are of course many others who note these parallels between Thucydides and Greek Tragedy, but Prof. Shanske's review is recent and enlightening.

40. This is from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale in his edition *Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968), "What I Owe to the Ancients," Section 2, pp. 106–7. Prof. Shanske also invokes this important discussion, op. cit., p. 130. A somewhat less enthusiastic embrace of Thucydides as a Sophist than Nietzsche's can be found in de Romilly's

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The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens, pp. 45–46, 205–6, and especially on page 74, where she notes the connection between Prodicus and Thucydides.

41. So Hornblower, *Thucydides*, p. 72. So also Lowell S. Gustafson, "Thucydides and Pluralism," in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, pp. 177–79.

42. *Plato's Phaedo*, with Translation, Introduction, and Glossary, Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem (Newburyport, MA: Focus Classical Library, 1998). At 100a, p. 80, they translate καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἁπάντων ὄντων, "and about all the rest," but literally this means "and concerning all the other things that are," which I think is an important expansion since Plato is clearly interested here in expanding hypothesis beyond material explanations, understandings, and causes to explanations that are beyond the material.

43. See, e.g., Allan Silverman, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Plato's Middle Period Metaphysics and Epistemology," 15. The Method of Hypothesis, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-metaphysics/#15 (accessed June 13, 2018), First published June 9, 2003; substantive revision July 14, 2014, Edward N. Zalta (ed.). See also on this point Lynn E. Rose, "The Deuteros Plous in Plato's 'Phaedo,'" *The Monist* 50, no. 3 (July 1966): 464; and J. T. Bedo-Addu, "The Role of the Hypothetical Model in the *Phaedo*," *Phronesis* 24, no. 2 (1979): 111–32.

44. Seth Benardete, *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 1–11.

45. Bedo-Addu and Rose, op. cit., agree in their respective studies that the "second sailing" is the inquiry into the formal causes of things, i.e., the Forms themselves. This leaves Socrates' first effort as an attempt to explain all the things that are in terms of the Good. For these types of explanations, Socrates is still looking for a teacher at the end of his life (99c).

46. One of the core arguments of Martha Taylor in *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*. While I believe most of Prof. Taylor's examples of implied criticism of Pericles' idea of the city as separated from the land of Attica are valid criticisms, it is not clear to me that enough attention is drawn to the irony of the examples she adduces.

47. Pericles exhorts the people to "behold the power of the city day by day in action, and become her lovers (*erastai)*" (2.43.1). τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, s.v. 2.43.1, argues, following Prof. K. J. Dover, that αὐτῆς, "of her" or "of it" (feminine, like "power" in Greek)" is the objective genitive of "lovers" and refers to the city, as in the translation. But this is quite likely another case of polyinterpretability such that the audience may hear a suggestion that they should become lovers of the power of the city. Pericles could have asked the Athenians to gaze on the beauty of the city, or on the courage of the people or any other important aspect of the city, but he chose to tell his people to gaze on the power of the city.

48. Gregory Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity: The Limits of Political Realism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 297, http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft767nb497/ (accessed January 20, 2019).

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49. See Price, *Thucydides and Internal War* generally and esp. pp. 69–70. Price's argument there that though the words are Socrates' Plato does not endorse them is true of a great deal of what Socrates says in all the dialogues. Price appears to be agreeing with Socrates on this point about *stasis* engulfing the entire Greek world. One could do worse in terms of authorities on such matters than to quote Socrates and Plato.

50. See, for example, Marc Cogan, *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History*, esp. pp. 237–38, 253–54. Cogan defines τὸ ἀνθρώπινον (1.22.4) as the public process of delivering speeches, and argues that the speeches must be compared in order to understand Thucydides. See also Peter Pouncey, *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism*, p. 79, where Pouncey explains Cleon's echoes of Pericles as intended by Thucydides to force comparison with Pericles.

Colin Macleod, "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," in *Collected Essays*, p. 69, states that there are "revealing relations between speeches which do not belong together in time: a particularly valuable point of reference are those of Pericles, for Thucydides Athens' best leader."

Leo Strauss, *The City and Man*, makes some very useful remarks on the speeches in Thucydides: "The speeches answer questions—and not merely questions of the moment, but the most fundamental and permanent questions concerning human action—which Thucydides does not answer, and they do so in a most persuasive manner. Thus the reader is almost irresistibly tempted to . . . believe that Thucydides . . . must have used the speaker as his mouthpiece. Thucydides helps us indeed in judging of the wisdom of the speeches, not only by his account of the deeds but also by giving us his judgment of the wisdom of . . . the speakers. . . . In fact, precisely the speeches more than anything else convey to us his judgment of the speakers and only of the speakers" (p. 166).

One implication of this is that no speaker can or should be seen as using all the arguments available to him. The arguments chosen and the way they are worded carry great weight in interpreting the character and role of the speaker.

Finley's *Thucydides*, p. 232, should also be noted: He contrasts Alcibiades' last speech with Pericles' third. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, pp. 311, 317, etc., makes a comparison of the speeches one of the central conclusions of his book.

More recently, see Christopher B. Pelling, "Thucydides' Speeches," *Thucydides*, ed. Jeffrey Rusten, pp. 276–90, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

51. George Kennedy (*The Art of Persuasion in Greece*, p. 48) takes what seems to be the correct view that *ta deonta* (τὰ δέοντα) refers primarily to "what the speaker ought to have said," using "ought" in the "rhetorical sense." This is Gomme's position too (*Historical Commentary* on 1.22.1). Hornblower (*A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I:* 1.22.1 n.) suggests that ignoring this sense of the words "ignores the rhetorical uses of the phrase, which go back to Gorgias."

Against the view that the phrase refers to what it was actually necessary to say at the given moment there is a significant argument: If speakers only say what is actually necessary, then certain disagreements, such as that between Cleon and Diodotus,

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might not arise. Either one of them, or perhaps even some other unexpressed opinion, could correspond to what had to be done, but surely not both or all. The resolution to this disagreement would seem to be that *ta deonta* refers to what ought to be said in support of what one has made up one's mind is the right position to take. See also Pouncey, *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism*, who in a long footnote summarizes some of the chief contributions to the debate concerning 1.22.1 (pp. 165–67, n.10).

52. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 164, contends that while Thucydides may have refined certain speakers' arguments, he did not "endow any speaker with qualities of understanding and choosing which he lacked." This seems substantially correct. It recognizes the importance of rhetorical technique in the fashioning of any speech but allows Thucydides the leeway he needs to present actual speeches that reflect a given speaker's understanding and rhetorical ability. Since the speeches thus reflect the speaker as well as rhetorical requirements, speeches can be profitably compared.

53. Cogan, *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History*, 223–26, has made some sound remarks about this subject in relation to the speech of the Spartans proposing peace in Book 4 (4.17–4.22). He concludes that the speech was a serious rhetorical failure, and that this failure has important implications for how we should read the *Histories*. A study of the apparent purpose of each speech in Thucydides relying on standard principles of rhetoric, such as those enunciated by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* and those implied and exemplified in earlier Greek speeches and discussions of rhetoric, would be an interesting and useful contribution to an understanding of Thucydides.

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Chapter 2

Pericles

Aspiring Statesman in Thucydides, General and Sophist in Plato

Thucydides writes as if he trusts that the sense and value of words are constant in a healthy *polis*, but when the *polis* degenerates into *stasis*, values change and the distinctions between words disappear. The decrease in the power of words to differentiate one thing from another lowers their value until they eventually become almost worthless. But immediately a fundamental question arises: whose discourse is the standard for judging? One of the prime characteristics of such a standard for Thucydides would be that *logos* corresponds to *ergon*. He believed that it is vital to ascertain the facts as a preliminary to sound discussion (1.20–1.21).[1] He himself states that his own *logos* matches the *erga*, at least as far as he was able to discover (1.22.1–1.22.3). He claims for his *logos* a universality (κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ, "a possession forever," 1.22.4); that is, his *logos* will be useful forever and has general application to the understanding of human nature, since war is a fundamental aspect of man's life, and the war Thucydides describes is worthy to be described (1.1.1–1.1.2). Thucydides' claim to have written a work of permanent importance rests on his belief that human nature is constant (1.22.4, 3.82.2) and that he has drawn the essential outlines of people's behavior in crisis and war.

In the conclusion to his explanation of his methods concerning the speeches and the events surrounding them, Thucydides says that it will be sufficient for him if those who wish to know the clear truth of events (τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς, 1.22.4) judge his work as useful. Here, as in his remarks on *stasis*, Thucydides refers to what is characteristically human ("in the course of human things," 1.22.4, cf. "as long as the nature of mankind remains the same," 3.82.2), and says that in some form the future will resemble the past.[2] The similarity of the thought of these two sections underscores the importance of *stasis* for the work as a whole. The war in its

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entirety is a kind of *stasis* within the Hellenic community,[3] and the revolutions themselves within the cities are internal wars. Socrates himself makes the general argument in the *Republic* that when Greeks fight with Greeks, Greece suffers illness and faction (νοσεῖν δ᾽ ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ στασιάζειν), and the result must be called *stasis* (στάσιν τὴν τοιαύτην ἔχθραν κλητέον, Book 5, 470b).[4]

Thucydides' *logos* organizes and presents the entire war, but during the war and the various *staseis* (plural), *logos* itself suffers and declines until political speech becomes almost impossible. Should such an outcome become permanent, it would render Thucydides' work useless, and would doom men to complete ignorance about the past and no help for the future. Thus, Thucydides places great importance on the stability of language as the basis for its use as a measure of what people do, their *erga*, and its degeneration troubles him.

Thucydides' own work thus serves in some sense as the standard against which the speakers' words may be judged, and in fact, the *erga* that Thucydides describes serve as a touchstone against which the speakers' claims and recommendations can be tested. Thucydides has fitted the speeches to the *erga* so that his narrative confirms, undercuts, or amplifies what each speaker says. The process of comparing one speech to others and to the action of the war helps the reader to see Thucydides' work as an artistic whole. The use of the *erga* of the war in this way to clarify the speeches exemplifies the way the speeches present hypotheses about the war that events support or contradict. Those events as narrated by Thucydides and their relationships with the speeches are an encapsulated example of the hypothetical method that give us standards or measures by which to evaluate accounts or *logoi*.

Within the work itself Pericles' speeches serve as the standard, albeit an imperfect one, against which other Athenian speeches may be judged.[5] Thucydides' admiration for Pericles is well known and clear (2.65.5–2.65.11). Pericles says that among his other virtues, he understands what is necessary and is able to explain it (2.60.5); Thucydides concurs (1.139.4, 2.65.9). Pericles claims for Athens an unlimited universality, and this has two sides: On the one hand there is the unlimited power of Athens (2.41.2, 2.62.2), which has left eternal monuments of its good and bad deeds (2.41.4, cf. 2.64.3),[6] and on the other hand, there is the singular spirit of Athens, her love of beauty and wisdom, which themselves are part of the universal nature of *logos*.

At this point the question arises whether, although Pericles is a great leader of a great state, political problems are already visible and reflected in his political language. "Eternal monuments of good and bad deeds" suggests at the very least a conflict between the internal values of Athens and the external values of a powerful imperial state. Solon, the great Athenian leader and

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lawgiver of the Archaic age, speaks of wealth and power that comes from unjustly obtained fruit:

χρήματα δ᾽ ἱμείρω μὲν ἔχειν, ἀδίκως δὲ πεπᾶσθαι
οὐκ ἐθέλω: πάντως ὕστερον ἦλθε Δίκη:
πλοῦτον δ᾽ ὃν μὲν δῶσι θεοί, παραγίγνεται ἀνδρὶ
10ἔμπεδος ἐκ νεάτου πυθμένος ἐς κορυφήν:
ὃν δ᾽ ἄνδρες μετίωσιν ὑφ᾽ ὕβριος, οὐ κατὰ κόσμον
ἔρχεται, ἀλλ᾽ ἀδίκοις ἔργμασι πειθόμενος
οὐκ ἐθέλων ἕπεται: ταχέως δ᾽ ἀναμίσγεται ἄτη

I long to have money, but I am unwilling to possess it unjustly, for retribution assuredly comes afterwards. Wealth which the gods give remains with a man, secure from the lowest foundations to the top, whereas wealth which men honor, with violence comes in disorder, an unwilling attendant persuaded by unjust actions, and it is quickly mixed with ruin. (ἄτη, "ate" transliterated)[7]

It seems like a small point in the Funeral Oration to include a reference to bad deeds and to praise them implicitly, but the clause into which Thucydides inserts this small reference provides some clues as to how important it is:

ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν μὲν θάλασσαν καὶ γῆν ἐσβατὸν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ τόλμῃ καταναγκάσαντες γενέσθαι, πανταχοῦ δὲ μνημεῖα κακῶν τε κἀγαθῶν ἀίδια ξυγκατοικίσαντες. (2.41.4)

we have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our daring, and everywhere have [established in our colonies] imperishable combined monuments [of good and evil (deeds)] behind us. (2.41.4, translation Crawley except for the parts in [right brackets]).

The most telling word here is ξυγκατοικίσαντες, a form from συγκατοικίζω, which means "together" (συγ) to "settle as colonists" (κατοικίζω).[8] So, Thucydides is using the word metaphorically in relation to monuments but the poetic association with colonizing is obvious. The direct colonizing by Athens and the larger indirect colonizing through accumulation of the empire has left behind monuments of good and evil. These monuments commemorate forceful compulsion (καταναγκάσαντες), that is, "using force get what one wants," which in the case of Athens is control of the sea and through the sea the land. We have to wonder here what the monuments are—temples built by Athenian money and power? Victory monuments? Or perhaps one monument is Thucydides' book, which brings us closer to an understanding of Athens' failure.[9]

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The reference to Homer in the section 2.41.4 that immediately precedes Pericles' remarks on monuments of good and evil, begins, "And far from needing a Homer for our panegyrist, or other of his craft whose verses might charm for the moment only for the impression which they gave to melt at the touch of fact," and continues, "we have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our daring, and everywhere, have [established in our colonies] imperishable combined monuments [of good and evil (deeds)] behind us." This hints strongly to the readers that we should consider the work we are reading and remember what Thucydides said about poets in Book I: "On the whole, however, the conclusions I have drawn from the proofs quoted may, I believe, safely be relied on. Assuredly they will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet displaying the exaggeration of his craft" (1.21.1).

But now we are reaching a high point on the path to knowledge, so Thucydides' competition becomes clearer—it is Homer himself, who is also always present for Plato. One monument of evil deeds is Thucydides' book, and another is the fame of Athens in the hearts and minds of those who have studied Athens.[10] The book reveals the flaws in Periclean Athens as well as its luminous strengths. It is a radical but still developing democracy built on external power, and that power outside the city inevitably influences how people who are in Athens think about their general relationships with others.[11] This is a fundamental problem in political life in Athens. Thucydides shows this almost in passing in the Funeral Oration, but the signs are unmistakable, an expansionist foreign policy based on compulsion and power, a desire for more allies as subjects (as at 2.64.3 in Pericles' third speech), and a definition of the city itself that is intellectually attractive and in accord with the technological and political power of democracy—a strong and dangerous navy as a core representative of democratic power. The freedom of Athens attracts supporters from the numerous lower classes in *poleis* outside of Athens, but the attraction of freedom and equality is based on unequal power.[12] It is also quite clear that Pericles' definition of the city is abstract in some ways, an idea of a free, enterprising community of spirit that is an "education for Hellas" (2.41.1).[13]

The conflict between the idea of the city as an abstraction divorced even from the land, and the actual city in which the Athenians live is another source of emotional conflict that in the end contributes to Athens' ruin. Is the city the physical city of Athens that Pericles advises the Athenians not to risk in Thucydides' account of Pericles' instructions (2.65.7), or is the city the larger concept, the "sea and the city" that Pericles tells the Athenians to safeguard (1.143.5)?[14]

The evil deeds here that are part of the monumental history of Athens, passing reminders that sometimes Athens had to do bad things to make a

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greater good, resemble the start of ruin in Solon's famous poem, where he says,

> ταχέως δ' ἀναμίσγεται ἄτη,
> ἀρχὴν δ' ἐξ ὀλίγης γίγνεται ὥστε πυρός:
> φλαύρη μὲν τὸ πρῶτον, ἀνιηρὴ δὲ τελευτᾷ:
> οὐ γὰρ δὴν θνητοῖς ὕβριος ἔργα πέλει
>
> It [wealth] is mixed quickly with ruin (ἄτη, "ate" transliterated), [Ruin] in the beginning small like fire, insignificant at first but grievous in the end, For mortals' deeds of violence do not live long.[15]

The monuments of good and evil deeds that Pericles extols are, except for the intellectual testaments of Thucydides and others, not "imperishable" (2.41.4). And Solon is right that "mortals' deeds of violence do not live long," or at least we all hope he is right.

Thucydides' history shows us that while Pericles was a great leader, perhaps one of the greatest, his city and his view of that city had a deep moral flaw, that no strong personal honesty and good judgment were able to overpower. The flaw was the desire for more, or *pleonexia*, that rather quickly rose to dominate the internal politics of Athens as that expressed itself in the Athenians' united desire in sailing to conquer Sicily for "sights and spectacles," conquest, personal gain, and pay that would last forever (6.24.3). They were united in their desire each to satisfy his own goals. Further, their desires were "excessive" (ἄγαν), desires for more—in what seems like one of the two natural interpretations of Thucydides' ambiguous phrase, διὰ τὴν ἄγαν τῶν πλεόνων ἐπιθυμίαν (on account of "the enthusiasm of the majority [that] was excessive" or on account of "their excessive desire for more").[16] The "excessive desire for more" suggests the famous injunction at Delphi, "nothing to excess" (μηδὲν ἄγαν, transliterated "meden agan").[17] Thucydides' method, like Plato's, is partly that of the famous tragedians. He very rarely intrudes directly into the narrative, which forces his readers to interpret.[18] Here Athens' flaws are fatal, and they lead to a great mistake, the Sicilian Expedition, which "failed not so much through a miscalculation of the power of those against whom it was sent, as through a fault in the senders" (2.65.11). It was one of many mistakes produced by the competing leaders after Pericles' death. The flaws are flaws of character, in this case *pleonexia*, but the fatal mistake is a mistaken calculation that arises out of a desire to win more.[19] The problem that Pericles faced was mixing moderation (nothing to excess in one account, *sophrosune* or "moderation" in another) and courage. He clearly had the courage to move Athens to the sea and to fight Sparta, but his moderation was personal. He did not translate it into a government that

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had a formal structure that would restrain the people or a single leader. The ability to mix *sophrosune* and courage is quite a difficult skill to attain, as the Stranger makes clear in the *Statesman* (306b):

Ξένος
καὶ μὴν σωφροσύνην γε ἀνδρείας μὲν ἕτερον, ἓν δ᾽ οὖν καὶ τοῦτο μόριον ἧς κἀκεῖνο.

Νεώτερος Σωκράτης
ναί.

Ξένος
τούτων δὴ πέρι θαυμαστόν τινα λόγον ἀποφαίνεσθαι τολμητέον.

Νεώτερος Σωκράτης
ποῖον;

Ξένος
ὡς ἐστὸν κατὰ δή τινα τρόπον εὖ μάλα πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἔχθραν καὶ στάσιν ἐναντίαν ἔχοντε ἐν πολλοῖς τῶν ὄντων. (306b)

Stranger:
[And I suspect that you believe that] certainly *sophrosune* is other than courage [or manliness], but nevertheless, [that] this also is a part of that of which courage is a part.

Younger Socrates:
Yes.

Stranger:
Concerning these things then one must be brave to present a certain astonishing argument.

Younger Socrates:
What sort [of argument]?

Stranger:
That this pair in a certain way has a very great enmity and opposing faction (*stasis*) among many of the things that are. (306b)

This analysis applies to Periclean Athens and indeed even of the unresolved contradictions in Pericles himself. In his discussion of the start of the

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disastrous Sicilian Expedition, Thucydides makes his readers ponder why Athens became enamored of faraway conquests. He later suggests some answers to that. Plato looks into the conceptual contradictions in political leadership generally, but this relates to Athens where an application of the Stranger's ideas suggests that if the political life of Athens had been woven together differently there might have been a different outcome, but what Athens ended up with was first a conflict between the errant and self-protective moderation of Nicias and the unbalanced courage of Alcibiades. Later *stasis* took over among many of the fundamental values in Athens and within the minds their political exponents.

Thucydides thus uses ambiguity to ensure the reader's engagement in this most important point, how to determine what is too much. Socrates raises several weaknesses of writing in the *Phaedrus*. He says the King of Egypt told Theuth, the inventor of writing, that his invention would promote forgetting (274e–275b). Socrates attempts to counter this by avoiding statements of doctrine and attempting to lead his interlocutors and even his readers to discover their own answers. Writing is unable to respond directly to questions (275d). Most seriously, writing cannot address an individual (276e). In addition to this, an individual soul is always moving (246c) and, as Heraclitus says (see *Cratylus* 402a, cf. 440a), we cannot step in the same river twice.

Yet the situation is even more complicated since there are two factors that change, the river and our souls. What we think we understand from a text once may not apply to us in the same way later. Some of Plato's solutions are to use the dialogue for writing, to have even Socrates say different things about the same subject—depending on his interlocutor and the context, to avoid stating doctrines in his own (Plato's) voice, and to employ a variety of types of writing including myth and precise analytical discussion to look at the same problems from different perspectives.

Thucydides rarely says openly what he thinks, and when he does speak and identify his point as a summary or a judgment, he speaks in ambiguous ways that take a long time to understand. He presents many points of view through many different speakers, some of whom even seem to disagree with themselves in other speeches or to see the same issue differently under different circumstances. Some of the speeches are much more difficult to read than the narrative, which makes us interact with them in slow and complicated ways. Plato and Thucydides have formally similar profiles in their own work. Thucydides speaks rarely, albeit more openly than Plato. Thucydides was an actor in the war he describes, and he presents himself as such more than once. Plato was, we have to assume, present with Socrates more than a few times, though he only shows himself as present once (in the *Apology*). There Socrates mentions him twice—first to point him out as in attendance in court (34a) and the second time to note that he proposes to pay a fine for Socrates

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(38b). In the *Phaedo*, Phaedo says that Plato was not there on Socrates' last day (59b). Both authors make their presence felt in their absence, however. Finally, like Plato, Thucydides uses dramatic irony to make points that he does not state directly. Sometimes the irony seems almost impossible to resolve fully. Sometimes the irony just reflects something about the speaker or the situation in which various actors and military forces find themselves. Some of the most striking ironies occur in Pericles' Funeral Oration itself.

Here we can turn to a more detailed review of the Funeral Oration in terms of the thesis that we can see in the Athenian speeches in Thucydides the gradual collapse of Athenian political discourse into the intellectual and emotional failures of *stasis*. *Logos*, for Thucydides, transmits to his readers what is permanent and valuable in the particulars he describes. *Logos* provides the means by which Thucydides and his readers can derive universal truths from particular experiences. If we consider the aspirations of the Athenians rather than their failures, it is clear that Athens' love of beauty and wisdom, and hence her participation in the universal nature of *logos*, reveals itself in the Funeral Oration. Athens by herself is a school for Greece for all time. Athens teaches by her example, although this teaching has limitations that amount to flaws, as we have seen already. *Logos* in general teaches by training people in understanding. Those who love wisdom, philosophers, become wise through their use of *logos* and understanding of it, while those who love Athens (2.43.1) are members of the greatest *polis* in Greece and become wise through their political life in this *polis*.

The Funeral Oration praises Athens by a statement of facts rather than by adorning her with pleasing words (2.41.4). This speech, because it represents the universal power and spirit of the city, and because as a political speech it attempts to encourage that power and spirit, becomes universal itself.[20] Pericles denies that Athens needs a Homer: the facts speak for themselves. But there is an obvious irony in this, as we have seen, in that Thucydides seems to consider himself the Homer of the Peloponnesian War, as the Archaeology makes clear (1.1.3, 1.10.3). He thus has engaged himself in a contest with Pericles as well as the implicit one with Homer. If in Pericles' view Athens needs no Homer, what need is there for Thucydides to record Athens' greatness? An answer to this question requires a more detailed comparison of the *logos* of Thucydides with the *logoi* of Pericles, of which the Funeral Oration is the preeminent example. In the process of this examination, we will be able to see the weaknesses in Pericles' combination, as a political figure, of *sophrosune* and courage or manliness (*andreia*).

In the first place, Thucydides' respect for Pericles is clear (cf. e.g., 2.65). Both agree on the need to state the facts without ornamentation (1.22, 2.41.4). Both praise practical abilities and intellectual attitudes in relation to action rather than deeds themselves.[21] Thucydides' praise of four men shows this

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in his case. He praises Pericles not for his deeds but for his ability to understand, speak, and act (1.139.4, 2.65.5–2.65.13, cf. 1.127.3).[22] In particular, Thucydides praises him in 2.65 for his moderation (2.65.5), his foresight (2.65.5, 2.65.13), and for his integrity and liberality (2.65.8), in other words for his character. His tribute to Nicias is likewise a praise of his character:

> καὶ ὁ μὲν τοιαύτῃ ἢ ὅτι ἐγγύτατα τούτων αἰτίᾳ ἐτεθνήκει, ἥκιστα δὴ ἄξιος ὢν τῶν γε ἐπ᾽ ἐμοῦ Ἑλλήνων ἐς τοῦτο δυστυχίας ἀφικέσθαι διὰ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐς ἀρετὴν νενομισμένην ἐπιτήδευσιν.

> This or the like was the cause of the death of a man who, of all the Hellenes in my time, least deserved such a fate, seeing that the whole course of his life had been regulated with [practiced attention to conventionalized] virtue. (7.86.5, Crawley, modified as noted with [brackets])[23]

Nicias' ἐπιτήδευσις, his "principles of conduct,"[24] are in accord with his moral virtue (*arete*).[25] Thucydides praises Antiphon for his ability to originate plans and to expound them (8.68.1). The estimate of Hermocrates also emphasizes his ability—his intellect, bravery, and experience in war (6.72.2). Even in his praise for Sparta and Chios, Thucydides focuses on their moderation, rather than on specific moderate acts (8.24.4).[26]

When Pericles praises those who have died first in the war, he turns directly to an exposition of Athens' "principles of conduct" (ἐπιτηδεύσεως), her constitution and manner (τρόπων, 2.36.4). His praise of Athens thus emphasizes the spirit and character of the city, and the people's devotion to the intellectual and beautiful (2.40.2). He is not praising the constitution per se.[27] The special virtues of the Athenians are intellectual: they are adept at originating plans, or at least at considering them (2.40.2–2.40.3).[28] These are the same qualities to which Thucydides frequently refers in his praise of individuals. Pericles seems to equate even courage with understanding (2.40.3, 2.43.1).[29] His actual praise of the men who have died rests on an appreciation of their state of mind when they died.[30] Finally, the most important remembrance of the dead is what is recorded in the hearts of men, not what stones may say (2.43.2–2.43.3). Both men seem to believe that a person's character is the proper focus of praise or blame.

On the other hand, a basic difference between Thucydides' *logos* and Pericles' *logoi* is that Pericles' speeches, including the Funeral Oration, are political and public, while Thucydides' work at its highest level is philosophical history. His book is a political history of the Peloponnesian War and its antecedents, but Thucydides uses this groundwork as a basis on which he develops his philosophical ideas. The work is philosophical history in that it sees the particular events of the Peloponnesian War as images of human speech and action in general.

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Although the Funeral Oration is political in the narrow sense, because Thucydides presents Pericles as delivering it upon a particular occasion, it has a larger purpose. It attempts to represent an approach to a harmony of the individual and the city rather than a simple focus on a narrow political aim. Nor in his three other speeches (including the speech reported in indirect discourse in Book 2), although they are more concerned with specific issues and problems, does Pericles attempt to achieve a private good for himself. He always has his eye to some extent on what is good for the state.

How the Funeral Oration can approach an ideal of political discourse in Thucydides, and what type of ideal Pericles aims it to be, or even if it is an ideal or a kind of flawed ideal, are questions closely related to what is true and universal in it.[31] It first claims universality in the connection it draws between the Athens of 431 and the Athenians' ancestors (2.36). The Athenians of today, Pericles says, are one in spirit with their forebears, who gave them what they now have. The city is also universal in its relation to its own citizens, for Athens is democratic, even though all are preferred to public positions on the basis of their abilities (2.37.1). All contribute to the formation of policy even if they cannot lead (2.40.2). Pericles alternates between the public and the private in order to unite the private interests for the public good (cf. 2.37–2.39 especially). For Pericles' ideal citizen, the *polis* is paramount. This proves to be an extremely dangerous relationship in a democracy just as it can be in an aristocracy.

This primary interest in the *polis* appears most clearly in Pericles' respect for debate or *logos*, which is the means by which every citizen may participate in the political life: *polupragmosune* develops from free public debate. *Polupragmosune* is thus an expression of the universality of *logos* in respect to the Athenian citizens. Each citizen has a share in the *logos* that precedes action, and in Athens all actions are prepared by debate (2.40.2). *Polupragmosune* also expresses the universality of the state in respect to its citizens,[32] for each Athenian is involved in some way in government. For Pericles, as for every other citizen, the state is paramount. It encompasses the prosperity or failure of the individual (2.60.4).

In order to draw out some of the implications of this position, it will be helpful to compare Pericles (and Thucydides) with certain aspects of Plato's discussion of the *polis* and its relationship to the individual. To begin with, Pericles' concept of the primacy of the *polis* resembles Plato's in the *Republic*, where justice of the whole arrangement of the *polis* is the highest goal, and the individual is subordinate to the state (*Republic* 504c–505b, cf., 433c, 443c–444a).[33]

On the other hand, for Pericles "happiness" (τὸ εὔδαιμον) is "freedom" (τὸ ἐλεύθερον, 2.43.4), while in Plato's ideal state happiness depends upon

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justice. Glaucon's question to Socrates near the beginning of Book 2 frames the question of happiness as a relationship between justice and injustice. The subjects here are the two men Glaucon proposes to Socrates: On the one hand, Glaucon says, take the man who is perfectly just, but who has no success in life, and moreover has a reputation for injustice, while on the other hand he suggests a man who, although perfectly unjust, leads a successful life and is regarded as a model of justice.

The question is, which man is happier?

> ἀλλὰ ἴτω ἀμετάστατος μέχρι θανάτου, δοκῶν μὲν εἶναι ἄδικος διὰ βίου, ὢν δὲ δίκαιος, ἵνα ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸ ἔσχατον ἐληλυθότες, ὁ μὲν δικαιοσύνης, ὁ δὲ ἀδικίας, κρίνωνται ὁπότερος αὐτοῖν εὐδαιμονέστερος. (361c–d)
>
> Let him go on without a change until death, seeming to be unjust through [his] life, but being [really] just, so that when both have come to the very end—one of justice, the other of injustice—they can be judged, whichever of the two is happier. (361c–d)

The rest of the *Republic* is in part Socrates' answer to this question and a demonstration that the just man, no matter what the rewards for his justice, is happier. Thucydides does not ignore justice, however. In addition to its place in many of the speeches, there are the questions of the justice of Athens' empire, whether Athens ruled that empire justly, and whether for Thucydides justice has any role in an empire at all. The answers to these questions are complicated. We will begin by returning to the examination of the Funeral Oration in detail.

A most serious charge that can be made against Athens is a lack of moderation, and this deficiency is manifest in the city's desire for universal rule.[34] *Pleonexia*, the unlimited desire for possession, did finally overcome Athens and was the emotional agent of her destruction (4.17.4, 4.21.2, 4.41.4, 6.13.1). Yet it is precisely in this point that Pericles personally is distinguished from his successors, especially Cleon and Alcibiades, though there are important issues surrounding how much Pericles' ideas and rhetoric encourage limitless desire. Still, under Pericles' personal rule Athens took a "moderate" (μετρίως) and "safe" (ἀσφαλῶς, literally, "not falling or failing") direction according to Thucydides (2.65.5). Even at the beginning of the Funeral Oration, Pericles declares his intention to speak "moderately" (μετρίως, 2.35.2) when he criticizes the law that someone must deliver a Funeral Oration for those killed in battle. The audience will be hard to please: the one who is well-disposed to the dead and who knows what they have done will think that the speech is insufficient in its praise, while the one who does not know their exploits

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may feel envy if he hears of something beyond his powers (2.35.2). Pericles' difficulty will be in finding a middle ground that will satisfy the wishes and beliefs of each citizen (2.35.2–3).

In the Funeral Oration, Pericles elevates and redefines certain important concepts of Greek politics.[35] The Athenians are opposed to what is commonly reckoned as *arete* (2.40.4).[36] Athens, Pericles asserts, gains friends by conferring benefits, not by receiving them, because she has an abiding faith in the liberality with which she bestows favors (2.40.4–2.40.5). Pericles says he believes that foreign affairs should be conducted without a calculation of advantage, although this is not the way of the tyrant city that Athens became. Athens in Pericles' time was a special kind of democracy, in which the *demos* did not rule absolutely, and high public estimation depended on virtue, not rank (2.37.1). Pericles here claims that Athens is a true aristocracy with rule by the best. For the encouragement of bravery, Athens relies more on the habits and character of her citizens than upon laws (2.39.4). This is a very significant point, meant to show a contrast with Sparta, but also revealing a view of the role of government that accords with what Plato presents in the *Statesman*.

In the *Statesman*, one of the subjects the Stranger and the younger Socrates discuss is the different political constitutions, concluding that in the best constitution the statesman-philosopher rules in accordance with his art (300c), and not by laws (294a–b, cf. 303b). Laws are ignorant of the particular situation (294b–c) and can never rule in accordance with the good. Laws thus represent true opinion, imitations (μιμήματα, 300c) of the truth but not knowledge, and one can never legislate true virtue.[37] In this sense, the laws are like works of art in Plato's epistemology as outlined in the *Republic* (X.595a–607c). In Pericles' Athens, on the other hand, there are laws, but Pericles represents them in the Funeral Oration as pertaining to private disputes and arrangements (2.37.1). Pericles is then, in Platonic claims at least, making what amounts to a very high claim, to be a philosopher, since he implies that he has fostered Athens and Athens has become a *polis* where rule in accordance with the good is possible. This implied claim, to the extent that we can view Thucydides as presenting Pericles arguments fairly, likely accounts in part for the antipathy between Plato and Pericles. The solution to the conundrum would seem to be depend on the extent to which Plato actually believed that a philosopher could rule in this world in which we live. A stubborn realist might argue that even though some rulers sometimes make legitimate approaches to philosophical rule, these approaches are always temporary and fortuitous. Therefore, Plato cannot mean that philosophers will rule. But in the *Republic*, it is quite clear that the rule of a philosopher-king is envisioned as possible (375e, 456b, 472d–473d, 499c, 502c). We may

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wonder why Socrates and Plato seem to have thought this and why Socrates maintains it in the *Republic*, especially since there have been no philosopher kings.[38] One provisional answer is that the proposals of the *Republic* respond to the situation of the various participants in the discussion and to the questions that Glaucon and Adeimantus pose in Book II concerning justice and injustice. One point at issue for Plato and Thucydides was, it seems, at least to some extent, the question of whether Pericles was a philosopher. The complicated answer to this that emerges from the *Statesman*, as we will see, appears to be that Pericles was not an effective statesman, though he clearly had many qualities, some of which may have approached philosophical concerns quite reasonably and effectively.

Of course there were also laws about elections and the various offices of state, but Pericles makes the large claim that in the political sphere men achieve prominence in accordance with their virtue, and that they are not hindered by their poverty or low position (2.37.1). A primary characteristic of Pericles' *polis* is freedom (ἐλευθέρως, "freely," 2.37.2, cf., 2.43.4). Similarly, as the Stranger describes him in the *Statesman*, the true ruler is not guided by laws but is free to do what is best:

> Ξένος
> καὶ μὴν τόν γε εἰδότα ἔφαμεν, τὸν ὄντως πολιτικόν, εἰ μεμνήμεθα, ποιήσειν τῇ τέχνῃ πολλὰ εἰς τὴν αὑτοῦ πρᾶξιν τῶν γραμμάτων οὐδὲν φροντίζοντα, ὁπόταν ἄλλ' αὐτῷ βελτίω δόξῃ παρὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα ὑφ' αὑτοῦ καὶ ἐπεσταλμένα ἀποῦσίν τισιν. (300c–d)

> Stranger:
> And yet we said, if we recollect, that the man of knowledge at least, the one who is really a statesman, would by art do many things in his practice while taking no regard to his writings, whenever he thought other things were better contrary to the rules written and sent by him to his absent subjects. (300c–d)

These similarities raise questions about the criticisms of Socrates against Pericles and the Athenian democracy, for example in the *Gorgias*, where Socrates accuses four of the greatest Athenian politicians, Themistocles, Kimon, Miltiades, and Pericles of "gratifying their own pleasures and the pleasures of the people" (τὸ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας ἀποπιμπλάναι καὶ τὰς αὑτοῦ καὶ τὰς τῶν ἄλλων, 503c, cf. 502e).[39] In Thucydides' portrait, on the other hand, many of Pericles' characteristics resemble those of the ideal ruler of the *Statesman* and in some sense also of the philosopher-king of the *Republic*. For example, Pericles never spoke with a view to the pleasure of the people but was able to contradict and anger them (2.65.8).

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A most important task for the ruler in the *Statesman* is to ensure the proper mingling of the people so that the courageous and the moderate types do not separate (310c–311a). This is to be taken literally—that the moderate should reproduce with the courageous—and also in a larger sense, that the ruler's task is to keep a proper proportion of the virtues in the people. One of the most important differences between the current age and the golden age that preceded it, according to the myth delivered by the Stranger in the middle of the dialogue, is that the mode of birth now is different from before. In the previous age, men arose from the earth and God was their shepherd (27le–272a), while in the current age men have responsibility for their own procreation and raising of the young (274a–b).

In the *Republic* too, knowledge of procreation and birth is a major responsibility of the ruler, and when the ruler loses the "nuptial number" the state inevitably declines (545e–547a). Like Plato (546a), Pericles recognizes that it is in the nature of things to decay (2.64.3), but Pericles does fail to provide for his own succession, which involves a new generation of births, and when the plague kills him there is no worthy leader to follow him. His failure here is the political version of what Socrates' says in the *Protagoras* is a serious flaw in Pericles' rule:

> μὴ τοίνυν ὅτι τὸ κοινὸν τῆς [319ε] πόλεως οὕτως ἔχει, ἀλλὰ ἰδίᾳ ἡμῖν οἱ σοφώτατοι καὶ ἄριστοι τῶν πολιτῶν ταύτην τὴν ἀρετὴν ἣν ἔχουσιν οὐχ οἷοί τε ἄλλοις παραδιδόναι: ἐπεὶ Περικλῆς, ὁ τουτωνὶ τῶν νεανίσκων πατήρ, τούτους ἃ μὲν διδασκάλων εἴχετο καλῶς καὶ εὖ ἐπαίδευσεν, [320α] ἃ δὲ αὐτὸς σοφός ἐστιν οὔτε αὐτὸς παιδεύει οὔτε τῳ ἄλλῳ παραδίδωσιν, ἀλλ᾽ αὐτοὶ περιιόντες νέμονται ὥσπερ ἄφετοι, ἐάν που αὐτόματοι περιτύχωσιν τῇ ἀρετῇ. εἰ δὲ βούλει, Κλεινίαν, τὸν Ἀλκιβιάδου τουτουῒ νεώτερον ἀδελφόν, ἐπιτροπεύων ὁ αὐτὸς οὗτος ἀνὴρ Περικλῆς, δεδιὼς περὶ αὐτοῦ μὴ διαφθαρῇ δὴ ὑπὸ Ἀλκιβιάδου, ἀποσπάσας ἀπὸ τούτου, καταθέμενος ἐν Ἀρίφρονος ἐπαίδευε: καὶ πρὶν ἓξ μῆνας γεγονέναι, [320β] ἀπέδωκε τούτῳ οὐκ ἔχων ὅτι χρήσαιτο αὐτῷ. (*Protagoras*, 319d–320b)

> Not, therefore, does is that which is held in common in the city thus, but in private the wisest and best of the citizens cannot pass on this excellence which they have. Then Pericles, the father of these youngsters, was educating them nobly and well in those things that closely relate to teachers, but, on the other hand, respect to those things in which he himself is wise, he neither educated them nor did he hand them over to anyone else [to be taught], but they run around as if set loose, on the chance that somehow automatically they might happen upon excellence. And if you wish, [considering] Kleinias, the younger brother of Alcibiades here, the one for whom this same man Pericles serves as guardian,

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> [Pericles] separated him from that one, Alcibiades, fearing concerning him lest he be ruined by Alcibiades, set him up in Ariphron's home and educated him. And before six months were up, Ariphron gave him back to Pericles not knowing what to do with him. (*Protagoras*, 319d–320b)

Pericles does not educate his dependents in his own particular, that is, political, virtue (319e). The result is so bad that Pericles recognizes that under his own guardianship Kleinias, Alcibiades' younger brother, has been morally endangered by Alcibiades' presence, the same Alcibiades whom Pericles himself is raising. In *Gorgias*, Socrates raises the same question in a different form: did Pericles make the citizens better (515d–516d)? For Plato the answer is that he did not, since Socrates says that Pericles corrupted the Athenians, and they became wilder and less just under his rule (515e–516c). Therefore, he was not even a good statesman (516d), let alone a philosophical teacher.

For Plato, Pericles failed as a leader because he had less than firm control over the people, and he left no worthy successor. For Thucydides, on the other hand, Pericles appears at first as the type of the ideal ruler, and "while he lived Athens was at her greatest" (2.65.5).[40] In fact, however, as Thucydides portrays the situation, real flaws—and profoundly important ones—in Pericles' statesmanship seem to be that he did not live longer or ensure a worthy successor, develop a party with worthy contenders, or produce a constitution with a structure for orderly succession and a separation of powers. These prove in the long term to be fatal flaws, as Athens lacked any senior, moderating legislative body. Once Pericles' personal moderation was gone, with no worthy successor and no institutional moderation force, there was no way to restrain the people. This particular shortcoming, which had developed after the reforms of Kleisthenes, had been exacerbated by the measures of Ephialtes and his junior partner Pericles, and then continued unresolved during the ascendancy of Pericles as *strategos* from 446 BC until his death.[41] The rise of the office of the *strategos* coincided roughly with the career of Pericles, though as we saw earlier, it began with Themistocles before the second Persian invasion.

It is remarkable that Thucydides presents the government of Athens under Pericles as a relationship of the one to the many, but the presentation seems to reflect the actual facts of his rule as Thucydides presents them. This is also, as the abstract version of the failure to provide a successor or moderating institutional power, Pericles' great weakness, which was not readily apparent while he was alive because of the high level of his personal qualities. In addition, however, just as he does not educate his children, so he educates the people insufficiently, since he does not create laws as educators of a constitutional structure that would lead the people toward moderation.[42] To repeat an earlier

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point, Thucydides is clear as to his view of the actual structure of the rule of Athens: "What was in word a democracy was becoming in deed rule (*arche*) by the first man" (2.65.9, translation mine). The plague exposes this and the other weaknesses in the *polis*. Then Pericles' death and the subsequent failure of Athens to allow a leader of equal stature to arise at last set the state on a path to ruin (2.65.10, 12). It is ironic that the plague first attacked Athens in the Piraeus, the vital center of her naval dominance and the epitome of her technical superiority (2.48.2). Piraeus and the fleet were for Themistocles the center of Athens' power (1.93.7), and Themistocles is for Thucydides the prototypical Athenian (1.138.3), able to respond with versatility to almost any situation, which is a quality Pericles also praises in the Athenians (2.41.1).[43]

Athens is an education for Hellas, an idea that seems to be based in the Athenians' confidence in their freedom or "liberality" (τῆς ἐλευθερίας, 2.40.5), which in turn makes them versatile (2.41.4), which then leads to Athens' power, which she has acquired through the "habits" of her people (τῶνδε τῶν τρόπων, 2.41.5). But this too actually is ironic since Athens lost the war. In that sense Thucydides' history shows us the irony of the idea that Athens is an education for Hellas. It is an education in that the narrative and speeches, like the action and the speech of a tragedy, show that the protagonist, which in a way is Athens herself, becomes a beacon of freedom and democracy and then turns greedy, and tyrannical as the result of an underlying character flaw, a love of power and the monumental results of that power shown in good and bad deeds. The Athenians fall victim to a collective desire for adventure and gain in particular in Sicily. Thucydides reveals this progression in the character, actions, and speeches of the major political figures, Pericles, Cleon, Diodotus, Alcibiades, Nicias, and lesser figures like Theramenes. Then a mistake in agreeing to Nicias' overly subtle plea for more power—as a deterrence to the expansion of the war—had the further ironic result of increasing the size of the resulting catastrophe. Athens is an education for the Greeks and an education that arises within the Greek world. That education has informed political life in the West precisely as Thucydides hoped it would, as a glorious experiment in imperial democracy that suffers a defeat memorialized in his book, a lesson and a possession for ever (1.22.4). One model for what Thucydides has presented us with is the *Persians* of Aeschylus, which develops sympathy for the defeated, that is, the Persians and their tyrannical leaders, in the war between the Greeks and the Persians that ended seven years before the play was produced.[44] In Thucydides' book, we develop a strong sense of the *pathos* of the emerging tyrannical power Athens, as the city careens toward defeat and eventually loses completely. One of the deepest historical ironies then is that Pericles himself was the choregos or producer of the *Persians*.[45] Thucydides also makes use of Herodotus' narrative of the Persian Wars to compare Athens'

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imperial development to the failed ambitions of Persia against Greece, as Tim Rood has recently argued quite successfully.[46]

Like Themistocles, Pericles saw the fleet as the physical means of Athens' dominance (2.62.2). Even the highest achievements of man's intellect cannot, however, escape the forces of nature. This does not in itself lessen Athens' achievement in Thucydides' eyes, although it is here in the Piraeus where the plague entered that imperial Athens began her tragic end. Pericles himself recognizes that it is in the nature of all things to decay (2.64.3),[47] and that some events even turn out contrary to reason (1.140.1).

Thus, while Pericles praises imperial Athens as an "education for Hellas," from one perspective this education was deeply tragic and ironic in a way that he did not foresee. Athens' failure and the failure of its democracy became a lesson for all political thinkers right down to James Madison's (or perhaps Alexander Hamilton's) reflection in *Federalist 63*:

> What bitter anguish would not the people of Athens have often escaped if their government had contained so provident a safeguard against the tyranny of their own passions? Popular liberty might then have escaped the indelible reproach of decreeing to the same citizens the hemlock on one day and statues on the next.[48]

The idea that Athens is an "education for Hellas" raises the obvious question, as we have seen, of how well Pericles and the rest of the ruling class in Athenians educated their own children. Plato's and Socrates' views of that are quite well known (e.g., *Laches* 179b and following, *Meno* 93–94, *Protagoras* 320a, 324d). This proves to be a profound personal and governmental failure. Indeed, the Athenians took until 411 to form a more sound constitution (8.97.2), but by then the *polis* had been weakened so much internally and even militarily that Athens had little chance to succeed.

In placing his description of the plague immediately after the Funeral Oration and by emphasizing the way in which the plague destroyed the rites of burial (2.52.4) Thucydides shows the dangers to Athens' political stability. There are definite indications that he means the two sections to be compared in ways that reflect on chance, the nature of disease, and the risks inherent in Pericles' style of rule. Before the Funeral Oration, Thucydides describes the customary burial rites of the Athenians (2.34), noting that in this first winter after the beginning of the war the Athenians "used the ancestral custom" (τῷ πατρίῳ νόμῳ χρώμενοι, my translation, 2.34.1) in the burials.

The rite has order, and an empty bier is even carried along, decorated for those missing in battle (2.34.3). Pericles, at the beginning of his address praises the one who has added the speech to the burial rite (2.35.1). During the plague, however, there is a general loss of order (2.53.1) beyond the neglect of burial rites. Far from reserving an empty bier for missing soldiers,

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men steal the use of others' funeral pyres (2.52.4). The Athenians of the Funeral Oration, who were, according to Thucydides, self-sufficient (τὸ σῶμα αὔταρκες transliterated *to soma autarkes*, "self-sufficient being [or body]," 2.41.1) in facing any problem, are reduced to a complete inability to stand against the plague, whether they are strong or weak:

> σῶμά τε αὔταρκες (*soma autarkes*) ὂν οὐδὲν διεφάνη πρὸς αὐτὸ ἰσχύος πέρι ἢ ἀσθενείας, ἀλλὰ πάντα ξυνῄρει καὶ τὰ πάσῃ διαίτῃ θεραπευόμενα. (2.51.3)
>
> Strong and weak constitutions proved equally incapable of resistance, all alike being swept away, although dieted with the utmost precaution. (2.51.3)

Thucydides here uses the phrase *soma autarkes* just as it appears in the Funeral Oration and thereby highlights the decline in the Athenians' spirit and fortitude. The juxtaposition of the Funeral Oration and the description of the plague suggest an acknowledgment by Thucydides of the temporary nature of Athens' greatness. While Plato chooses to make his analysis of Pericles depend in part upon his provision for successors, Thucydides separates Pericles' other achievements from this complex and significant failure. He draws a conclusion similar to Plato's concerning this failure, however, by artistically contrasting Pericles with his successors through the course of the *Histories* in particular in their speeches. Thucydides also states clearly that Pericles' successors were far less capable than he and more interested in their own advancement and in gratifying the multitude (οἱ δὲ ὕστερον ἴσοι μᾶλλον αὐτοὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὄντες καὶ ὀρεγόμενοι τοῦ πρῶτος ἕκαστος γίγνεσθαι ἐτράποντο καθ' ἡδονὰς τῷ δήμῳ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐνδιδόναι, "With his successors it was different. More on a level with one another, and each grasping at supremacy, they ended by committing even the conduct of state affairs to the whims of the multitude," 2.65.10). He leaves it to us to see the connection that Plato later turns into the explicit basis for his own view of Pericles.

Thus, for Thucydides, the criticism of Pericles is only one part of his portrait, and we are to accept the Funeral Oration as a statement of the high aspirations of the Athenian *polis*. Pericles says the Athenians are lovers of beauty without extravagant expense and lovers of wisdom without softness. This dedication to wisdom and the discourse that must lie behind these concepts can of course easily lead to the kind of softness that Aristophanes parodies in *Clouds*, but Pericles portrays the Athenians as brave and swift in action.[49] Even poverty is not shameful (2.40.1), nor is it a hindrance to political advancement (2.37.1).

From another point of view, Athens' singular greatness and her uniqueness in the realization of her ideals make her an education for Hellas (2.41.1).

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Since a thing is most clearly understood in terms of its perfected form,[50] and since Athens is for Thucydides a great and important manifestation of the Greek city-state, all Greek peoples and cities, and indeed all people everywhere, can learn from her the essence of man's relationship to the *polis*.[51] In this sense also, Athens is universal. Pericles (and Thucydides) anticipated Aristotle (*Politics* 1253a2–3) in seeing that man is essentially a political animal. In the *polis* he receives all his needs and lives his fullest life. Since Athens is a self-sufficient *polis* into which all things flow from all lands (2.38.2, cf. 2.36.3), the Athenian is also self-sufficient (2.41.1), as Pericles says.[52] The Athenian citizen is completely versatile. Now any politician may make such claims for himself and his people, but Pericles differs from the rest in that he speaks the truth, as the power of the city attests (2.41.2). The Funeral Oration is moderate, because even though the claims seem great and marvelous, they are largely true. The question then is to what extent was Periclean Athens moderate.

The true political universality of Athens rests not only on her participation in the *logos* of the political, that is, not only on her love of wisdom and beauty or on her example to the world, but equally on her power, to which everlasting memorials of deeds good and bad are a testament. Earlier we said that Athens does not need a Homer because a mere unadorned statement of the facts of Athens' hegemony suffices to enunciate her power; no poetic exaggeration is wanted. Thucydides and Pericles agree in this. Thucydides' true witness to the fact of Athens' power means that he is not a Homer, and since he is not, he is engaged in a contest of values with Pericles and Athens. There is, however, an even deeper meaning to Pericles' assertion: Athens needs no Homer because the Athenians, as artists of life in Pericles' view, express themselves fully in the active world.[53] Pericles in the Funeral Oration presents his highest vision of man. Athens, according to Pericles, does not need a Homer (or even a Thucydides who only states the facts) in order to exist and be famous. As we have already seen to some extent, however, Thucydides does not accept this subordination of his *logos* to the Periclean ideal. His *logos* incorporates a more complete view of human life, one that specifically raises questions about the importance of power in human relationships, where it is appropriate and where it is dangerous. He does this by showing us how such political relationships function.

On a different level, Thucydides' work is a direct contribution to Athenian political life. In the first words of the work, and again at the beginning of the second preface (5.26.1), Thucydides discloses his relationship to Athens when, referring to himself in the traditional manner of the historian, he calls himself "Thucydides, an Athenian." Thucydides is an Athenian, even in exile. His position with respect to his city is essential to his existence and to his writings. While it is traditional to begin a history this way,[54] Thucydides uses

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the custom to his own purpose. Although in the case of Herodotus' *Historiae*, for instance, it matters little that he is from Halicarnassus, for Thucydides' work, his citizenship has bearing. He is, even on the simplest level, one man on the list of leaders the democracy punished or cast out (5.26.5).

This list includes Themistocles (1.135.3); Pericles, Eurymedon, and Sophocles (4.65.3); and Alcibiades (6.61.4). This makes it especially important that he gives his citizenship twice. The fact that he was a citizen of one of the two major combatants gave him insight into Athens' plans, while his exile allowed him to familiarize himself with the Spartans (5.26.5).

Beyond this, however, Thucydides' position with respect to his own city has implications for how we are to interpret his work. Nietzsche's theory of the "bad conscience," which he develops in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, bears on this point. In his view the master, "he who can command," creates society in his own image; he imposes form.[55] The work of the masters "is an instinctive creation and imposition of forms. They are the most involuntary, unconscious artists" there are.[56] Their work leads to a loss of freedom for everyone else and forces into latency others' instinct for freedom.[57] The "bad conscience" develops when the instinct for freedom is repressed and can only vent itself upon itself. The artistic temperament grows out of the "bad conscience," for the artist delights in imposing form upon himself, since he cannot impose it on the outside world. He sees himself as ugly in comparison with the active man, and to compensate, he creates the ideal and imaginative within himself. In this way, he satisfies his innate desire (which he shares with all men) to impose form and order on life.

Pericles' Athenians have no "bad conscience" that would force them to look to an artist to impose a pleasing form on what would otherwise be formless. Pericles' *logos*, like Thucydides', is a sign of Athens' greatness, not an elaborated poetical version of that greatness (2.41.2).[58] Thucydides' fundamentally political attitude indicates his "good conscience," although the elaborated and philosophical aspect of his work reveals a tendency toward the "bad conscience" that is present in every artist. This conflict in Thucydides between the active life and his "bad conscience" appears most notably in his awareness of the tension between *logos*, or the representation of the *erga*, and the *erga* themselves. Thucydides' "bad conscience" also derives in part from his knowledge of what happened later in the war. He artistically shapes the *Histories* with the outline of the war in mind. While Thucydides presents Pericles' speeches as attempting to define and organize the world in accordance with his own knowledge, Thucydides, with his more complete and comprehensive view, uses each deed and speech (including the Funeral Oration) to control his readers' reactions.

In Thucydides' report of the speeches of his idealized statesman, Pericles' words aim to match the deeds he presents. After he has finished the largest part of the Funeral Oration, he says,

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καὶ εἴρηται αὐτῆς τὰ μέγιστα: ἃ γὰρ τὴν πόλιν ὕμνησα, αἱ τῶνδε καὶ τῶν τοιῶνδε ἀρεταὶ ἐκόσμησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν πολλοῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἰσόρροπος ὥσπερ τῶνδε ὁ λόγος τῶν ἔργων φανείη. (2.42.2)

That panegyric is now in a great measure complete; for the Athens that I have celebrated is only what the heroism of these and their like have made her, men whose fame [in words], unlike at of most Hellenes, will be found to be only commensurate with their [deeds]. (translation Crawley with [adjustments in brackets], 2.42.2)

Pericles' *logos* is almost equally balanced with the deeds. As Thucydides presents him, he seems to speak without exaggeration or distortion.[59] This is the troubled peak from which political discourse degenerated in the course of the war. Yet he uses a very fraught word, at least in Thucydides' way of presenting discourse, ὕμνησα, "I sang."[60] This conveys a poetic kind of singing, and although prose writers as diverse at Herodotus, Plato, and Xenophon use the word also, it here seems to allude again to the world of the Homeric hymns, Hesiod and Homer. Pericles uses this word here, which recalls what Thucydides says at in his summary of his method in Book 1:

ἐκ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων τεκμηρίων ὅμως τοιαῦτα ἄν τις νομίζων μάλιστα ἃ διῆλθον οὐχ ἁμαρτάνοι, καὶ οὔτε ὡς ποιηταὶ ὑμνήκασι περὶ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον κοσμοῦντες μᾶλλον πιστεύων. (1.21.1)

On the whole, however, the conclusions I have drawn from the proofs quoted may, I believe, safely be relied on. Assuredly they will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet displaying the exaggeration of his craft. (1.21.1)

The use of word ὑμνήκασι, "they [the poets] sang," here by Pericles suggests delicately or pointedly, depending on the reader's perspective, that Pericles is exaggerating or embellishing the virtues and deeds of the city here, much like a poet.[61] Edith Foster argues clearly and directly that Thucydides is implicitly criticizing Pericles here. Her argument depends to some extent on her reading of Pericles' indirect discourse speech earlier in Book 2. There she makes a very strong case that Thucydides' report of Athens' material advantages reveals both subtle and profound problems in Pericles' understanding of what it means to advise, lead, and rule. The advantages that Pericles sees in Athens depend on a kind of ruthless realism and materialism in foreign affairs and war, for instance when he says the Athenians can strip the gold from Athena Parthenos. Foster notes the disturbing nature of the idea of stripping Athena Parthenos of her ornaments.[62] This is partly disturbing because one of the goals of the Panathenaic Procession is the presentation of the sacred peplos to Athena, which is shown on the Ionic frieze of the Parthenon, most likely the moment after the presentation.[63] This would be offensive to the

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religious citizens of Athens, though Athena's status as the warrior goddess could mitigate that. Pericles contends that the city would replace the gold once the war is over, which is not so implausible as it sounds, as if Athens did win the war in a manner similar to what Pericles seems to have planned it would have been reasonable that Athens could once again acquired great wealth from her empire, but the boldness of the claim and the somewhat disturbing nature of the idea of stripping the gold from the statue seem to undermine the persuasiveness of Pericles' claims that Athens had enough money for the war.[64]

Professor Foster emphasizes the ways in which the story that Thucydides tells undermines some of the seemingly conclusive statements he makes about Pericles. Her discussion of Pericles' indirect discourse speech and the following narrative (2.13–17) provides a clear example of this argument.[65] Yet this often implicit and sometimes almost explicit criticism of Pericles in Thucydides must be reconciled with Thucydides' estimate of Pericles' plans for the war and the qualities that Thucydides identifies in Pericles' leadership. Counter to Foster's points about Pericles, the two most telling comments Thucydides makes are at 2.65.5, where he states that Pericles rightly judged Athens' power, and at 2.65.13, where he says that the resources of Athens vastly exceeded what she needed to win the war easily.[66] One step on the way to reconciling these two views of Pericles is to keep in mind that Pericles directed the start of the war and lived through the beginning of it. His estimates of Athens' wealth and power seem to be fair and reasonable, if not for a thirty-year war. Who could have done better? Certainly none of his most powerful or influential successors. But in the end, Pericles was wrong about the war. Pericles was also wrong, as we have seen, about some political issues and structural issues in the forms of Western government that were not fully resolved even until the time of the U.S. Constitution and the *Federalist Papers*. The deficiency of his views derives from the lack of moderation in the policies of his successors, who represent a problem that he should have been able to foresee. How can the problem of succession be resolved? How important is education for democracy? Is the pederastic educational model of upper-class Athenian men, to the extent that we can ascertain how prevalent this model was in practice, a good or reliable model for education of those who might lead, for example, Alcibiades? How should we mediate the inherent conflict between the one leader and the many in democracy? How much of an advantage is needed in material and money for war when the leaders have some choice of timing? This last question is still quite an open one at least to some extent. The lack of clarity about it led to what was in many ways a profoundly disturbing American debacle counted in many thousands of apparently pointless and unnecessary brutal deaths as recently as 2006–present.[67] How does Thucydides want us to think about these conflicts in his

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work? Is it reasonable for us to posit one role for an agent in the war like Thucydides and another role for him as a thinker and writer?[68] Some of these questions require serious discussion; others may never be resolved. The question, however, of the extent to which some of Pericles' ideas or preconceptions led to the loss of the war is perhaps answerable in one form or another in Thucydides' work itself.

After concluding his praise of the city, Pericles asks the Athenians to become lovers of the city (2.43.1), which is a very dangerous emotion to foster, as it is closely associated with tyranny.[69] Here the *eros* Pericles encourages drifts toward a love of the power (δύναμις, 2.43.1) of the city even in its seemingly polyvalent grammar, where the object of the *eros* could perhaps be the power of the city and not the city or at least not only the city, thus translating 2.43.1, "you should, gazing day by day on the power of the city, become her lovers [or 'become lovers of the power of her']."[70] Later in the war, indeed, the Athenians do succumb to the *eros* of tyranny (6.24.3, cf. 6.13.1), but Pericles was usually able to harness this *eros* through understanding and moderation.[71] He wants the Athenians to love the city because they "keep in their hearts" (ἐνθυμουμένους, 2.43.1) that their father's boldness was based on "knowing what was necessary" (γιγνώσκοντες τὰ δέοντα). For Pericles one of the highest values, which should receive our unfettered devotion, is *gnome*, a combination of intelligence and the resolution to carry out the right policies (cf. 2.40.3). Since the Athenians have the freedom to contribute to their city's progress, since their city deserves their love, and since Athens gives merit the highest rewards (2.37.1), Athens has the best citizens (2.46).

As Professor Martha Taylor has noted, however, even Pericles cannot fully control the Athenians' *eros*.[72] Shortly after the Funeral Oration Pericles leads a rather large expedition against Epidaurus (2.56.1). But the motivation, which appears to be a diversionary and defensive movement against the Spartan invasion of Attica, is unclear for an expedition that involves 100 ships. The plague, in addition to serving as a powerful rhetorical counterpoint to the Funeral Oration, already seems to have weakened the political resolve of the Athenians in Summer 430, as Pericles in fact experiences later that same summer (2.59.1–2). In other words, there was no structure in place in Athenian democracy at the top of the power elite other than the rule of a great, intelligent, and powerful leader. So when he was under attack even for something over which he had no control, a plague, the mood of the people took over politics. Thucydides' narrative invites such speculations by presenting us with the general's greatest speech, followed by the catastrophe of the plague and then showing us how the people respond. We may think that Pericles took such a large number of ships to demonstrate Athens' power while under attack,[73] but the demonstration was militarily ineffective

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at Epidaurus (2.56.4) and later at Potidaea (2.58.2). Two battles do not determine a war but the prevailing tone is negative and monitory.

In fact, the *eros* for the city and her power that Pericles encourages and praises becomes an aberrant desire for Sicily within not so very many years from his death. Nicias asks the older men in the assembly to reject the "sick passion for conquest" (δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων, 6.13.1),[74] keeping in mind "that by passion (ἐπιθυμίᾳ) the fewest actions and by reason the most do prosper" (translation Hobbes). He bids his listeners to vote "on behalf of their country" (translation mine).

In the *Republic* Socrates addresses what he seems to see as an underlying problem in democracy, a greediness or "insatiate desire" (ἀπληστία) for freedom (562b). Pericles defines happiness as freedom in the Funeral Oration (2.43.4). Yet Pericles encourages an *eros* for a city that he comes to define as existing wherever he and the Athenians want it to be (ἐφ᾽ ὅσον τε νῦν νέμεσθε καὶ ἢν ἐπὶ πλέον βουληθῆτε, "as far as you use it at present, but also to what further extent you may think fit," 2.62.2). This is not moderate. Pericles instills in the people, as Thucydides says, the entire population of the city, so to speak (6.30.2), a limitless desire that leads them down to the Piraeus (ἐς τὸν Πειραιᾶ καταβάντες, 6.30.1), as if they are living out the exhortation of Pericles to find their home wherever they want. This was the most splendid and expensive force any Hellenic *polis* had ever mounted (6.31.2). Plato apparently echoes Thucydides' phrase about going down to the Piraeus when Socrates says he went down to the Piraeus at the start of the *Republic* (κατέβην χθὲς εἰς Πειραιᾶ, 327a).[75] This visit of Socrates to the Piraeus to discuss justice is in many ways the second sailing he discussed in the *Phaedo* (97c–d). It is also an echo of the Athenians' second attempt at the Peloponnesian War after the Peace of Nicias, an attempt that failed for crucial practical and moral reasons.

We know that Pericles was courageous; we know that he was personally moderate and that he could influence the Athenians to moderation, but he encouraged the Athenians to a path of limitless desire that Alcibiades wanted to direct, and Nicias was unable to stem. Beyond that, Pericles was a general leading an increasingly powerful city that had no legislative control other than Pericles. Yet Pericles had in his remote and more immediate past the models of Solon and Kleisthenes who changed the constitution to allow Athens to grow as a democracy. And Pericles had worked with another reformer, Ephialtes. Athens needed a new or revised founding narrative or myth to be woven into the fabric of the city, but Pericles apparently did not see this or if he did was not sure how to effect it. To be more precise, Pericles most likely needed a proper union of courage or manliness (ἀνδρεία, transliterated *andreia*, 3.82.4) and an even more complicated virtue, *sophrosune*, which is

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customarily translated "moderation," though that translation lacks the intellectual focus and specificity of the Greek word σωφροσύνη, which is composed of the Greek adjective σῶς, "safe," and the noun φρήν, or "mind."[76] In the *Cratylus* (411e) in the midst of some comic derivations of words, Socrates notes that *sophrosune* is the safety or preservation of *phronesis* (φρόνησις, "sense, purpose," or a kind of practical "wisdom").[77]

The discussion of the warring virtues of *andreia* or manliness and *sophrosune* in the *Statesman* (306a–308c) bears directly on an estimate of Pericles. It is clear that he was manly, courageous, and bold in war (Thucydides, 1.116.3–1.118.1, 1.139.4). There is some question about his discipline or moderation as a leader, however, which is made a complicated subject by Thucydides' presentation of a great speaker with an ability to moderate the passions of the people, and an ability to choose and recommend what seemed best for Athens (2.65.4). The difficulty in Pericles' leadership is that he lacks the kind of moderation that comes from recognizing what we cannot do or cannot be sure of. In other words, he does not know well enough the limitations of his knowledge. This issue of this type of knowledge arises openly in the *Apology*, where Socrates says that what the Oracle in effect said in regard to his wisdom amounts to this: "οὗτος ὑμῶν, ὦ ἄνθρωποι, σοφώτατός ἐστιν, ὅστις ὥσπερ Σωκράτης ἔγνωκεν ὅτι οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πρὸς σοφίαν." "This one of you is wisest, whoever, like Socrates, recognizes that he is in truth worthy of nothing in regard to wisdom" (23a–b). This then is part of Socrates' *sophrosune*, and part of the virtue of the philosopher (*Republic*, 490c).

Near the end of the *Charmides* Socrates questions Critias, who seeks to define *sophrosune* as a kind of knowledge (167a):

> ὁ ἄρα σώφρων μόνος αὐτός τε ἑαυτὸν γνώσεται καὶ οἷός τε ἔσται ἐξετάσαι τί τε τυγχάνει εἰδὼς καὶ τί μή, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ὡσαύτως δυνατὸς ἔσται ἐπισκοπεῖν τί τις οἶδεν καὶ οἴεται, εἴπερ οἶδεν, καὶ τί αὖ οἴεται μὲν εἰδέναι, οἶδεν δ᾽ οὔ, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων οὐδείς: καὶ ἔστιν δὴ τοῦτο τὸ σωφρονεῖν τε καὶ σωφροσύνη καὶ τὸ ἑαυτὸν αὐτὸν γιγνώσκειν, τὸ εἰδέναι ἅ τε οἶδεν καὶ ἃ μὴ οἶδεν. ἆρα ταῦτά ἐστιν ἃ λέγεις. (167a)
>
> Then the moderate [or disciplined] person alone will know himself and be able to identify both what he happens to know and what not, and as to other people, similarly he will be able to determine what someone knows, if in fact he knows anything, and what in turn someone thinks he knows, but does not know, but of the others no one [will be able to do this]. And this is being moderate [or disciplined] and [this is] moderation and knowing oneself, the idea of knowing what one knows and what one does not know. Then is this what you are saying? (167a)

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Critias replies that it is, to which Socrates responds that this is the third offering, by which he means the third definition of *sophrosune*, the one to Zeus the Savior. A few moments before this Critias had said (166e):

> ἀλλά, ἔφη, ποιήσω οὕτω: δοκεῖς γάρ μοι μέτρια λέγειν.
> λέγε τοίνυν, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, περὶ τῆς σωφροσύνης πῶς λέγεις;
> λέγω τοίνυν, ἦ δ᾽ ὅς, ὅτι μόνη τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν αὐτή τε αὑτῆς ἐστιν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη. And Socrates replied:
> οὐκοῦν, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, καὶ ἀνεπιστημοσύνης ἐπιστήμη ἂν εἴη, εἴπερ καὶ ἐπιστήμης. (166e)

> But, he said, I will do so; for you seem to me to be saying moderate things.
> Tell me then, I said, concerning *sophrosune*, what you mean?
> I mean then, he said, that alone of the other sciences, it is the science itself both of itself and of the other sciences.
> Then, I said, it would be the science of the lack of science also, if in fact [it is the science] of science? (166e)

This is the epistemological background for the assertion that *sophrosune*, if in fact it is a science or includes or is involved with a science, is a science of what is moderate or disciplined and also of what is not moderate. So to know how to be disciplined or moderate means knowing that quality in any act, event, person, or thing as well as being able to recognize when discipline and moderation are absent. The importance of this for sound political leadership is profound. A statesman, if there is such a person, must know whether a given action is moderate and whether some action is not knowable as moderate or immoderate or too soft and retiring. Such actions are very dangerous as moderation is always at war with courage (*Statesman* 306b–c), so if one does not know whether a course of action is moderate or immoderate it is wisest to assume that it will be quite dangerous if it turns out to be immoderate as it will then infuse the courageous souls with passion that will be hard to control as there will be no countervailing moderation. Embarking on a war where one's armies and navy will need courage, but it is not clear that there will any measure or moderation in the war, can be especially dangerous for a democracy, as indeed the Peloponnesian War turned out to be. One reason for this is that once the people want something and there is no good restraint, their importunate demands can render leaders helpless to contradict them. This is why Pericles' personal ability to control the democracy was such a powerful virtue, though the power of this virtue likely obscures one's ability to see the lack of it in others and in institutional form.

In the *Statesman*, Plato addresses the relationship between courage and moderation directly. The Stranger says that *sophrosune* is different from

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courage (*andreia*) but also of the same part of excellence (*arete*) as courage. There is a striking coupling of the same two virtues in Thucydides' description of the distortion of values in words during the *stasis* in Corcyra: "Men changed the customary valuation of words in respect to deeds in judging what right was." He continues:

> τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀλόγιστος ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ἐνομίσθη, μέλλησις δὲ προμηθὴς δειλία εὐπρεπής, τὸ δὲ σῶφρον τοῦ ἀνάνδρου πρόσχημα, καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἅπαν ξυνετὸν ἐπὶ πᾶν ἀργόν. (3.82.4)
>
> Reckless audacity came to be considered the courage of a loyal ally; prudent hesitation, specious cowardice; moderation was held to be a cloak for unmanliness; ability to see all sides of a question inaptness to act on any. (3.82.4)

Pericles unites courage and *sophrosune*, but he does so uneasily as his moderation, while profound, is largely personal rather than a value he put in place in the government. Why were his prognostications for the war with Sparta such a failure in ensuring victory? This is the question that every reader of Thucydides feels, I believe, in one form or another. There is a sense of inevitability in the loss, which derives from the narrative and the speeches. Some of the signal moments are the narrative of the plague directly after the Funeral Oration, the fining of Pericles, Pericles' recognition in his last speech that the people of Athens are distressed, the ascendancy of Cleon, whose folly his death demonstrates, the role of chance in the Athenian victory at Pylos, the sense of the Athenians' at first hard to understand interest in remote Sicily, the unleashed desire and misplaced military interests of Alcibiades before the expedition to Sicily, the fateful ineptitude of Nicias' recommendation that the already emboldened Athenians mount an even bigger force for Sicily than they had previously managed, the generals' recognition in Sicily that no one was seeking alliance with them, and then the rejection of Nicias' very sensible recommendation to declare the Sicilian Expedition over and sail back home. Thucydides reveals a contest between the emotional conflicts driving the Athenians to destruction on the one hand and the possibilities, on the other hand, that partly because of chance Pericles' predictions would come true.

Thucydides states that Pericles' plans for victory were reasonably and carefully set. Why then did Athens not win? In the first place, Pericles died with no apparent plan for succession, yet as Thucydides states his ability to solve one of democracy's greatest challenges, group psychology, was an important factor in Athenian political life. At the age of about sixty-four when he died, it is not reasonable to argue that youth blinded him to the problem. He should have had some plan. Pinning hopes on Alcibiades was not a plan, though it

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is unlikely in any case that that is what Pericles was planning. There was a solid tradition of constitutional changes in Athens by the time of Ephialtes, and that should have engaged Pericles to solve the obvious political problems presented by a democracy in name that was ruled by the first man. A related factor was the failure to provide for any mediating internal power in the government, a group with long-term interests in the success of Athens and with enough experience to breed general caution and a sense that the unknown is always a factor in war and frequently a force in peace. By the latter part of the war, even Alcibiades seems to have learned the importance of a mediating *boule*, such as the old Council of the Five Hundred, since he insists on eliminating the Four Hundred and replacing it with the *boule*. By dropping the reference to sortition and replacing it with the words, "just as before,"[78] Thucydides seems to be indicating that Alcibiades wants the *boule* of former times, the Council of the Five Hundred, restored. Thucydides notes just before this that Alcibiades helped Athens for the first time and in an important way (8.86.4).

It seems unlikely that Pericles envisaged a war of almost three decades, yet several of his prognostications turn out wrong and belie Thucydides' encomium for his rule (2.65). For example, the fortification of Decelea proves to be a major problem for Athens (7.18–19 and 7.27–30) despite Pericles' arguments about the insignificance of the risk (1.142.1–4). Although Pericles claims that Athens would have sole mastery of the sea (1.142.6–7), the Syracusans in particular learn naval tactics (7.52.1, 7.55.1), but so also do the Spartans learn effective techniques as they show with their victory at Eretria in 411 (8.95.5–7), even if their deliberate and slow character prevents them from following up (8.96.5). Thucydides implicitly confirms the strategic moral importance of the Syracusans' character, which resembles the Athenians' in ways that make them effective opponents (8.96.5).

It also seems clear that Pericles encouraged the Athenians in a dangerous approach to their empire. Loving a powerful city or state or loving the power of one's country can and did produce profound dislocations for Pericles' successors in any attempt at reasonable statesmanship. Even the best leaders will have problems managing passions enflamed by war.

Pericles' first speech, although it is political and has the clear purpose of strengthening the Athenians' resolution for war, does not differ in spirit from the Funeral Oration. Pericles begins by proclaiming the constancy of his resolve not to yield to the Peloponnesians (1.140.1), for to yield would mean a loss of freedom (1.141.1), which is the foundation of happiness (2.43.4). While in the Funeral Oration Pericles places a high value on justice within the *polis* (2.37.3), in this first speech he declares the importance of respect for justice (*dike*) in relations between states (1.140.2). He reiterates this point near the end of the speech, stating that the Spartans are the aggressors,

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not the Athenians (1.144.2–1.144.3).[79] Thucydides makes it clear that from Pericles' perspective the immediate responsibility for the war (as opposed to the underlying cause) rests with the Spartans, because they have refused to allow their differences with the Athenians to be settled legally by arbitration. Although Thucydides makes Pericles say this and does not himself directly confirm it, neither does he reject Pericles' contention that the Spartans were the aggressors.[80] Of course, Thucydides' own view of the causes of the war is more comprehensive than this. For him the main cause is Athens' growing power and Sparta's fear of it (1.88). It is easy to second guess any leader in a situation like this, but it does seem that Pericles did not fully recognize the importance of what he did not know, and recognizing that is of profound importance in political *sophrosune*. This quality must, especially for a statesman in war, include a profound respect for what may turn out differently from one's expectations, whether those expectations are dashed or exceeded.

In this first speech Pericles emphasizes Athens' naval prowess, which she has developed into a science through practice and application (1.142.4–143), so that her position is virtually invulnerable (1.143.5). Athenian expertise at sea complements Athenian skill in debate, to which Pericles alludes when he says that the Peloponnesians consider public questions briefly, but they spend much time in pursuing their individual objectives (1.141.7). Both debate and the technical mastery of seamanship require practice, the engagement of the mind, and coordinated action. Thus, Thucydides shows us Pericles seeing the same virtues in Athens that he proclaims in the Funeral Oration, despite the practical focus of this first speech, which is necessitated by the immediate subjects, the Megarian decree, and the demand that Athens leave the other Greeks to rule themselves (1.139.3, 1.140.2). In a similar fashion, Pericles here and in the reported speech early in Book 2 refers to the importance of Athens' wealth (1.141.2–1.141.5, 1.142.1, 2.13.2–2.13.3), which will support the war, whereas in the Funeral Oration he sees wealth from a wider perspective and as the basis for action in general (2.40.1).

Naval power, which is the result of wealth, practice, and skill, has enabled Athens to control the sea and even much of the land (1.143.4–1.143.5), but Pericles warns against using this power to undertake new campaigns or to extend the empire, at least while there is war with Sparta (1.144.1, cf. 2.65.7).[81] Pericles shows here that the experience of the Egyptian expedition (1.109–1.110) has taught him to moderate Athens' growth during the war. Although Pericles' warnings are valuable and his own apparent relative restraint and honesty are sober and crucial elements of leadership, protecting Athens against the Athenians' sense of their own wealth and power proves impossible. Indeed, when Pericles presents the true extent of Athens' power to the "unreasonably knocked down" Athenians (καταπεπληγμένους, "knocked down" παρὰ τὸ εἰκὸς, literally "contrary to reason," 2.62.1), he

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implies that he had not done this earlier as the explanation of Athens' real power is a "rather bold pretension" (κομπωδεστέραν . . . προσποίησιν, 2.62.1, translation mine). Athens' power, he says, resides in her domination of the sea, which is so strong that the Athenians should value their land and houses, comparatively speaking, as "an appendage and ornament of wealth" (κηπίον καὶ ἐγκαλλώπισμα πλούτου, 2.62.1) "to esteem lightly" (ὀλιγωρῆσαι, my translations). This set of values favors the navy and the democratic forces in Athens, but it carried a fatal risk, as Edith Foster and Martha Taylor have explained, though on somewhat different grounds.[82] Morally, the emphasis on the psychological problems inherent in leading a people to find their hearts in a sense of the unlimited expanse of the sea is compelling as an explanation for Athens' failure.

Thucydides points out early that Athens' "freedom from *stasis*" or faction (ἀστασίαστον) derived from the poor soil in Attica (1.2.5). Inequalities of wealth are the most common cause of faction, as many thinkers have observed since Thucydides.[83] Since the wealth of these early times that Thucydides is discussing resides in land, Athenians were more equal than those in other places, and as the city attracted newcomers they went to sea (1.2.6). Pericles exploits this natural state in order to develop the democracy. This represents a profound political flaw that looms portentously over Athens, yet Pericles does not moderate it but encourages it. He seems to have aimed to make Athens so wealthy and large, a whole world of hope for expansion, that the problem of the regulation of conflicts between different interests would disappear into the sea.

The rise of somewhat democratic political groups under the aegis of the Delian League made Athens popular.[84] The members of the League, who were later more realistically subject states in an Athenian Empire, in many ways accepted Athenian hegemony because Athenian control appealed to the larger number of citizens in many states and certainly to the noncitizens and slaves.[85] A separate source of Athenian power arose from the economic freedom that Athens practiced and promoted among its allies or subject states.[86] Those who accepted Athenian hegemony had more local political power and they had much better economic lives than they had before the advent of Athenian power.[87] These two aspects of life within the Athenian Empire generated potential problems for Pericles and his successors. The war disrupted some of the economic gains of the poorer classes. Athens' increasingly vicious pursuit of empire destroyed the trust that the democrats in many states had for Athens. This is one of the most important reasons why Thucydides highlights the debate over whether to kill the Mytileneans who had revolted. Once Athens directed violence at the people who naturally favored her, she risked losing their support and her own extensive political power. This is one of the most serious problems with the Athenian position in the war.[88]

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Taylor's argument that Pericles set in motion a kind of psychological disease among the Athenians, their desire for more or *pleonexia*, certainly explains why the Athenians were ready to stake everything on what amounted to the start of an Athenian city, colony of sorts, outside Syracuse.[89] Nicias calls the goal of the expedition the establishment of *polis* (6.23.20). This is one of the largest ironies in Thucydides. This city is the complete opposite of what Pericles recommended but the people want it. They become eager for it (6.24.2). *Eros* fell on them to sail (6.24.3). Nicias follows the will of the people after inciting it, but it was Pericles who unleashed this demon.

What Pericles incites is dangerous and impractical but more importantly, as Thucydides suggests when he says that the main problem with the expedition was not the expedition itself but the Athenians' failure to send a good general, that is, Alcibiades, the real problem was that Athens had become an immoral power, not just an amoral one. Athens eventually violated the principles that underlay the promise of her general support for democracy.[90]

Thucydides presents Pericles' last speech as differing in tone and substance from his first and from the Funeral Oration. Just before this speech, the Athenians, disheartened by the plague and the second Spartan invasion of Attica, decided to send ambassadors to Sparta to treat for peace, but these ambassadors were unable to accomplish anything (2.59.2). Pericles in his third speech attempts to encourage the people and calm their spirits (2.59.3). He is successful in stopping any further missions from being sent to Sparta, although the people fine him and continue to grieve over their private afflictions (2.65.2). Yet since he is shortly afterward reelected general (2.65.4), this speech is a good example of his ability to moderate the moods of the people (2.65.9).

> ὁπότε γοῦν αἴσθοιτό τι αὐτοὺς παρὰ καιρὸν ὕβρει θαρσοῦντας, λέγων κατέπλησσεν ἐπὶ τὸ φοβεῖσθαι, καὶ δεδιότας αὖ ἀλόγως ἀντικαθίστη πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ θαρσεῖν. ἐγίγνετό τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή. (2.65.9)
>
> Whenever he saw them unseasonably and insolently elated, he would with a word reduce them to alarm; on the other hand, if they fell victims to a panic, he could at once restore them to confidence. In short, what was nominally a democracy became in his hands government by the first citizen. (2.65.9)

While Thucydides here emphasizes the negative side first of courage emboldened by *hubris* (ὕβρει θαρσοῦντας), and then of moderation, which leads to fear, this same contrast resonates later in the characters of Alcibiades and Nicias as the *hubris* of Alcibiades excites the Athenians to ventures they never should have made in Sicily and Nicias' failures demonstrate that

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moderation and measure must comprehend a sense of what is known and what is unknown.

Although this speech takes place in the context of Athenian depression and the first cracks in the unity of the *polis*, Pericles' *logos* still reflects with close accuracy the *erga* about which he speaks. On the other hand, a close examination of several key statements shows that even here there are signs of a change in values of words. Pericles encourages the Athenians by revealing to them for the first time how great their dominion is over the sea. What he claims is somewhat boastful (κομπωδεστέραν, "rather boastful"), he admits, but he mentions it because he sees that the people are unreasonably unnerved (2.62.1). Pericles had in his first speech asserted that power over the sea was a great thing, but he did not say as he does here that the Athenians could rule over whatever they wish (2.62.2). In the Funeral Oration, he gave slight credit to the boast (2.40.2, 2.41.2). There in the Funeral Oration it was the truth of the facts or (more literally) deeds (ἔργων, 2.41.2) that signaled the power and spirit Athens had, not a boast of words: καὶ ὡς οὐ λόγων ἐν τῷ παρόντι κόμπος ("And that this is no mere boast thrown out for the occasion"). A κόμπος (transliterated kompos) is "a boast," which is here composed of "words" (λόγων). Thucydides and Pericles here draw attention to the subtle change in values.

Now, after the devastation of the plague, a boast has political value.[91] The devastation must have been overwhelming. Twenty-five percent of the population died and many others contracted the plague including Thucydides (2.48.3), a fact that reinforces his participation in Athenian life and that contributes to a sense of his reliability as a recorder of events. Thucydides reports that some felt that the reservoirs of the Piraeus had been poisoned by the Spartans and provides some circumstantial evidence for believing this as in the Piraeus water was stored in reservoirs since there were no wells (2.48.2). This type of claim or rumor does occur in such catastrophes.[92] The Spartans did fear contracting the plague (2.57) and seem not to have contracted it in any large numbers since Thucydides does not say they did. Thucydides observes:

> By far the most terrible feature in the malady was the dejection which ensued when anyone felt himself sickening, for the despair into which they instantly fell took away their power of resistance, and left them a much easier prey to the disorder; besides which, there was the awful spectacle of men dying like sheep, through having caught the infection in nursing each other. This caused the greatest mortality. (2.51.4)

Those who recovered were often elated and then had a diminished sense of fear (2.51.6). We have to assume that Thucydides experienced some part

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of this at least. The plague fell on (ἐσέπεσε, composed of the preposition for "into" or "on" *es* and a past tense form of the verb *pipto* "to fall") the city (2.48.2). After Nicias' second speech concerning the Sicilian Expedition, the one in which he recommended an enormous force against Sicily partly in the hope of deterring their dreams (6.24.1), "a desire" (or perhaps even "lust") "fell upon all alike to sail out" (translation mine), καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι (6.24.3). The main verb this time is composed of the preposition *en* ("in") and, again, a past tense form of the verb *pipto* ("to fall"). The plague appears to be part of a pattern of emotional responses that eventually detach the Athenians from reality.

Before his third speech since the Athenians are losing their spirit, Pericles, in his desire to revive the flagging spirits of his countrymen, rates higher what he called in the Funeral Oration a "boast of words" (2.41.2), and at the same time, by showing that the Athenians could extend their power as far as they wanted, lays open the path to the expansionism, which even in this speech he continues explicitly to repudiate. The famous comparison of the Athenian *arche* to a tyranny, which Pericles says is unsafe to let go, even though it seems unjust to have taken it (2.63.2), involves a change in the idea of the Athenian Empire. Such a comparison is found neither in the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 nor anywhere in Pericles' other speeches. Thucydides has Pericles lower the value of the *arche* by comparing it with a tyranny, and also increase his apparent estimation of tyranny by calling the empire that and not strongly disapproving of the name. Although Pericles does hedge his comparison by saying that the empire is "like" (ὡς τυραννίδα) a tyranny—the word "like" (ὡς) here mitigates the claim—the tone of his references to the empire here differs from what he said in the Funeral Oration. There he claimed that those subject to Athens would feel that they are ruled by worthy men (2.41.3), while here it is assumed that Athens is hated by her allies, over whom she rules (2.64.5). Although the difference could be explained by the different rhetorical modes of the speeches, Thucydides indicates general accord between the emotional decline represented in Pericles' last speech and the depressed mood of the people (2.59.1–2.59.2). This suggests that Thucydides means that the difference in rhetorical tone reflects a general political decline. Ruling what had been allied states with a benign dictatorship differs quite a bit from planning to execute rebellious parties in a subject state. This type of attack on the people themselves in Mytilene and then later Melos breaks the fundamental pact between Athenian democratic politics and the less fortunate members of the allied and subject city-states.

Soon after this third speech, the Athenians execute a number of envoys from Sparta as well as the Corinthian Aristeus (2.67.1, 2.67.4) without even waiting to hear the defense of their actions that these men wished to offer or

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giving them a trial, "thinking themselves justified (δικαιοῦντες, means 'justifying oneself') in using in retaliation the same mode of warfare which the Lacedaemonians had begun," which ominously includes killing all they found at sea who were Athenian allies and even those who were neutral (2.67.4).

The several changes in the values of certain words in this last speech of Pericles, and the dramatic perversions of language in the later Athenian speeches, most notably Cleon, Alcibiades, and the envoys at Melos, help to point the way toward Thucydides' own *logos*. This *logos*, in addition to recounting the *erga* of the Peloponnesian War, is also a political philosophy, the ideal of which the Funeral Oration represents as an unattained aspiration. An examination of the Athenian speeches in Book 1 will help to illustrate the aspirations of this ideal, but there are also questions about the nature of the Funeral Oration and its relationship to the entire text.

First, does the Funeral Oration present a philosophical ideal of the *polis*, or does it represent a statement of an ideology? The distinction here is between being and becoming, as ideologies by their very nature see things in terms of becoming, movement, and process.[93] Ideologies focus on history, and hence on motion. They are the tools of those who would overthrow power if they do not have it, or maintain it if they do. If, however, Thucydides through Pericles is presenting a set of eternal ideas about Athens as an image of the *polis* as such, then the Funeral Oration, and by implication the entire work, is philosophical in nature and concerned more profoundly with being than with becoming.

A second and directly related question is to what extent does Thucydides agree with Pericles' ideals? Does Thucydides present a different ideal by implication of the dialogue between Pericles' ideas and the way Thucydides presents the war?

In her work on the genre of the Funeral Oration in Greece, *The Invention of Athens*,[94] Nicole Loraux sees in the Greek *epitaphios* an ideological function, in which, she says, Pericles' oration participates. Because she takes an historical as opposed to a philosophical approach to the *Histories*, she does not focus on the distinction between the idealizing tendency in the Funeral Oration and what she sees as its ideological purpose. Loraux suggests that the genre in which Pericles was speaking had a large effect on what he actually said, which is undoubtedly true.[95] Pericles clearly acknowledges the weight of a tradition (2.35.1–2.35.2), and a public funeral is a custom in which tradition would naturally have effect. Yet the Funeral Oration has many important relationships to the rest of Thucydides' work so that even though Pericles very likely delivered a speech strongly influenced by a tradition, its particular rhetorical effect in Thucydides can be felt throughout his book. The speech stands out for its grandeur and its clear statement of the ideals of the Athenian *polis*. It also stands out for its lack of a direct relationship to the narrative.[96]

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This has led some to see the Funeral Oration first as a speech of Pericles and second as part of Thucydides' text,[97] which raises an interesting rhetorical and interpretive question: What kind of a work is the *Histories* and what role do the speeches have?

While we will cover these questions in more detail later, certain aspects of the answers to them emerge here. The thesis here concerning the effect of *stasis* on political discourse particularly in Athens supports the view that Thucydides' work is not an historical work in the modern sense, but a cross between history, poetry, and philosophy, which has as its essential purpose conveying philosophical truths about political life through the telling of a great, paradigmatic, and powerful story.[98] Thucydides includes speeches in his work, but he includes them only when they bear in some important way on his themes. He has shaped both the Funeral Oration and the other speeches in the *Histories* so that they form part of an artistic whole. Loraux's view that the Funeral Oration represents an ideology rests on the argument that the speech we have is close to a verbatim report of what Pericles' said. For Loraux's historical approach, this is understandably a crucial fact about the speech. Yet Thucydides was free to include or exclude the speech, as its lack of any direct relationship to the events of the war shows. He could have left the speech out with no loss in the clarity of his narrative of the *erga* of the war. His inclusion of the speech is an artistic act implying his control of its content, whether or not the words are exactly those Pericles spoke. For Loraux, the Funeral Oration is essentially Thucydides' report of an attempt by Pericles to justify and explain Athens' rule in historical terms. Thucydides uses it to present eternal truths about humans, though Pericles' view is partial. What Loraux sees as an ideology is in my view the idealizing tendency of the speech, which Thucydides has used to present his portrait of the Athenian ideal. Ideals differ from ideologies in that ideologies are modern systems of thought designed to explain historical developments.[99]

Pericles uses the Funeral Oration to create an imaginary Athens but one that was based on aspirations that were at least partly being realized, in part to encourage the Athenians to bear up under a war that he believed was inevitable. This is not just a function of Athenian funeral orations, however, but also a natural part of the Funeral Oration as such. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is an obvious example, having as it does the effect of justifying the war for which so much blood had already been shed. The Athenians may have invented the form (cf. Demosthenes, 20.141), as they did so many other things, but this type of speech has natural functions. In addition to these customary functions, however, the Funeral Oration is part of Thucydides' portrayal of Pericles, which in itself is one of the organizing principles of Thucydides' entire work.

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Democracy, aristocracy, monarchy, and rule by a philosopher king are not for Plato and Thucydides ideologies but forms of government.[100] The Funeral Oration of Pericles does portray an imaginary Athens. For Thucydides, however, that Athens is not an ideology but an approach to an ideal. The ideal Athens here is not perfect, but the notion that we can have that kind of place or knowledge in this life is a phantasm. This raises a very important issue with regard to what Plato's conception of truth is, as we will see.

NOTES

1. The scholarship on the relationship between *logos* and *ergon* in Thucydides is vast and, in a sense, includes everything written about the speeches. For a good bibliography of older work on the speeches see William C. West III, "A Bibliography of Scholarship on the Speeches in Thucydides, 1873–1970," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 124–65. In particular see Friedrich Solmsen, "Thucydides' Treatment of Words and Concepts"; H. R. Immerwahr, "*Ergon*: History as a Monument in Herodotus and Thucydides." *American Journal of Philology* 81 (1960): 261–90; Hunter, *Thucydides*, pp. 104, 120–21; Lowell Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 163–74, 226–41; F. Heinimann, *Nomos und Physis* (Basel: F. Reinhardt, 1965), pp. 43–48.

2. Both Gomme et al. (*Historical Commentary*) and Steup 1.22.4nn. argue, but on somewhat different grounds, that Thucydides did not intend his work to be useful for the future. Steup claims that τὸ σαφὲς ("exact knowledge" is Crawley's rendering) (1.22.4) cannot refer to the future. One cannot know of things that have not yet occurred. Steup is forced to admit, however, that if this is true τὸ σαφὲς is incompatible with the rest of Thucydides' expression, in particular τῶν μελλόντων ("things to come," my translation, 1.22.4) and κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι ("which in the course of human things must resemble if [them] does not reflect [them]," translation Crawley). Steup then suggests that after (ἔσεσθαι, literally "will be," but translated "in the course of things [in the future)") some words have fallen out; they in some way referred to the future. Steup objects to Classen's translation of τὸ σαφὲς as "eine klare Vorstellung" (a clear mental image). This seems to me exactly the right translation. It is in accord with the basic meaning of τὸ σαφὲς and it does not require us to posit a textual problem for which there is no evidence other than the supposed problem of understanding the text. Gomme states that κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι is future to Thucydides, not to his readers. But in Thucydides' work all that can be similar to the history intervening between its time and the time of its readers are general human characteristics of human nature and action. If someone learns these things from Thucydides, he will inevitably be aided in understanding the future, since human nature is constant. For the view that the history is meant to be useful

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in understanding the future, see, e.g., Hunter, *Thucydides*, p. 121, and Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, pp. 149–62.

3. Cf. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, p. 81. For a view somewhat opposed, see Marc Cogan, "Mytilene, Plataea, and Corcyra: Ideology and Policy in Thucydides, Book Three," pp. 5 ff. See also Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, who, it seems to me, demonstrates his thesis successfully. See the sympathetic and very instructive review by James V. Morrison in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, September 27, 2002, http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2002/2002-09-27.html (accessed June 30, 2018).

4. See Plato, *Republic* 5.470b–d. Paul Shorey is surely right that this is a conclusion for Plato not negated by comments in the *Statesman*: "It is uncritical then . . . to take as a recantation of this passage the purely logical observation in *Politicus* 262 D [*Statesman* 262d] that Greek and barbarian is an unscientific dichotomy of mankind." Plato, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vols. 5 & 6, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1969), Vol. 5: 470c n. 1.

5. For Pericles as the ideal statesman, see Jaeger, *Paideia*, I, pp. 406–8. See also C. W. Macleod, "Thucydides on Faction," pp. 56–57, also in *Collected Essays.*

6. See Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 228.

7. From Solon, fragment 13 from Stobaeus, *Anthology, in Greek Elegiac Poetry from the Seventh to the Fifth Century B.C.*, edited and translated by Douglas E. Gerber (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

8. *LSJ* s.v., συγκατοικίζω: III, metaph., *establish jointly.* This approach elevates the metaphorical meaning, but it seems that the meaning that Thucydides is trying to make Pericles declare is that the establishment of the monuments of good and evil relates directly to Athens' territorial ambition to rule.

9. Henry R. Immerwahr, "*Ergon*: History as a Monument in Herodotus and Thucydides," The American Journal of Philology 81, no. 3 (Jul. 1960), pp. 261–90.

10. Immerwahr, "*Ergon*: History as a Monument in Herodotus and Thucydides," p. 288.

11. Gustafson, "Thucydides and Pluralism," pp. 174–94, and in particular pp. 176–82 in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations.*

12. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 290, 292, 294.

13. See Hornblower 2.41.1 n., who seeks to reduce the meaning of τῆς Ἑλλάδος παίδευσιν ("the education of Greece") literally—in Jowett's translation and "the school of Hellas" in Crawley's. He proposes that the meaning is that "Pericles [wants] . . . the rest of Greece [to] . . . learn from Athens' political example." He does cite Gomme, Loraux, and others including Plato as apparently endorsing the traditional translation (which is also provided by Hobbes). In the *Protagoras*, Hippias says in attempting to heal the rift in styles of discussion between Socrates and Protagoras that Athens is the πρυτανεῖον τῆς σοφίας (337d, "the leaders' sanctuary of wisdom" (Lamb's translation, adapted, from Plato. Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vol. 3, trans. W. R. M. Lamb. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1967). This seems conclusive to me. Plato in the *Protagoras* presents the Sophist Hippias

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proposing a democratic solution to the dispute between Socrates and Protagoras over the best style of discussion. But the discussion has a dramatic date in the late fifth century. Such ideas were in the air, as was the sometimes simplistic belief in democracy's ability to solve problems. See Larry Goldberg, *A Commentary on Plato's Protagoras* (New York & Berne: Peter Lang), pp. 138–39. Hippias' appeal to a democratic solution (rather than one based in reason) illustrates, as Goldberg points out, one of the weakest aspects of democratic rule, the need to flatter the voters.

14. See Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, page 94ff. Prof. Taylor very perceptively calls attention to many such discrepancies between speeches, accounts of what happen (deeds), and interpretations of Thucydides. I think the point of them is that Thucydides' history has many of the characteristics of a Greek tragedy. The discrepancies are intentional and carefully constructed to lead the reader to new insights much in the way that Greek tragedies do. Irony is one of the most obvious tools.

15. Solon, fragment 13 from Stobaeus, *Anthology,* in *Greek Elegiac Poetry from the Seventh to the Fifth Century B.C.*, edited and translated by Douglas E. Gerber. I have altered the translation slightly to fit the flow of the discussion.

16. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume III*, on 6.24.4 offers both translations and suggests that here we have another example of "polyinterpretability" in which the phrase τῶν πλεόνων means both "of the majority" and also "for more." This seems very persuasive to me. I prefer the term "polyvalent." ἄγαν (transliterated agan) means "too much, and recalls the famous inscription at the spot of the Oracle at Delphi, "nothing to excess" (μηδὲν ἄγαν), quoted by Socrates in the *Protagoras* (343b).

17. See *Charmides* 165a along with *Protagoras* 343b (as noted), and Pindar Fr. 204 (in *Pindari Carmina*, ed. C. M. Bowra [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2nd ed., 1947]), as well as Theognis 335 (in *Greek Elegiac Poetry*, ed. and trans. Douglas Gerber [Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, 1999]).

18. Morrison, *Reading Thucydides*, p. 156.

19. See David Bedford and Thom Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 1 (Jan. 2001), pp. 51–67, for a thorough review of how Thucydides' narrative operates in the mode of Greek tragedy.

20. Cf. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 226–36. Strauss argues that the universalism of *logos* is the universal application of *logos* and the power of *logos* to reach all men. This universalism is genuine while for him the universalism of the city is, although brilliant, a sham (p. 228). For him, the active life is inferior to the contemplative life. Even within the sphere of the active life, Sparta is higher than Athens. Strauss places great importance on Thucydides' praise of Sparta at 8.24.4 (cf. Strauss 231). See also Grene, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 83–92, esp. p. 91.

21. Immerwahr, "*Ergon*: History as a Monument in Herodotus and Thucydides," p. 285.

22. Cf. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, pp. 7–8.

23. Westlake, *Individuals*, p. 209, translates thus: "because of his principles of conduct which he had invariably practised in accordance with goodness."

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24. For ἐπιτήδευσις as "principles of conduct," see Westlake, Individuals, p. 209 n. 3, and Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 2.36.4n.

25. For *arete* as *moral* virtue here, see Westlake, *Individuals*, p. 209. He cites Thucydides 2.40.4, 5.105.4. Cf. Finley, Thucydides, p. 246. See also Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation*, p. 189 and 189 n. 4. See *LSJ* s.v. ἀρετή A. 2.

26. Even Thucydides' condemnations of individuals refer to moral and intellectual deficiencies, not to specific bad deeds. See 3.36.6, 4.21.3 on Cleon; 6.35.2 on Athenagoras.

27. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, 2.36.4 n.

28. With ἐνθυμούμεθα (2.40.2), cf. ἐνθυμηθῆναι used of Antiphon, 8.68.1.

29. Irnrnerwahr, "*Ergon*," p. 285.

30. Note all the verbs of thinking in 2.42.4.

31. For a study of the values of the Funeral Speech, see P. Walcot, "The Funeral Oration, a study in Values," *Greece and Rome,* series 2, 20 (1973), pp. 111–21. Walcot focuses especially on the place of women in Periclean Athens.

32. This virtue is naturally opposed to the old ideal of ἡσυχία as Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides*, pp. 76, 87–88, points out.

33. Cf. Thomas L. Pangle, *The Laws of Plato* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). "Interpretive Essay," p. 377.

34. See Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 228. See also Gustrafson, "Thucydides and Pluralism," who stresses the distinction between an unbounded quest for power and the exercise of power for higher ends, such as an expansion of freedom, beyond simple domination (pp. 180–85).

35. Note διαφέρομεν ("we differ") 2.39.1, διαφερόντως ("singularly") 2.40.3, μόνοι ("alone") 2.40.2, 40.5, μόνη ("alone") 2.41.3 (twice). The Athenians are unusual and even singular. For a good analysis of Pericles' departures from traditional political thought, see Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, pp. 76–88.

36. For the sense of *arete* here as "goodness," see Gomme et al. (*Historical Commentary*) and Classen-Steup 2.40.4nn. See also E. C. Marchant, *Thucydides Book II*, 2.40.4n.

37. See *Plato's Statesman*, translated with commentary by Seth Benardete, III.131 (in commentary).

38. C. D. C. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006), pp. 92. See also pp. 86–91.

39. Plato, *Gorgias* revised text with commentary by E. R. Dodds. See 502d10–503d4 n. where Dodds reviews the various reports from Thucydides, Demosthenes, Lysias, Aristotle, and Isocrates of demagogic flattery of the citizens largely with a view to supporting Thucydides against Socrates' report in this part of the *Gorgias* of what he calls Pericles' flattery of the people.

40. Thucydides does not state the charge under which the Athenians fined Pericles (2.65.3), but Plato tells us the charge was theft of public money (*Gorgias* 516a, cf., Plutarch, *Pericles*, 31, 35.4). This is an example of Thucydides' reticence. The actual charge was unimportant, since Thucydides main point is that the people had, under their afflictions, sunk into an emotional and rash act of anger (2.65.3) in fining Pericles. The omission has the further effect of not reducing our esteem for

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Pericles, which would violate the rhetoric of Thucydides' argument. In addition, the charge was almost certainly untrue. See Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, 2.65.3n, who reviews the scholarship on the question of the prosecution of Pericles' associates.

41. For the roles of Ephialtes and Pericles in what are called the "reforms of Ephialtes," see Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, pp. 41ff.

42. Aristotle also sees lawmaking as the architectonic art of the city; Lawmaking is accomplished through prudence or phronesis as an architectonic function or art (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 6, chapter 8, 1141b24–28).

43. Immerwahr, "Pathology of Power and the Speeches in Thucydides," pp. 16–31 in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter. Immerwahr (pp. 26–28), argues against H. Flashar (*Der Epitaphios des Perikles: seine Funktion im Geschichtswerk des Thukydides*, Heidelberg: Akademie Der Wissenschaften), p. 25, who contends that the praise of Athens can only be ironic, since Athens failed.

44. A. F. Garvie, ed., *Aeschylus: Persae* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), "Introduction," pp. xxii and xxxiv. This interpretation is controversial. See Garvie, p. xxxiv n. 68. Note also in particular Nicole Loraux, *The Mourning Voice: An Essay on Greek Tragedy*, trans. E. Rawlinson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp. 42–53, and the general review in Casey Dué, "Identifying with the Enemy: Love, Loss, and Longing in the Persians of Aeschylus," *The Captive Woman's Lament in Greek Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), pp. 57–90.

45. Zimmermann, Bernhard (Freiburg), "Choregia," *Brill's New Pauly,* Antiquity volumes edited by: Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, English edition by: Christine F. Salazar, Classical Tradition volumes edited by: Manfred Landfester, English edition by: Francis G. Gentry. Consulted online on June 23, 2018, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e233250, First published online: 2006.

For a full account of Pericles as choregos in 472 BC, see Vincent Azoulay, *Pericles of Athens*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 47–48.

46. Tim Rood, "Thucydides' Persian Wars," *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Thucydides* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 148–76.

47. Cf. Plato, *Republic* 546a. Even the best state will eventually decay.

48. *Federalist #63*, https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-63.

49. Cf. Plato, *Gorgias* 484c–486c.

50. Cf. Aristotle, *Politics* 1252b30–34.

51. Cf. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 226, 230–31. See also Grene, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 91–92. Jaeger, *Paideia I*, pp. 410–11, emphasizes the importance of Attic culture in the attempt to understand how Athens is the education of Hellas. This seems right. Two examples make the point: The Parthenon is one of the most remarkably complex and instructive buildings ever built. It is hard to overstate its influence and Pericles had a great deal to do with the idea of building it and taking money to pay for it. The other example is Greek Tragedy, which presented itself to Thucydides and to Plato as the great new form of visual and literary art.

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52. Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, pp. 83–84.

53. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 229–30, sees Thucydides' irony as simple: Athens does need a Homer, i.e., Thucydides.

54. Cf. Herodotus, *Historiae* 1.1.

55. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p. 522 ("Second Essay," Section 17). For the individual master who creates a society it is easy to substitute the "master" race or imperial city. Nietzsche uses the same words to characterize Pericles' Athens (pp. 477–78; "First Essay," Section 12) as he does to describe the master who can command.

56. Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, p. 522 ("Second Essay," Section 17).

57. See Joel E. Mann and Getty L. Lustila, "A Model Sophist: Nietzsche on Protagoras and Thucydides," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, no. 42 (2011): 51–72, for an insightful review of the ethical problem inherent in Nietzsche's apparent embrace of the Sophists. One particular smaller problem is that Nietzsche has a much larger conception of the Sophist movement in Greek culture than most scholars today. See especially p. 58 on this issue. "Nietzsche's enumeration . . . of the figures he regards as representatives of sophistic culture. These include (in addition to Thucydides) the tragic poet Sophocles, the Athenian politician Pericles, the Ionian physician Hippocrates, and the atomist Democritus. Together they constitute a 'culture which deserves to be baptized in the name of its teachers, the sophists.'"

58. Cf. Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, p. 35: "Since Athens is herself a work of art, she needs no Homer" (2.41.4).

59. Pearson, "Three Notes on the Funeral Oration of Pericles," pp. 399–407, offers the interesting suggestion that when Pericles says *logos* is equally balanced with the *erga* in the case at hand, he is praising *logos*, which is here "a tradition, a system, a set of general ideas to which it is hoped that particular actions of the Athenians will conform" (p. 407). This is partly right. The deeds of the Athenians who have died "have worthily represented the great tradition" (p. 407). The primary meaning of ὁ λόγος, however, is the *logos* Pericles has delivered. He refers to it with the words εἴρηται and ὕμνησα. Marchant (*Commentary on Thucydides Book 2* [London: MacMillan & Company, 1891]), 2.42.2 n., also restricts ὁ λόγος too much, but in a different way. He sees ὁ λόγος as referring to the report of the deeds of the Athenians (at 2.42.2), although Pericles devotes the Funeral Oration not to these but to praise of the city.

60. So Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*: 2.42.2 n. For the importance of the idea of song in ὕμνησα, see *LSJ* s. v. ὑμνέω.

61. Edith Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, p. 188 (Kindle Location p. 2159), makes a clear case for seeing Pericles use of this word "I sang," as provocative.

62. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, pp. 163–64 (Kindle location, pp. 1935–52).

63. Jenifer Niels, *The Parthenon Frieze* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 2006), pp. 67–70, 166–71.

64. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, pp. 162–63 (Kindle location pp. 1916–39). While it is true that there are troubling undercurrents

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in Pericles account of Athenian financial resources for war, Prof. Foster does not explain how readers are to understand the apparent contradiction between her clear reading of 2.13, Pericles' indirect discourse speech, and the subsequent narrative in 2.14–17.

65. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles and Periclean Imperialism*, pp. 151–82.

66. See Eric Robinson, Book Review: *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, by Edith Foster. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42, no. 2 (Autumn 2011), 276–77.

67. Marvin Kalb, "The Road to War: Presidential Commitments Honored and Betrayed," October 2, 2013, speech for the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs: https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/multimedia/20131002-the-road-to-war-presidential-commitments-honored-and-betrayed.

68. See Morrison, *Reading Thucydides*, pp. 164–65 et passim.

69. F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1907), pp. 201–20. Dora C. Pozzi in "Thucydides II, 35–46: A text of power ideology," pp. 226–27, argues that in 2.43.1 Pericles does not exhort the Athenians to become lovers of the city but rather lovers of the power of the city. She says that the antecedent of αὐτῆς is δύναμιν, not τῆς πόλεως. This seems to me perhaps somewhat strained, as τῆς πόλεως is already a genitive and goes easily with αὐτῆς while δύναμιν is accusative. So Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 2.43.1 n., as referenced earlier. Of course, such a change in case would not be difficult in a poetic speech such as Pericles'. In any case, the change would not affect our argument except to remove some of the historical resonance of the injunction.

See also Matteo Zaccarini, "What's Love got to do with it? *Eros*, Democracy, and Pericles' Rhetoric," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 58 (2018), 473–89, in particular p. 476 and p. 476 n. 10, for a disagreement with Monoson's approach (op. cit. supra) and her argument for the idea of an erotic relationship with the city. In *Plato's Democratic Entanglements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Monoson further develops the use of the erotic metaphor in political life in Athens by associating it with Thucydides' account of Harmodius and Aristogeiton (pp. 46 ff.). This is very persuasive. The connection between *eros* as part of a democratic mythology, and a disturbed one at that, seems clearly present in Thucydides' view of what is wrong with Pericles' view of citizenship.

70. *Pace* Prof. Dover, as reported by Hornblower (*A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume II* 2.43.1n.). This section of this sentence, then (ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς), has the same "polyinterpretability" as some others, but here there is a primary object of desire, the city, although what many will love is the power not the city; the somewhat ambiguous grammar reflects this descent.

71. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, p. 166. Taylor goes on to argue that in the sea attack on Epidaurus Pericles is violating his own strictures against unnecessary adventures (2.56). It is interesting to speculate on the motivation, but the plague had begun already in Athens (2.57.1), so perhaps we need not speculate. In addition to being a powerful poetical counterpoint

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to the Funeral Oration, the plague had already turned the people against Pericles by summer 430 (2.59.1–2).

72. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, p. 167–68.

73. Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation*, p. 122.

74. My translation. The syntax of the entire sentence verges on the bewildering, which is of course one of Thucydides' techniques for slowing the reader down. See Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, *Volume 3*, 6.13.1n, concerning the disputes as to how to read the sentence, none of which affect the translation or purport of the phrase δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων.

75. See Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, Vol. 3, 6.30.1 n., who wonders if Plato is here alluding to Thucydides. He provides useful references to Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *On Literary Composition* and other ancient critics.

76. *LSJ* s. v. σώφρων I. A.

77. For the translation "discipline," see the very persuasive arguments Christopher Moore and Christopher Raymond make in their *Plato: Charmides* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2019), pp. 18, 30–43. The introduction and analysis perform the very useful task of discussing the meaning of *sophrosune* in ancient Greek by canvassing usage with particular attention to Plato. They also meticulously explain their criteria for choosing a translation. I suspect or perhaps, better, hope that discussions of other dialogues of definition (e.g., *Euthyphro* and *Meno)* will be forthcoming.

78. ἐκέλευεν αὐτοὺς καὶ καθιστάναι τὴν βουλὴν ὥσπερ καὶ πρότερον, "he bid them to set up the *boule* just as before" (8.86.6). This replaces references to sortition (via a choice of bean, where white is said to mean election, 8.66.1, 8.69.4). See ἀπὸ τοῦ κυάμου councilors "from the bean" and the note of Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume 3*, 8.86.4 n. It seems likely that Thucydides is reporting that Alcibiades wanted to go back to a Council of the Five Hundred composed of specially selected members but how this was done is obscure. The current consensus is that Alcibiades' advice was followed, See, e.g., David Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, p. 152. See also Kurt von Fritz and Ernst Kapp, *Aristotle's Constitution of the Athenians and Related Texts*, Chapter 34, n. 117, p. 182, New York: Hafner, 1950. On the other hand, Andocides, *De Mysteriis*, 96–98, quotes a law from 410/09, apparently passed after the restoration of the democracy, that states: ἄρχει χρόνος τοῦδε τοῦ ψηφίσματος ἡ βουλὴ οἱ πεντακόσιοι οἱ λαχόντες τῷ κυάμῳ, οἷς Κλειγένης πρῶτος ἐγραμμάτευεν ("The *Boule* the Five Hundred those chosen by the bean for whom Kleigenes first was the secretary"). In *Minor Attic Orators in Two Volumes* 1, Antiphon Andocides, trans. K. J. Maidment (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968). P. J. Rhodes suggests that the law quoted in Andocides definitely does imply that election of members—as opposed to sortition—of this Council lasted for only a year or so if it occurred at all (*The Athenian Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, revised edition 1993, pp. 231–32).

79. After a few years, the Spartans concluded this too (7.18.2–7.18.3). See Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 174–82.

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80. Thucydides does equate the Spartan invasion of Attica with the beginning of the war, thus implying that the Spartans broke the treaty (5.20.1).

81. For two different views of the strategy of Pericles, see Donald W. Knight, "Thucydides and the war strategy of Pericles," *Mnemosyne* quarta series 23 (1970) pp. 150–61; and B. X. de Wet, "The So-called Defensive Policy of Pericles," *Acta Classica* 12 (1969), pp. 103–19. Knight argues that Pericles' strategy could never have won the war, in large part because there would not be enough money.

82. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, pp. 188–90, comments on Pericles' reduction in value of the land of Attica and the physical city of Athens and the unreasonable nature of reliance on the unlimited control of the sea. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 127–30, focuses more on the psychological deformity of seeing the "whole sea [as] the city" (p. 130).

83. James Madison, "Federalist #10," https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10 (accessed March 15, 2019): "But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property."

84. Josiah Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press reprint edition 2016), pp. 250–52, focuses on the speech of the Corinthians in Book I (1.68–71). The Athenians were more innovative than Sparta and much more democratic in their internal politics.

85. Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*, pp. 249–50.

86. Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*, pp. 249–53.

87. Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*, pp. 198–205.

88. W. Daniel Garst, "Thucydides and the Domestic Sources of International Politics," pp. 67–97, and in particular pp. 73–76 in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*.

89. See Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War* generally and in particular pp. 167–70.

90. Chris Waggaman, "The Problem of Pericles,' in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, pp. 206–7.

91. Note in particular the article by R. J. Littman, *Mt Sinai Journal of Medicine* 76, no. 5 (October 2009): 456–67. For a very helpful abstract, see the National Library of Medicine: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19787658 (accessed July 29, 2018). R. J. Littman, "The plague of Athens: epidemiology and paleopathology." Author information: Department of Languages and Literatures of Europe and the Americas, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI, USA. littman@hawaii.edu

92. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 2.48.2 n.

93. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp. 470–71.

94. Nicole Loraux, *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City*, pp. 335–37.

95. Cf. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens*, pp. 180ff., 191. As Loraux recognizes (pp. 89–90), there are some methodological questions involved in inducing the details of a tradition followed by Thucydides, since there are no funeral orations dating from the Pentecontaetia. Thucydides himself provides very good evidence for the existence

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of a tradition (2.34.6–2.35.2), but to what extent we can say that a tradition of which we have no early examples determines its first remaining manifestation is open to question.

96. See Immerwahr, "*Ergon*," p. 285. Cf. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens*, pp. 190–91, where she observes that there are many thematic relationships between the Funeral Oration to the rest of the text.

97. As Loraux does in *The Invention of Athens*, p. 192.

98. Leo Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 142–43.

99. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 468.

100. Cf. Arendt, *On Revolution*, pp. 225ff. See also Arendt, *Origins*, pp. 468ff.

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Chapter 3

Athenian Speeches in Book 1

Can the Athenian Empire Aim at Justice?

The dominance of Pericles' ideals at the beginning of the war shows itself not just in Pericles' speeches but also in the speech of the Athenian ambassadors at Sparta in Book 1, which depends in many ways upon Pericles' *logos*. In fact, the significant role of political discourse in Athens can also be seen in the speeches of the Corcyraeans and Corinthians at Athens. This then is an interpretive summary of the "Athenian" speeches in Book 1, particularly the speech at Sparta, so as to establish the intellectual background of Athens just before the war, as Thucydides saw it. While the import of these speeches has been the subject of some scholarly discussion,[1] the aspect of these speeches that relates to the decline in political discourse helps to clarify the role of the speeches in Thucydides' presentation of the decline of a great state.

Thucydides begins his account of the actual deeds of the Peloponnesian War with the affair of Epidamnus, a colony of Corcyra (1.25.1), which found itself a point of contention between Corcyra and Corinth. Epidamnus fell into faction and expelled the nobles, who, with the aid of some local barbarians, raided and plundered the city. Corcyra rebuffed the appeals of the people of Epidamnus for help, which led them to turn to Corinth, which felt that it was just (τὸ δίκαιον, "justice," 1.25.3) to aid Epidamnus, as the colony was theirs as much as it was the Corcyraeans'. Their hatred (μίσει, 1.25.3) of Corcyra also motivated them, as Corcyra had neglected Corinth, although it was her mother city. After being defeated by the Corcyraeans in a naval battle (1.29), the Corinthians were so distressed (ὀργῇ φέροντες, "pressing on with the zeal of anger," 1.31.1)[2] that they devoted themselves to improving their fleet. This frightened (ἐφοβοῦντο, 1.31.2) the Corcyraeans because they had no allies in Greece, so they sent to Athens to try to enlist her aid.

Note that the Corinthians take the first steps toward war in an emotional state (ὀργῇ φέροντες, 1.31.1) brought on by their hatred of Corcyra. The

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Corcyraeans' fear then leads them to the Athenians for an alliance. Their ambassadors claim first that Athens will be aiding a state that has "suffered injustice" (ἀδικουμένοις, 1.33.1), second that the favor Athens does will be remembered, but third and most importantly that Athens will gain the second most powerful naval power (after her own) if she will form an alliance (1.33). At the very beginning of their speech the Corcyraeans say that it was just (Δίκαιον, 1.32.1) for them, as a people who had never appeared before the Athenians and had never done Athens any favors, to show that the request they were making would be beneficial to Athens, and that Corcyra would retain a sense of the favor (1.32.1).

While the Corcyraeans base their most persuasive arguments on the interest of Athens, they do also appeal to justice. They say that in helping them the Athenians will be helping to correct an injustice (1.33.1). The Corcyraeans further contend that Corinth cannot claim it is not just for Athens to receive a Corinthian colony, since they have been treated unjustly (ὡς δὲ ἠδίκουν σαφές ἐστιν, "and that Corinth was doing injustice to us is clear," translation mine, 1.34.2) by Corinth. It would be a terrible thing, the Corcyraeans assert, for the Corinthians to be able freely to fill up their ships while the Athenians are regarded as unjust if they accept Corcyra into alliance (1.34.3–1.34.4). The Corcyraeans refer explicitly to the prevailing treaty that allowed neutral parties to join whichever side they wished (1.35.1–1.35.2). This directly contrasts with the sentiments the Athenians express at Melos, when they argue that the mere existence of neutral states suggests that those states are strong and that Athens fears them (5.97).[3] For our purposes it does not matter whether the Corcyraeans believed their arguments, but that they feel these arguments will be compelling to the Athenians is instructive. Interest is paramount for the Athenians, but they respect justice and do not yet feel that they need to view Greece monolithically, as either theirs or their enemies'.[4] As their emotions are brought more to a level with their circumstances (3.82.2), however, Athenian political speeches become less practical, more angry and ineffective, and less respectful of justice.

The Corinthians too, despite their rather unpleasant character as those who urge war on the Spartans, but cannot or will not undertake it themselves, accept the terms of the Corcyraean arguments as a reflection of what will be persuasive to the Athenians. The speech of the Corcyraeans compelled (1.37.1) the Corinthians to make their case in terms of the just and to say that the Corcyraeans have adopted their policies not with an eye toward justice but for their own ends. The Corcyraeans wanted to remain neutral, say the Corinthians, in order to commit injustice on their own (1.37.4); while given their relative freedom, they should have honored justice more (1.37.5). Nor have they honored their mother country, but in fact have acted against her in the case of Epidamnus. Their other colonies respect the mother country

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Corinth, and so should Corcyra. The Corinthians reject the Corcyraean claim to have asked first for arbitration, saying that the Corcyraeans did not make this request until they had solidified their own military position so that their deeds do not match their words (1.39.1). Corinth thus accepts the premise that an offer of arbitration would be attractive to the Athenians, who are the audience for the speeches, and also that the Athenians look for men's words to match their deeds, as Pericles says in the Funeral Oration (2.42.2). Of course it is the Corinthians' words themselves that do not equal their deeds, because while they deny that war is coming (1.42.2), Thucydides tells us that their main purpose in trying to prevent the adhesion of Corcyra to the Athenian side was to make sure that they themselves could control the war (1.31.3). Furthermore, soon after this debate in Athens, they urge upon the Spartans the necessity of going to war (1.67.5–1.71.7).[5]

It would not be just, the Corinthians say, for Athens to accept Corcyra's violence and *pleonexia* (1.40.1). The logic of the Corinthians' argument fails when they admit that according to the prevailing treaty it was permitted for neutrals to join either side (1.40.2). This underlines the contrast with the Athenians' position at Melos, where neutrality is an indication of the weakness of the leading states. Here the Corinthians say that the case of Corcyra is different, because Corcyra proposes joining Athens in order to hurt Corinth, and this was not envisioned in the treaty. Corinth thus urges the creation of a special class of neutral states, whose members are not permitted to join either side. The Corinthians' main point follows soon after this, when they threaten that if the Athenians take up a Corcyraean alliance, there will be war instead of peace (1.40.2). Later, the Corinthians again attempt to frighten Athens with the prospect of war (1.42.2). This, along with the arguments that Athens should respect the right (δικαιώματα, 1.41.1) of states to punish their allies (1.40.4–1.40.6), forms the Corinthians' appeal to advantage.[6] They couch even their appeal to advantage in terms of right. In addition, say the Corinthians, they provided valuable assistance in the Persian Wars (1.41.1–1.41.3). This is an argument to which they could expect the Athenians to respond.

Both the Corcyraeans and the Corinthians participate in what James Boyd White calls a "culture of argument," whose members accept the premise that their interests can be discussed and to some extent decided upon in a rational manner.[7] Both sides appeal to justice, and both appeal to interest. Both sides at least pretend a respect for written agreements. Even their appeals to interest imply that there is a common understanding among the Greeks that interests can be discussed rationally, and that interests are amenable to treatment as rights. What makes this especially remarkable in its range or openness to various topics is that it takes place in disturbed times just before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.[8] What we see in these speeches and in the speeches

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at the first Congress of Lacedaemon are the last efforts made by the Greeks to live within the bounds of civilized discourse before the war begins to strip away pretenses, which are the clothing of politics.[9]

The purpose of the Athenians' speech at the assembly of Peloponnesians at Sparta in Book 1 was, Thucydides says, not to make a defense against the charges concerning Athens but to advise that war should be considered carefully, and to show how great the power of Athens was. The second contention supports the first: the greater the power of Athens, the more deliberation and care should be taken in going to war against her.[10] The Athenians do not, however, directly discuss this second point. Instead of proclaiming their power, the Athenians justify their empire and show that their city is worthy of account (1.73.1). While Thucydides' introduction appears on the surface to contradict the actual speech, a deeper look at these issues confirms the harmony of the narrative with the speech.

For Thucydides, power is not simply a matter of the largest military forces or resources with which to conduct the war, despite the importance of these factors as a basis for power (2.13). Thucydides states clearly his belief in the power of Athens and Sparta relative to that of other cities (1.2–1.3, 1.23), and ascribes this power largely to national character. Sparta enjoyed freedom from tyranny (1.18.1) and knew how to be moderate, that is, how to conduct themselves with *sophrosune* despite success (ηὐδαιμόνησάν τε ἅμα καὶ ἐσωφρόνησαν, literally, "they had good fortune and conducted themselves with *sophrosune* at the same time," 8.24.4). Pericles, as we have seen, clearly puts the source of Athens' power in the character of her people. Thucydides sees character as essential, but here at least only two states combine the moderation that Athens lacks together with prosperity. Pericles was moderate; not the Athenians he ruled.

In *The Human Condition* Hannah Arendt develops her concept of political action, using Periclean Athens as perhaps her best example. Her understanding of Athens' power helps to illuminate some assumptions in Thucydides. Arendt defines power as something that "springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse."[11] Power for her is potential, that is, power is the capability a state or individual has to do something.[12] Power cannot exist without others, while strength is the "natural quality of an individual seen in isolation."[13] She further distinguishes power and strength by observing that while strength may be possessed, power cannot, since it results from a "potentiality of being together." Both individuals and *poleis* attain sovereignty, which depends upon the capacity to make promises and legal agreements or contracts, in a public space where the participants are at least theoretically equal and can act politically.[14]

Arendt sees contracts and mutual promises between individuals or treaties between states as at once enabling sovereignty to come into being, and also as

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proof that sovereignty is being preserved.[15] The agreed purposes of contracts and treaties allow those who make them to "dispose of the future as though it were the present."[16] In other words, they extend people's power.[17]

The power of the Athenians is of the sort Arendt describes as depending for its very existence upon other states to validate it. Thus, when the Athenians say that they honor contracts (1.77.1), they are affirming their power, since their power is fundamentally a public and political (as opposed to simply military) phenomenon. This is not to say that the honoring of contracts is the root of Athens' power. That they feel free to honor contracts is more a sign of that power. The root of Athens' power is the spirit of the people. Contracts enlarge their sphere of action and symbolize their respect for sovereignty.

Although international relations veer much more closely toward a state of nature than do internal politics, states do, according to Arendt, depend upon the existence of other states to provide a space for their power. States that respect justice, more than they must, first show their freedom, which is one result of power, and second show their moderation. These are not absolute considerations, however, since if a state begins by respecting only justice and moderation, it will never develop an empire. In order for an empire (as opposed to a tyranny) to grow and prosper, it must understand force and power. Where force is required, it must be used, but especially as an empire reaches its natural limits, it must exercise this force with a delicate hand. This verges on being a definition of political moderation in international affairs.

To return to the speech of the Athenians, their claim that Athens is worthy depends upon a justification of the empire, for Athens' worthiness to rule derives from the valor, skill, and readiness to serve that made it possible for Athens to acquire the empire. By asserting that Athens is worthy of the rule she has, the Athenians introduce the idea of Athens' power, since the need to justify the empire does not arise unless there is in fact an empire. This way of demonstrating the power of Athens reveals the essential moderation of the speakers.[18] They could, for instance, have said: our city is so powerful that any war against us would harm you greatly even if we lose; it is thus in your interest not to fight. Such a blunt statement of the facts would resemble the Athenian position in the Melian Dialogue, in which the Athenians explicitly exclude all consideration of higher motives (5.89). In this first speech of the Athenians in Book 1, however, power is viewed as arising from the character of the people, which appears not only in the people's courage and quickness but also in their moderation (1.76.4–1.77.2).

The moderation of the speech and the emphasis on the moderation of Athens' rule (1.76.3, 1.77.2) place this speech in the same line as the speeches of Pericles, with which this speech also shares a concern for the true greatness of Athens, which sets her apart from other Greek cities. After the prooemium the ambassadors turn to the achievements of Athens during the Persian Wars,

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in which, they assert, Athens alone fought against the Mede at Marathon (1.73.4). When the Mede came again, the Athenians deserted their city because no one had come by land to assist them (1.74.2, cf. 1.73.4). Athens' achievement makes her worthy (1.73.1, 1.75.1).[19]

The concluding clause of this introduction in the speech of the Athenians presents the overall ethical position the Athenians' claim: καὶ ἅμα βουλόμενοι περὶ τοῦ παντὸς λόγου τοῦ ἐς ἡμᾶς καθεστῶτος δηλῶσαι ὡς οὔτε ἀπεικότως ἔχομεν ἃ κεκτήμεθα, ἥ τε πόλις ἡμῶν ἀξία λόγου ἐστίν. ("We also wish to show on a review of the whole indictment that we have a fair title to our possessions, and that our city is worthy of account" [translation Crawley with some revisions, 1.73.1].) "We have a fair (οὔτε ἀπεικότως, literally "not unfitting") title to our possessions, and . . . our city is worthy of account." This is an attempt to justify as fair and worthy the establishment of the Athenian Empire. They do not claim directly that it is just, but they do say that it is not "unfitting," which is a relatively modest claim that approaches a claim of right.[20] This argument is an attempt to introduce some kinds of ethical principles into international relations, which is often thought of as dominated by what has been called "political realism," a kind of realism often ascribed to Thucydides.[21] It is sometimes said that the ethos of Athens as an imperial power involved a subscription to this idea, but a more nuanced approach leads to the conclusion that the realism of Pericles was at least potentially enlightened realism that included justice, virtue, and an aspiration toward some kind of general good.[22]

In the Funeral Oration also, Pericles emphasizes Athens' uniqueness and her worth: μόνοι, "alone," 2.40.2, 2.40.4, μόνη, "alone," τῷ ὑπηκόῳ κατάμεμψιν ὡς οὐχ ὑπ᾽ ἀξίων ἄρχεται, "[nor] to her subjects [does Athens give] a ground for censure that they are not ruled by worthy men" (translation mine, 2.41.3). The deeds upon which the ambassadors claim Athens' pride rests are: that she provided the greatest number of ships, the most intelligent general, and the most unsparing eagerness for action against the Persians. Each of these corresponds to an aspect of the Athenian character praised by Pericles, for he commends the Athenians for their intelligence and love of wisdom (2.40), their dedication to naval superiority (e. g. 1.143.5), and their eagerness to serve the city (2.43.5–2.43.6), all of which in both accounts make them worthy rulers.

Pericles' speeches and this speech at Sparta share certain political ideals, but these ideals are founded on a realistic appraisal of the nature of military force. Pericles saw the threat posed by the Spartan demands on the eve of the Peloponnesian War (1.140.3–1.140.4), he correctly estimated the power of each side (2.65.13), and he understood the nature of sea power (1.143.5).[23] He also understood the limitations the empire placed on Athens (2.63.2–2.63.3). In the same way, the Athenian speakers at Sparta recognize

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that the basis of political power is power itself, not justice or fine phrases in themselves (1.76.2), but they, like Pericles (2.40.4), claim that Athens does respect justice more than it must.[24] Athens respects justice and equity, and as a consequence, she, unlike other states, is moderate. Sparta, on the other hand, uses arguments from justice because she thinks such arguments will be useful (1.76.2). This statement reinforces an important theme in Thucydides that those who make justice the basis of their arguments usually pursue their own interests the most ruthlessly.[25] For the Athenians, justice and right become possible through the rational application of power. For others, such as the Corinthians, right is an absolute that can be used in an appeal to the emotions. Moderation for the Athenian speakers (and for Thucydides, as we shall see) arises not from justice by itself but from an appreciation of justice in the context of political power. Power is an essential condition of human relationships or *ta politika* (political things) in their broadest sense. What is important is what states and men do with it. The Athenians say: ἄλλους γ᾽ ἂν οὖν οἰόμεθα τὰ ἡμέτερα λαβόντας δεῖξαι ἂν μάλιστα εἴ τι μετριάζομεν. "We then think that others, at least, having taken our part, would show best if we are moderate in any way" (1.76.4). The Athenians do not say what Thrasymachus says in the *Republic*, that the just is the advantage of the stronger (338c, 342b, 344c). They do not prohibit certain kinds of speech (336c–d) or demand or insist on perfection (340c), the way Thrasymachus does, nor do they advocate tyranny, as Thrasymachus does (344a).[26]

The difference between Callicles in the *Gorgias* and Pericles and the Athenian speakers of his day, like those here, rests specifically in Callicles' advocacy of a lack of restraint when he promotes luxury, licentiousness, and freedom (τρυφὴ καὶ ἀκολασία καὶ ἐλευθερία, *Gorgias*, 492c) as if they are all the same or part of the same fruits of power. These, he says, are virtue and happiness (ἀρετή τε καὶ εὐδαιμονία, 492c). In the Funeral Oration, on the other hand, Pericles exhorts the Athenians to his more carefully articulated view that "happiness is freedom and freedom is valor" (τὸ εὔδαιμον τὸ ἐλεύθερον, τὸ δ᾽ ἐλεύθερον τὸ εὔψυχον, 2.43.4), while later, Thucydides praises his moderation (2.65.5) and says he told the Athenians to wait quietly in their war (2.65.7).

Although the Athenian ambassadors seem to assert the general proposition that by nature might rules (1.76.2), they cannot mean this absolutely, for if they did, their own statement that praise is due to those who respect justice, and their implication that praise is due to them (1.76.3–1.76.4), would not make any sense. The Athenians mean in the first place that the rule of might has been an established outcome in human relations and is generally to be expected, second that the Spartans conduct their foreign policy by this rule, but finally that Athens is a partial exception to it.[27]

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The Athenians' claim that they are worthy forms an important part of their justification of the empire, for they say that in acquiring this empire fear, honor, and benefit motivated them (1.75.3, 1.76.2). Although two of these three motives make the Athenians' conduct an instance of the general law that men seek power for their own advantage and that the strong rule the weak, the reference to "honor" (τιμῆς) introduces something higher. The Athenians explain this motive when they assert that they "thought themselves worthy" to rule (ἄξιοί τε ἅμα νομίζοντες εἶναι, 1.76.2). Their worthiness brings them honor, and they are worthy of honor not only because they are powerful but also because of their zeal, intelligence (1.74.1, 1.75.1), moderation, and justice (1.76.3–4).

As proof of their moderation the Athenians adduce their handling of disputes with the allies. The Athenians are explaining how it is that they are blamed rather than praised for their sense of justice:

> καὶ ἐλασσούμενοι γὰρ ἐν ταῖς ξυμβολαίαις πρὸς τοὺς ξυμμάχους δίκαις καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ἐν τοῖς ὁμοίοις νόμοις ποιήσαντες τὰς κρίσεις φιλοδικεῖν δοκοῦμεν. (1.77.1)
>
> For because we find ourselves at a disadvantage in law-suits against our allies, in cases controlled by inter-state agreements, and so we have transferred such cases to Athens where the laws are equal for all, we are supposed to be too fond of dragging people into court. (1.77.1)[28]

Although there is some dispute about the exact meaning of this sentence, ἐλασσούμενοι ("being at a disadvantage") and ὁμοίοις ("equal" as applied to laws here) are the central words for understanding how this claim exemplifies Athenian moderation.[29]

The Athenians' succeeding remarks show that they make this point primarily as an example of their moderation and how the world views it.[30] They say that no one asks why this charge of litigiousness is not brought against others who are less moderate, since for those who can use force, there is in general no need to appeal to the law. The subject states, because they usually associate with Athens as equals in legal matters, are indignant both when they are worsted by Athens and when they lose a legal decision. Thus, again (as in 1.76.2) the Athenians make the point that they are exceptional in their sense of moderation and justice.[31]

In section 1.77.1, the Athenians give two examples of their reasonableness. Both of these involve a significant waiving of the advantage their position and *arche* (rule or empire) could give them, for there was nothing to force them to follow the treaties, which specify lawsuits to resolve claims involving Athens and her allied states. Certainly at Athens itself there was

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no compulsion for Athens to submit herself to equal justice. Thus, the basic sense of ἐλασσούμενοι ("being at a disadvantage") applies both to the cases abroad and to those at Athens. The Athenians again indicate their respect for the law when they complain that their subjects, because they are accustomed to associate with Athens as equals, are vexed if they suffer any defeat at all from Athens. The subject states are not thankful that the Athenians leave to them the greater part of their possessions; they are more irritated that part is taken than they would be if the Athenians, "having cast law aside, were already grasping for more" (ἀποθέμενοι τὸν νόμον φανερῶς ἐπλεονεκτοῦμεν, 1.77.3).

Thus, the Athenians here claim that they respect the law and differentiate themselves from the Persians, who gave the Greeks much worse treatment than Athens has (1.77.5). The Greeks, nevertheless, feel that Athenian rule is more grievous, since it is current. Yet the underlying issue is not that the rule is current but that a Greek city is ruling other Greek cities. So to avoid this very difficult issue and counteract instead the view that the issue is that the fact that the rule is current, the ambassadors contrast Athenian rule with what Spartan rule might be like, for the implication of the sentence—"for the present always weighs heavy on the conquered" (1.77.5)—is that if the Spartans were ruling they would seem more grievous, because they would be the current rulers. If the Spartans should conquer the Athenians, then, the speakers contend, Sparta would find that she would receive as little good will from her "allies" as Athens does now. Sparta's poor conduct as leader of the Greeks against the Persians proves that she would again be hated, for the rest of the Greeks do not share her customs, and when Spartans do go abroad, they practice neither Sparta's own customs nor those of the rest of the Greeks (1.77.6). This last remark alludes to Pausanias' tyrannical behavior and to his alleged Medism.[32] While the Athenians' speech suffers from the severe rhetorical deficiency of insulting its audience, this deficiency may also be seen as an excess of honesty.

Thucydides' later narrative confirms what the Athenians say here at the conclusion of the body of their arguments, and thus indicates agreement on one important primary level between Thucydides' *logos* and this speech. For instance, late in the war, Astyochus also betrays Sparta and subjects himself to Tissaphernes (8.50), illustrating Sparta's lack of fitness to rule an empire, but there is a larger issue that emerges from consideration of the Athenian speech. They here in this speech Book 1 compare themselves to the Persians (1.77.5), which is perhaps unwise. This soon becomes a "centerpiece of Spartan propaganda."[33] In conclusion, then, the problem with what in the end seems to be contorted rhetoric is that the Athenians go so far as to compare themselves to the Persians in order to avoid facing the issue that they are ruling other Greek cities while implicitly appealing to the idea of democracy in

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the subject cities. In the long run, they cannot really have it both ways. Either they are spreading democracy or they are spreading Athenian power. This represents an incipient aspect of the disease of a reliance on power without a controlling and substantial moderation or discipline. The subtle connection of Athens to Persia raises the issue of how Athens' Empire becomes something akin to the Persian goal of ruling Greece.

The emerging rebellions among Athens' allies represent the weakest aspect, historically at least, of her hegemony. The premise of that hegemony was the alliance between the democrats in Athens and the democratic groups in the allied city-states. But the Athenians abandoned that or never even truly offered it. Hermocrates later, as an important Syracusan democratic leader, makes the point explicit:

> καὶ οὐ περὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἄρα οὔτε οὗτοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων οὔθ' οἱ Ἕλληνες τῆς ἑαυτῶν τῷ Μήδῳ ἀντέστησαν, περὶ δὲ οἱ μὲν σφίσιν ἀλλὰ μὴ ἐκείνῳ καταδουλώσεως, οἱ δ' ἐπὶ δεσπότου μεταβολῇ οὐκ ἀξυνετωτέρου, κακοξυνετωτέρου δέ. (6.76.4)
>
> In fine, in the struggle against the Medes, the Athenians did not fight for the liberty of the Hellenes, or the Hellenes for their own liberty, but the former to make their countrymen serve them instead of him, the latter to change one master for another, wiser indeed than the first, but wiser for evil. (6.76.4)

Hermocrates characterizes Athens as very quick or intelligent or even wise but wise for evil. Note "κακο" (evil) in the word κακοξυνετωτέρου.[34] He is describing here in very negative terms one potentiality of the qualities for which Pericles praises the Athenians in his Funeral Oration: They are quick, intelligent, and powerful, and as a result have left monuments of good and evil deeds (μνημεῖα κακῶν, 2.41.4). Here in this speech in Book 1 the Athenians do not mention their bad deeds of course, but Thucydides hints at them in a kind of irony in which the speakers say something that leads us beyond the point they intend. They do not want their audience to think about the point that Athens, the great promoter of democracy, is ruling over other democratically minded people. But the issue is unavoidable and Thucydides makes us feel that by presenting the complicated rhetorical steps the Athenians take to avoid it. They must defend themselves against the charge that they are "fond of dragging people into court" (1.77.1). This is not easy nor are they completely convincing.

This is not to say that Thucydides' thought is programmatic or that there is a full subtle and implied text beneath the text.[35] The war could have turned out differently. Athens did not have to attack its own allies or put entire groups to death. The debate between Cleon and Diodotus illustrates that as

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does the way in which the first ship out with a death sentence takes quite naturally a slow course but the second meets with no chance storm or delay (3.49.4). But what Thucydides does here in Book I is to suggest coming problems that do in fact arrive. Here we can see the tragic in Thucydides. Pericles' and the Athenians' failure was partly that they did not see that a new leader and perhaps a different type of leader would be required, that succession was a crucial problem in the constitution of a government. Nor did they see that the role of Athens as a leader of democracies would require some new form of alliance in which implicit equality would be respected. The underlying tension between Athens' democratic ideals and her export of democratic ideas and freedom in trade, on the one hand, and imperialism, on the other, is one of the tragic conflicts of the entire *Histories*.[36]

Not to see the problem of succession was blind and even hubristic as the fact that good leaders had emerged for Athens in the fifth century does not demonstrate that that would have continued without provision in every case, as indeed it did not in the Peloponnesian War.[37] This was a failure of leadership, and one for which Plato implicitly criticizes Pericles both in the *Symposium* and also, of course, in the *Meno* and the *Protagoras*. Alcibiades, the only clear successor to Pericles, is overcome with *eros* of the same type as Athens herself. He seeks adulation from everyone and finds Socrates impossible to seduce and enchant (*Symposium* 222a–b). He even argues that Socrates has engaged in *hubris* against him, though all laugh at him for this claim as he is obviously still in love with Socrates (222c). But Alcibiades is in love with himself and with the image of himself he wants to see in Socrates.[38] He became the most powerful living embodiment of Pericles' description of the ideal Athenian citizen, one who becomes a lover of the city (2.43.1), but what is the city of Athens if not her people? Pericles does not exhort the Athenians to love their ancestors or their physical city or their laws or constitution; he urges them to become lovers of the city and its power as exemplified in its conquests. He wants them to love themselves, which then veers into a narcissistic dream that Athens and her people are everywhere. Alcibiades is the living embodiment of that dream, leading first Athens, then working for the Persians and the Spartans, and then returning to Athens. His *eros* is barren. It bears no child nor does it give birth to a better Athens. Alcibiades serves as the drunken opposite to the vision of Diotima, who emphasizes love that gives human birth for most of us and that bears fruit at a higher level for some (*Symposium*, 208e–209e). The same is, much more sadly, almost as true of Pericles too. Alcibiades is of course not his son, nor did his education, which seems to have been provided by his guardians, Pericles and Ariphron, lead him to success.[39] It was apparently not until 411 that Alcibiades for the first time rose to the level of true political leadership when in the midst of political chaos in Athens

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he prevented the Athenians at Samos from sailing against their own people (8.86.4).

In Book I, the Athenians at Sparta also agree with Thucydides (cf., e.g., 2.65.5, 8.24.4, 8.97.2) and with Pericles (2.35.2) in a respect for moderation. There the coming failures, most notably in Alcibiades, are distant and implicit. A sense of moderation also allows the Athenians to argue that the chances of war make calculation difficult and that the unexpected or what is "contrary to reason" (παράλογος, 1.78.1) is prominent especially in a long war (1.78.1–1.78.2). Inasmuch as the Athenians use this argument for their own advantage to persuade the Spartans to deliberate slowly, their respect for the importance of chance may be suspect, but the fact that what the Athenians say is true (as the Peloponnesian War gives ample testimony), and that Pericles too has this same respect (1.140.1) makes the Athenians more credible.

In Pericles first speech, specifically at 1.141.5, there are several echoes of 1.78.1–1.78.2. Note τοῦ δὲ πολέμου τὸν παράλογον, ὅσος ἐστί, πρὶν ἐν αὐτῷ γενέσθαι προδιάγνωτε: [2] μηκυνόμενος γὰρ φιλεῖ ἐς τύχας τὰ πολλὰ περιίστασθαι ("but consider the vast influence of accident in war, before you are engaged in it. [2] As it continues, it generally becomes an affair of chances," 1.78.1–2), and compare this with Pericles, who says ἄλλως τε κἂν παρὰ δόξαν, ὅπερ εἰκός, ὁ πόλεμος αὐτοῖς μηκύνηται ("especially if the war last longer than they expect, which it very likely will," 1.141.5). Pericles contends that the Athenians are likely to win the war, for the Spartans trust that they themselves will survive the dangers, but they are not sure that they will not exhaust their money prematurely, especially if, contrary to expectation, the war is lengthened, which Pericles thinks likely. The δόξα ("opinion") in question must be a general opinion of the Hellenes, such as the Corinthians express (1.121). Even Archidamus himself, who feared that the war would be long (1.81), and who wanted time to increase Sparta's strength (1.83.2–1.83.3), seems to have misjudged the Athenians' strong resolution for war and their unwillingness to submit (2.18.5). He thought the war would be shorter than it turned out to be, as did Sthenelaidas (1.86).[40]

Alongside this respect for chance (the companion of what is παράλογος, or "contrary to reason or expectation"), the Athenians, like Pericles, affirm their dedication to the principle that reason and thought should come before action (1.78.3). They thus provide a general support to their theme that the Peloponnesians should deliberate carefully before they become involved in a war with Athens. The Athenians bid them to choose good counsel over rash action and recommend that they neither break the treaty nor transgress the oaths; they want the Peloponnesians to settle their differences with Athens according to the agreement.

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Sthenelaidas rejects just this means of settling the grievances when he declares that the case should not be decided by words and the law, especially as the Spartans are harmed not in word but in deed. He seeks a forceful reprisal (1.86.2), which adumbrates the later decline of the value of *logos* as compared with action in Athens and indeed in the entire Hellenic world during the war. Archidamus had warned the Spartans against being stirred up by the hope that the war will end quickly:

> μὴ γὰρ δὴ ἐκείνῃ γε τῇ ἐλπίδι ἐπαιρώμεθα ὡς ταχὺ παυσθήσεται ὁ πόλεμος, ἢν τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν τέμωμεν. δέδοικα δὲ μᾶλλον μὴ καὶ τοῖς παισὶν αὐτὸν ὑπολίπωμεν: οὕτως εἰκὸς Ἀθηναίους φρονήματι μήτε τῇ γῇ δουλεῦσαι μήτε ὥσπερ ἀπείρους καταπλαγῆναι τῷ πολέμῳ. (1.81.6)
>
> For let us never be elated by the fatal hope of the war being quickly ended by the devastation of their lands. I fear rather that we may leave it as a legacy to our children; so improbable is it that the Athenian spirit will be the slave of their land, or Athenian experience be cowed by war. (1.81.6)

The words ἐλπίδι ("hope") and μὴ . . . ἐπαιρώμεθα ("do not be elated") are especially significant: the former because hope is not for Thucydides a proper basis for action. Archidamus uses the latter word twice more in this speech, each time with the negative connotation of a decision based on emotion. Archidamus tells the Spartans that money is essential for winning a war: the Spartans should first procure money and not be incited by the words of their allies: μὴ τοῖς τῶν ξυμμάχων λόγοις πρότερον ἐπαιρώμεθα ("let us . . . not allow ourselves to be carried away by the talk of our allies," 1.83.3). Archidamus answers the Corinthian charges of slowness and procrastination by praising these very characteristics of the Spartans. They are not stirred up by the pleasure of hearing men urge them to risks that do not seem worthwhile (1.84.2).

Archidamus' judgment of the Spartan character agrees with Thucydides', who says that the Spartans' moderation prevented them from being insolent in success and from yielding to misfortune (8.24.4). Archidamus, like the Athenian envoys, counsels moderation and a continuing respect for reason and the law, but the war overcame these virtues, and put recklessness, vengeance, and unrestrained emotion in their place. Once Pericles has died, these failures become more apparent, especially in the Mytilenean debate, to which we will turn next.

NOTES

1. See, e.g., G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), who argues that Thucydides has in fact

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misrepresented what the Athenians say because the tone of the speech is not appropriate to the circumstances (pp. 12–14). Marc Cogan disagrees with de Ste. Croix that Thucydides misrepresents the Athenians. He suggests (convincingly, I believe) that while the rhetorical tone of the Athenian speech is wrong for the audience and the occasion, the mistake was the Athenians' not Thucydides'. See Cogan, *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History*, pp. 27–28. See also n. 17 pp. 259–69. In any case, the speech did not convince the Spartans (1.87–1.88).

Dennis Proctor, on the other hand, sees the Athenian point of view in the Melian Dialogue as a "more extreme, more ruthless formulation of an argument [that of the Athenians at Sparta] which had been heard several times before" in *The Experience of Thucydides* (Warminster, Wilts, England: Aris and Phillips, 1980), p. 96. Cf. p. 89. D. Gillis adopts much the same point of view in his "Murder on Melos." *Istituto Lombardo. Rend.* (Lett.) 112 (1978), pp. 185–211. See, in particular, pp. 200–1, where he argues that there is very little if any difference between what Thucydides thinks about the dictum that the strong rule and the weak suffer and what the Athenians at Sparta, or Pericles, Cleon, Euphemus, or the Athenians at Melos say about this. At the end of his article, he reveals the basis for his lack of discrimination in these different cases when he says that we Americans tolerated a decade of war crimes (in Vietnam presumably). He prefers the candor of the Athenians at Melos to our concealments and says that we should not blame the Athenians when we ourselves are guilty (pp. 210–11).

For the opposite view, that the Athenian speech in Book 1 differs importantly from the Melian Dialogue, see, e.g., A. E. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1973), pp. 32–48. See also de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 205–29.

2. Translation by Charles D. Morris, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 1*. 1891 (Boston: Ginn and Company), available online at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/.

3. Cogan, *The Human Thing*, p. 91. Cogan sees this loss of political space for neutrals as an innovation the Athenians make in their treatment of Melos.

4. The Corcyraeans' use of the seemingly conflicting arguments from interest and from justice might suggest that the speakers were simply relying on all the arguments available to them. This would contradict the thesis that the arguments that are chosen and the way they are worded carry great weight both in interpreting the character and role of the speaker and in clarifying the significance of the *erga.* As we shall see, however, justice for Thucydides resides within the context of power.

5. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, pp. 6–9, examines this speech in detail as an early and very persuasive example of political dishonesty and the misuse of terms like justice. This then supports the idea that quite early in the narrative Thucydides presents the idea that the war involves its participants in the kinds of conduct and political language that are traits of *stasis.*

6. Philip A. Stadter, "The Motives for Athens' Alliance with Corcyra (Thuc. 1.44)," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* (1983): p. 132.

7. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, p. 67.

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8. See also Michel Foucault, "Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia," 6 Lectures at University of California at Berkeley, CA, October–November 1983, https://foucault.info/parrhesia/foucault.DT1.wordParrhesia.en/ (accessed January 18, 2020).

9. See generally Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, and esp. pp. 82–89 on the debate between the Corcyreans and the Corinthians at Athens. "Their *evaluations* . . . of justice are at odds. The Corinthians advocate a more conventional application, in which colonies must honor their mother-cities even at the expense of their immediate interests and safety, treaties must be honored, virtue and morality practiced; this bumps against certain facts, *erga*, such as their refusal of arbitration, and they must adjust their argument and understanding of 'justice' accordingly. The Corcyreans, for their part, maintain that justice may exceed those traditional claims to meet the challenges and exigencies at hand" (p. 88).

10. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," p. 38, makes this point.

11. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), p. 179.

12. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 179.

13. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 179.

14. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 220.

15. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 220.

16. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 220.

17. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 222.

18. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," emphasizes the divergence between the aims the Athenian speakers say they have and Thucydides' report of these aims (p. 39 ff.). Donald Kagan in *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*, more correctly, I think, sees the essential agreement between Thucydides' introduction and the Athenians' statement of their aims (pp. 296–300).

19. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, discusses this point (pp. 250–53). Raubitschek in "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta" makes the important argument that Thucydides presents the Athenians' justification of the empire in a spirit similar to the praise of Athens by Herodotus (7.139).

20. Charles Morris' note makes the point that οὔτε ἀπεικότως can imply "by litotes" "most justly": "οὔτε ἀπεικότως: cf. ii.8.2; vi.55.11; viii.68.25, always with neg., and by litotes = δικαιότατα." Morris, 73.1 n. See http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0199%3Abook%3D1%3Achapter%3D73%3Asection%3D1 (accessed December 28, 1998).

21. Gustafson, "Introduction" to *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, pp. 10–12.

22. Gustafson, "Introduction," p. 10; and Waggaman, "The Problem of Pericles," in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, pp. 197–220.

23. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 247–48, 254–57, 336–37.

24. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 257–59.

25. David Cohen, "Justice, Interest, and Political Deliberation in Thucydides," *Quaderni Urbanati di Cultura Classica* n. s. 16, n. 1 (1984), p. 45.

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26. Cf. Seth Benaredete's comments on the way in which Thrasymachus tries to prevent Socrates from making various philosophical points. See Seth Benardete, *Socrates' Second Sailing* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 20–22.

27. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 1.76.2 n.: The Athenians are "referring only to the *established practice*," (emphasis Hornblower) not to some claim about *nomos*.

28. Hornblower's translation, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 1.77.1 n.

29. This passage has generated much scholarly interest. See Classen-Steup 1.77.1 n.; Gomme et al. (*Historical Commentary*) 1.77.1 n.; Robert J. Bonner, "On Thucydides 1.77.1," *Classical Philology* 14 (1919): 284–86; G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, "Notes on Jurisdiction in the Athenian Empire," *Classical Quarterly* 55 n. s. 11 (1961): 95–101; Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," pp. 44–55. Cf. also *LSJ* s. v. ἐλασσόω II. 1, s. v. συμβόλαιος, and s. v. σύμβολον II.

Hornblower is apparently rejecting the translation of H. T. Wade-Gery as it is reported by de Ste. Croix ("Notes on Jurisdiction"), pp. 111–12. There are two subsidiary issues involved in deciding what the sentence means and how it is to be construed:

1. Does ἐν ταῖς . . . δίκαις refer to lawsuits deriving from contract disputes, as *LSJ* s. v. συμβόλαιος prefer, or to lawsuits conducted in accordance with treaties (*LSJ* s. v. σύμβολον II. 3). Gomme is surely right in saying that the former interpretation is too narrow (*Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 237–38). G. E. M. de Ste. Croix follows Gomme on this point ("Notes on Jurisdiction," 96).

2. What does φιλοδικεῖν mean? E. G. Turner, " HYPERLINK "http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=filodikei%3Dn&la=greek&can=filodikei%3Dn0&prior=kri/seis" \t "morph" φιλοδικεῖν δοκοῦμεν (Thuc. I. 77)," *Classical Review* 60 (1946): 5–7, maintains that it refers to litigiousness, that is, to the love of litigating, and that it cannot include the external idea of spectators and connoisseurs of legal action. But this is a difference without much point. Presumably those who love to litigate will enjoy watching trials too, though perhaps not as thoroughly. Someone criticizing the famous Athenian litigiousness will not think that it is only in the desire to litigate that the Athenians show their love of legal action. He will see it as a characteristic vice of the Athenians that they love trials, and their enjoyment in watching them will only contribute to the truth of the observation.

30. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," p. 44.

31. As Raubitschek says, "This claim of the Athenians reveals clearly that their claim to be noteworthy (1.73.1) does not rest on the justification of their power but on the moderate use they have made of it." ("The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," pp. 43–44).

32. Although Thucydides does not seem completely convinced of the truth of these charges, he does say that Pausanias appeared to be more of a tyrant than a general (1.95.2), and the charge of Medism was the clearest made against him (1.95.5).

33. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 115n.3.

34. For *sunesis* (σύνεσις) as a crucial political and practical characteristic in Thucydides, see Allison, *Word and Concept in Thucydides*, pp. 79, 169, and 181–82.

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35. Matthew Kears of the University of Birmingham makes this point in his perceptive, though too harsh review of Martha C. Taylor's, *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*. *Rosetta* 8: 111–113, http://rosetta.bham.ac.uk/issue8/reviews/kears-taylor.pdf (accessed May 1, 2019).

36. W. Daniel Garst, "Thucydides and the Domestic Sources of International Politics," *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, ed. Lowell Gustafson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 87–91.

37. One important resolution of many of these problems of government, at least in thought, appears in James Madison's writing, e.g., in *Federalist #51:*

"If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions. This policy of supplying, by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public." (https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-51, originally published in *The New York Packet*, February 8, 1788). Madison is here justifying the separation of powers, but the underlying principles apply to the question of succession.

38. Seth Benardete, "On Plato's *Symposium*," p. 199, in *Plato's Symposium*, trans. Seth Benardete with commentaries by Allan Bloom and Seth Benardete (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993). See also Bloom, "The Ladder of Love," pp. 162–64.

39. For Alcibiades' lineage, see Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades*, 1.1 (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, 1916). Cf. Herodotus, *Histories* 8.17.

40. If Pericles had said τὴν δόξαν rather than simply δόξαν, the reference to Spartan opinion alone would have been clear. Without the article δόξαν refers to a generally held expectation of a short war. See Knight, "Thucydides and the War Strategy of Perikles," p. 153n.1.

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Chapter 4

Democracy, Demagoguery, and Political Decline in Thucydides and Plato

The Debate between Cleon and Diodotus

After Pericles' speeches the next significant Athenian political speeches are those by Cleon and Diodotus concerning the punishment of the revolutionaries at Mytilene. In these speeches, we can see a general decline in the level of political discourse at Athens and the emergence of the demagogue Cleon.

In broad terms, this debate is a conflict between violence and reason, which is a major opposition of *stasis*. Diodotus speaks for the more humane alternative, but his reliance on the argument from expediency shows a lowering of the tone of debate at Athens. Cleon, on the other hand, is the type of the demagogue for Thucydides and uses some of the demagogue's rhetorical tools, such as appeals to violent emotion and to suspicions of others' motives.[1] Since Cleon arouses suspicion against those who would speak for a lesser punishment, Diodotus cannot hope to win the debate by relying on the Periclean argument that friends are gained by doing good (cf. 2.40.4). Although Cleon lost this debate, he was persuasive enough that the vote was very close (3.49.4). Yet before the debate, the Mytilenean ambassadors had perceived that most of the citizens wanted to reconsider the matter (3.36.5). Thus, as Thucydides depicts the event, Cleon was at least not unpersuasive. The spirit of the Athenians was failing under the pressure of war and the plague, which colored their view of the revolt on Lesbos (cf. 3.3.1).

Although the decree seemed "savage" (ὠμὸν, 3.36.4, cf. 3.36.6) to many, Cleon supported putting to death all the men of Mytilene and enslaving the women and children. His speech falls into two main parts.[2] The first is an attack on democratic debate, while in the second he argues that the decree is just and expedient. The attack on democracy exemplifies certain of the characteristics of *stasis*. Cleon reviles the Athenians for listening to those

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who with "fair-seeming phrases" (τὸ εὐπρεπὲς τοῦ λόγου, 3.38.2) attempt to dissuade them from the resolution. "In such contests the state gives the prizes to others but by herself must bear the dangers" (ἡ δὲ πόλις ἐκ τῶν τοιῶνδε ἀγώνων τὰ μὲν ἆθλα ἑτέροις δίδωσιν, αὐτὴ δὲ τοὺς κινδύνους ἀναφέρει, 3.38.3). This resembles what Thucydides had said happened after Pericles' death: leaders involved the state in projects that could only help them and hurt the state (2.65.7). Likewise in his chapters on *stasis* Thucydides says that men, armed with popular but fraudulent appeals, "sought prizes for themselves in those public interests which they pretended to cherish" (τὰ μὲν κοινὰ λόγῳ θεραπεύοντες ἆθλα ἐποιοῦντο, 3.82.8). Cleon's criticism of democracy agrees with this, at least on the surface. But Cleon was to Thucydides a dishonest man who had only his own interest in mind. He fostered violence and war in order to hide his own crimes (5.16.1) and is thus an example of the very thing he criticizes.

Thucydides has inserted into Cleon's speech frequent echoes of Pericles, thereby making it apparent that he intends to contrast the two men. In *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, de Romilly discusses these echoes at length.[3] She rightly dismisses the view that the echoes are "accidental and not intentional," that Pericles and Cleon are using the same words to say the same thing, and that Thucydides simply approved of Pericles but changed his mind when Cleon put forward the same ideas.[4] But she also rejects the argument, now common, that the echoes are intentional, and that by forcing a comparison of the two men Thucydides makes their basic differences and some continuities or developments from Pericles' ideas to Cleon's more clear. According to this argument, "Cleon, in fact, repeats Pericles' views on the empire, but he does so in order to deduce a glorification of force which Pericles had not recommended; where Pericles wanted 'not to give up,' Cleon wishes to 'punish severely.'"[5] Thus, Cleon's policy is a caricature of Pericles'.

Yet Cleon emerged from a culture that fostered him. Though he rejects the Sophist culture (3.38.7), he is part of it at least by reaction.[6] Pericles says in the speech reported in indirect discourse in Book 2, chapter 13, that the Athenians should "keep their allies well in hand" (τά τε τῶν ξυμμάχων διὰ χειρὸς ἔχειν, 2.13.2, translation Hornblower 3.40.4). This is vague but "sinister,"[7] and also foreboding. This further shows the continuity between Pericles, Cleon, and then Alcibiades as an enlightened empire is transformed into a tyranny composed of dangerous leaders. It seems that perhaps another flaw in Pericles' plan was that it did not reckon on either the emergence of figures like Cleon or a general decline in Athenian spirit occasioned by chance events such as the plague or by more predictable outcomes, such as desertion by a capable leader like Alcibiades, or a longer war than one originally expected. Athenian government did not have strong

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institutional controls needed to check *stasis* and the leaders who would exploit divisions.[8]

Indeed, Thucydides seems to use some of the echoes to show how Cleon deliberately imitated Pericles and attempted to surround his own policies with the aura of Pericles' political power and rhetoric. De Romilly's answer to the questions posed by these echoes is that Cleon and Pericles, like other imperialists of the day, used such phrases, and that the echoes signify very little, although they are not accidental. When Thucydides wrote Cleon's Mytilene speech, on this view, he did not consider the difference between Cleon and Pericles important. De Romilly believes that Thucydides wrote 2.65 well after he composed the speeches concerning Mytilene. Thus, as he wrote Book 2, chapter 65, "the contrast which had previously seemed unimportant turned out to be essential, and the attacks of the opposition, now triumphant, called for precise justification."[9] In her view then regarding the meaning of the text, de Romilly reverts to the question that frequently arises about Greek and Roman authors: when did the author write the various parts of his work?[10]

This is not the place to go into this question at any length, but the results of this study will help to show the essential unity of Thucydides' work.[11] As James Boyd White asks,

> How are we to read a text that functions in such apparently conflicting and contradictory ways? What sense can we make of a mind that proposes, almost simultaneously, such a variety of ways both of making a world and of making sense of it? The worst response is to patronize Thucydides, saying, for instance, that his *History* has inconsistent strains because it is unfinished or because he had not yet worked out a resolution of the conflicts. This is wrong, not only because his is a mind not to be patronized, but because the inconsistencies of language and method are not incidental but structural.[12]

It is in theory simpler to suppose that since the portrait of Cleon is consistent in all the places in which he appears, Thucydides understood his subject from the beginning. Thucydides puzzles readers in order to provoke thought, a goal he reaches in a variety of ways including irony, early assertions of overriding emotional themes in many narrative threads, and the way he presents chance events in such a long war.

After his reminder that he has frequently said that it is not possible for a democracy to rule over others, Cleon gives his reasons for this belief, which include a critique of the Athenian way of life as outlined in the Funeral Oration. He asserts that the Athenians' freedom from suspicion of each other in their daily lives leads them to have the same feelings toward their allies: διὰ γὰρ τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν ἀδεὲς καὶ ἀνεπιβούλευτον πρὸς ἀλλήλους καὶ ἐς τοὺς ξυμμάχους τὸ αὐτὸ ἔχετε, "Fears or plots being unknown to you in

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your daily relations with each other, you feel just the same with regard to your allies" (3.37.2). For Pericles, on the other hand, the political life free from suspicion was one of the virtues of the Athenians (2.37.2). Cleon calls this virtue a vice, thus perverting the *axiosis* of words in the same way that Thucydides discusses in his treatment of *stasis* in Corcyra (3.82.4).[13] Cleon next associates persuasion through words (λόγῳ πεισθέντες) with cowardice and softness (μαλακίζεσθαι, 3.37.2), thereby contradicting one of the central claims of the Funeral Oration, that the Athenians are devoted to debate and discussion as preliminary to action (2.40.2–3), but that this devotion does not lead to softness (φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας, "we are lovers of wisdom without softness," translation mine, 2.40.1).

At the very opening of his speech, Cleon is shown to differ from Pericles in his attitude toward democracy and *logos*. Cleon questions the value of what Pericles praised so highly (3.37.1–3.37.2). Cleon continues these themes in his denunciation of debate (3.38),[14] which he condemns as a contest in which cleverness rules (3.38.4–3.39). Again, the contrast with Pericles is clear. Cleon is intellectually dishonest, for while condemning debate he vigorously engages in it, and his speech exhibits the very sophistic cleverness that he professes to fault (3.37.3). In Thucydides' portrait, Cleon is a demagogue; he is the most violent of the citizens and the most persuasive with the demos (3.36.6, cf. 4.21.3). Cleon was the principal Athenian who stood in the way of peace after Pylos and Sphacteria, for he feared that peace would make his crimes more evident and his slanders less persuasive (5.16.1). Thucydides provides a striking example of Cleon's opposition to peace when in 425 he demands that the Spartan envoys speak publicly about the agreement they wish to reach concerning the Spartiates at Pylos (4.22.2). Of course, the Spartan envoys cannot do this. They would be slandered by their allies, especially if the negotiations failed (4.22.3). With his comments on Cleon in Book 5, Thucydides suggests that in this case as in many others Cleon knew he was attempting to deceive the people about the situation. He knew the Spartans could not speak publicly, and he deliberately appealed to the prejudice of the demos that it be involved in whatever talks took place. This appeal for public debate is in addition inconsistent with Cleon's condemnation of such activities in the speech about Mytilene. Cleon's rejection of debate in this speech follows from his argument that democracies cannot successfully manage empires (3.37.1). His apparent recommendation is to give up on debate, or at least to curtail it (3.37.4–5).[15] The large political issue that underlies this is the contradiction between the appeal of Athens to democratic groups in her allies and the contradiction between that appeal to democracy, as we have seen, and the realities of running an empire. This is an inherent problem; to that extent, Cleon is right. But the lack of an attempt to solve the problem is part of the problem of Pericles. The problem appears more familiarly in

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British and North American history in the "Declaration of Independence." Jefferson's focus on the wrongs done by the king appeals to English people under British rule, which was altered by Glorious Revolution into an incipient republic with rule by Parliament.[16] The people of England had been liberated from the absolute rule of the king in the Glorious Revolution, but the colonists were still under his direct rule. Jefferson is appealing in some ways to the English population to allow their brethren in the New World to enjoy the same liberation.

In this speech concerning the Mytileneans, Cleon first echoes Pericles when he asserts that the arche or "rule" is a tyranny (3.37.2), thus strengthening Pericles' pronouncement in his last speech (2.63.2). Thucydides here shows Cleon deliberately echoing Pericles and changing the sense of what he had said by leaving out the qualifying ὡς ("like") in ὡς τυραννίδα. He makes a complete identification of the arche with tyranny. In line with this change in the conception of the arche, Cleon implicitly criticizes Pericles' idea of how to keep the allies obedient to Athens. Pericles praised Athens for bestowing "favor" (τὴν χάριν*,* 2.40.4),[17] while Cleon regards Pericles' attitude as leading only to the Athenians "being harmed" (βλαπτόμενοι, 3.37.2) when they bestow favors (χαρίζησθε, 3.37.2). He values good will (εὐνοία) less than Pericles (3.37.2, cf. 2.40.4).

Cleon condemns the attempt to change the decree concerning the Mytileneans because he feels that it is an example of the Athenian lack of respect for the law (3.37.3–3.37.4), while Pericles praised not only the Athenian obedience to the law but also their recognition of the importance of *logos* in determining what should be done (2.40.1–3). Cleon claims that "a lack of knowledge joined with moderation is more beneficial than cleverness coupled with a lack of restraint" (ἀμαθία τε μετὰ σωφροσύνης ὠφελιμώτερον ἢ δεξιότης μετὰ ἀκολασίας, 3.37.3).[18] This phrase provides a clear insight into Cleon's character. He praises ignorance in contrast to Pericles' wholehearted encouragement of intellectual activity (cf., e.g., 1.140.1, 2.40.2–2.40.3, 2.62.5). Cleon sets up a false opposition between ἀμαθία ("ignorance" or "stupidity") and σωφροσύνη ("moderation") on the one hand and δεξιότης ("cleverness") and ἀκολασία ("lack of restraint") on the other. But Cleon, by linking ἀμαθία ("ignorance") with σωφροσύνη ("moderation") and opposing it to cleverness, implies that ἀμαθία or "ignorance" is instead a lack of sophistic learning and cleverness. Cleon characterizes as an example of σωφροσύνη ("moderation") not changing the resolution concerning Mytilene (3.37.3), but the word moderation can only refer with a kind of dramatic irony to the content of the resolution, which is not moderate, that is, that all the men should be put to death and the women and children enslaved.[19] Cleon perverts the word σώφρων ("safe" or "moderate"), using it to refer to a lack of restraint, which is strange and almost "a monstrous act" (πρᾶγμα ἀλλόκοτον, 3.49.4).

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He completely reverses the normal values by calling the attempt to change the resolution an example of ἀκολασία or "lack of restraint." These examples of Cleon's rhetoric confirm our interpretation of Thucydides' comments on the changing *axiosis* of words. All the examples Thucydides gives when he comments on the effect of *stasis* on political language, and the instances of such changes here in Cleon's speech, involve changing values of words that themselves carry conventional and social, moral, and sometimes political judgments of value, not values for words that are neutral or simply factual in their content. During internal political conflicts, people's values and the words they use to describe them change.

Cleon is for Thucydides the paradigm of the violent and unrestrained man. He does nothing in moderation, and his language reflects this. For this, Thucydides condemns him (5.16.1). His entire speech on the Mytilenean question, filled as it is with misrepresentation, innuendoes, and perversions of Pericles' words, serves as a kind of paradigm of *logos* separated from *ergon* by passion and self-importance.[20] For instance, he suggests that a hope of gain has incited those who wish to convince the Athenians to punish Mytilene more moderately (3.38.2). Thucydides nowhere supports this claim. His criticisms of the Athenian people are dishonest because he himself has worked up an elaborate and sophistic speech, while at the same time he accuses the people of being swayed by such things (3.38.3–3.38.6). Cleon also falls into an inconsistency when he says that the Mytileneans have not learned from the fate of their neighbors who rebelled and were punished (3.37.3). This conflicts with Cleon's assertion that firm punishment deters crimes (3.37.6).[21] Furthermore, when referring to what he believes is the deserved fate of the Mytileneans—death, he confuses the concept of the enemy, when he calls the allies necessary, established, and permanent enemies who should receive no pity (ἔλεός τε γὰρ πρὸς τοὺς ὁμοίους δίκαιος ἀντιδίδοσθαι, καὶ μὴ πρὸς τοὺς οὔτ᾽ ἀντοικτιοῦντας ἐξ ἀνάγκης τε καθεστῶτας αἰεὶ πολεμίους, "Compassion is due to those who can reciprocate the feeling, not to those who will never pity us in return, but are our natural and necessary foes," 3.40.3). If the other states in the Athenian Empire are the enemies, what are the Spartans? Thus, Thucydides uses Cleon to show how a man who does not understand anything beyond passions and his own advancement, and who furthermore neither cares about nor comprehends the importance of ideals in political life, will favor violence as a solution to problems and will ultimately be led by the mob instead of leading it himself. In the process words are revalued.

The mob leads Cleon in 425 after he tries to force Nicias to undertake the expedition to Pylos. Nicias resigns his command and the multitude clamors for Cleon to go (4.28.3), urging him on when he backs off. Thucydides makes known his opinion of the crowd with the comment that this is just "the sort of thing the crowd is wont to do" (οἷον ὄχλος φιλεῖ ποιεῖν, 4.28.3). This echoes

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Thucydides' view of what happened after the people fined Pericles: later, he says, "just as the mob is wont to do" (ὅπερ φιλεῖ ὅμιλος ποιεῖν, 2.65.4), it reelected him general. The point of this echo is that Pericles did not bend before the emotions of the inconstant and indecisive mob (2.65.8–2.65.9), but Cleon cannot control the mob. It rules him. So in the present case Cleon, at a loss as to how to back out of the generalship, finally undertakes the voyage (4.28.4). Thucydides tells us when the desire for this extension of victory arose right after the speech of the Spartans in which they ask at Athens for peace (4.17–21).

In their speech, the Spartans present several arguments that might plausibly appeal to the Athenians' view of themselves as better than they had to be, for example when they say that if the victor (the Athenians) can end the war "with a view to what is equitable" (πρὸς τὸ ἐπιεικὲς), having conquered "with excellence" (ἀρετῇ), and grant terms more "moderately" (μετρίως, 4.19.2). This is, it seems in 425 BC, meant to appeal to Athenians who in 432 at the start of the war had contended that they were more just (δικαιότεροι, 1.76.3), more equitable (ἐκ τοῦ ἐπιεικοῦς, 1.76.4), and more moderate (μετριάζομεν, 1,76.4) than they needed to be. While it appears to be true that in 425 the Spartans are proposing combining with Athens and thereby selling out their allies,[22] that by itself is only an appeal to Athenian self-interest no matter how unpleasant it seems, and Thucydides' overall sense seems to be that for Athens the most powerful political forces at this time are the now growing desires of the Athenian people who "were grasping at more" (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο, 4.21.2) in response to the views of Cleon, who was becoming very powerful and whom Thucydides names as a demagogue (δημαγωγὸς, 4.21.3). This and related words such as δημαγωγία ("leadership of the people," 8.65.4) and verb forms from δημαγωγέω, "to be a leader of the people," appear to have emerged first in Aristophanes' *Knights* (line 191) in 424.[23]

Thucydides seems to connect immoderate leadership of the people that succeeds mostly by currying their favor with the development of profoundly dangerous populist tendencies such as excessive desires, when in response to envoys from the Spartans seeking return of their comrades captured on Sphacteria island, the Athenians in 425 "kept grasping for more" (or better terms) (οἱ δὲ μειζόνων τε ὠρέγοντο, 4.41.4). Later in the same year, Thucydides observes that the Athenians settled the conflict in Corcyra (4.47.2), which is the focal point for the development of the narrative of *stasis* in Athens and in the entire Hellenic world. That same summer the leaders of Corcyrean commons involved the Athenians in handing over prisoners to be imprisoned (4.47.2–3), which then led to their slaughter and the elimination of that entire side of the conflict, thus illustrating the lust for blood that develops during *stasis* (3.82.3, 8). The Athenians later blame and punish their generals, Pythodorus, Sophocles, and Eurymedon for not subduing all of

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Sicily (4.65.3–4). As Thucydides presents it, the Athenians were wrong. The generals had not taken bribes, their decision to leave was correct, and in fact it was the only practical course. Thucydides finds the source of the Athenians' political mistake in the state of mind of the people. They thought that because they were at present prosperous, nothing could stand against them and that they could accomplish both the possible and the impossible. Athens' success emboldened them to trust in their hopes (4.65.4).

Thucydides has thus described in a set of exemplary events how slavery can begin to arise out of too much freedom, as Socrates puts it in the *Republic* Book VIII (564a). The greatest and most fierce slavery arises out of too much freedom. The *sophrosune* or discipline and moderation of the statesmen in a *polis* should enable people to control their emotions so that they do not confuse their strength with their hopes (Thucydides 4.65.4), which will in turn keep freedom from running astray in a democracy. Cleon becomes the type of the demagogue (in a completely negative sense), who can then lead the state into tyranny as the Athenians' increasingly tyrannical conduct of foreign affairs infects their internal political world with the disease (νόσημα) of faction (*Republic* VIII.564b, 565a–565e). Socrates describes how the people choose a leader whose leadership turns into tyranny as he incites the people to take money from the wealthier people (565d–566b). In this sense for Plato, Pericles and Cleon seem to merge into one figure to the point where they even sound alike as the three sets of comparisons below make clear. Italics indicate direct verbal parallels:

A.
Pericles: ὡς *τυραννίδα γὰρ ἤδη ἔχετε αὐτήν*, ἣν λαβεῖν μὲν ἄδικον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἀφεῖναι δὲ *ἐπικίνδυνον*.

For *what you hold* is, to speak somewhat plainly, *a tyranny*; to take it perhaps was wrong, but to let it go is *unsafe*. (Thucydides 2.63.2)

Cleon: οὐκ *ἐπικινδύνως* ἡγεῖσθε ἐς ὑμᾶς καὶ οὐκ ἐς τὴν τῶν ξυμμάχων χάριν μαλακίζεσθαι, οὐ σκοποῦντες ὅτι *τυραννίδα ἔχετε τὴν ἀρχὴν* καὶ πρὸς ἐπιβουλεύοντας αὐτοὺς καὶ ἄκοντας ἀρχομένους.

[and you never reflect] that . . . your mistakes] are *full of danger* to yourselves, and bring you no thanks for your weakness from your allies; entirely forgetting that *your empire is a despotism* and your subjects disaffected conspirators. (3.37.2)

B.
Pericles: τῆς μὲν *γνώμης*, ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, αἰεὶ *τῆς αὐτῆς ἔχομαι*.
There is *one principle*, Athenians, which *I hold to through everything*. (1.140.1)

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Pericles: καὶ *ἐγὼ μὲν ὁ αὐτός εἰμι* καὶ οὐκ ἐξίσταμαι.
I am the same man and do not alter. (2.61.2)

Cleon: *ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ὁ αὐτός εἰμι τῇ γνώμῃ.*
For myself, *I adhere to my former opinion.* (3.38.1)

C.
Pericles: εἴ τις καὶ τόδε ἐν τῷ παρόντι δεδιὼς ἀπραγμοσύνῃ *ἀνδραγαθίζεται.*
If indeed any of you in the alarm of the moment has become enamored of the honesty of such an unambitious part. (2.63.2)

Cleon: ἢ παύεσθαι τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἀκινδύνου *ἀνδραγαθίζεσθαι.*
Or else you must give up your empire and cultivate honesty without danger. (3.40.4)

Cleon is the degenerate successor to Pericles. He is the man that Pericles' personal moderation would not allow him to become, but he is also the man whose emergence might have been blunted by constitutional reforms.

Before the battle of Amphipolis those whom Cleon is supposed to be leading, this time his soldiers, again compel him to act (5.7.1). Brasidas had taken up a position on Cerdylium so that he could observe Cleon's movements (5.6.3). He expected that Cleon, despising the number of his opponents, would march on Amphipolis. Cleon was compelled to do exactly what Brasidas had expected (5.7.1). The word "compelled" (ἠναγκάσθη, 5.7.1) is important here: Cleon is not master of the situation. Thucydides explains that Cleon was compelled by the soldiers' annoyance at their lack of activity and by their murmurings about the quality of their leadership. They saw Cleon as weak and incompetent. Thus goaded into action, Cleon, because he had been successful at Pylos, trusted that he knew what he was doing and that no one would come out against him (5.7.3). Unlike Pericles, Cleon trusts his judgment because he has been lucky, not because he understands the situation.[24] Thucydides here confirms his judgment that Cleon owed his success at Pylos to luck (cf. 4.3.1, 4.12.3, 4.14.3, 4.55.3). In his last speech, Pericles says that ξύνεσις ("knowledge" or "quick comprehension," transliterated *sunesis*) strengthens courage through the feeling of disdain, which derives from the understanding that one is superior to one's adversary. ξύνεσις or knowledge trusts less in hope than in a proper conception of the actual circumstances (2.62.5). An ignorant trust in luck, according to Pericles, fosters boasting and is the part of the coward. Thucydides uses Cleon to illustrate this point when he shows him despising the size of Brasidas' force (5.6.3), but not commanding facts that could justify such an attitude, as Thucydides' later account of Brasidas' thoughts reveals. Brasidas decides not to allow Cleon to see his forces, since they are relatively small in number and poorly armed (5.8.3). Cleon had not even seen them and

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he had certainly not based his contempt for them upon an adequate conception of their power. Indeed, after going to get a look at Brasidas' forces and thereby exposing himself to Brasidas' stratagem—to attack suddenly before Cleon could retire—Cleon retreats hastily. He foolishly opens his unarmed side to the enemy (5.10.4), and finally is killed in flight (5.10.9).

Cleon, who exposes his forces without even intending to fight, is trapped while attempting to get a look at the enemy (5.10.2–5.10.3, cf. 5.7.3). He intends to judge from mere appearances, but he has not prepared himself for the possibility of a battle. He looks without thinking. The folly of relying on mere observation as a guide to practical judgment as an important part of Thucydides' *logos*. He remarks that though Homeric Mycenae may have been small, its size would not accurately prove the power of the armament sent against Troy (1.10.1). He proves his general contention by referring to the cases of Sparta and Athens: Sparta would be judged weak on the basis of her physical remains, while Athens' power would be exaggerated (1.10.2). Those who depend exclusively on what they see and do not think beyond this are subject to passion, and hence are likely to make mistakes.

Since he does judge from appearances, Cleon has a low opinion of intelligence, and he affirms this opinion several times in the speech concerning Mytilene. For example, as a corollary to his assertion that ignorance coupled with moderation is more beneficial than cleverness joined with a lack of restraint, Cleon claims that inferior men, when compared with those who are more intelligent, for the most part manage their cities better (οἵ τε φαυλότεροι τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοὺς ξυνετωτέρους ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλέον ἄμεινον οἰκοῦσι τὰς πόλεις, "and . . . ordinary men usually manage public affairs better than their more gifted fellows," 3.37.3).[25] This is sharply opposed to Pericles' ideas and to Thucydides' too. Plato presents philosophers as the ideal leaders in the *Republic*, but in *stasis* people with less ability come to the fore. Thucydides uses the words "more ordinary" or "meaner," or "blunter in their wits" (φαυλότεροι γνώμην, 3.83.3) to refer to new leaders in his account of how *stasis* spread to the entire Hellenic world. Those who were blunter in their wits won most of the battles because they acted boldly and did not wait upon careful thought. People lost respect for simplicity and honor as cities were divided into opposing factions (3.83.1).

Cleon initiates his attack on public debate with a condemnation of ξύνεσις, "knowledge" or "intelligence." He states,

> οἱ μὲν γὰρ τῶν τε νόμων σοφώτεροι βούλονται φαίνεσθαι τῶν τε αἰεὶ λεγομένων ἐς τὸ κοινὸν περιγίγνεσθαι, ὡς ἐν ἄλλοις μείζοσιν οὐκ ἂν δηλώσαντες τὴν γνώμην, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τοιούτου τὰ πολλὰ σφάλλουσι τὰς πόλεις: οἱ δ᾽ ἀπιστοῦντες

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> τῇ ἐξ αὑτῶν ξυνέσει ἀμαθέστεροι μὲν τῶν νόμων ἀξιοῦσιν εἶναι, ἀδυνατώτεροι δὲ τοῦ καλῶς εἰπόντος μέμψασθαι λόγον, κριταὶ δὲ ὄντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ἴσου μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγωνισταὶ ὀρθοῦνται τὰ πλείω. (3.37.4)

> The latter are always wanting to appear wiser than the laws, and to overrule every proposition brought forward, thinking that they cannot show their wit in more important matters, and by such behavior too often ruin their country; while those who mistrust their own cleverness are content to be less learned than the laws, and less able to pick holes in the speech of a good speaker; and being . . . judges [on the basis of equality] rather than rival athletes, generally conduct affairs successfully. (3.37.4, translation Crawley, modified as indicated).

Thucydides uses the last clause to contrast with Pericles' praise of Athenian participation in public debate: καὶ οἱ αὐτοὶ ἤτοι κρίνομέν γε ἢ ἐνθυμούμεθα ὀρθῶς τὰ πράγματα, "we Athenians ourselves either judge at least or ponder affairs rightly" (2.40.2, translation mine).[26] Unlike Cleon, Pericles holds in high regard those who can develop and perhaps more importantly judge good proposals since they recognize the importance of the ability to speak effectively in public (2.60.5).

Cleon introduces into his speech the metaphor of the *agon*, which he uses to disparage public speakers in particular and public debate in general. He quickly elaborates the metaphor, describing in detail his view of the Athenian people's conduct in the assembly. He derides their active participation in public debate, calling it the activity of "spectators," a "readiness to be deceived," "slavery to new ideas," and so on until he at last charges the assembly itself with taking part in the agon and with conducting itself more like the audience of a Sophist than men taking counsel for their city (3.38.4–3.38.7). Pericles on the other hand emphasizes the active role required by judging well and contrasts it with the ideas of "laying affairs to heart well" (or pondering them well), but of course it is Cleon's speech that deceives the people of their true interest and of any consideration of moral values, all in the name of a populist, violent set of values.[27] Cleon sees an opposition between speakers educated by Sophists who confuse issues with clever words, on the one hand, and regular Athenians, on the other hand, who just want a good and clear decision. Pericles wants the citizens to lay the choices in their hearts and then make well-informed judgments that are based on their sense that they are just as worthy as anyone else to make serious decisions.

In his portrayal of the degeneration of Athens, Thucydides explores the relationship between *nomos* and *phusis* (from Greek φύσις, "nature"). He shows the original validity and force of *nomos* and the decreasing the value of *logos*,[28] which in the form of the spoken or written word is a *nomos* for the representation of ideas and facts. Cleon pushes Athens toward a greater

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reliance on her physical power or *phusis* rather than on the force of her character and example.[29] He speaks for the most violent alternative in the case of the Mytileneans, but founds his arguments on two chief points, that is, that it is both just and advantageous to depopulate Mytilene (3.40.4). He uses the persuasive power of the argument from justice to lead the Athenians into what is clearly the more "portentous" (ἀλλόκοτον, 3.49.4) and "savage" (ὠμὸν, 3.36.4) course. In fact, by his echoes of Pericles and by his capture of the argument from justice Cleon compels Diodotus to argue, at least ostensibly, from expediency and from a calculation of advantage.[30] That before the debate most of the people wanted to reconsider the matter decided upon the day before (3.36.4–3.36.5), while after the debate the votes for Diodotus' and Cleon's positions were almost equally divided (3.49.1), testifies to the power of Cleon's oratory. The ugly mood of the Athenians makes it even harder for Diodotus to rival the emotional appeal of Cleon's argument from justice.[31] Nor can he openly and without careful preparation use the argument from pity, since Cleon has ruled it out (3.40.3).

In one of his more remarkable echoes of Pericles, Cleon presents the Athenians with two choices: they may either punish the Mytileneans or "give up the empire and play the good man without danger" (παύεσθαι τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἀκινδύνου ἀνδραγαθίζεσθαι, 3.40.4). Thucydides uses this echo, as he does others in Cleon's speech, to show him deliberately imitating Pericles. Pericles had advised the citizens that it was no longer possible to retire from the empire, if any one of them in the fear of the moment wanted to "play the good man through inactivity" (ἀπραγμοσύνῃ ἀνδραγαθίζεται, 2.63.2).

Pericles' phrase is an oxymoron, since ἀνδραγαθία or "playing the good man" is one aspect of manly courage and a quality Pericles would normally value.[32] But since Pericles does not hold "inactivity" (ἀπραγμοσύνη) in high regard, the oxymoron suggests that ἀπραγμοσύνῃ ἀνδραγαθίζεται is in reality an impossible combination. "In activity" (ἀπραγμοσύνη) is roughly equal to giving up the empire, and is meant as a serious description of this course of action. Thus, Pericles uses "playing the good man" (ἀνδραγαθίζεται) at least to some extent ironically, implying that truly to play the good man is to hold onto the empire and continue the war.

In Cleon's speech, on the other hand, ἐκ τοῦ ἀκινδύνου "without danger" (translation Crawley) parallels Pericles' ἀπραγμοσύνη ("inactivity"). It is meant seriously, and "playing the good man" (ἀνδραγαθίζεται) is again ironic. Cleon surely does not believe that manly virtue consists in letting the Mytileneans go free.[33] Thus, he implies that to depopulate Mytilene is to "play the good man." For Pericles the opposition is between holding onto the empire and giving it up, while for Cleon the two positions are abandoning the empire and depopulating Mytilene. The terms of the discussion have become more openly violent and savage. Yet the use of the same word

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(ἀνδραγαθίζεται) shows an ironic continuity between the two leaders, an example of dramatic irony. Pericles' policies or extensions of those policies become more dangerous in the hands of an unprincipled leader.

In a similar fashion when Thucydides shows Cleon deliberately echoing Pericles' declaration of constancy to his strategy and to his ideals, Cleon is debasing the words Pericles had used (cf. 3.38.l with 2.61.2 and 1.140.1). Whereas Pericles is constant both in his position with regard to Athens' power and in the need for perseverance in the war, Cleon is constant in his desire for the destruction of Mytilene. Pericles stands firm in policies that are good for the state and lead to everlasting renown (2.41.4), while Cleon is the same in his advocacy of a specific act of violence. One might argue that Pericles' policies would have led him to depopulate a disobedient city too, but Thucydides chooses to highlight Cleon's rashness and violence, and to contrast these qualities with Pericles' more enlightened sentiments.

Yet the parallels Thucydides has established between Pericles' and Cleon's rhetoric, and the later extensions of this rhetoric by Alcibiades raise questions about the extent to which Cleon and Alcibiades are natural successors to Pericles. In Thucydides, as we shall see, this question has many ramifications. Plato, on the other hand, provides a clear exposition of the argument that Pericles was a demagogue.

Plato's understanding seems in the *Gorgias* and *Protagoras* to be that Pericles was in essence no better than Cleon. Pericles, Socrates says, made the citizens worse by paying them for state service (*Gorgias*, 515e). Along with Themistocles and Cimon he was responsible for all the Athenians' troubles (519a). On this view it might be conceded that Pericles was a finer man and a better general than Cleon, but that he was, like Cleon, essentially in agreement with the aims of the radical democracy. He was able to lead the people, unlike Cleon, but he did not lead them toward justice. He fostered unrestrained democracy and ruined Athens with the empire.

Although Plato and Thucydides are close on many points, they seem on the surface to differ in their conceptions of the value of democracy, and this has an effect on their estimates of Pericles. In Plato's *Statesman*, for instance, the Stranger says that "no multitude of any sort" (οὐκ ἄν ποτε πλῆθος οὐδ' ὡντινωνοῦν, 297b) could ever acquire the science of ruling a state, nor could it ever exercise such rule with wisdom (μετὰ νοῦ, literally "with mind," 297b, cf. *Laws*, 6.758b), while for Pericles each man has a part in the exercise of power to judge the worth of others' plans (2.40.2). To what extent does Thucydides imply criticism of Pericles by linking him with Cleon and Alcibiades, and to what extent does his analysis accord with Plato's? The modes in which the two authors chose to write complicates this issue.

Plato nowhere in the dialogues speaks in his own voice, while Thucydides, although he does use his own authorial voice occasionally, constantly

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employs the opposition of ideas as a rhetorical tool to force his readers to think about the events he is presenting.[34] So before we can answer the questions about the ambiguities in Thucydides' presentation of Pericles, we must consider the ambiguity of Thucydides' methods in general.

Thucydides is not an historian in our modern unpoetic and scientific sense, nor is he of the sort that Aristotle describes in the *Poetics* (1451b), in which the historian deals essentially with the particular.[35] The rhetoric of his form creates oppositions and challenges the reader to look not so much at whether he represents his own sources clearly, but at life in general.[36] He thus seems at times to be more of a philosopher—or perhaps a Sophist or playwright—than he does an historian.[37] The question of interpreting him and his relationship to Pericles then becomes one of whether or not he provides a place of rest—a philosophical vantage point from which we may understand his work—or whether he never resolves the many oppositions he presents and is not a philosopher but the philosopher's close image, the Sophist.[38] Plato can help us resolve this question by providing the background for the argument we reviewed from the *Statesman* that what is not does in fact exist as the Other. We therefore can measure and define the absence of some of the basic qualities of the statesman, courage and *sophrosune* (*Statesman*, 284b–c).

In the *Sophist*, one of the defenses of Sophists that Theaetetus and the Eleatic Stranger must overcome is the argument that what is not cannot exist (*Sophist*, 260c–261b). One defense of the Sophists could be that if the argument against them is that they are not, and what they are is not, then if one follows the great philosophical figure Parmenides, there is a problem because what is not does not exist.[39] Therefore, the Sophist cannot exist (260c–d). The Stranger's solution to the problem posed by Parmenides' idea is to define what is not as what is other or different. The Stranger is tracking down the Sophist in the realm of images and likenesses, but the Sophist contends that "speech and thinking (or 'opinion')" (καὶ λόγον δὴ καὶ δόξαν εἶναι τῶν οὐ μετεχόντων, 260d) "do not have a share in not-being." The Stranger sees the Sophist in the realm of not-being and falsity, while the Sophist seeks to defend himself by saying that these do not exist. Once the Stranger has shown that true and false statements exist (264a), he can find the Sophist among images and falsehoods (264d). The Sophist dwells with nonbeing, while the philosopher looks upon reality itself in the clear light (254a–b). Yet the philosopher is so close to the Sophist that Theaetetus finds the philosopher first, almost running into him unawares (253c).

The existence of not-being or falsity in the realm of thought and language is a central question, though at a different level, in the *Cratylus*. Cratylus believes that names exist by nature and not by custom (383a), but he allows Hermogenes to take the first part of the discussion with Socrates. After

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Socrates explains the activities of the legislator of language (426c–427d), Hermogenes induces Cratylus to join the dialogue by asking him to explain the fitness of names (427d–e), a question that Cratylus cannot resist because he believes that the original legislator gave names that are of necessity true (438c). Thus for Cratylus all names are the right names, and there is no possibility of a false one. Just as in the *Sophist*, we find in the *Cratylus* that the Sophist defends himself by asserting that there is no falsity or not-being (*Cratylus*, 429b–e). Socrates refutes this position by showing Cratylus that a name is a kind of image, and that there can be true and false images (430–31). When Cratylus contends that words are a special case (431e–432a), Socrates distinguishes between words and the actual things the words represent. Socrates presses Cratylus to explain how he can say there is no knowledge of things apart from names. He asks how the legislator knew things before he gave them names (438b), and how it is that the legislator contradicts himself, since some names suggest that there is rest, while other names depend on motion (438c). Finally, Cratylus admits that there is knowledge apart from names and that certain absolutes, such as the good and the beautiful, do exist (439b–d).

This argument shows that the position that all names are correct is impossible to defend. Thucydides implicitly recognizes this when he says that in *stasis* words change their *axioseis* (plural of *axiosis* or "valuation," 3.82.4). If words had been for Thucydides the only medium through which things could be known, then he would not have been able to know when a word was being incorrectly applied, since he would have had no reference point in the thing itself (*ergon*). For Thucydides as for Plato there is knowledge of things apart from words, and both can say that some words are correct and others incorrect images of the things they describe.

In Socrates' last speech in the *Cratylus*, it becomes clear that this dialogue has even wider significance for Thucydides. There Socrates contends that if everything were in motion and nothing at rest, there would be no knowledge. For Thucydides too, just as for all those who seek to know the exact nature of things (1.22.4), there must be a place of rest, or else it would not be possible to say anything at all. If Thucydides did not have knowledge, he could not talk as he does about human nature or observe that words changed their sense. On this very point what he has to say comes very close to Plato's position. For Thucydides as for Plato in the *Cratylus*, the sense and meaning of words depends in part upon custom (cf. συνθήκην τι καὶ ἔθος, "a convention in a way and custom," my translation, *Cratylus* 435b, and τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων, "the customary valuation of words," Thuc. 3.82.4). Yet in order to observe the movement and change of words, Thucydides presupposes a reference point or place of quiet or rest (5.26.5) from which he can observe and know things as they are:

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καὶ ξυνέβη μοι φεύγειν τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ ἔτη εἴκοσι μετὰ τὴν ἐς Ἀμφίπολιν στρατηγίαν, καὶ γενομένῳ παρ᾽ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς πράγμασι, καὶ οὐχ ἧσσον τοῖς Πελοποννησίων διὰ τὴν φυγήν, καθ᾽ ἡσυχίαν τι αὐτῶν μᾶλλον αἰσθέσθαι. (5.26.5)

It was also my fate to be an exile from my country for twenty years after my command at Amphipolis; and being present with both parties, and more especially with the Peloponnesians by reason of my exile, I had leisure to observe affairs somewhat. (5.26.5)

καθ᾽ ἡσυχίαν, which here is reasonably translated by Crawley as "[being at] leisure," literally means "in quiet" or "stillness."[40]

The Stranger argues in Plato's *Statesman* that the mean or measure is crucial to all knowledge:

[284α] Ξένος:
εἰ πρὸς μηδὲν ἕτερον τὴν τοῦ μείζονος ἐάσει τις φύσιν ἢ πρὸς τοὔλαττον, οὐκ ἔσται ποτὲ πρὸς τὸ μέτριον: ἦ γάρ;

Νεώτερος Σωκράτης
οὕτως.

Ξένος:
οὐκοῦν τὰς τέχνας τε αὐτὰς καὶ τἆργα αὐτῶν σύμπαντα διολοῦμεν τούτῳ τῷ λόγῳ, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὴν ζητουμένην νῦν πολιτικὴν καὶ τὴν ῥηθεῖσαν ὑφαντικὴν ἀφανιοῦμεν; ἅπασαι γὰρ αἱ τοιαῦταί που τὸ τοῦ μετρίου πλέον καὶ ἔλαττον οὐχ ὡς οὐκ ὂν ἀλλ᾽ ὡς ὂν χαλεπὸν περὶ τὰς πράξεις [284β] παραφυλάττουσι, καὶ τούτῳ δὴ τῷ τρόπῳ τὸ μέτρον σῴζουσαι πάντα ἀγαθὰ καὶ καλὰ ἀπεργάζονται.

[284A] Stranger:
If someone will allow the nature of the larger to be relative to nothing other than to the smaller, it will not ever be relative to the mean or measure, or will it?

Younger Socrates:
It is so.

Stranger:
Then will we not destroy the arts themselves and all the works of them with this argument (*logos*) and the now sought-after political art and we will make disappear the described art of weaving. For all arts of this type guard closely their actions in the more and less of the mean not on the basis that it is not, but on the basis that it is difficult, and indeed it is in this way that preserving the mean they make everything that is good and beautiful.[41] (284a–b)

The mean here is τὸ μέτρον, the "mean" or "measure."[42]

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Indeed all knowledge depends upon some sort of measure or mean (τὸ μέτρον 284b), or constant point of reference. Thucydides' quiet or rest is such a point of measure from which one can understand and measure movement. This is a literary or metaphorical indication that Thucydides does not approach his subject as a Sophist in the Platonic sense. Another indication is that unlike the Sophists, he does not aim to win favor with his audience (1.22.4), which can then lead to high payments. There is also a question of the status of judgments of value or worth relative to ascertained facts, where Thucydides' view of what he says is true resembles what Plato argues about measure and the Forms. Thucydides measures reports of facts against experience, indications, reasoning, and results and seems to be quite sure that there are abstract qualities like human nature.

This still does not answer the question of whether Pericles represents for Thucydides a true political ideal or whether he is merely a more creditable and efficient democrat than either Cleon or Alcibiades. For this, we must understand further the relationship between Thucydides and Plato. Thucydides may have his own point of rest and knowledge from which to survey the Peloponnesian War, but does Pericles share that position? Thus far it seems that he lacked an ability to conceptualize and then confine what he did not know within the bounds of *sophrosune* and measure. Specifically, he seems to have been unable to take the step from knowing how to respond with moderate military force to knowing how to manage a war that could last almost thirty years. The prospect of such a long war required a structure for political succession and a permanent governmental body with oversight of the long-term interests of the state. Pericles seems also to have been unable to understand fully that Athens' appeal to its subject states depended on a long-term democratizing movement.[43]

Nietzsche argued that with Plato and perhaps even as early as Socrates the ancient union of *logos* and *ergon* in Greek life began to disintegrate.[44] In his view, Socrates and Plato, by looking at life on this earth as a contamination (*Phaedo* 80b–81d) and a disease,[45] began a separation of mind and body or *logos* and *ergon* that led first to the establishment of the Christian Church with its otherworldly creed, and finally to the complete derangement of modern life in which all knowledge, especially science, has become disjoined from our higher purposes.[46] This is a twofold process. First, Plato identified the true life with the life outside the body. The Christian Church continued this. Second, Plato separated thought from action and idealized knowledge so that Socrates' and Plato's actual political deeds are trivial compared with their ideas.[47] In later hands, this disjunction leads to the separation of science from life. The great scientific achievements since the Renaissance have left the world in awe of science so that science has, in Nietzsche's view, triumphed over man. For him, "an essentially mechanical world is an essentially meaningless world."[48] Thus, for him, God is dead.[49]

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As a remedy to all of this, Nietzsche wants to return to a pre-Socratic or at least pre-Platonic world in which we can once again understand the union of *logos* and *ergon* and not use our philosophy to condemn this life or our science to dissect it.[50] He sees Thucydides as an antidote to Plato, representing the last of the older Hellenes.[51] For Nietzsche, there is no contradiction in Pericles' remark in the Funeral Oration that the Athenians have everywhere established eternal memorials of good and bad (2.41.4).[52] The magnitude of the deeds matters for Nietzsche far more than their moral value.

Although the Athens of Pericles represents the highest achievement of the Greeks, from this pinnacle Pericles recognizes that decline is inevitable (2.64.3). In the *Republic*, Plato addresses political decline and puts it in terms of a change from rest to motion. Socrates and Glaucon are discussing how the city in which the rule is by the best (aristocracy) declines into rule by those who love honor and victory (timocracy). This turns into an examination of when faction first arises in the city:

> Socrates: πῶς οὖν δή, εἶπον, ὦ Γλαύκων, ἡ πόλις ἡμῖν κινηθήσεται, καὶ πῇ στασιάσουσιν οἱ ἐπίκουροι καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους τε καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτούς; ἢ βούλει, ὥσπερ Ὅμηρος, εὐχώμεθα ταῖς Μούσαις εἰπεῖν ἡμῖν "ὅπως δὴ" "πρῶτον" στάσις "ἔμπεσε," καὶ φῶμεν αὐτὰς τραγικῶς ὡς πρὸς παῖδας ἡμᾶς παιζούσας καὶ ἐρεσχηλούσας, ὡς δὴ σπουδῇ λεγούσας, ὑψηλολογουμένας λέγειν. (545d–e)
>
> Socrates: "How then, Glaucon," I said, "will our city be moved and in what way will the auxiliaries and the rulers separate into factions both against one another and among themselves? Or do you wish, as does Homer, that we pray to the Muses to tell us how 'faction first fell on us,' and shall we say that they speak to us with high tragic talk, as if playing with children and jesting though they were speaking seriously in a high, proud way?" (545d–e)

Plato, like Thucydides, joins *stasis* with movement: "how will our city be moved" (κινηθήσεται)? *Stasis* is also for Plato connected with the decline from the highest state. Again like Thucydides, Plato puts this in terms of the natural tendency of all things to decay:

> Socrates: ὧδέ πως. χαλεπὸν μὲν κινηθῆναι πόλιν οὕτω συστᾶσαν: ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ γενομένῳ παντὶ φθορά ἐστιν, οὐδ' ἡ τοιαύτη σύστασις τὸν ἅπαντα μενεῖ χρόνον, ἀλλὰ λυθήσεται. (546a)
>
> Like this. It is difficult for a city constituted like this to be moved. But, since there is decay for everything that has come into being, not even such a composition will remain forever; It will be dissolved. (546a)

Note the importance of motion and its connection with decay. In his last speech, Pericles says,

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ἢν καὶ νῦν ὑπενδῶμέν ποτε (πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι), μνήμη καταλελείψεται, Ἑλλήνων τε ὅτι Ἕλληνες πλείστων δὴ ἤρξαμεν, καὶ πολέμοις μεγίστοις ἀντέσχομεν πρός τε ξύμπαντας καὶ καθ᾽ ἑκάστους, πόλιν τε τοῖς πᾶσιν εὐπορωτάτην καὶ μεγίστην ᾠκήσαμεν. (2.64.3)

Even if now, in obedience to the general [natural] law of decay, we should ever be forced to yield, still it will be remembered that we held rule over more Hellenes than any other Hellenic state, that we sustained the greatest wars against their united or separate powers, and inhabited a city unrivalled by any other in resources or magnitude. (2.64.3, translation Crawley with the addition of the word [natural])

For Plato, knowledge of the "nuptial number" and hence of the entire arrangement of the best state coincides with rest and organized or orderly movement, births in accordance with number. The loss of the knowledge of this number first introduces diseased motion and *stasis* into the city (546a–e). Thus, Plato and Thucydides agree that the one who seeks to understand human nature must do through careful movements of thought from a point of reference or rest, but there is still a question as to whether for Thucydides, Pericles surveys Athens relative to a position of measure and reference, or whether perhaps Pericles may represent some higher or different type for Thucydides, as Nietzsche suggests.[53] Nietzsche comments on Pericles' use of the word *rhathumia* (ῥᾳθυμία), which means "easiness of heart [or mind]," but that is not the same as a position of intellectual rest with a measure for reference for Pericles at least, since he sees this ease of mind as a valuable characteristic when facing danger and hardships without fear.[54] Pericles' failures then are failures deriving from a lack of reflection on the structural problems in the Athenian democracy.

This question of the nature of the highest type of life lies behind all political speculations, and we will return to it later. For now, it is sufficient to say that although we may see early and faint signs of tyranny even in the Funeral Oration, Pericles as Thucydides portrays him is not a tyrant, nor was his city during his rule right up to the end, though Athens was sometimes overbearing and violent. The degeneration of Athenian internal political life and foreign policy during the war does not for Thucydides necessarily mean that Pericles in his rule did not at least for a brief time aim clearly an ideal. As became clear in our examination of the speech of the Athenians at the Congress at Lacedaemon in Book 1, and even in the debate between the Corcyreans and the Corinthians at Athens, Athens as an imperial city was not content merely to look at its own self-interest. Athens paid homage to the just and to reasoned debate, and was a worthy ruler. This does not imply that Pericles' rule incorporated all the solutions to its structural weaknesses; indeed some of the solutions, such as the interposition of a somewhat aristocratic senate between the leader of a democracy and the assembly (the ἐκκλησία or *ecclesia*) or a

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method for assuring relatively orderly succession from one leader to the next, could have emerged from a contemplative reflection on democracy.

Despite Cleon's debasements of Pericles' ideas, there is in the Mytilenean debate something still of the Athenian love of reason, or what James Boyd White calls the "culture of argument."[55] Both Cleon and Diodotus do confront the question of whether it is wise to depopulate Mytilene, although Cleon's attention to wisdom is without substance. In contrast, the Spartan judges of the Plataeans seek only to assure themselves that the Plataeans have done nothing for the Lacedaemonians (3.52.4). They do not ask themselves or the Plataeans whether the punishment is wise.[56] While Diodotus relies mainly on the argument from expediency, he also almost surreptitiously brings in the question of justice when he says that if the Athenians kill all the Mytileneans, they "will do injustice" (ἀδικήσετε, 3.47.3) to those who turned the city over to the Athenians as soon as they had arms. He says this even while claiming that expediency cannot be united with justice (3.47.5). For the Spartans reviewing the case of Plataea, however, the only question is expediency (3.52.4, cf. 3.68.4).

The contrast is only partly between the Athenians, who do not kill and enslave all the Mytileneans, and the Spartans who kill all the Plataean men and enslave the women and children (3.68.1–3.68.2). Thucydides is also showing that just as political discourse was breaking down in Athens, so it was declining throughout the Hellenic world. It should be noted that Thucydides places the debate concerning Mytilene in a suggestive context. It directly precedes the very similar but worse treatment of the Plataeans by Sparta when the Spartans massacre over 200 Plataeans (3.68.2–4), while the section on the revolution in Corcyra follows next after that. Then immediately after the revolution in Corcyra Thucydides mentions the early Athenian expedition to Sicily (3.86), and by doing so links the Athenians' interest with Sicily again with *stasis*, as he had done in his review of Pericles and his successors (2.65.11–2.65.12). Nicias says in a futile effort of discouraging the passion for the venture that the Athenians must accept, that in Sicily Athens will attempt to found a city among strangers and their enemies (6.23.2). Then Thucydides comments at the end of the adventure that the Athenians are like a depleted city (7.75.5). Finally, in taking the war to Sicily the Athenians suffer a complete loss such that few out of many return (7.87.6), which is clearly an allusion to the returns in the *Odyssey* from the Trojan War.[57] This then becomes the overarching example of one of the most important and disturbing characteristics of *stasis*, which is the disappearance or complete destruction of one side in the conflict and, in the end, the frequent disappearance of the entire political entity that suffers from *stasis*.[58] Thucydides prefigures the loss of the city when Pericles takes the inhabitants of greater Attica away from their cities into Athens (2.16.2).[59] Then later he takes away from his

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citizens the idea that their physical home is the real city of the Athenians; he replaces the physical city with a city in the sea and the idea of Empire (2.62.2–3). This proves to be a tragic error of judgment derived from an over-estimation of the value of power.

This debate between Cleon and Diodotus represents a decline in the level of political discourse from what prevailed while Pericles was alive, and is an example of Thucydides' comments on Pericles' successors:[60]

> οἱ δὲ ὕστερον ἴσοι μᾶλλον αὐτοὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὄντες καὶ ὀρεγόμενοι τοῦ πρῶτος ἕκαστος γίγνεσθαι ἐτράποντο καθ' ἡδονὰς τῷ δήμῳ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐνδιδόναι. (2.65.10)

> With his successors it was different. More on a level with one another, and each grasping at supremacy, they ended by committing even the conduct of state affairs to the whims of the multitude. (2.65.10)

Here we obviously see Thucydides' view of Pericles' strengths, but the weaknesses of the Athenian Constitution that he inherited reveal his one deficiency, a failure to see the need for a more comprehensive reform of the structure of the government. The extent to which this weakness can be teased out of Thucydides' one comment on the positive outcome of the revolution of 411 (8.97.2), "fusion of the high and low" in the structure of the government is hard to ascertain at least partly because of the incomplete state of the final book, Book 8. Pericles needed others perhaps, someone with the political vision of Solon or Kleisthenes, but no such ally appeared nor did Pericles seek out such a one.

Cleon, for the sake only of his own advancement (cf. 5.16.1, 3.36.6), appeals to the emotions of the people. He speaks violently (3.36.6) and encourages revenge while suggesting that those who oppose him have their own interests mainly at heart (3.38.2). Diodotus addresses this charge, pointing out that such suggestions make the successful speaker liable to be suspect (ὕποπτος "is suspect," 3.42.3, cf. ὑποπτεύηται, someone "is suspected," 3.43.1). He thus illuminates one of the signal characteristics of *stasis*, which is suspicion, a quality that Pericles says is absent from the best states (2.37.1).

Diodotus refreshes for the Athenians the claim of fair and open consideration of the issues (3.42.5), which he says has been endangered in the prevailing political climate of charges and suspicion. The good citizen, he says, ought not to frighten his opponents, but to speak openly for the benefit of the state.

Suspicion, Diodotus says, limits debate so that even good advice is not less suspect than bad (3.43.2). The result of this is that both the advocate of the

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worst measures and the man who speaks for the good of the state must lie in order to win his case (3.43.2).[61] The city can no longer be served openly, for the one openly presenting something good for the city is suspected (3.43.3) of grasping for more. This entire passage (3.43.1–3.43.3) serves as a commentary on the debate between Cleon and Diodotus. When Diodotus says that because of refinements in political discourse the city cannot be served in the open (3.43.3), he is describing the position in which he finds himself. Yet Cleon is the one who must use deceit to promote the worst measures (3.43.2); Diodotus, recommending what is better (τἀγαθὰ, literally "good things," 3.43.2), must lie in order to win trust (τὸν τὰ ἀμείνω λέγοντα ψευσάμενον πιστὸν γενέσθαι).[62] The tactics that Cleon uses prevent Diodotus from speaking freely. He must appeal to expediency and to the emotions of the people rather than to their minds. Diodotus also anticipates the description of *stasis* when he refers to the refinements (διὰ τὰς περινοίας, "on account of these refinements," 3.43.3) of argumentation that he sees at Athens. Special techniques for dealing with one's adversaries flourish during *stasis*:

> Revolution thus ran its course from city to city, and the places which it arrived at last, from having heard what had been done before carried to a still greater excess the refinement of their inventions, as manifested in the cunning of their enterprises and the atrocity of their reprisals. (3.83.3)

Even in his account of criminal motivation (3.45) Diodotus must pander to the prevailing mood of the people, for in their view the emotions, not reason, lead men. He even proposes that the Athenians should try to change the nature of political debate and not honor good speakers lest the good speakers try to win more honor.[63] This has the effect of suggesting a kind of unnatural coldness to political life, which reinforces the sense that something was already terribly wrong in the heart of the political life of Athens.

Cleon's anti-intellectual appeals also play on this feeling among the people with the result that in this pair of speeches Thucydides shows how the range of political discourse has narrowed as the people became divided. In Cleon's time, certain arguments have lost their persuasive power. By the end of the war, political discourse has little or no effect on what the Athenians do.

Diodotus argues that the contest between him and Cleon does not concern whether the Mytileneans have done any wrong, but rather what good counsel and wisdom are for the Athenians. He asserts that he has come forth neither to oppose nor to accuse in the case of the Mytileneans (3.44.1). He must deny that he has come forth in opposition, because Cleon has charged that those who oppose the resolution concerning the Mytileneans are working against the interests of Athens and may have been bribed (3.38.1–3.38.3). Diodotus is, then, in the situation to which Thucydides refers when he describes *stasis*:

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the violent and angry man is always trustworthy, the one who speaks in opposition suspect (3.82.5). This is not to say that *stasis* is already fully grown at Athens. *Stasis* is at this point incipient and only some of its characteristics are beginning to develop. In addition, Thucydides sees the debate between Cleon and Diodotus as a paradigm of the confrontation between the type of the demagogue, Cleon, and the inheritor of moderate policies, Diodotus, whose task is especially difficult because of the violent mood of the people.[64] On the one hand, Diodotus upholds the value of free discussion in the assembly, since he directly confronts Cleon's position that debate is not the proper way to prepare for action: He says that those who hold such a position are either unintelligent or corrupt (3.42.3). On the other hand, since Diodotus thinks that a good man must lie when conditions have become as bad as they are at Athens, he reveals the limits that have been placed upon political discourse.[65] These limits reflect the weakened power of *logos* as swift emotional action becomes more highly esteemed.

Cleon forces Diodotus to reduce his argument to one from self-interest (3.44.4), which contrasts with Pericles' claim in the Funeral Oration that the Athenians benefit others not so much from calculations of self-interest as they do from trust in their own freedom (2.40.5). Diodotus does introduce an ethical judgment later in his speech (3.47.3–3.47.5), but he must conceal this argument even as he makes it (3.47.5). The differing circumstances and modes of the Funeral Oration and Diodotus' speech certainly account for some of the variation in tone and subjects between the two speeches, but in accordance with his program (1.22.4), Thucydides has made the speeches more a revelation of the character and ideas of the speakers than of their rhetorical skills or even of the rhetorical modes of their speeches.[66]

Diodotus' emphasis on interest affects the character of all his other supporting arguments. He subordinates the "moderation" (μετρίως, 3.46.4) of Athens to her interests, while both Pericles and the Athenian speakers in Book 1 saw political moderation as good in itself (cf. 1.76.4). In addition, Diodotus denies that the penalty of death will restrain anyone intending a crime, specifically a state planning to revolt (3.45), and bases this on two considerations, one anthropological or historical, the other psychological. In early times, he says, punishments were lighter, but they have become more severe as they gradually lost their ability to dissuade criminals (3.45.3). But this is really no more likely or reasonable (cf. 3.45.3) than either that punishments have gradually become lighter as men have learned to fear their societies' increasing power to impose them, or that just as human nature has been constant, so also have punishments. Diodotus uses this argument because he must. Since he relies on considerations of expediency for his main point of view, his only argument against the death penalty is the one from expediency. He must claim that the punishment simply will not prevent future revolts. Diodotus' account

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of the motivation of the intending criminal emphasizes the irrationality of human impulses. *Elpis* (hope) and *eros* guide the criminal in his actions, and sometimes luck increases his delusion (3.45.5–3.45.6). His account of human motivation accords with the emphasis on the irrational that Thucydides notes as a characteristic of *stasis*.[67] Indeed, the speech itself contains a fundamental irrationality or dishonesty.[68] How can he consistently maintain that no *nomos* or punishment will restrain the one who intends to do wrong and also claim that public debate is an essential preparation for action? Both *nomos* and legal punishment are products of forethought, and both are considered by rational men in planning action.

If irrationality rules, then Diodotus' own speech cannot possibly have any effect on what the Athenians decide to do. In Diodotus' argument, *nomos*, which Pericles claimed Athens respected (2.37.3), seems to have given way to *phusis*. Two passages, one from Diodotus, and one from the Funeral Oration, should be compared:

> πεφύκασί τε ἅπαντες καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ ἁμαρτάνειν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι νόμος ὅστις ἀπείρξει τούτου, ἐπεὶ διεξεληλύθασί γε διὰ πασῶν τῶν ζημιῶν οἱ ἄνθρωποι προστιθέντες, εἴ πως ἧσσον ἀδικοῖντο ὑπὸ τῶν κακούργων. καὶ εἰκὸς τὸ πάλαι τῶν μεγίστων ἀδικημάτων μαλακωτέρας κεῖσθαι αὐτάς, παραβαινομένων δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ ἐς τὸν θάνατον αἱ πολλαὶ ἀνήκουσιν: καὶ τοῦτο ὅμως παραβαίνεται. [4] ἢ τοίνυν δεινότερόν τι τούτου δέος εὑρετέον ἐστὶν ἢ τόδε γε οὐδὲν ἐπίσχει. (3.45.3–4)

> All, states and individuals, are alike prone to err, and there is no law that will prevent them; or why should men have exhausted the list of punishments in search of enactments to protect them from evil-doers? It is probable that in early times the penalties for the greatest offences were less severe, and that, as these were disregarded, the penalty of death has been by degrees in most cases arrived at, which is itself disregarded in like manner.[4] Either then some means of terror more terrible than this must be discovered, or it must be owned that this restraint is useless. (3.45.3–3.45.4)

> ἀνεπαχθῶς δὲ τὰ ἴδια προσομιλοῦντες τὰ δημόσια διὰ δέος μάλιστα οὐ παρανομοῦμεν, τῶν τε αἰεὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὄντων ἀκροάσει καὶ τῶν νόμων, καὶ μάλιστα αὐτῶν ὅσοι τε ἐπ᾽ ὠφελίᾳ τῶν ἀδικουμένων κεῖνται καὶ ὅσοι ἄγραφοι ὄντες αἰσχύνην ὁμολογουμένην φέρουσιν. (2.37.3)

> But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace. (2.37.3)

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Diodotus says that both in private and in public life men are accustomed to make mistakes, and no *nomos* will restrain them.[69] This represents an acceptance of the idea that we cannot control our natures.[70] For Pericles, on the other hand, the ease of private life does not lessen respect for the law, which owes its force to δέος ("fear"), the very thing to which Diodotus denies efficacy.[71] Pericles invokes respect for law, while Diodotus concentrates on what he sees as man's natural inclination to break the law.

Thucydides had seen Pericles bring the Athenians to their senses when they were incited by *hubris* (2.65.9). Thus, the argument that the Mytileneans could not possibly have been restrained by any laws or counsels is simply not true. If they had had a leader such as Pericles, he might have been able to convince them not to become hubristic, a fault into which Cleon says their prosperity had led them. Again, however, Diodotus must rely on arguments that suggest that passions drove the Mytileneans, because that is the only opening Cleon left when he said that pardon could be granted to unwilling criminals (3.40.2). The tendency of Cleon's and Diodotus' arguments taken together is to reduce both the space for public debate and the trust in the efficacy of reason in that debate.

Diodotus departs from Pericles in several other points as well, such as his statement that τύχη (*tuche,* "chance" or "luck") moves men (3.45.5–3.45.6) and that poverty produces boldness (3.45.4). Pericles had said that chance is equal for all men and should not relied upon (2.65.5). We may blame chance for what does not turn out according to our plans (1.140.1), but it does not afford a sound basis for wise decisions. Pericles did recognize that chance could enslave the mind, as for instance in his third speech when he encourages the Athenians to persist in the war despite the ravages of the plague (2.61.3–4). After acknowledging the force of this stroke of bad luck, however, Pericles states that the Athenians ought to be willing to face the dangers that lie before them, since they are citizens of great character who inhabit a great state (2.61.4).

On the surface, Diodotus devalues the idea of *nomos* as a force for restraint. He says that reason plays a small part in men's actions (3.45.6), but since he engages in debate with a very well-crafted speech, he at bottom relies on the power of *logos* to anticipate action and to render it useful. Yet he differs from Pericles, for although both trusted in *logos*, only Pericles could express this trust openly. Diodotus profoundly rejects open *logos* in his speech when he says that it is not possible to benefit the city without deceiving it (3.43.3). He says that only from great "simplicity" (εὐήθεια, 3.45.7) could someone think that when human nature has determined upon a course of action, force of law, or some other deterrent will sway it. This is significant in two respects. First, as Thucydides notes, in *stasis* "simplicity" (τὸ εὔηθες 3.83.1) becomes laughable, even though nobility of character has the largest

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share in simplicity. Second, Diodotus emphasizes *phusis* against *nomos* and forethought. At least according to what he says, man's nature is passionate and not swayed by respect for law or even an estimate of personal advantage. This change leads to an account of human conduct in a state that stands opposed to the one the Stranger presents in the *Statesman*. There the best regime relies on the prudential judgment, that is, the *phronesis* of the ruler, but this is rarely attained, so we must accept the rule of the laws or *nomoi* (294a) as images or imitations of the true rule (300c). But the actual laws set out in a good regime have an image of the good in them (300b). Diodotus' idea that *nomos* cannot restrain men or structure their lives (3.45.3–4) stands opposed to what the statesman argues (*Statesman* 300a–b) and what Socrates implies elsewhere, for example, the *Gorgias* (504c–d), where he says that our souls obtain order from justice and *sophrosune*.[72] We may quite sensibly surmise that Diodotus' psychology of crime fits the rhetorical requirements his speech faces if he wishes to persuade, but this psychology is at best only a partial view of a larger and truer analysis of human emotion and thought that lead to our estimate of Thucydides' own ideas, which he carefully hides from our direct sight.

Diodotus' psychology of crime does, however, correspond in some respects to Thucydides' own analysis of motivation.[73] Just as Diodotus asserts that rational calculation of advantage, respect for law, and conventions in general are powerless to restrain men from crime, so in his description of the growth of Greek society, Thucydides emphasizes the determination of human actions by two emotions, fear and greed. Since the weaker love gain, they accept the rule of the stronger. The more powerful cities, because they had capital, were able to subdue the weaker ones (1.8.3). Likewise, Agamemnon's ability to raise his expedition depended more on his superior strength than on the oaths of Tyndareus (1.9.1). To take an example from Thucydides' own time, he says that the Spartan fear of Athens' growing power drove her into the war (1.23.6).

Yet these correspondences do not reach to the center of Thucydides' philosophy. Diodotus ascribes basic human motivation to poverty, abundance, and the other conditions of human life:

> ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν πενία ἀνάγκῃ τὴν τόλμαν παρέχουσα, ἡ δ' ἐξουσία ὕβρει τὴν πλεονεξίαν καὶ φρονήματι, αἱ δ' ἄλλαι ξυντυχίαι ὀργῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς ἑκάστη τις κατέχεται ὑπ' ἀνηκέστου τινὸς κρείσσονος ἐξάγουσιν ἐς τοὺς κινδύνους. (3.45.4)

> And that as long as poverty gives men the courage of necessity, or plenty fills them with the ambition which belongs to insolence and pride, and the other conditions of life remain each under the thralldom of some fatal and master passion, so long will the impulse never be wanting to drive men into danger. (3.45.4)

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As each certain condition is constrained by something overpowering, it motivates men. As *eros* leads, *elpis* ("hope") follows, the latter suggesting the abundance of chance (3.45.5, cf. 3.45.6), which also contributes substantially to the incitement. When Thucydides, on the other hand, describes his own method for determining what is and what is not important in a sequence of events, he rejects what is limited in scope, individual or particular, and dependent on chance, in favor of what is constant in human nature. For instance, in his account of how he derived the information that went into his narration of the deeds of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides mentions his "great pains" (ἐπιπόνως, 1.22.3) to arrive at his facts. He did not trust "any chance source" (ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος, 1.22.2), or someone who might give a report colored "by his own sympathies or distorted by a poor memory" (ὡς ἑκατέρων τις εὐνοίας ἢ μνήμης ἔχοι 1.22.3). Again, when Thucydides outlines the ravages of *stasis*, he focuses on what is constant in revolutions as opposed to what is determined by the vicissitudes of the individual cases:

> καὶ ἐπέπεσε πολλὰ καὶ χαλεπὰ κατὰ στάσιν ταῖς πόλεσι, γιγνόμενα μὲν καὶ αἰεὶ ἐσόμενα, ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἡσυχαίτερα καὶ τοῖς εἴδεσι διηλλαγμένα, ὡς ἂν ἕκασται αἱ μεταβολαὶ τῶν ξυντυχιῶν ἐφιστῶνται. (3.82.2)
>
> The sufferings which revolution entailed upon the cities were many and terrible, such as have occurred and always will occur, as long as the nature of mankind remains the same; though in a severer or milder form, and varying in their symptoms, according to the variety of the particular cases. (3.82.2)

The language Thucydides uses here coincides with the words he uses in his chapter on method (1.22).[74] In each case the words ὡς ("as") and ἕκασται ("each") appear, as do words of the root τυχ-, expressing chance. ὡς seems to imply the limited scope of what is individual (ἕκασται) and particular. Since Thucydides sees chance events and the particular as of far less significance than what is general and constant, Diodotus' psychology, depending as it does on chance and the particular conditions of life (ὡς ἑκάστη [ξυντυχία] "as each [chance occurrence] is overpowered by some irrepressible power" 3.45.4), does not agree with Thucydides' ultimate views.[75] Although fear, greed, and desire are important determinants of action for Thucydides, they are not the only causes, and they certainly are not the highest. Enlightened statesmen such as Pericles must understand that such motivations as Diodotus mentions do often drive men, since men are by nature wont to err both individually and in the political sphere. Laws, justice, and even a rational calculation of their own interest (as we shall see especially in the case of the Sicilian expedition) do not always restrain them. When, however, a speaker declares that all men make mistakes by nature and that

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no law or reason can hold them back, he lowers the tone of discourse in the city. In order to have the best citizens, one must hold before them ideals toward which they may aim. Here we may reflect on the difference between Thucydides' narrative and the points of view of Pericles and Diodotus. Diodotus must appeal to *phusis* more than *logos* as compared to Pericles, who aims at a higher synthesis. But Thucydides' understanding and his work are at least potentially of a different sort. He appeals to a universal and philosophical horizon in which custom and the standard forms in which human actions and ideas participate interact through thought, language, and deeds. Pericles' speeches may aim at something higher but because they are political they are tied at least originally to the time in which they are delivered.[76]

Beyond this, however, Thucydides' moderation and discipline in his approach to what seem like chance events differs naturally from Pericles' point of view. To consider it in the terms of moderation in the *Statesman* (284e–285b), Pericles' incorporation of the part of *sophrosune* that must reckon with what is not and turn it into a kind of knowledge fails to occur even after the great chance event of the plague. Thucydides' vision thus includes that particular strength. Of course, we can argue that he had a much longer time to think about this than did Pericles but that does not mean that the statesman can avoid such concerns.

Since Thucydides clearly sees the force of custom (one of the meanings of *nomos*) in determining what is true or is understood as true, the question in regard to his understanding of what knowledge is will be whether we aim at some universal truths that we can sometimes see as if from a distance, or whether we are forever trapped in a variety of individual circumstances. The one point in the identification of clear differences between Diodotus and Pericles is how we measure those differences. For the purposes of this argument, the ideas of Cleon are on the same level as those implied in the speech of Diodotus, setting aside the question of whether he believed each or any of his points and themes. The metaphysical point of the ascent from Diodotus to Pericles appears then as an indication that there is an ascent toward participation in general truth, which reaches its apex in this work at least in the stated and implied truths of Thucydides. It is misleading in this regard to start with the view that Plato represents a rationalist ideal in which we can see a convincing proof in the existence of eternal forms or ideas that lie at the basis of all phenomena, while Thucydides represents the application of the idea of a Heraclitean epistemology to the field of historical research and reasoning.

In the first place, the arguments for the existence of a permanent soul in the *Phaedo* point our attainment or knowledge of the Forms only when our souls are purified of our bodily or earthly existence (66e–67a). Yet our souls become pure only in death (67d). Those who philosophize rightly aim to release the soul from the body; they practice death. (67d). It is then clear that

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in some ways at least there is a question for Plato and Socrates concerning how much we can know in this life. Kierkegaard goes so far in *The Concept of Irony* as to argue that Plato in the *Phaedo* presents the idea of knowledge in this life ironically.[77] We are living fully and able to know only when we die. Until then our knowledge is not complete or even sure for whatever it is we think we know. Later in the *Phaedo* Socrates has succeeded to some extent in proving the immortality of the soul to Simmias and Cebes, the two men with whom he has been discussing this while the others who were there for Socrates' death listen and watch. He then says,

> For I am calculating, my dear partner—see how greedily—if what I am saying happens to be true, believing it is good [for me]; and if there is nothing for one who has died, then during this time at least before my death I will be less unpleasant lamenting. (91b)[78]

It is certainly clear that Thucydides does not present an epistemological argument for how we are to understand the meanings and values that words have, but there are substantial indications that he does think there are facts and things that are not true and that some words describe certain phenomena better than others. In the emerging argument here it seems at least provisionally clear that values are as real to him as actual things on the ground, and many ways far more important. Yet part of what makes Thucydides difficult is the way he uses paired figures and paired speeches. We want to know what Thucydides thinks, but he makes that a challenge to force his readers to consider many points of view and to develop a fuller understanding of the large war he describes. He also relies on irony as that is one of the most important rhetorical tools for the dramatists, in particular Sophocles, who were the models in art for Thucydides and Plato.[79]

NOTES

1. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 186–87.

2. The word ὦμος ("violent," "bloody") appears only one other time in the accepted text of Thucydides: οὕτως ὠμὴ <ἡ> στάσις προυχώρησε (3.82.1). (It occurs also in the spurious chapter 3.84.1 in the adverbial form ὠμῶς.) This word ὦμος links both with the mood of the Athenians during the debate about Mytilene and with the chief proponent of the decree, Cleon.

3. Jacqueline De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism,* trans. P. Thody (New York: Arno Press, 1979), pp. 163–71.

4. De Romilly, *Thucydides*, pp. 164–65.

5. De Romilly, *Thucydides*, p. 165. These are the views of M. Pohlenz, "Thukydidesstudien I," *Nachrichten van der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft zu*

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Göttingen (1919), p. 129. They are apparently shared by Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 174, and Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.40.4n.

6. Jacqueline De Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1992, translation of original 1988 publication), pp. 36, 82, 138, notes Cleon's rejection of the Sophists.

7. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I:* 2.13.2 n.

8. See Gottfried Mader, "Demagogic Style and Historical Method: Locating Cleon's Mytilenean Rhetoric (Thucydides 3.37–40)." Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric 35, no. 1 (2017): 1–23, on the point that Cleon's speech here presents the reader with a real decline in political discourse that continues through the war.

9. De Romilly, *Thucydides*, p. 171.

10. E. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* (Bonn: Cohen, 1919), p. 1, gives to F. W. Ulrich, *Beiträge zur Erklärung des Thukydides* (Hamburg: Bei Perthes-Besser & Mauke, 1846), the credit for opening up this question of when Thucydides wrote the various parts of the *Histories*. On the origins of the analytical study of ancient texts, see Jay Bolter, "Friedrich August Wolf and the Scientific Study of Antiquity," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21, no. 1 (1980), pp. 83ff.

11. For a clear exposition of the arguments for the essential unity of the *Histories*, see John H. Finley, "The Unity of Thucydides' History," in *Three Essays on Thucydides* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1967.

12. White, *When Words Lose their Meaning*, p. 87.

13. Cf. Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 175; and H. D. F. Kitto, *Poiesis* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 309, 313. Kitto sees in Cleon's speech examples of the phenomenon Thucydides describes in 3.82.4, but does not think *stasis* is the cause.

14. Darien Shanske, *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 52–53.

15. Shanske, *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History*, p. 52.

16. Thomas Jefferson, "Declaration of Independence," https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript, accessed March 14, 2019. Near the beginning of the list of grievances, the Declaration says,

> Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.
>
> *He* has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
>
> *He* has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.
>
> *He* has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

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He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. (emphasis added)

17. I understand the words βεβαιότερος δὲ ὁ δράσας τὴν χάριν ὥστε ὀφειλομένην δι᾽ εὐνοίας ᾧ δέδωκε σῴζει to mean: “a firmer (friend) is the one who has done a favor so as to preserve it as owed through his continued good will (εὐνοία) towards him to whom he showed the kindness.” Cf. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 2* (London: MacMillan & Company, 1891), 2.40.4n.

18. De Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*, connects Cleon’s ideas here to the reaction in Athens to the Sophist culture, pp. 39–40. This is an important point that connects in some ways figures like Strepsiades in the *Clouds* with Cleon, rebelling from the Sophist culture but wanting also to participate in it.

19. See *LSJ* s v. ἀμαθία. For a less loaded use of σωφροσύνη n Thucydides, see 1.84.3. There Archidamus is attempting to persuade the Spartans not to go to war. He claims that he counsels σωφροσύνη. But cf. 1.86.2. Cleon’s words in 3.37.3–3.37.5 echo Archidamus’ speech at many points. In 8.64.5, Thucydides uses σωφροσύνη to refer to a moderate form of government.

As Arthur Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975 reprint), pp. 246–47, says, “From the days of Homer prudence in one’s own interests has been commended as σώφρων.” This kind of prudence is just what Cleon’s recommendations lack, as Diodotus (3.44ff.) argues. In fact, Diodotus claims that his position is σώφρων because it looks to ev8ovAia rather than to justice (3.44.1). Cf. Adkins, p. 247, for the close relationship between good counsel and σωφροσύνη.

20. For Cleon’s self-centeredness, see 3.37.1, 3.39.1, 3.39.2, and Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.37.ln., 3.39.2n. See also Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 3.38.1 n., and the observations there that Cleon’s “pig-headedness” is not the same as Pericles “firmness.” Note that Hornblower quotes Anthony Andrewes: “We might ourselves wonder if Pericles’ insistence was not mistaken obstinacy.”

21. See M. H. B. Marshall, “Cleon and Pericles: Sphacteria,” *Greece & Rome* 31, no. 1 (1984): 29.

22. So Hornblower suggests, quite plausibly in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume II*, 4.20.2 n.

23. *LSJ* s.v. δημαγωγέω. For a comment that the word had perhaps a neutral sense, see the continuation of the entry in *LSJ* under δημαγωγός “a popular leader, as Cleon or Pericles, Th. 4.21.” While the connection between Cleon and Pericles is reasonable, the word and its related forms have negative connotations in Thucydides as well as in Aristophanes’ *Knights* (191, 217), both cited by *LSJ*.

24. See Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, p. 197.

25. See *LSJ* s. v. φαῦλος II. 2, “inefficient, bad.” See also Classen-Steup, 3.37.3n. Cf. Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.37.3n, who interprets φαυλότεροι as “men of second rate intellect.” This seems to capture the thought perfectly.

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26. See the very clear and thorough note on this complicated passage: Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 2.40.2 n. On the force of ἤτοι see Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, p. 553 s. v. (7) ἤτοι, who suggests that Thucydides felt and used the particle τοι as "vivid in the combination," ἤτοι because he confines ἤτοι and τοι to speeches. Pericles emphasizes the virtues of making good decisions and participating actively in that process. Hornblower argues for a translation like Warner's ("we Athenians, in our own persons, take our decisions on policy or submit them to proper discussion") and Classen and Steup, *Thukydides*, 2.40.2 n.

27. See, e.g., Orwin, "Democracy and Distrust," in *Thucydides' Theory of International Relations*, pp. 98–114, esp. p. 102. See also the valuable review of Thucydides, ethics in government and foreign affairs, and realist theories of international relations; Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," pp. 51–67.

28. Cf. Hunter, *Thucydides*, pp. 134–35, 135 n. 13.

29. See now Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," pp. 59–64.

30. This more traditional understanding of Cleon as kind of perverted mirror image of Pericles explains the echoes in Cleon from Periclean speeches and political action as against the view of Darien Shanske in *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History*, pp. 52–53, who sees a closer affinity between Pericles and Cleon in an otherwise very insightful study especially of Thucydides' development of the poetic techniques of the Greek tragedians, pp. 69–118.

31. Winnington-Ingram, "*Ta Deonta Eipein*: Cleon and Diodotus," p. 77.

32. Cf. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, p. 235. Cf. also *LSJ* s. v. ἀνδραγαθία. Since ἀνδραγαθίζεται occurs only in these two places before the fourth century, we must use ἀνδραγαθία to isolate the meaning of the verb. Adkins, p. 235, collects and compares the occurrences of this word in Herodotus (1.99, 1.136, 4.65, 5.39, 6.128, and 7.166). At these places, it means "manly virtue" and "may stand as a synonym for *arete*." At Thucydides 2.43.2, it means "manly virtue." At 3.57.1, it has a moral flavor, but the entire Plataean speech appeals to moral feelings (cf. 56.2, 57.1, 58.1, and 59). This influences the meaning of ἀνδραγαθία there.

33. For example, in 3.37.2 and 3.40.7, Cleon characterizes not depopulating Mytilene as softness.

34. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, p. 85.

35. See Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 141–43; and White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, p. 88.

36. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, p. 88.

37. See, e.g., D. Whitehead, "Thucydides: Fact Grubber or Philosopher?" *Greece and Rome* 27 (1980): 158–65.

38. See *Plato: Sophist or The Professor of Wisdom*, with translation, introduction, and glossary by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 1996), pp. 6–7.

39. See Parmenides, "On Nature," *Fragment 8* (Diels-Kranz), lines 8–9: οὐ γὰρ φατὸν οὐδὲ νοητόν ἔστιν ὅπως οὐκ ἔστι, "for it is not to be said or thought that it is not." Translation David Gallop, *Parmenides of Elea: Fragments, A Text and Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000; reprint of 1991 edition).

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For this interpretation, see also Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem, *Plato Sophist: The Professor of Wisdom* (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 1996), p. 4, and *Plato's Parmenides*, translation and commentary, R. E. Allen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 81.

40. *LSJ* s .v. ἡσυχία.

41. *Plato: Statesman*, translation, interpretation, and glossary by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2012). The translation, modified slightly, is from this edition.

42. *LSJ* s.v. τὸ μέτρον. The standard definition is "measure."

43. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* , p. 290.

44. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 272 (Section 340). Cf. *Twilight of the Idols*, pp. 106–7, "What I Owe to the Ancients," Section 2.

45. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 272 (Section 340). Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 118a; and John Burnet, *Plato's Phaedo,* 118a7n.

46. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, pp. 12–20 ("Zarathustra's Prologue," Sections 3–6, esp. Section 5). See also *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 153–54 (Section 225).

47. Nietzsche, *Twilight*, pp. 106–7, "What I Owe to the Ancients," Section 2, pp. 332–33 (Section 372), p. 337 (Section 375).

48. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 335 (Section 373).

49. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, "New Struggles" (Section 108). See also "The Madman" (Section 125). The most well-known statement is in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Penguin Classics), p. 41

50. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, pp. 37–38, "Preface for the Second Edition" (Section 4).

51. Nietzsche, *Twilight*, pp. 106–7, "What I Owe to the Ancients" (Section 2).

52. Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, p. 477 (First Essay, Section 11).

53. See also J. S. Rusten, "Two Lives or Three? Pericles and the Athenian Character (Thucydides 2.40.1–2)." *Classical Quarterly* 35 (1985): 14–19. Rusten suggests that Pericles does not favor one type of life over another, and sees the highest good as deriving from the state.

54. See again, Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, pp. 477–79 and also p. 477 n. 5 (Kaufman) (First Essay, Section 11).

55. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, pp. 27–28, 44–51, 59–68.

56. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 216.

57. June Allison, "Homeric Allusions at the Close of Thucydides' Sicilian Narrative," *American Journal of Philology*, 118, pp. 499–526.

58. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 4.

59. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles, and Periclean Imperialism*, section 2040 (Kindle edition).

60. B. X. de Wet, "Periclean Imperial Policy and the Mytilenean Debate," *Acta Classica* 6 (1963): 122–23, makes this point, as does A. Andrewes, "The Mytilene Debate: Thucydides 3.36–49," *Phoenix* 16 (1962): 76–77.

61. See Orwin, "Democracy and Distrust," pp. 109–110, on the remarkable nature of Diodotus' comments here.

62. Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," p. 360.

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63. Orwin, "Democracy and Distrust," pp. 107–9.

64. For a good account of the task Diodotus faces see Winnington-Ingram, "*Ta Deonta Eipein*," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 12 (1965): 70–82.

65. Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, 3.42.2n. and 2.40.2n. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 3.42.2n., makes the interesting point that Thucydides here through Diodotus "manages . . . to convey the suggestion that the eventual decision was taken without reference to the speeches made."

66. Antonios Rengakos, *Form und Wandel des Machtdenkens der Athener bei Thukydides (Hermes Einzelschriften* Heft 48) (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner), pp. 70–71, emphasizes Diodotus' continuance of Pericles' moderation and sense of justice. Rengakos sees the modern tendency to emphasize the brutality of Diodotus' speech as incorrect, and he herself concentrates on the ethical component of the speech (pp. 67–68, 74). He cites Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 177, as a good example of those who focus on the harshness of Diodotus' speech. In general Rengakos' conclusions tend to support the view that Diodotus was an inheritor of the Periclean view of the Athenian Empire, but that he had to cloak his ideas in a cover of hard Athenian self-interest.

Although expediency is the end of deliberative oratory, and τὸ καλόν (the noble and beautiful) is the goal of epideictic speeches (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1.3.1358b20ff.), justice and the good in general are part of deliberative oratory (*Rhetoric*, 1.3.1362a20ff.), and Diodotus does refer to such topics. See also Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 88–89.

67. See the discussion in "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy" by David Bedford and Thom Workman, pp. 59–60. They view the growing pressure of deeds over words and thought as leading to more passionate and irrational action, which ties together two major themes in Thucydides, reason or *logos*, as opposed to action and passionate violence and movement on the one hand compared with thoughtful contemplation on the other.

68. Immerwahr, "Pathology of Power," pp. 28–29.

69. Darien Shanske, Esq. notes the apparent collapse of *nomos* (including customs) in the ideas of Diodotus. He observes that Diodotus as well as Cleon reject *epieikeia*, for which the "standard translations are "fairness," "leniency," or "equity." See *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History*, p. 110.

70. See Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," pp. 61 ff.

71. Cf. *LSJ* s. v. δέος. The word δέος ("fear") here may contain the idea of fear based on a reasonable recognition of danger, which would increase the intellectual component of the concept for Pericles.

72. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, p. 152.

73. Joseph Plescia, "Thucydides and the Quest for a Political Blueprint," *Atene e Roma* 24 (1979), pp. 129–144, searches for Thucydides' ideas in the speeches without keeping in mind that the speeches are dramatic and rhetorical. Thus, he can say that for Thucydides the moderation of the Athenians derived above all from a concern for utility, and that justice and fairness had little to do with it (p. 140). He bases this on what Diodotus says (3.42.1). But at the very least one must maintain the formal distinction between what Thucydides says and what his speakers say. For instance,

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how can Cleon and Diodotus, who take such opposed viewpoints, both speak for Thucydides?

74. Cf. Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, pp. 153–69, esp. 159, where he comments on the coincidence of language in Thucydides' statements of method. See also, Hornblower, *Thucydides*, who notes that Thucydides' point about the particular cases producing variation in the general symptoms appears to be the first statement of this "simple but profound" point (p. 43).

75. Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, p. 149. See also E. C. Marchant on 3.45.4 *Commentary on Thucydides Book 3*: αἱ δ' ἄλλαι ξυντυχίαι . . κινδύνους—"the other conditions of life," as they arise—temporary rather than permanent: these fill men with a sudden passion (ὀργῇ), "as each (ξυντυχία) is overpowered by some irrepressible power"—such as an overwhelming desire for independence.

76. Leo Strauss, *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism, Essays and Lectures by Leo Strauss*, selected and introduced by Thomas L. Pangle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 89–95.

77. Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony, with constant Reference to Socrates*, trans. Lee M. Capel (Bloomington & London, 1971), 114–15.

78. Cf. *Plato's Phaedo*, with trans. Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem (Newburyport, MA: Focus Classical Library, 1998), p. 69. The translation is mine, however.

79. For a standard, and excellent, overview of irony in Sophocles, for instance, see G. M. Kirkwood, *A Study of Sophoclean Drama* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, new paperback edition with preface and expanded bibliography, 1996), pp. 247–89, "The Irony of Sophocles." Cf. also Shanske, *Thucydides and the Philosophical Origins of History*, pp. 85ff.

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Chapter 5

The Melian Dialogue and the End of the Political in the *Statesman*

1. PRELUDE TO THE DIALOGUE

The Melian dialogue forms the next important stage in Thucydides' portrait of the degeneration of Athenian political discourse, but Thucydides first mentions Melos in Book 3, chapter 91, near the beginning of a seemingly disconnected series of events occurring shortly after the first eruption of revolutionary passions at Corcyra. These events are not, however, unrelated, for in this section Thucydides introduces many of the themes that later become important in the Melian Dialogue, the Sicilian Expedition, and the dissolution of the Athenian *polis.* Before we look at the Melian Dialogue itself, therefore, it is important to see how Thucydides introduces Melos, since in his first mention of a subject he frequently presents the germ of his later more complex treatment.

After his general picture of *stasis*, Thucydides describes how approximately 600 Corcyraean exiles of the oligarchic party fortified themselves on Mt. Istone and ravaged the countryside (3.85). He then mentions the first Sicilian Expedition, which the Athenians sent under the command of Laches, son of Melanopus, and Charoeades, son on Euphiletus. In Sicily, the Syracusans were at war with the Leontinians, whose allies had sent for aid from Athens, basing their plea on kinship (both were Ionians) and their ancient alliance (3.86.3), although their real motive was self-interest. They needed a fleet to remove the Sicilian sea and land blockade (3.86.3). The Athenians answered by sending the requested fleet; their pretext was their kindred relationship with the Leontinians (τῆς μὲν οἰκειότητος προφάσει, "relying on the excuse of their common descent," 3.86.4, translation mine),[1]

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but as Thucydides says, they really wished both to prevent the export of Sicilian grain to the Peloponnese and to see if Sicily could be brought under subjection. This intervention of the Athenians in the affairs of a distant land illustrates one of Thucydides' most important points in his description of *stasis*. The war allowed the partisans in each state to bring in the Athenians or the Spartans, the popular party usually calling upon the Athenians and the oligarchs calling in the Spartans. In peace, cities do not want foreign intervention, nor does a pretext exist for bringing in allies, but in war there are many occasions to ask for aid (3.82.1). The situation in Sicily exemplifies Thucydides' general outline. The pretext of kinship enables the Athenians to aid the Leontinians in a fair-seeming guise, but both the Leontinians and the Athenians have important practical motives for the alliance. Since the introduction of a foreign power into political discord or *stasis* often involves a pretext and a true motive, there is a separation between word and deed that resembles the distortion of language that Thucydides says takes place in *stasis* generally.[2]

Thucydides next mentions the plague, which returned in 427 and oppressed the Athenians more than anything else:

> τοῦ δ᾽ ἐπιγιγνομένου χειμῶνος ἡ νόσος τὸ δεύτερον ἐπέπεσε τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις, ἐκλιποῦσα μὲν οὐδένα χρόνον τὸ παντάπασιν, ἐγένετο δέ τις ὅμως διοκωχή [2] παρέμεινε δὲ τὸ μὲν ὕστερον οὐκ ἔλασσον ἐνιαυτοῦ, τὸ δὲ πρότερον καὶ δύο ἔτη, ὥστε Ἀθηναίους γε μὴ εἶναι ὅτι μᾶλλον τούτου ἐπίεσε καὶ ἐκάκωσε τὴν δύναμιν. (3.87.1–2)
>
> Summer was now over. The winter following, the plague a second time attacked the Athenians; for although it had never entirely left them, still there had been a notable abatement in its ravages. The second visit lasted no less than a year, the first having lasted two; and nothing distressed the Athenians and reduced their power more than this. (3.87.1–2)

Athens' best fighting men died in this visit of the plague (3.87.1–3.87.2). Thucydides was bound to report this occurrence of the plague, since it had such a serious effect on Athens, but the placement he gives it between two notices of the first Sicilian Expedition and so shortly after the picture of *stasis* connects the plague with *stasis*. He reinforces his point by using the same verb (ἐπέπεσε, 3.82.2, 3.87.1) to describe *stasis* appearing in a city and the plague falling upon Athens. Thucydides uses similar verbs, as we have seen, to describe the first attack of the plague in Athens (ἐσέπεσε, 2.48.2, from εἰσπίπτω, "fall into," compared with ἐπιπίπτω in 3.82.2 and 3.87.1, "fall onto"), and the later to characterize the excitement or "lust" (ἔρως, 6.24.3) that "fell on" Athens to sail to Sicily in 415 (ἐνέπεσε, 6.24.3). These verbs

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all imply a violent change and underscore the relationships between the different events.

The first two attacks of the plague so weakened Athens' spirit and so reduced her power as to make the Sicilian Expedition of 416 an even more serious mistake than it was as a violation of Pericles' firm injunctions not to engage in a war of conquest during the war with Sparta (2.65.7). Pericles' recommendations were the fruit of his wisdom applied to the conduct of the war, but the Athenians deviated from them under the pressure of forces that Thucydides portrays as falling upon the people from outside of themselves. He even speaks of the *eros* that led the Athenians to Sicily as an outside force.[3] *Stasis* too is for Thucydides almost an external force, analogous to the gods of earlier Greek thought. He does not, however, personify *eros* and *stasis*; Thucydides formulates these factors as abstractions of political life.

Stasis itself, like war in general, participates in an even larger concept, that of disturbed or distorted movement (*kinesis*).[4] War is a disordered motion as opposed to the restful and orderly motion of peace. The Athenian principle is movement, the Spartan, rest, as the Corinthians say at the Congress of Lacedaemon in Book 1 (1.70). This contrast has larger implications for Thucydides' view of Athens' political achievements and for his entire political philosophy, since as a city seeking to reach a perfection or form of human political motion, Athens contains in herself the principle of her decline and defeat. Without the Spartan principle of rest, a *polis* cannot survive. The attainment of some stationary political reference point is crucial for a city that has the energy to prevail and become successful, as Thucydides says in Book 8 when he reflects on the character of the Chians. Only they and the Spartans, he says, knew how to be moderate in prosperity (Χῖοι γὰρ μόνοι μετὰ Λακεδαιμονίους ὧν ἐγὼ ᾔσθόμην ηὐδαιμόνησάν τε ἅμα καὶ ἐσωφρόνησαν, "Indeed, after the Lacedaemonians, the Chians are the only people that I have known who knew how to be wise in prosperity," 8.24.4). Athens could not endure without Pericles' moderation, or without making a constitution that would formalize that moderation and constrain the democracy. In a person or even a group of people, moderation can vanish in the press of disturbing events, which makes the lack of clear, formalized structures that enforce moderation a serious weakness in governments.

The authors of the Constitution of the United States, as is well known, were very conscious of the importance of restraining the passions of democracy. To return to Madison, as he says in arguing for a Senate that would counteract the people and their direct representatives in the House:

> What bitter anguish would not the people of Athens have often escaped if their government had contained so provident a safeguard [i.e., a senate] against the tyranny of their own passions.[5]

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This tyranny can manifest itself externally in ill-timed and careless expansion, and internally as faction or the judicial murder of Socrates. Here we may review Madison again, in *Federalist 63:*

> From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction.[6]

Madison suggests that a cure for these mischiefs would be a senate, which in the Athenian constitution would be a strong *boule* or Council that served the longer-term interests of the state. In Athens by the time of Pericles' ascendancy, the *boule* was not powerful (Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 25, 27.1), but Pericles held the people in check somewhat as a strong *boule* might have done. Without Pericles, Athens turned more and more toward restless motion. Yet like Madison in *Federalist 63*, we may conclude that democracy almost by nature leads to faction or *stasis* and results in a concentration of power in the hands of leaders who will exploit the passions or *eros* of the citizens for conquest or power.[7]

To heighten the sense that the war and *stasis* represent forces of disruptive and destructive motion, Thucydides mentions that at the same time as the plague there were many earthquakes in Attica, Euboea, and Boeotia (3.87.4). He closely joins the plague and *stasis* with Athens' interest in Sicily by describing the Athenian and Rhegian attack on the islands of Aeolus, which were allied with Syracuse (3.88).

Next, Thucydides reports that in the summer of 426 the Peloponnesians and their allies invaded Attica again, but earthquakes forced them to return home. The earthquakes during the invasion of Attica give Thucydides occasion to digress about earthquakes in Opuntian Locris; at Peparethus, the sea withdrew and there was an earthquake (3.89.2–3.89.4). Thucydides concludes that earthquakes cause tidal waves (3.89.5). He was not bound by his own canons to report any of these seismic events. Although they have no effect on the course of the war, Thucydides uses the earthquake as a literary device to symbolize the disruptive movements of the war, as we have already seen. Earlier we focused on the analysis of this physical event as a kind of symbol of hypothetical reasoning. But the other moral issue, as we see here, is the pure destructive force of the event.

The relationship of the movement of the land to the movement of the sea is meaningful too. Athenian sea power and the land power of the Spartans move violently in opposition to one another. In a similar fashion, as we have seen, the earthquakes cause the sea first to recoil and then to rebound upon the land, as Thucydides surmised in discussing what we today call a tsunami in

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the Malian Gulf (3.89.2–5).[8] In fact, Thucydides next describes the battles of the Athenian fleet in Sicily, which result in the death of the Athenian general Charoeades, the successful Athenian assault of Mylae, and the capitulation of Messina. In their main attack, that against Mylae, the Athenians stage an amphibious assault (the sea attacks the land) and overcome an ambush (3.90.1–2). The next mention of the fleet in Sicily does not occur until the winter of 426 (3.103), when, after an unsuccessful Athenian attack on the acropolis of Inessa, the Syracusans rout Athens' allies in retreat. Later, Laches and the Athenians descend against and defeat the Locrians.

At this point Thucydides makes a rather long digression concerning the Delian games, which followed the Athenian purification of the island, which was sacred to Apollo. He compares the Athenian celebration with the celebration in the time of Homer, and he quotes from the Homeric "Hymn to Apollo."[9] In the quoted lines, "Homer" himself tells the maidens at the festival that if anyone should ask who is the sweetest singer, they should reply that it is Homer, the blind man from rocky Chios (3.104). This passage sets the peacefulness of the Delian celebrations in contrast to the activity of the Peloponnesian War, and recalls the comparison between Thucydides and Homer.[10] The lines challenge Thucydides, for the speaker claims that he, "Homer," is "the sweetest" (ἥδιστος 3.104.5) of singers; but they also set Thucydides apart. Thucydides, like Homer, must bring order to the world he seeks to describe. This order represents peace as opposed to war, and rest and orderly change as opposed to violence and disturbed motion. Like Homer, Thucydides provides the order of *logos* and thus makes understanding possible, but he does so by reference solely to the facts, and not by embellishment. He is by no means the sweetest. It is partly because Thucydides' *logos* matches the *ergon* that the chapters on the changing valuations (*axioseis*) of words in *stasis* are so important. Thucydides insists that his *logos* is true, and he views with horror men losing their sense of what is truly worthy of praise or blame.

In his conclusion to the digression on Delos, Thucydides suggests how different his subject is from Homer's, when he mentions that the Athenians introduced horse races to the contests for the first time (3.104.6). In this way, the Athenians displayed their distinctive inventiveness. Horse racing also later exemplifies the extravagance of Alcibiades (6.15.4), who is the paradigm of the flawed Athenian character. Alcibiades is the energy of Athens without control; he is movement without rest (cf. 6.18.6).

These two paired narratives, the implicit analogy of Athens and Sparta at war as compared with dramatic and destructive waves caused by an earthquake and the implicit comparison of the Delian games and Homer to current horse races and the narrator Thucydides. The scientific view that allows Thucydides to explain a wave caused by an earthquake also helps him to

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create an order out of the war. The Homeric "Hymn to Apollo" provides a religious counterpoint to the celebratory Delian games and the fifth-century political associations of Athens with Delos, while Thucydides is left to make sense of horse racing as an emblem of Athenian competitiveness gone astray. Homer and the Delian games, like science applied to the waves, give us ways to understand the events of the Athenians' time, excessive horse races, and war. This pattern functions for Thucydides as an exemplar of what he is doing overall, providing his readers here with a suggestion of how to read his book. The structure of Plato's view of the universe, as the Stranger explains it in the *Statesman*, resembles this. We have an original pattern, the Classical Greek world, the world of Zeus (272b), and a reversed or "counter-normal" pattern (270b),[11] which is the world of Kronos, a kind of golden age (271c–d). The question at issue then is whether the structure the statesman relies on is philosophical, that is, what the epistemological status of the philosophy of politics is. The structure or explanatory narrative the statesman relies on can be the overthrow of a previous regime, a large and dominating foreign conflict, an internal change in the order of things, whether it be political or economic. Is there in fact any possibility of a philosophical leader or do leaders need to embrace or create mythologies that are not sound even when they wish to choose something that is sound? In the case of Athenian leaders of the fifth century BC, there were several powerful narratives, the overthrow of the Peisistratid tyranny and establishment of democracy as in the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, defeat of the Persians through the Delian League led by Athens, the spread of democracy to other city-states, and open and enriching trade along with a protective navy. The point of the Stranger's mythological structure of a golden age of Kronos and an earthly age of Zeus appears to be a way of understanding why humans seem to have this type of archetypical model for management of their affairs through political action. The original or archetypical pattern explains our need for such patterns as part of our fundamental makeup. Plato's implicit thesis is that this is part of our basic desire for understanding, although like Thucydides he firmly grounds these patterns in *logos* or reason. Thucydides' reliance on *logos* shows up in the results of his investigative research and observations as well as in his reliance on inherent forms of measure and ordering structures extending into what we would call moral considerations. This leads him to an apparent sense in Book 8 that we can learn and improve our forms of government in something analogous to the scientific method, the idea of historical research and the testing of hypotheses (8.97.2). History and the science of political life in the age of Zeus give us particular narratives that guide us through whatever part of life we reside in now that the golden age recollects in a dream. What happens in Melos seems to break several of these archetypes or narratives, however. In particular, the events seem to destroy

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the idea that the Athenian democratic Empire could afterward represent universal human aspirations for an enlargement of freedom. This is true even though local democracy continued at Athens and in some ways flourished after the revolutions of the late fifth century. The larger movement of history shifted to Rome some centuries after that, with an entirely different set of results.

To return to Melos, the Athenians make their first attack on it in the same manner as their assault of Mylae (3.90.2). This is the first mention of Melos as having any direct involvement in the war, although at the beginning of the war, when Thucydides lists the allies of Athens and Sparta, he says that the Athenians had all the Cyclades as allies except Melos and Thera (2.9.4).[12] By juxtaposing the first Sicilian Expedition with the first attack of Melos, Thucydides begins to develop the thematic relationship between the later Sicilian and Melian affairs. Both events grew out of Athenian overconfidence and *pleonexia*, which in turn derived from the successes at Pylos.[13] These successes reinforced the Athenian overconfidence and excited their desire for more conquests (4.17.2, 4.21.2, 4.41.4, 4.92.2). Thucydides himself directly connects the Sicilian Expedition with *pleonexia* (4.65.4).

At the Congress at Gela in 424, Hermocrates was able to persuade the Sicilians to unify at least in their opposition to Athens. Before this, the different Sicilian states were at war (3.90.1). Hermocrates concluded his speech by exhorting the Sicilians to free themselves from two evils, the "Athenians and civil war" (Ἀθηναίων τε ἀπαλλαγῆναι καὶ οἰκείου πολέμου, 4.64.5). Earlier Hermocrates had said that the Sicilians must keep in mind that *stasis* destroys cities and will destroy Sicily if they do not unite against Athens (4.61.1). The Sicilians under the leadership of Syracuse thus unite and force the Athenians to leave, for there is no room left to exploit differences and the pattern of civil war cannot be fulfilled. At Athens, on the other hand, some early signs of the disintegration of the *polis* became evident when the people punished their own generals, as we have seen, because they suspected them of taking bribes to leave Sicily (4.65.3). In Thucydides' philosophy the root of mistakes in politics and military strategy lies in the loss of reason's control over the emotions, as is clear from his and Pericles' insistence on the importance of careful thought, planning, and intelligent choices (cf., e.g., 1.140.1). Here, however, the Athenians show that they are beginning to succumb to the power of the emotions. This state of mind and the related loss of the power of *logos* presage the eruption of revolutionary passion later in the war. The Athenians' belief that their power was invincible both made it possible for them to forget that which made Athens great, her spirit, and provided a background for the philosophy of power (and its fulfillment) as expressed at Melos. The moderation with which Pericles had controlled the city had by the time of the Melian Dialogue lost its power.[14]

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The reigning spirit of the Athenians at this time appears to be *pleonexia*, the desire for more, which sees an opportunity for a deserved expansion of the empire in the fact that Melos is an island and that it is not under Athenian domination. Thucydides emphasizes these two points (5.84.2).[15] Is this desire for more, which in imperial terms is the desire for conquests, essential to any kind of empire? Is Cleon right that a democracy cannot rule an empire (3.37.1)? There are certainly many contradictions between an appeal to the poor and disposed through democratic ideals and the idea of ruling over others.[16] Thucydides explores these contradictions somewhat like a playwright but in his story the actual events determine the narrative, though he shapes the story by exclusion and emphasis. Determining what Thucydides thinks of this contradiction may not in the end be possible in terms of his narrative, nor is it clear in every case that Thucydides has only one view of complicated events in the war. When Pericles was presented with a revolt in Euboea, he put it down without killing everyone, though his troops took over Histiaea. The Athenians under Pericles in 446 BC simply expelled the inhabitants of this area on the northern coast of the island and took the land for themselves (1.114.1), at least as Thucydides relates the story.[17] Pericles also led the military effort to suppress the revolt of Samos in 440 (1.116.3–117.3), though he had assistance from other generals notably one Thucydides, quite likely the son of Melesias and not the historian, the son of Olorus. The settlement required razing of the city's walls, payments, handing over ships, and hostages, not slaughter (1.117.3).

The next revolt involves Corcyra and Potidaea in 432 (118.1), though Thucydides had presented that conflict earlier. At several points, Pericles' personal political and military moderation appear. First, the alliance with Corcyra was defensive not offensive, that is, they would not have the same "friends and enemies" but Athens would aid Corcyra (1.44.1). Athens sees Corcyra as useful because of their large navy and because of the island's location along the passage to Italy and Sicily (1.44.2–3), which introduces what later becomes a motif underlining the decline of Athens into passion and *eros* for more conquest. After the Corinthians rout the Corcyraeans in the subsequent battle, they sail through the wreckage and kill men indiscriminately including in their ignorance (ἀγνοοῦντες) even their own friends (1.50.1). The Corinthians were likely responding. Subsequently, the Athenians adhere to their defensive posture when challenged by the Corinthians (1.33.2). The Athenians response to this is to reassert that the Corinthians may leave and sail wherever they wish but if they sail against Corcyra they, the Athenians, will attempt to stop them (1.33.3). This is here a still principled and moderate position adhering in deed and also in word to the alliance Athens agreed to with Corcyra, as Thucydides reports the Athenian response in direct discourse. The response of the Athenian navy here is at least consistent with the

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historical idea or living myth of the Athenians as defenders of Greek city-states, though of course Corcyra had refused to aid the democratic faction in their own colony of Epidamnus (1.24.5–6).

It is quite reasonable to see the change in the Athenian decision as to what to do in response to the revolt in Mytilene as the result of a victory of those favoring Diodotus because his arguments were more persuasive and more humane, though it has been argued that the democratic political groups in Athens favored Diodotus generally.[18] Of course, all three factors likely worked to the advantage of Diodotus' arguments. The result was humane.

Thucydides shows how by 424 the war was bringing the emotions of both the Spartans and the Athenians to a level with their fortunes (cf. 3.82.2), for earlier in this year the Spartans too had begun to show themselves more subject to their emotions when they lost heart because of the Athenian successes. Since the Athenians had drawn Sparta into a naval struggle, Sparta feared internal revolution (4.55.1) and another disaster like Pylos (4.55.3). For this reason, they became more afraid of military confrontations, especially because they were fighting the Athenians, who thought that what they had not tried was a success lost.

The war had turned the Spartans' moderation into fear and the Athenians' energy and confidence into recklessness and *pleonexia*.[19] Pericles had moderated the Athenians' energy by means of his *logos*, but war, the plague, and Pericles' own death unleashed the passion that eventually led to the Sicilian disaster, *stasis* at Athens, and final defeat.

2. THE MELIAN DIALOGUE: WHEN WORDS FAIL

Between the first Athenian attack on Melos and Thucydides' famous dialogue between the Melians and the Athenians, almost ten years intervene (cf. 3.91.1–3.91.3). These years include the Peace of Nicias, but for Thucydides this Peace was part of the war (5.26.2), and he uses the Dialogue to show the continued hardening of Athenian attitudes. At Melos, the Athenians introduce a realistic type of discourse that finds no exact parallel in any Athenian speech before theirs. They reduce all relations between states to contests of power and advantage, leaving no room for any higher consideration, such as honor, justice, or even simple humanity.[20]

Thucydides opens his narrative of the sixteenth year of the war (416) by connecting Alcibiades with the Melian Dialogue. He says that Alcibiades sailed with twenty ships to Argos and seized those 300 Argives who were still suspected of sympathizing with the Lacedaemonians. The Athenians resettled these people in the neighboring islands. Thucydides links this brief description with his narrative of the events at Melos by juxtaposing the two events:

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> τοῦ δ᾽ ἐπιγιγνομένου θέρους Ἀλκιβιάδης τε πλεύσας ἐς Ἄργος ναυσὶν εἴκοσιν Ἀργείων τοὺς δοκοῦντας ἔτι ὑπόπτους εἶναι καὶ τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων φρονεῖν ἔλαβε τριακοσίους ἄνδρας, καὶ κατέθεντο αὐτοὺς Ἀθηναῖοι ἐς τὰς ἐγγὺς νήσους ὧν ἦρχον: καὶ ἐπὶ Μῆλον τὴν νῆσον Ἀθηναῖοι ἐστράτευσαν. (5.84.1)

> The next summer Alcibiades sailed with twenty ships to Argos and seized the suspected persons still left of the Lacedaemonian faction to the number of three hundred, whom the Athenians forthwith lodged in the neighboring islands of their empire. The Athenians also made an expedition against the isle of Melos. (5.84.1)

He thus suggests that the spirit of the Athenians in the Melian expedition is yoked to Alcibiades.[21] Both suffer from a lack of restraint.

The Melians, Thucydides says, were a colony of the Lacedaemonians, but they refused to submit to the Athenians as the other islanders had. At first the Melians were neutral, but when the Athenians compelled them to become enemies by ravaging their land, the two peoples entered open conflict. As Thucydides presents the affair, the Athenians made the first aggressive moves.

In order to save themselves the trouble of reducing Melos militarily, the Athenians send ambassadors to negotiate the island's submission (5.93). Therefore, as the Melians say, the words of the Athenians do not correspond with their deeds:

> οἱ δὲ τῶν Μηλίων ξύνεδροι ἀπεκρίναντο "ἡ μὲν ἐπιείκεια τοῦ διδάσκειν καθ᾽ ἡσυχίαν ἀλλήλους οὐ ψέγεται, τὰ δὲ τοῦ πολέμου παρόντα ἤδη καὶ οὐ μέλλοντα διαφέροντα αὐτοῦ φαίνεται. ὁρῶμεν γὰρ αὐτούς τε κριτὰς ἥκοντας ὑμᾶς τῶν λεχθησομένων καὶ τὴν τελευτὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς περιγενομένοις μὲν τῷ δικαίῳ καὶ δι᾽ αὐτὸ μὴ ἐνδοῦσι πόλεμον ἡμῖν φέρουσαν, πεισθεῖσι δὲ δουλείαν." (5.86)

> To the fairness of quietly instructing each other as you propose there is nothing to object; but your military preparations are too far advanced to agree with what you say, as we see you are come to be judges in your own cause, and that all we can reasonably expect from this negotiation is war, if we prove to have right on our side and refuse to submit, and in the contrary case, slavery. (5.86)

The Melians contend that discussion has no real value when the *erga* so grossly contradict the *logos*. The Melians themselves choose to have the Athenians speak to a select group of their officials, not before an assembly of the people for the obvious reason that the Athenians might persuade the commons to be more favorable to their proposals.[22] In response, the Athenians suggest that both sides avoid long speeches and instead face the issues in a direct discussion.

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The larger issue of form is why Thucydides should place a dialogue here since there were presumably other occasions similar to this one. Unless there is some reason to disbelieve Thucydides here, we have to assume that the Dialogue follows his earlier strictures concerning how he dealt with his material. This form allows Thucydides to clarify the relationships between justice, empire, and force, as a pair of speeches would not.[23] Each position can be tested and pushed to its conclusion. Thucydides inserts this detailed examination of the nature of power and empire here because this confrontation directly precedes the Sicilian Expedition, and the Sicilian Expedition shows what happens to power when passion overcomes reason. The Melian Dialogue is a *logos* that helps to explain the *erga* of the Sicilian Expedition. This expedition occurs mainly because the Athenians by that time no longer allow *logos* to direct their policy and strategy or they rely on distorting and misunderstood speeches such as that of Nicias advocating an especially large armament be readied against Sicily. The Dialogue is a *logos* expressing the diminishing power of *logos* in actual debate that relies on reason. The Dialogue does this in the manner of a tragedy or a dialogue of Plato in which no one character expresses the conclusion or meaning of the work in a direct way. An example of this in Plato's work would be a completely aporetic dialogue in which the outcome is a complete *aporia*. An example of this is the *Parmenides*, which is a completely aporetic dialogue.[24]

> [166ξ] συλλήβδην εἰ εἴποιμεν, ἓν εἰ μὴ ἔστιν, οὐδέν ἐστιν, ὀρθῶς ἂν εἴποιμεν;
> παντάπασι μὲν οὖν.
> εἰρήσθω τοίνυν τοῦτό τε καὶ ὅτι, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἓν εἴτ᾽ ἔστιν εἴτε μὴ ἔστιν, αὐτό τε καὶ τἆλλα καὶ πρὸς αὑτὰ καὶ πρὸς ἄλληλα πάντα πάντως ἐστί τε καὶ οὐκ ἔστι καὶ φαίνεταί τε καὶ οὐ φαίνεται.
> ἀληθέστατα. (166c)
> Parmenides: "To conclude, if we should say that if unity is not, nothing is, would we speak rightly?"
> Socrates: Certainly, in every way.
> Parmenides: "Then let this be said and that unity, as it seems, whether it is or whether it is not, both it and the other things both in respect to themselves and to the other things both are and are not and seem and do not seem to be all things in all ways."
> Socrates: "Most true." (166c)

This is not to imply that the Melian Dialogue is as obscure as the *Parmenides*, but there is no one speaker who says what the *Parmenides* means or who expresses the conclusions that Plato seems to intend to induce. Similarly, the Melian Dialogue, like a crucial exchange in a tragedy, has at least several important implications and no one final meaning.[25]

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The Melian Dialogue concludes with the end of discourse (5.111.5). The Athenians advise the Melians to consider that they have only "one fatherland" and that they are considering for it the lucky outcome of not being ruined.

Although the *Histories* depicts a decline in political life in Athens during the war, this decline does not follow a clear, straight line. The Melian Dialogue seems to represent a moral collapse. The lack of regularity in Athens' decline derives from several factors, not the least of which is the actual order of events. Another and more literary type of factor appears to be Thucydides' desire to elaborate the portrait of Cleon early in the work so that it can serve as a reference for the type of the demagogue, who is in turn the image of the Sophist, as Socrates says to Callicles in the *Gorgias*: The Sophist is also an orator, or something close and similar (ἐστὶν σοφιστὴς καὶ ῥήτωρ, ἢ ἐγγύς τι καὶ παραπλήσιον, 520a).

The Melian Dialogue underlines a general sense of the degeneration at Athens and also an impression that grows through the course of the work that Athens will lose the war.[26] The dramatic form of the dialogue depicts the radicalizing of an idealized form of the imperial *polis*, Periclean Athens.[27]

The Melian Dialogue is a very significant step in this process of radicalization. At the very beginning of the debate, Thucydides has the Athenians make clear their brutal mood. They dismiss the Melians' reflections on the nature of the dialogue and bid them to concentrate instead on the safety of Melos. This foreshadows the eventual collapse of the Athenian forces in Sicily, at which point all hope of the Athenians using reason fails, whether it be militarily or politically. The dialogue anticipates this in dramatic form.[28] If the Melians have come for any purpose other than to deliberate about the safety of their homeland in the present circumstances, the Athenians say they "would stop" talking (παυοίμεθ' ἄν), but if the Melians have come to talk about safety, the dialogue should proceed (λέγοιμεν ἄν, literally, "we would [continue] talking," 5.87.1). These polite optative verbs mask the threatening force behind them. If the Athenians should cease discussing the situation with the Melians, they would not simply stop talking and go away. They would (and later did) reduce the city. In their reply, the Melians show that they understand the superior power of the Athenians, for they try to explain why they have drawn the discussion to topics not strictly within the limits set by the Athenians, and then concede that the discussion will go on in whatever way the Athenians wish.

The Athenians want the discussion to enforce the point that only power matters, while the Melians seek unsuccessfully to explore other types of factors, none of which matter to the Athenians. The Athenians declare that they will not use fair words in a long incredible story of how they rule justly because they overthrew the Mede, or of how since the Melians are doing them an injustice, they have decided to make a just requital. This declaration gives direction to all the subsequent statements the Athenians make. Their rhetoric

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is realistic in tone and substance, and it contrasts sharply with the speech of the Athenian ambassadors at Sparta and with Pericles' speeches. Here the Athenians explicitly exclude the traditional justification of Athens' greatness and of her empire, whereas the Athenians at Sparta spend almost the entire first half of their speech proving that Athens was worthy of her empire because of the bravery, daring, and intelligence she showed in expelling the Mede.[29] By 416, this justification no longer has any value in the conduct of Athens' foreign policy. Nor do the Athenians at Melos believe that any consideration of justice or injustice should intrude upon their plans.[30]

One possible explanation for the wide variation between what the Athenians say at Melos, on the one hand, and the speeches of Pericles and the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1, on the other, is the difference in the rhetorical requirements in each case. The Athenians at Sparta were speaking to equals in power. Therefore, they stress the importance of using power justly. Pericles speaks to an Athenian audience, which needs to see that his policy is the one that will bring them their goals of empire and glory.

At Melos, however, the Athenians are speaking as strong to weak, which their military preparations make brutally clear, and the Melian oligarchs have excluded their own demos from the discussion. Therefore, justice and fine words have little rhetorical value, according to the Athenians (5.89). Dramatically, however, the presentation of the Melian Dialogue emphasizes an arc of moral decline. The effect of this arc on the reader overwhelms in importance other types of reasons that can be adduced to explain the differences between Athenian speeches earlier and what the Athenians say in the Dialogue.

One essential aspect of the speeches, then, is to reveal the τῆς ξυμπάσης γνώμης "the general sense [or intent]" of the speaker (1.22.1). While it is true that in the Funeral Oration, for example, praise is required by the occasion of the speech, Thucydides shows Pericles departing even from these "conventional requirements" (τὰ δέοντα, 1.22.1) and praising not just those who have died but also the *polis* itself. Even in this most conventional form, Thucydides does not present us with a speech in which rhetorical requirements determine content. At Sparta justice is an appropriate topic for the Athenians to bring up to their equals in power, but they go beyond this to make a point of their respect for justice regarding lesser powers (1.77.1). Yet what they say is that the justice they provide is in Athenian courts: "we [the Athenians] find ourselves at a disadvantage in law-suits, in cases involving inter-state agreements."[31] At Melos there is no compulsion for the Athenians to use fine phrases or to refer to justice. Despite this, the exclusion of these topics does have a great dramatic effect, especially considering the prominent position of many fine phrases in Pericles' speeches in particular. In other words, Thucydides uses the idealizing tendency of the earlier speeches to

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depict an aspiration toward a political ideal, and by presenting later speeches and events in which this aspiration is absent, he forces us to concentrate on the decline.[32] The decline also creates a sense of inevitability as we know that punishment should follow error.

The ambassadors in Book 1 and Pericles especially in the Funeral Oration and his last speech extol Athens because she is different from the other cities in Hellas and worthy of her great power. These ideas and phrases the Athenians at Melos dismiss as "fine phrases" (ὀνομάτων καλῶν, 5.89). These Athenians have lost their faith in the power of fine words to persuade. In a continuation of what we first saw in Diodotus' speech, the Athenians here rely almost exclusively on calculation as opposed to the more liberal temper they showed earlier in the *Histories*. They tell the Melians that they do not think it worthwhile for them to try to persuade the Athenians to stay their attack. The Athenians care neither that the Melians did not campaign with the Lacedaemonians nor that they have done Athens no harm. Words (ὀνομάτων καλῶν, the earlier "fine phrases," and a "long untrustworthy speech in words," λόγων μῆκος ἄπιστον, 5.89) in short will not persuade the Athenians. This explicit devaluation of the power of discourse mirrors the Athenian *polis'* loss of the ability to restrain itself through *logos* or reason.

Nevertheless, there is some reason in what the Athenians say when they assert:

> ὅτι δίκαια μὲν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπείῳ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῆς ἴσης ἀνάγκης κρίνεται, δυνατὰ δὲ οἱ προύχοντες πράσσουσι καὶ οἱ ἀσθενεῖς ξυγχωροῦσιν. (5.89)
>
> [We both know] that in human discourse, justice is being judged only from equal necessity, but the powerful do what they can and the weak accept it. (5.89).

Some entity must enforce the operation of justice. At 1.77.1, it is the powerful government of Athens that enforces justice in the Athenian courts that the allies or subject states must then use. Yet this does not mean that a strong government or a dictatorial power is needed for justice. Justice could also be ensured by an agreement between powerful states to require that law, even including law regulating the powers of unequal states, be enforced in accordance with justice.[33]

At Sparta, the Athenians aim through their *logoi* to turn the Spartans toward a quieter attitude (1.72.1), whereas at Melos the main argument of the Athenians is their military power. The Athenians bid the Melians to place no hope in the persuasive power of speech (5.89). In their speech at Sparta, the Athenian ambassadors accuse the Spartans of taking up arguments based on justice to conceal their reckoning of their own interests, and then remark that no one has let considerations of justice interfere with his acquisition of

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something he wanted (1.76.2).[34] This seems on the surface consonant with the views the Athenians at Melos express. Yet in their very next sentence, as we have discussed, the ambassadors say that those men deserve praise who respect justice and equity more than they must (1.76.3). In fact there are two important themes right here, the idea of the domination of the stronger over the weaker and the corresponding instinct we seem to have to seek defense in various appeals to empathy and social cohesion as a facility for obtaining empathy.[35] But like Cleon earlier (3.37.4–5, 3.38.4–7), the Athenian ambassadors reject open discussion. On an emotional level, the situation in the Melian Dialogue seems more disturbing as the Athenians are talking to people who will be punished and whose families will be punished. In the winter, the men of Melos are put to death. The women and children are sold as slaves (5.116.4).

The Melians agree that the Athenians' proposal of a private dialogue is equitable when they mention "the fairness" (ἡ . . . ἐπιείκεια) of the proposal (5.86), but complain that the Athenians' military preparations are at variance with their proposal. Before the war Athens claimed it conducted itself equitably, and there were deeds to back up the claim (1.76.4). At Melos, the Athenians begin the Dialogue with an appearance of equity, but in fact their rationale is force.

This contrast raises again the question of how, or whether, any of the higher virtues can arise or continue in a *polis* if the *polis* has its roots in power and not justice. For some this is not a question, as they see all of Athens' history as of a piece, and find no ideal expressed even in the Funeral Oration.[36] In this view Athens inhabits the Heraclitean realm of becoming, and that realm never leads to anything higher. There is clearly in Thucydides a tension between Pericles' ideals and the reality of the Athenian Empire, but Pericles appears in his speech to aim at an ideal of a statesman, even though Thucydides does imply criticisms of the shorter reach of his interest in the structure of government and empire. The question then is, where, for Thucydides, does Pericles stand in the relationship between being and becoming?

Plato stands at one pole. He argues for the primacy of knowledge and the ideal in human life. He looks for the single real existence behind the multiplicity of the world.[37] Friedrich Nietzsche, on the other hand, in many places favors multiplicity over a unified ideal.[38] He sees Thucydides as expressing through his history a "high culture."[39] Nietzsche takes the Calliclean position to its conclusion and proclaims,

> My final proposition is: that the *actual* man represents a much higher value than the "desirable" man of any ideal hitherto.[40]

He argues further that man's desires for ideals (and he sees Plato as the prime mover in the desire for ideals) are a will to nothingness. Once man

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attains his ideal, he ceases to have man's strength and in fact ceases to be man. He rejects the position Socrates takes most clearly in the *Phaedo*, that the highest life, the life of pure knowledge, is attainable only in death (*Phaedo* 66e–67a). In fact, for Socrates in the *Phaedo*, the life of the philosopher is the practice of death.

Nietzsche rejects this conclusion and instead proposes that from the material world there can arise higher cultures and higher types of men. Thucydides for him depicts this higher culture, and Pericles' Funeral Oration is the culmination of it. Thucydides, however, puts his ideal man closer to the Platonic ideal than Nietzsche thinks he does (in *The Twilight of the Idols*, for instance),[41] yet Thucydides' ideal differs in several important respects from Plato's.

In particular, the very nature of Thucydides' enterprise emphasizes action in the world. Thucydides sees ideals manifest in discrete historical situations. The intellectual statement of the antithesis of these ideals is the Melian Dialogue. The arguments of the Athenians themselves hinge solely on interest, in contrast to Pericles' declaration that Athens fearlessly benefits others no more by a reckoning of advantage than by a trust in her liberality (2.40.5).[42]

When the Athenians explicitly narrow the scope of discourse in this dialogue, they continue a process that became apparent in the debate concerning Mytilene, in which Cleon preempted the appeal to justice and made open arguments for the humane alternative impossible. Since in the Melian Dialogue this narrowing has almost destroyed discourse itself, the Dialogue is a direct example of the result of the political degeneration at Athens. As Thucydides presents it, Athens is apparently unified in the aim of conquering Melos. On the other hand, many of the types of arguments used by the Athenians, and their very desire to overcome Melos, reveal that they are no longer in control of their judgment, and that as a people they have decided to embrace the violent emotions of war.

It seems that one reason the Athenians have for wanting to put Melos under their thumb is that Melos is relatively weak ("are islanders and weaker than others"),[43] almost as if their independence despite their weakness is a threat to Athens. Thus, in peace men have better "ideas" (τὰς γνώμας, 3.82.2), but war equalizes the "emotions" (τὰς ὀργὰς, 3.82.2) of men with their situation (3.82.2). Because of the war, the Athenians are more concerned than they would be in peacetime that a weak state could remain independent partly because that will show their liberality, as Pericles puts it (2.39.1).

The opposition between ὀργή ("emotion") and γνώμη ("reason"), the former representing the emotions, the latter moderation and the use of reason, supports the basic point, that in peace men are more reasonable, while in war their emotions lead them. One further important indication of the

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unreasonableness of the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue lies in their answer to the Melian threat of what will happen to Athens if she falls. The Melians contend that the Athenians should respect the common good, which is that justice and reasonable arguments be available to the one who is in danger, and that in danger one should be able to contemplate aid by appealing to something that is not within the strict limits of advantage. This principle may, the Melians assert, be of great importance to the Athenians, for should they fall they would feel the greatest vengeance (5.90). The Athenians essentially have no good answer to this point, which shows the weakness of their rhetorical position.[44] They say that they are not afraid of the Lacedaemonians, on whom the Melians rely for help (5.104, 106); their own allies would be more dangerous to them. This reply begins to reveal the Athenians' faulty reasons for subduing Melos. They were right that if they were defeated the Lacedaemonians would not be their greatest fear, but they were wrong to focus on their allies as the real objects of fear.[45] As Xenophon reports the assembly at Lacedaemon to decide the fate of Athens, the greatest danger to Athens came from Thebes and Corinth, which were neither allies of the Athenians nor states that were part of the primary opposition to Athens that most favored destroying Athens, although many other Greeks supported this course.[46] The Athenians' incorrect prevision reveals that their emotions, in this case fear, have led them astray. Hence, they become more brutal than they have to be and thus degrade further their relations with the rest of Hellas.[47]

The Athenians' correct prediction that Sparta would not be their primary danger in defeat is ironic, for the Spartans, at least according to Xenophon, refused to destroy Athens on the grounds that Athens had done such a great service against the Mede.[48] In victory the Spartans showed moderation and a respect for honor and the common good, all of which the Athenians loudly reject. The incorrectness of the Athenians' foresight shows both their own lack of nobility and also the deepening poverty of their general ideas of how to prevail as an imperial power.

Because they have in principle rejected discourse, the Athenians also must reject the Melians' appeal to the common good of justice, honor, and persuasion. As Thucydides presents it, the Melians do succeed, however, in putting the Athenians on the defensive rhetorically for part of the Dialogue.[49] By mentioning the possibility of Athens' defeat they force the Athenians to defend their position. When the Melians propose to the Athenians that Melos remain neutral, they force them to admit that Athens' rule is based on hatred (5.95). The point is not that Thucydides wants to show that the Melians have made the Athenians say things they do not believe, but that the Melians' arguments direct the logic of this part of the debate, at least up until the Athenians state clearly that the Melians should consider their own safety first of all (5.101). Thucydides develops the discussion in this way to

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show that the Athenians really do not have an effective theoretical justification for their position, despite the clarity of their arguments. True power, in other words, does not rest merely on force and a calculation of advantage, but requires character imbued with certain higher qualities, as Pericles observed (2.40.4–2.40.5).[50]

The Athenians' explicit and implicit arguments here resemble Thrasymachus' arguments in the *Republic*, where Thrasymachus contends the truly unjust are those whose injustice is perfect such that they are able to subjugate entire cities and tribes.[51] The difference between Thrasymachus and the Athenians appears to be like the difference between Thrasymachus and Callicles in the *Gorgias*: Thrasymachus' definition of justice as the interest of the stronger is a redefinition of the idea, while Callicles seems to aim at a somewhat unclear new kind of justice, one that is based on the rule of the stronger over the weaker,[52] a rule of nature such as we see in animals like the lion.[53] Callicles argues for *pleonexia*, as Socrates asserts.[54] In other words, the risk inherent in Pericles' Athens lies in a movement toward a redefinition of excellence or *arete* as an expression of the power of the city at which Pericles directs the people to gaze (2.43.1, cf. 2.41.4).

The Athenians grasp at more, and threaten the weak and militarily insignificant Melians with destruction (5.93) in response to the Melians' question of how it would be useful for them to be slaves, as it is for the Athenians to rule (5.92), but the Melians continue to press the Athenians' position to find out how extreme it is. The Melians propose that Melos be neutral (5.94), but the Athenians reject this on the grounds that the hatred of the Melians would not harm them so much as their friendship would demonstrate Athens' weakness, and their hatred would prove Athens' power (5.95). This argument contradicts what Pericles says in the Funeral Oration, where he depicts Athens as prospering and acquiring friends not by faring well but by doing good for others, and by trusting in her own liberality. In the Melian Dialogue, however, the Athenian speakers not only look to hatred for proof of power, but also carefully calculate the benefits to Athens of acquiring friends and enemies.

This section of the Melian Dialogue also contrasts with a passage at the end of Pericles' last speech. There Thucydides has Pericles praise the glory of Athens, saying that Athens has ruled over more Greeks than any other state, and that Athens' greatness is unsurpassed (2.64.3). Those who deem themselves worthy to rule "cause offense" (λυπηροὺς) and "suffer hatred" (τὸ δὲ μισεῖσθαι) in the present, but whoever incurs envy for the highest goals, counsels rightly (2.64.5). For "hatred" (μῖσος) does not last long, but "present splendor" (ἡ δὲ παραυτίκα τε λαμπρότης) and "future glory" (τὸ ἔπειτα δόξα) are "always remembered" (αἰείμνηστος, 2.64.5). Pericles emphasizes that the hatred is short-lived and that fame and glory supersede it, whereas the

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Athenians at Melos see only the hatred as a proof of power, and show no concern for fame and glory. These changes form part of a general shortening of temporal perspective, for which Thucydides provides a number of examples in his chapters on *stasis* (3.82.5, 3.82.7–3.82.8).

In the Funeral Oration also, Thucydides had Pericles use the phrase αἰείμνηστος ("always remembered") to refer to the "glory" (ἡ δόξα) of those who had died in the war (2.43.2). Their death is glorious because they were Athenians, and Athens stands alone among the cities of Hellas, for she alone is greater than what people say about her, and she alone does not provide irritation to her enemies that they suffer at the hands of unworthy men. Nor does Athens provide the grounds for blame to her subjects that they are ruled by an unworthy people (2.41.3). Thus, the glory of Athens justifies whatever hatred she may provoke in the brief present. Pericles looks upon the glory of Athens from the perspective of eternality, in contrast to the short-term view Thucydides shows in the Athenians at Melos. When Pericles says that the whole world is a tomb for famous men, and that even in lands not their own there is an unwritten memory dwelling in the mind of each more than there is a written memorial, Thucydides is using him to speak to all his readers, in whom the example of the brave Athenians produces "in the mind of each person" an ἄγραφος μνήμη παρ᾽ ἑκάστῳ τῆς γνώμης, "an unwritten memorial" of Athens' spirit (2.43.3). This resembles Socrates' insistence in the *Phaedrus* (277e–78a) on the far greater importance of lessons written in the soul as compared with what is actually written in verse or declaimed in a set speech. Thucydides' work is a dialogue with those who seek to understand *ta politika*, "political things," that is, the eternally recurring forms of human relations. Thucydides says he wrote his work in the hope that it would be helpful to as many as wish to examine "that which is clear" (τὸ σαφὲς, 1.22.4, below) in the things that, in accordance with what is human, will appear again in a similar form:

> καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες αὐτῶν ἀτερπέστερον φανεῖται: ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἕξει. κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται. (1.22.4)

> The absence of romance in my history will, I fear, detract somewhat from its interest; but if it be judged useful by those inquirers who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the interpretation of the future, which in the course of human things must resemble if it does not reflect it, I shall be content. In fine, I have written my work, not as an essay which is to win the applause of the moment, but as a possession for all time. (1.22.4)

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The neuter singulars and plurals in Greek signify abstraction and inclusiveness. They take in all events that will be similar to those Thucydides has described. Thucydides, like Pericles, looks to what will always be remembered. The aim resembles Plato's in many ways.

The pinnacle of the Athenian achievement is the spirit of the city—the way of life of the people. Pericles exhorts those who have engaged in a mortal struggle to judge "happiness" (τὸ εὔδαιμον) as "freedom" (τὸ ἐλεύθερον), and freedom as "courage" (τὸ εὔψυχον, 2.43.4), yet these are the very virtues on which the Melians base their decision to stand against the Athenians.[55] The Athenians have argued that they are intent upon Melos because those already feeling the pain of domination may bring them into headlong danger. To this the Melians reply that if Athens runs such a great risk to hold on to her empire, and if her subjects endanger themselves to be free of it, then it is "great baseness" (πολλὴ κακότης) and "cowardice" (δειλία) for the Melians, who are "still free" (τοῖς ἔτι ἐλευθέροις), not to do their utmost to remain free (5.100).

The Athenians reject these considerations on the grounds that since the contest is not between equals, it does not concern manliness (ἀνδραγαθίας) and the shame (αἰσχύνην) of defeat; the question is one of safety and of giving in to the stronger (5.101). In this way, the Athenians return the discussion to the question of force. Honor and virtue generally have no place in this view. In the same way that for them the question of justice only arises between equals (5.89), so here because the dispute is not between equals, honor is not at stake. This is not to suggest that Thucydides believes that it was prudent for the Melians to resist. They had no chance of success, and their hopes were foolish, but their folly unmasks the brutality of the Athenians and the degeneration of their political language.

It may fairly be asked here whether the Athenians have really changed from, for instance, the way they treated the Samians in 440. Yet although there are reports of willful Athenian brutality at that time,[56] Thucydides does not mention them (1.115–1.116). As he presents the revolt of Samos, the Athenians suppressed a defecting ally in the course of the maintenance of the empire. Melos, on the other hand, although a colony of Sparta, preserved neutrality until Athens ravaged her territory. Strictly speaking, the attack on Melos violated Pericles' injunctions against undertaking new conquests during the course of the war.

Thucydides emphasizes the excess of the attack on Melos and does not report the suppression of the Samian rebellion as an example of the wanton use of force. He apparently accepts Pericles' judgment that a successful revolt by the Samians would endanger the empire. While we are free to see similarities between the treatment of Samos and that of Melos, Thucydides does not make the comparison. Indeed, he seems by his unwillingness to make the

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comparison to force his readers to see the differences. The Athenians of 416 have, because of their growing emotionalism under the stress of war, lost the ability to make the prudent distinctions that are required of an imperial power. The same point seems to apply to the Athenian suppression of revolts early in the imperial era (478–462), when Athens started to become less popular with her allies (1.91–1.102). While the suppression was sometimes very harsh, there was some tactical short-term prudence in the approach of suppressing revolt even if as a long-term strategy for empire it could not succeed well.[57]

In response to the Melians' criticism of the Athenians for placing Melos, which has nothing to do with Athens, in the same category as Athens' own subjects (5.96), the Athenians explain that Athens' subjects do think that this is equitable, for both subjects and nonaligned states have an equal share of justice on their side, that is, justice does not matter in these cases (5.97). Some cities by their power remain outside the empire, and the Athenians, because they are afraid, do not attack them. Thus the Athenians repeat their argument that justice has no value and that the strong rule.

The Melian Dialogue occupies a complex position in Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War. It shows the deterioration in Athenian political life, develops certain abstract ideas that appear in other speeches, and adumbrates the fall of Athens through her *pleonexia*. Although the representatives of Athens do not emphasize Athens' desire to expand, they do mention it as one of their motives (5.97), and thereby directly contradict one of Pericles' most important recommendations (2.65.7). Already at this time *pleonexia* or the general desire for more has begun to take hold of Athenian counsels. It shortly, in the form of the Sicilian Expedition, becomes Athens' ruling political passion.[58]

The ideas expressed by the Athenians at Melos look back to the Mytilenean debate, for Athens' basic position at Melos is equivalent to Cleon's recommendation concerning Mytilene. Both Cleon and the Athenians at Melos pursue policies that will lead (or in Cleon's case would have led) to the death of all the men and the enslavement of the women and children in the city against which they direct their wrath. Fear of a revolt of the allies was an important reason for Cleon's advocacy of the destruction of Mytilene (3.39.7–3.39.8, 3.40.7). At Melos the same consideration dominates the Athenian counsels (5.91.1, 5.99). The Athenians' response to the Melian situation is, however, more extreme than was their final response to the revolt of Mytilene. Cleon relies most heavily on the argument that the destruction of Mytilene is just, while expediency is Diodotus' main argument for not reducing Mytilene. Thus, the Athenians at Melos actually inherit Diodotus' arguments (although not his goals) rather than Cleon's.[59] Deciding political questions solely on the basis of expediency lowers the tone of political discussion, for all men are wont to fall short of their goals. If men aim at lowered goals, they have

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already given up a portion of what it might have been possible for them to attain. When a *polis* has high ideals, it may at least approach them even if it does not succeed in living up to them. The Melian Dialogue and the reduction of Melos after it show the *telos* or end of the type of argument Diodotus uses. They also suggest the weaknesses of Nietzsche's aim of making power the basis and also the aim of life even if that power is tempered by a respect for culture and learning, as it was at Athens, quite notably in 416 BC, at least to the extent that that year is an important date in Athenian culture. It was the date of the Melian Dialogue. It was also the date of the dramatic poet Agathon's first Lenaean victory with a drama.[60] This then is the dramatic date of Plato's *Symposium* (174a–b).[61] The Melian Dialogue reduces *logos* to consideration of life and death, the reduction to the physical that typifies much of the appeal of Sophists such as Gorgias, Thrasymachus, and Protagoras. Socrates engages the Callicles in a discussion of this type in the *Gorgias* in which he concludes that saving this life and being saved are far different from what is "good and noble" (512d).[62] This seems to be one conclusion that Thucydides wishes us to see here also.

The Melians make their last real attempt to persuade the Athenians in chapter 98, when they try to convince the Athenians that Melos' and Athens' interests may coincide. After this last Melian reference to persuasion (5.98), it becomes clear to the Melians that all their hopes depend on chance and the expectation that the Lacedaemonians will aid them. In the remainder of the dialogue the Melians bring up these hopes, and the Athenians argue against them. First, the Melians suggest that they have hopes because in war chance is important (5.102). This is a counsel of desperation. Throughout the history of the war, Thucydides and those speakers with whom he has the most sympathy on a practical level, such as Pericles, expressly reject chance and contingency as the basis for a rational policy. On the other hand, the Melians' reliance on hope recalls Diodotus' contention that men pursue criminal designs out of *hubris* arising from abundance. "Hope and desire" (ἥ τε ἐλπὶς καὶ ὁ ἔρως) lead men on, while fortune adds to their irrational expectations (3.45.4–3.45.6). Although the Melians are certainly not suffering from hubris bred of abundance, hope for good luck leads them on. In this respect, they resemble the Athenians as they begin the Sicilian Expedition.

The Athenians rightly answer the Melians that for them hope will prove ruinous (5.103), but this does not induce the Melians to view their situation more prudently. They say they recognize how hard it will be to contend against Athens' power and fortune when the contest is not on an equal basis, but nevertheless, they trust in the fortune that comes from the gods. For two reasons, they think they will not be worsted: (1) they are just men, fighting against unjust men, and (2) the Lacedaemonians out of shame and kindred feeling will come to their aid (5.104). But this is not sound reasoning. Kinship

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and a sense of shame are particularly weak supports late in a long war such as that between Athens and Sparta, for as Thucydides says in his discussion of *stasis*, kinship became a more foreign (i.e., less important) tie than party during the war (3.82.6). In fact, the hopes of the Melians do prove vain, which contributes to the picture Thucydides draws of a declining tone of discourse and a general coarsening of human relationships as the war developed.

The Athenians answer the Melians' reliance on the good will of the gods by telling them that the gods will do no more good for them than they will for the Athenians. The Athenians claim that neither what they do nor what they deem just lies outside either human belief concerning the gods or human wishes concerning one another. Both god and man obey a natural necessity of ruling wherever they have the power (5.105.1–5.105.2). In comparison, when the Athenian ambassadors address the rule of the stronger in Book 1, they leave, as we have noted, a special position for justice and furthermore praise those who are just (1.76.2–1.76.3). Here the Athenians "deem just" (δικαιοῦμεν, 5.105.1) that which is. Justice is not for them an ideal to which they should aspire, but an expression of the rule of the stronger. They thus fully develop the position toward which Pericles in his last speech had merely taken the first step when he told the Athenians that they held an empire which it seemed was unjust to have taken, but which was dangerous to let go.

After the Athenians assert that by a necessary nature men and gods rule wherever they are strong, they call this *phusis* a *nomos* (5.105.2). This thesis raises the question of the relationship between *nomos* and *phusis* in Thucydides, particularly as it applies to political discourse. In calling this *phusis* a *nomos*, the Athenians reject the normative view of *nomos* implied in the Funeral Oration where Thucydides has Pericles extol the Athenians' obedience to law, in particular to the higher unwritten law (2.37.3). Thucydides himself does not make any explicit statements concerning the relationship between *nomos* and *phusis*, but he does describe the overturning of *nomos* during the plague and *stasis* as horrible events. The Athenian position at Melos resembles Thrasymachus' doctrine that justice is the interest of the stronger,[63] although the Athenians differ in that they say that justice is simply irrelevant in relations between states where power is not equal.[64] The claim that justice is irrelevant or simply not a factor is close to Callicles' conception that the weak use justice and temperance and other traditional virtues as part of a social contract to give them some protection.[65]

The decline in Athens from a celebration of customs, ways of life, and arts that promote and support elevation of customs (*nomoi*) and the people who participate in them to an expression of culture such as the Melian Dialogue epitomizes parallels to the collapse of human *nomoi* into physical concerns in a degenerating *polis.* Yet one of the most important concerns of the statesman, according to the Stranger in the *Statesman*, is precisely the ordering of

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the soul through justice, moderation, education, and the customs and laws that support those aspects of life. *Phronesis* (prudence or wisdom) is the tool the statesman uses to bring a properly functioning *polis* into existence (e.g., 292d).[66] The movement toward *phusis* that reaches some kind of terminus in the Melian Dialogue is thus a movement away from the political and toward a world based completely on power.

At 5.89, the Athenians say that justice is only a question between equals in power, but by limiting the sphere of justice so sharply they almost imply that it does not exist, since most foreign relations involve states of unequal power. Likewise, at 5.97, the Athenians say that the "plea of right" (δικαιώματι) belongs equally to Athenian subjects (even the conquered rebels) and to those who are in no way connected with the Athenian Empire. In other words, the plea of right does not accrue to anyone in particular. This lack of discrimination shows the Athenians' disregard for the idea. Might decides what form of political relationships prevail, while right has no real effect.

To the Athenians' contention that any reliance on the nobler motives of the Lacedaemonians is misplaced, the Melians reply that it will be advantageous to the Spartans to aid Melos. But the Athenians dismiss this with their assertion that "justice and nobility" (τὸ δὲ δίκαιον καὶ καλὸν, 5.107) are dangerous. This contrasts with the claims Thucydides reports the Athenians making at Sparta in Book 1, when they say that against the Mede Athens was willing to take all the risks in both the first invasion and the second in order to preserve the freedom of Hellas (1.73.4, 1.74.2–1.74.4). In addition, Pericles in his third speech says that the one who flees dangers deserves more blame than the he who stands up to them, if the choice is between success in a dangerous enterprise and yielding to one's neighbor (2.61.1). Thucydides uses the Athenian officers at Melos as representatives of the Athenian state of mind in 416. For the Athenians of 416, a plain reckoning of advantage has replaced a sense of honor and public esteem as the highest political value. As we have noted, Pericles in the Funeral Oration said that Athens acquired her friends not by faring well but by her actions. The firmer friend (i.e., Athens) is the one who does the favor so as to preserve it as owed "through the (continuing) good will" (δι' εὐνοίας) of the one to whom he has given the gift.[67] This political ideal differs sharply from the judgment of the Athenians at Melos, who argue that "the good will" (τὸ εὔνουν) of a city which a great power might help is not nearly as compelling a reason for alliance as is power (5.109). The good will of the allies was of much more value for the Athenians of Pericles' time than it was for them in 416.

In their final reply, the Athenians summarize the arguments of the Melians who, they say, rely solely on hope, but have no resources to back it up. The course of events confirms the Athenians' view of the matter. The Melians have no good reason to expect success, especially given the

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moral degeneration of the Athenians, who reject as mere folly the Melians' sense of shame at giving in. The Athenians say that "shame" (τὸ αἰσχρὸν, 5.111.3) is merely a word, and that this word will lead the Melians into disaster. Pericles' view differed from this. In his last speech, he exhorted the Athenians to hold on to the empire because to lose what Athens had would be "more shameful" (αἴσχιον) than to fail in the attempt to acquire more (2.62.3).

Thucydides himself stresses the importance of shame as a social bond in his description of the plague, when he observes that all the burial "rites" (νόμοι or *nomoi*) were upset, and many turned to "shameless methods of burial" (ἀναισχύντους θήκας, 2.52.4) because they lacked the appropriate means. The ruin of these customs contributed to the general moral decline of the city, as men "deemed it right" (ἠξίουν, 2.53.2) to take quick enjoyment of pleasure and would no longer keep to what was "reckoned honorable" (τῷ δόξαντι καλῷ, 2.53.3). Whatever was pleasurable or contributed to pleasure was considered "good" (καλὸν) and "useful" (χρήσιμον, 2.53.3). This corruption of values toward the immediately pleasurable parallels the corruption in values in the direction of power revealed in the Melian Dialogue. During the plague the desire for immediate gratification of the desire for pleasure overcame the settled customs of the Athenians, while at Melos the Athenians show that they have not the patience for Pericles' policies, which counseled developing respect among allies and enemies alike. The Athenians demand immediate submission. In the guise of counselors of expediency, the Athenians came to Melos to exercise their undisciplined will to power.

Near the end of the Dialogue, the Athenians contend that the Melians should give in to them because they are proposing the "moderate terms" (μέτρια προκαλουμένης, 5.111.4). This is an example of Thucydides' irony. To threaten to kill neutrals is not moderate. It also eliminates completely the relationship between the action and any kind of political measure, as the humans who measure things as part of their judgment will be eliminated. Then in their summation the Athenians say that success comes to those who do not yield to their equals, who stay on good terms with those more powerful than they are, and who conduct themselves "moderately" (μέτριοί) toward their inferiors. These two uses of μέτριος ("measured") show how Athens has changed from just before the war, when Thucydides has the Athenians at Sparta assert that they were "moderate" (μετριάζομεν, 1.76.4), and that the way they allow their own defeats in contract trials involving their allies helped to show this (1.76.4–1.77.1). Others, the Athenians continue, who are "less moderate towards their subjects than the Athenians" (ἧσσον ἡμῶν πρὸς τοὺς ὑπηκόους μετρίοις οὖσι), suffer less reproach than does Athens (1.77.2). The reason for this is that these others use force, while Athens relies upon justice more than most and its subjects are largely treated as equals (1.77.2–3).

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These uses of the idea of measure touch on a cardinal and difficult virtue for any political leader, *sophrosune*, which is moderation or discipline, and which then promotes moderation or is used as a way of expressing moderation. In the *Statesman*, the Stranger tells Socrates that just as for the Sophist they had compelled a conclusion that nonbeing exists (as other), so in the political realm measure must be brought into being (τὴν τοῦ μετρίου γένεσιν, 284c). He argues that neither can a statesman or another person who knows practical matters be said to exist unless this point is accepted (284c). He is arguing that political knowledge is a kind of *techne*. Successful action in politics as in technical work requires the introduction of measure and the mean. Without action, there will be no mean or measure at all. In short, measure is not natural. It is required in human action and for successful human action.[68] This is most easily seen in geometry applied to practical problems like surveying or designing a building or in the application of calculus to projectile motion. In the political sphere of human relations, the crucial process by which we work together requires constant evaluation of worth, which is most easily accomplished for us with language. In the *Statesman*, the Stranger uses the model of weaving to explain how measure relates to *techne* (279a–284a). This seems to be a very productive analogy that brings the Stranger into the political realm as the human or person is the measure or mean for clothing, which is a primary object of weaving.[69] Weaving was an important *techne* for the Greeks and the occasion of a remarkable Greek black-figure lekythos now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.[70] The decline in discourse through the elimination of the mean or measure of moral terms and terms describing human conduct generally led in Corcyra to the complete destruction of one party as a real consequence of the end of discourse. The Melian Dialogue presents that step in a dramatic way.

For the Athenians at Melos, justice is dangerous (5.107). They first threaten and then use deadly force rather than treating the Melians in some moderate fashion. The Athenians' words at Melos are partly sensible—an imperial power should be moderate if it wants to continue a successful hegemony—but these words do not accord with their actions. The loss of any real expression of moderation or methods of expressing moderation represent a loss of political judgment because political judgment by nature involves moderation, discipline, and a sense of measuring as well as courage.

As many have seen, there is a similarity between certain of the arguments the Melians use and the state of mind of Athens before the Sicilian Expedition.[71] This similarity does not become apparent until the Athenians have been able to define the terms of the Dialogue as the power of Athens on the one hand and Melos' impotence on the other (5.100–101). At this point, the Melians stop trying to persuade the Athenians that it is either wrong or inexpedient for them to attack Melos (5.112.2). They place their hopes first in chance (5.102),

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and then in the gods (5.104). This trust in hope is futile for, as Pericles says, understanding makes courage stronger, but hope has its strength in a lack of means (2.62.5).[72] The Athenians themselves undertake the voyage to Sicily in a deluded state of mind, since they know neither the size of Sicily nor how many people live there (6.1.1). Furthermore, an irrational *eros* to conquer has convinced them that "they have good hopes of success" (εὐέλπιδες ὄντες σωθήσεσθαι, 6.24.3, cf. 6.24.2, 6.24.4). Both the Melians in the Dialogue and the Athenians as they sail for Sicily are in an irrational state of mind. They hope without good ground. By having the Melians suggest the end of the empire, Thucydides brings Athens' defeat into view (5.90) and colors the subsequent exchanges to reflect the comparison between Melos' fate and Athens'.

Thucydides uses the narration of the Athenian siege of Melos after the Dialogue to show the Athenians' overconfidence. He describes how the Melians were able to attack successfully a part of the Athenian line, kill some of the men, and obtain some food and supplies (5.115.4). To prevent another similar raid, the Athenians set up a better guard. The Athenians had been too sure of victory to take the proper precautions, just as they were when they left for Sicily. Even after the Athenians took these additional measures, the Melians were able to take a poorly defended part of the Athenian position (5.116.2), while they did not in the end surrender until someone betrayed Melos from within (5.116.3). Thus, at the end of this section of the Peloponnesian War Thucydides emphasizes the critical role of unity in the survival of the *polis*, a theme that reveals itself in Books 6 and 7 first in the discord at Athens and second in the unity of the Sicilians under the leadership of Hermocrates.[73]

NOTES

1. See *LSJ.* s. v. πρόφασις A. I. 2. "Falsely alleged motive (or cause), pretext, pretence, excuse," which is the clear meaning here.

2. Thucydides sees the civil strife in both Syracuse itself and in Sicily generally as examples of *stasis*. He has Hermocrates refer to *stasis* in Sicily in 4.61.1 and to domestic war (οἰκείου πολέμου) in 4.64.5.

3. Like Aeschylus and many other Greek authors, Thucydides sees powerful emotional states as external to the individual. See Jaeger, *Paideia*, Vol. 1, pp. 258f.

4. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 140–41.

5. *The Federalist Papers*, No. 63: Madison (probably), https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-63. Cf. No. 9: Hamilton. https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-9.

6. *The Federalist Papers*, No. 10: Madison. https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10.

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7. Hans Kopp, *The Defeat of Athens in 404 BC in The Federalist*. *KTÈMA Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques* (Université de Strasbourg, 2017), 42, pp. 97–114. ⟨halshs-01669232⟩. https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/hals hs-01669232 (accessed August 10, 2019). See in particular p. 108, where Kopp points out that the Pericles seems to have fanned the passions of the people as much as, according to Thucydides, he restrained them.

8. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, Volume I*, 3.89.5 n.

9. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 107, compares the celebration also to the "perverted festival" of *stasis* in Corcyra.

10. See Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 235–36, who emphasizes the peacefulness of the quotation. Westlake, in "Irrelevant Notes and Minor Excurses in Thucydides" (*Essays*, pp. 1–38), seems to miss the point when he says that the purification of the island and the revival of the Ionian festival were "acts of political propaganda" (p. 17). Political propaganda was involved, but Thucydides, as Westlake himself notes (pp. 17–18), spends most of the digression discussing the ancient festival, not its modern revival. Westlake does not seem able to account for this (p. 19).

11. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 48–51. For the counter-normal era, see in particular p. 57.

12. Thus, the argument of M. Treu that Melos was in fact a tributary ally of Athens, and that Athens' attack in 416 was justified, is irrelevant for understanding Thucydides' thought, although if Treu is right (which I doubt), there are some questions about Thucydides' reliability. See M. Treu, "Athen und Melos und der Melierdialog des Thukydides," *Historia* 2 (1953), pp. 253–73, and *Historia* 3 (1954), pp. 58–59. Rengakos, *Form und Wandel des Machtdenkens der Athener bei Thukydides*, p. 94, also sets aside the historical question.

See also Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, p. 328, who accepts Thucydides' judgment on this issue and sees the Athenian assessment of Melos in 425 as an attempt by Athens to let Melos submit without a fight. Neither for him nor for Gomme and Andrewes, *Historical Commentary*, 5.84.2n., is the Athenian assessment a good argument that Melos was in fact even a reluctant ally between 425 and 416. "To maintain this thesis we have to suppose that Thucydides positively falsified the facts" (5.84.2n.).

In general, it seems better to accept the history that Melos was a Spartan colony, which Hornblower does (*A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 5.84–114) in an extensive note. He is following I. Malkin, *Myth and Territory in the Spartan Mediterranean* (1994), pp. 74–78. See also Hornblower 5.84.2n. Melos' exact status appears to be a neutral colony of Sparta that Sparta did not think worthy of assistance.

13. For a good exposition of the relationship between Melos and Pylos, see Hans Herter, "Pylos und Melos," *Rheinisches Museum* 97 (1954), pp. 316–43. See also Hayward R. Alker, Jr., "The Dialectical Logic of Thucydides Melian Dialogue," *American Political Science Review* 82 (1988): 816, who carefully revives Cornford's thesis that "the Melian episode reveals the blindness of 'Tyrannus Eros.'"

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14. Cf. Westlake, "Athenian Aims in Sicily," *Essays*, p. 102: "He [Thucydides] thus finds in the treatment of the generals an illustration of the irresponsibility shown by Athens under the influence of bad leadership by successors of Pericles."

15. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 124–26. See also Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume 3*, 5.84.2 n., who notes the emphasis on Melos as an island and as a neutral state that refuses to submit to Athens.

16. Sungwoo Park, "Thucydides on the Fate of the Democratic Empire," *Journal of International and Area Studies* 15, no. 1 (2008): 93–109. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43111478 (accessed July 21, 2019). See esp. pp. 94–95.

17. Plutarch in his life of Pericles (23.2) says that the Athenians treated the Histiaeans harshly because they had taken an Athenian ship captive and killed its crew. *Plutarch's Lives with an English Translation* by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1916).

18. Park, "Thucydides on the Fate of the Democratic Empire," pp. 102–3.

19. At the first Congress at Lacedaemon in Book 1, the Corinthian ambassadors contrast the essential characters of the Spartans and Athenians (1.70). These character sketches provide a background against which to view the later emotions and actions of each city.

20. Michael C. Mittelstadt makes the very persuasive point that at 5.90 the Melians appeal "to the Athenians of the earlier stage of their expansion when *deos* and then *time*—fear and honor, exerted a more powerful influence on their behavior towards other states and the principle of *ophelia,* personal advantage, less." See his "Thucydidean Psychology and Moral Value Judgement in the *History*: Some Observations," *Rivista di studi Classici* Torino XXV (1977): 43.

Dennis Proctor in *The Experience of Thucydides* says that the shift (apparent in the Melian Dialogue) "in the use of *agon* [contest] and its derivatives from a battle of words to a contest of deeds—marks a change of direction from what has gone before. The same cannot be said of the theme itself, the supremacy of the strong over the weak and the ruthless relegation of any question of right or wrong; for this is only a more extreme formulation of an argument which has reared its head several times already in the *History*" (pp. 88–89). Yet this shift from word to deed in the use of words such as *agon* is in fact a crucial shift from restraint to violence, as we shall see. It is also another example of the changed *axiosis* or valuation of words.

See also Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," who also comment on the broad shift from word to deed over the course of Thucydides' history, pp. 59–60.

21. For a thorough and convincing explanation of the importance of Alcibiades for Athenian government starting with his appearance in Book V of Thucydides, see Mark H. Munn, *The School of History: Athens in the Age of Socrates* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 2000), pp. 95–195.

22. G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, "The Character of the Athenian Empire." *Historia* 3 (1954/55): 13–14.

23. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 273–74. H. L. Hudson-Williams, "Conventional forms of debate and the Melian Dialogue," pp. 164–67,

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believes that Thucydides wrote a dialogue because the two sides were small in number; a formal debate would have been inappropriate.

On p. 169, he says that current convention and the fact that the debate occurred may have caused Thucydides to elaborate the Dialogue. See also Donald Kagan, "The Speeches in Thucydides and the Mytilene Debate," *Studies in the Greek Historians in Memory of Adam Parry. Yale Classical Studies* 24 (1975): 77.

24. See, e.g., Allen, *Plato's Parmenides*, pp. 338–39.

25. See James V. Morrison in his *Reading Thucydides*, p. 4. Morrison notes that Thucydides presents speakers and events that provide a large number of different perspectives. See also Gerald Mara, *The Civic Conversations of Thucydides and Plato* (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 2008), pp. 19–20, who also acknowledges Morrison on Thucydides (n. 33). "Too simply put, while Plato theorizes politics in a way that points to enhanced political possibilities, Thucydides draws our attention to the disruption that lies at the core of all political identities. However, both authors resist the tendencies toward the cognitive imperialism that characterizes theorization by showing the limitations of their own dominant templates. For Socrates, the teachability of the virtues is fundamentally problematic (*Protagoras* 361a–c). For Thucydides, some forms of culture enable thoughtful challenges to the power that they presuppose and reflect. In suggesting the provisionality of their own frameworks, both writers practice a conversational rather than a deductive form of political thought."

26. Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 89 n. 24, 157, 159–61.

27. See in particular Rengakos, *Form und Wandel des Machtdenkens der Athener bei Thukydides*, p. 124. Rengakos also notes (p. 122) that Thucydides provides a great deal of evidence of "idealism" in his text. He cites a number of passages from Pericles' speeches and from the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1.

28. See Greenwood, *Thucydides and the Shaping of History*, pp. 38–39.

29. See de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 249–53, for a comparison of the Athenian speech at Sparta to the Melian Dialogue.

30. See Scott M. Truelove, *Plato and Thucydides on Athenian Imperialism*, Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2012: "Indeed, as we have seen, the first major episode in the war—between Corcyra and Corinth—showed that the Athenians allied with the Corcyreans not out of a consideration for justice, but because of the substantial naval resources that Corcyra would bring the empire (1.44). More infamously, the Spartans slaughtered the Plataeans because the Thebans 'were useful' to them, in spite of the overwhelmingly moral character of that debate (3.68). By drawing our attention to the gap between actual and rhetorical motives, Thucydides encourages us to notice the distance between the rhetoric of the debates and what ultimately motivates cities' actions. The Melian Dialogue is the apotheosis of this approach: the Athenians explicitly reject what constitutes the appropriate language of political argument—they pull back the veneer of appeals to history, honor, and justice," p. 51.

31. Translation Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*, 1.77.1 n. See the full note for a very convincing set of arguments that the translation of this difficult passage is correct.

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32. Rengakos, *Form und Wandel des Machtdenkens der Athener bei Thukydides*, p. 122, provides a useful summary of the "idealistic" passages in the Athenian speeches and in Thucydides' comments on them. He divides these passages into six types, each concerned with one rhetorical *topos*:

1. honor and glory, 1.75.3, 1.76.2, 1.144.3, 2.41.4, 2.61.4, 2.63.l, 2.64.3, and 2.64.5;
2. moderation, 1.76.4, 1.77.2, 2.65.5;
3. justice and fairness toward the allies, 1.77.1;
4. the rejection of the right of the stronger, 1.77.3;
5. worthiness to rule, 1.73.1, 1.74.3, 1.76.2, 2.41.3;
6. liberality, 2.40.4. Rengakos contrasts these aspects of the Athenian character extensively with what the Athenians say in the Melian Dialogue. See pp. 93–102, and esp. pp. 101–2.

33. See the discussion of Truelove, *Plato and Thucydides on Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 51–52, esp. p. 51 n. 107.

34. See Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 151 n. 32, for a detailed comparison of expressions in support of the principle of the "domination of the stronger by the weaker" in 1.76.1–2 (the Athenian speech at Sparta) and the position of the Athenians at Melos (5.105).

35. See Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 152. In this connection, the book by Frans de Waal, *Primates and Philosophers: How Morality Evolved*, ed. with an introduction by Stephen Macedo and Josiah Ober (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006, 2016) is quite interesting. De Waal sees reciprocity and empathy as the two building blocks of morality that we share with certain apes along, of course, with aggression.

36. See, e.g., Gillis, "Murder on Melos," p. 191ff.

37. Grene, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 95–97.

38. See, e.g., Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, pp. 32–38 ("Preface to the Second Edition").

39. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, Sections 428–29.

40. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, Section 390.

41. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, pp. 106–7 ("What I owe to the Ancients," "Section 2").

42. Felix Wassermann, "The Melian Dialogue," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 78 (1947): 23–24, claims that Pericles would have agreed with the Athenians at Melos. He thus ignores all the Athenian references to higher political motives. Wassermann, as he himself recognizes, goes against the general weight of the scholarly tradition. Cf. also Wilhelm Nestle, "Thukydides und die Sophistik," *Neue Jahrbticher für das klassische Altertum* 33 (1914): pp. 653, 669 ff.; Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 189, 203, 211; de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 249–50, 286–310.

43. See Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 5.97n.; Macleod, "Form and Meaning in the Melian Dialogue," *Collected Essays*, p. 59.

44. White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, pp. 77–78.

45. For this point of view, see Anthony Andrewes, "The Melian Dialogue and Perikles' Last Speech," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* n.s.

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6 (1960): 4, who sides with A. Momigliano, "La composizione della Storia di Tucidide," *Mem. della Reale Acc. delle Scienze di Torino* II, 67 (1930): p. 11.

46. *Hellenica II*, 2, 19. Even if one takes into account the evidence of Isocrates' *On the Peace* 78, 105, that the Athenians were after the War hated more by their allies than by the Spartans, the Athenians are still not correct at Thuc. 5.104, 5.106, for they have left out of account those who hated them most—Thebes and Corinth. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 276–77, argues against Momigliano and suggests that Xenophon's reference includes Athens' allies when he says ἐν ᾗ ἀντέλεγον Κορίνθιοι καὶ Θηβαῖοι μάλιστα, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων, μὴ σπένδεσθαι Ἀθηναίοις, ἀλλ᾽ ἐξαιρεῖν, "at which the Corinthians and Thebans in particular, though many other Greeks agreed with them, opposed making a treaty with the Athenians and favoured destroying their city" (*Hellenica II*, 2, 19, trans. Carleton L. Brownson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, Ltd., vol. 1:1918). But as Andrewes says in "The Melian Dialogue," Athens' allies did not take the lead for Athens' destruction (p. 4 n. 2).

47. See Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 186–87, for evidence other than Thucydides.

48. Xenophon, *Hellenica II*, 2, 19. Gomme et al., *Historical Commentary*. 5.91.ln., accept this judgment of Xenophon's, as does J. B. Bury, *A History of Greece* (New York: The Modern Library, 1913), p. 489. See also Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume 3:* 5.91 n., who agrees also.

49. See Amit, "The Melian Dialogue and History," pp. 228–35. For some remarks that tend to support this thesis, see Bahr-Volk, "A Note on the Figurative Use of Words Denoting Posture and Position in Thucydides' Melian Dialogue," pp. 59–60, who observes that verbs of falling and plunging are generally associated with the Melians (5.103, 110, 111), but with the Athenians only once (5.90). Verbs of falling more commonly describe the Melians in the second half of the Dialogue, after they have lost the initiative.

50. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 157.

51. Plato, *Republic*, 348d. See also Bloom, "Ínterpretive Essay," pp. 439–50.

52. Plato, *Gorgias*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959), 483c7–484c3 n.

53. Plato, *Gorgias*, 483e5. Rachel Barney characterizes Callicles' ideas here as a "somewhat murky ideal, the superior man, is imagined as having the arrogant grandeur of the larger-than-life Homeric heroes; but what this new breed of hero is supposed to fight for and be rewarded by remains cloudy to his imagination." See her "Callicles and Thrasymachus," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/callicles-thrasymachus/.

54. Plato, *Gorgias*, 508a.

55. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 155.

56. See, e.g., Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 191–92.

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57. See the very helpful review in Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*: 1.99 n., taking issue with M. I. Finley's argument that the Athenians in the time of Cimon were as harsh as Cleon in his arguments for punishing the Mytileneans with death. "The Fifth Century Athenian Empire: A Balance Sheet," *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, ed. P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 103–26.

58. Andrewes, "The Melian Dialogue," p. 3, misses this reference to *pleonexia* when he denies that Thucydides treated "the conquest of Sicily as a matter of unregulated ambition."

59. W. Liebeschuetz, "The Structure and Function of the Melian Dialogue," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 88 (1968), pp. 73–77.

60. Zimmermann, Bernhard (Freiburg) and Brodersen, Kai (Mannheim), "Agathon," in *Brill's New Pauly*, Antiquity volumes edited by: Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, English Edition by: Christine F. Salazar, Classical Tradition volumes edited by: Manfred Landfester, English Edition by: Francis G. Gentry. Consulted online on December 26, 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e107370. First published online: 2006

61. See Seth Benardete, "On Plato's Symposium," in *Plato's Symposium*, trans. Seth Benardete with commentaries by Benardete and Allan Bloom (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 181.

62. Macleod, "Form and Meaning in the Melian Dialogue," p. 55 and p. 55 n. 14.

63. Plato, *Republic*, 338.

64. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Vol. III*, 5.105.2 n.

65. Plato, *Gorgias*, 483b, 49le–492d. See also the very useful comments of E. R. Dodds in his edition of Plato's *Gorgias*, pp. 387–91.

66. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 149–50.

67. I have followed closely the interpretation of E. C. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 2* (London. MacMillan & Company, 1891), 2.40.4 n.

68. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, p. 133.

69. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, p. 125.

70. "Terracotta Lekythos (Oil flask)" attributed to the Amasis Painter, black figure, 550–530 BC, 6¾" high, Accession Number: 31.11.10, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (https://www.metmuseum.org/en/art/collection/search/253348, accessed December 1, 2019). Measure is quite obviously everything here, in weaving and in the women dancing above in the obverse or second view. In the upper section of the first image, there is a leader or a goddess, perhaps Athena herself.

71. Cf., e.g., Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence*, pp. 120–21. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, pp. 174–87, makes the Melian Dialogue crucial to the *hubris* and fall of Athens (pp. 174–87).

72. See also 4.62.4 (Hermocrates), 4.65.4, 4.108.4. Cf. de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 291–92.

73. Because Thucydides places it directly before the crisis that ultimately led to Athens' defeat, the Melian Dialogue is vital to any understanding of the degeneration

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of the Athenian Empire and of the *polis* itself. Andrewes in "The Melian Dialogue" argues precisely the opposite point:

"Theories which take it [the Melian Dialogue] as a comment specifically on the Athens of 416 seem to me mostly to end in rhetoric or nonsense" (p. 10). These are strong words.

I believe that Andrewes' paper is itself somewhat confused. Because he thinks that the Dialogue is only a "stage in Thucydides' own exploration of the problems of imperialism" (p. 10), he can give no reason why Thucydides put it where he did. He even says that the proper way to interpret it is "to take it out of context" (p. 10). This does not seem a good solution. Looking at the Dialogue in its immediate context, for instance, we may see that the Athenians' advanced military preparations justify the Melians' contention that the Athenian willingness to negotiate is really a pretense. I have discussed the more general context of Athens decline and the Sicilian Expedition in the text. Andrewes sets up a straw man in arguing against making the context important for understanding the Dialogue. It has a meaning in its context, but it also focuses the reader's attention on the subject actually being discussed, the nature of empire and war, which is appropriate at this advanced stage of the war.

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Chapter 6

Alcibiades' Desire for Sicily in Thucydides and for Sexual Conquest in Plato

Alcibiades is a pivotal figure in the decline and defeat of Athens in the Sicilian Expedition. As the successor of Pericles, he represents as does no other figure the hopes and tragic failure of the Athenian *polis*. His actions dramatize one of the most serious problems of democracy, how to educate in the midst of diversity and the great temptations of license and freedom. Democracy depends on an educated citizenry. This is most clear within the leadership of the society as it is from that group that most new leaders will emerge. In other words, the quality of education available in a society with some openness to new leaders determines to some extent how good those leaders will be.

Alcibiades had Pericles as his guardian and Socrates as his teacher, yet he could not effectively rule Athens or himself. Thucydides' account of his deeds and his presentation of Alcibiades' speeches reveal this inability to rule, which Plato confirms in his portrait of Alcibiades in the *Symposium*. In this chapter, we shall examine Thucydides' description of Alcibiades from his first notice in Book 5 through the debate concerning the Sicilian Expedition, and then compare it with certain of Plato's references to Alcibiades. We shall also consider Nicias' two speeches in the debate in order to establish their position in the decline of political discourse at Athens.

In the next chapter, chapter 7, we shall consider the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton and the mutilation of the Herms, which among other things show the importance of proper knowledge and education in a democracy.

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PART 1. ALCIBIADES AND THE PEACE OF NICIAS

Alcibiades makes his first appearance in Thucydides during the Peace of Nicias. As the leader of a group of Athenians opposed to the treaty establishing the Peace of Nicias, Alcibiades first turns Argos toward an alliance with Athens (5.43–5.44.2), then tricks a group of Lacedaemonian envoys who had come to Athens to keep her from entering upon an alliance with Argos (5.44.2–5.45). In these activities, Thucydides establishes Alcibiades as one concerned with his private position instead of with the good of the *polis*. Alcibiades favors an alliance with Argos instead of Lacedaemon partly because he thinks it would be better for Athens, but also because he was "fond of victory [or contention]" (φιλονικῶν) and had lost out to Nicias and Laches in influence with the Spartans (5.43.2).[1] Because of his youth and his grandfather's renunciation of the ties of προξενία (*proxenia*), a kind of compact between an important private citizen and another state, in this case Sparta, the Spartans had overlooked Alcibiades (5.43.2). As a result, Alcibiades "felt personally slighted" (νομίζων ἐλασσοῦσθαι) and decided to undertake a "private" (ἰδίᾳ) dialogue with the Argives, promising to do all he could "himself" (αὐτὸς) to help them at Athens (5.43.3). Alcibiades thus suffers from many of the failings Thucydides ascribes to the partisans in *stasis*. His concern for his own position recalls Thucydides' statement of the basic causes of *stasis*, the desire for power deriving from *pleonexia*, and the love of honor (3.82.8). This leads to violent emotions as men settle into a love of victory and the emotional violence of parties engaged in contention (3.82.8). Alcibiades' love of victory, for example, recalls the love of victory Thucydides sees in *stasis*.

In Book V once the Peace of Nicias has been signed, there is an early breach that Alcibiades seeks to exploit in such a way as to cancel the treaty (5.42.2–5.43.2). He tricks the Lacedaemonian envoys into keeping quiet concerning their powers when they appear before the Athenian assembly. But then he "shouts down" (καταβοῶντος, 5.45.4) the Lacedaemonians and further incites the emotions of the Athenians so that he hopes they will return to war against Sparta. Thucydides shows the reaction of the Athenians to this speech when they "cannot restrain themselves" (οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι οὐκέτι ἠνείχοντο, also 5.45.4) as they hearken to Alcibiades even more than they had before (5.45.4). Thucydides punctuates Alcibiades' outburst with his familiar literary device of the mention of an earthquake (5.45.4), as Alcibiades' appearance in Athenian politics scene begins the movement toward war again, and again the earth moves.

The next day, however, Nicias persuaded the Athenians to send an embassy (which would include him) to Sparta to learn what Sparta wanted and to try to arrange some solution to the questions about the Boeotian

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alliance (5.46). Unfortunately for Nicias and the Athenians, the Spartans said that they would not give up their relationship with Boeotia. Nicias, who "was afraid" (ἐφοβεῖτο) to return without anything to show for his embassy, persuaded the Spartans to renew their oaths (5.46.4). This shows Nicias in a characteristic emotion, fear (ἐφοβεῖτο γὰρ, "for he was afraid,")[2] in this case for his own position, which he does not want to "be slandered" (διαβληθῇ, 5.46.4). Nicias' fear is not for Athens but for himself, demonstrating further the growing importance of what is personal or private in Athenian public life.[3] This contrasts with the Athens of Pericles' Funeral Oration, in which private concerns are subordinate to the public or general good.[4] It also confirms Thucydides' assessment of Pericles' successors in the chapter following his third speech. Coincident with this concern for private advantage and position is a movement toward "emotionalism" (ὀργή), which the Athenians demonstrate here when "they become angry" (εὐθὺς δι᾽ ὀργῆς εἶχον) that they have been "done an injustice" (ἀδικεῖσθαι) by the Lacedaemonians (5.46.5). This sense of justice differs very significantly from the sense of "justice" (δίκαια, 1.144.2) Pericles invokes in his first speech. The justice the Athenians evince here in Book 5 is predicated on emotions, whereas Pericles appeals to justice as one factor in his rational estimate of Athens' power and place in the world.

As a result of Alcibiades' manipulations, the Athenians conclude a treaty with Argos and her allies, helping to confirm Thucydides' thesis that the Peace of Nicias was in fact part of the war. The Argives thought that Athens was a natural ally, since both cities were democracies (5.44.1). This recalls Thucydides' comments on the progress of *stasis* throughout the Hellenic world. Oligarchs in a number of cities brought in the Lacedaemonians, while democrats encouraged the Athenians (3.82.1). Thucydides continues this theme in relation to Argos later in Book 5, when the Athenians appeal to the democrats at Argos, while the Lacedaemonians look to the Argive party that desired to overthrow the democracy, and establish a treaty with Argos (5.76–5.79).[5] Despite Alcibiades' presence at Argos, the Spartans are able to obtain their own treaty (5.76.3). Thucydides says that there was a "great discussion" (πολλῆς ἀντιλογίας) of this matter, but he does not report the speeches. This treaty between Sparta and Argos did not last long, however, for the next summer the popular party at Argos attacked the oligarchs, slew some of them, and banished the rest (5.82).

There is a major shift toward ideologically based foreign relations in the war with the rise of Cleon and the debate over how to respond to the revolt of Mytilene. Athens' appeal in its empire had long been toward democracies, as we have seen, while the shift toward supporting and even fomenting revolution as a tool of war cemented that appeal, which then in turn fostered a more emotional and ideological view of how the war should be fought and won.[6]

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There is in the second half of the *Histories* a clear change from public debate to private discussion or dialogue.[7] Paralleling this development are two other changes, first an increase in the number of reports and speeches in indirect discourse and second a switch from the delivery by groups (Thebans, Athenians, and others) of direct discourse speeches in the first half to speeches attributed to individuals in the latter part of the *Histories*.[8] These changes indicate the increasing dominance of the particular over the general and of the private over the public. Overall, there is a contraction of public political space and a decrease in power of the means—rhetoric or *logos*—for effecting change within that space. The war removes the common ground necessary for debate between two sides. Alcibiades, on the other hand, with his interests in manipulation, intrigue (cf. 6.48), and private advantage, plays a large role in this shift, and dramatically concentrates these tendencies in international relations and even within Athens itself.[9]

The degeneration of *logos* is one important part of an even larger movement during the war away from *nomos* and toward a state of nature.[10] In Book 5, Thucydides gives an instructive example of this. In the Olympic games that summer, the Eleans prevented the Lacedaemonians from sacrificing or contending, because the Spartans had refused to pay a fine the Eleans had demanded in consequence of an attack. Although this fine was sanctioned "by the Olympic law" (ἐν τῷ Ὀλυμπιακῷ νόμῳ), the Spartans said that because of a technicality they were not liable for it (5.49.1–5.49.2). This incident had little or no bearing on the course of the war, yet Thucydides describes it at some length and goes over the negotiations between the Spartans and the Eleans in detail (5.49–5.50). He does this in order to show the breakdown of *nomos* occasioned by the war. The Spartans appear to have broken the truce by attacking Elea, but this is not the most significant point here. What is significant is the disruption of the Olympic games themselves. As Hornblower explains the matter, the Lacedaemonian Lichas, who won the chariot race competing for the Boeotians since the Spartan was excluded, crowned his charioteer to show that it was his victory for Sparta not a victory for the Boeotians (5.40.4).[11] The result, however, is that Lichas is crowned and then flogged, though Thucydides describes the flogging first and then the crowning of Lichas to emphasize the derangement of the games and of the civilization in which they are taking place.[12] Thucydides marks this disruption of the order of the contests with another earthquake.

The machinations of Alcibiades surrounding the Peace of Nicias exemplify Thucydides' analysis that personal and private views have taken over from public, shared interests, goals, and aspirations at Athens. Thucydides calls the Peace unstable (5.25.3), which is then a facet of the Peace that Alcibiades seeks to exploit early and readily (5.43.1–2). Alcibiades does this because he feels that he has been "slighted" since the treaty was negotiated by Nicias

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while he, Alcibiades, was ignored because he was young (5.43.2–3). He takes all this slight personally because of the great esteem in which his family was held (5.43.2). Today we might say he was spoiled rotten, but this has great significance politically and militarily because he was so capable, noteworthy or notorious, and beautiful. In the dialogue *Alcibiades I*, which is quite possibly by Plato,[13] Alcibiades sees his older political competition as so amateurish that he does not need to practice or study to oppose them successfully (119b–c), while Socrates attests to his beauty, a fact that seems to have attracted many lovers (104a).

Alcibiades fosters a resumption of the war with Sparta (5.43.3). He then tricks the Spartan ambassadors into allowing the alliance between the Athenians, Argives, Eleans, and Mantineans and puts Nicias in a position of having little to show for the truce with Sparta (5.46.4–5), which has the effect of increasing Alcibiades' influence while it reduces Nicias'. This then helps to lead, after the Melian Dialogue, to a resumption of war with Sparta.

PART 2. THE SICILIAN EXPEDITION AND POLITICAL *EROS*

For our examination of the Athenian speeches, the next important debate after the Melian Dialogue is the set of speeches by Nicias and Alcibiades before the Sicilian Expedition. Book 6 begins with the Athenians' desire to sail for Sicily and conquer it (6.1.1), even though they are ignorant of the size of the island and of the number of people living there (6.1.2). In order to show how vast and varied was the island the Athenians wanted to reduce, Thucydides describes the peoples of Sicily and how they came to be there.

The complicated history of the various races inhabiting Sicily belies the argument of the Egestaeans at Athens that the Syracusans will, if they are not punished for depopulating Leontini, come to the aid of the Spartans (6.6.2).[14] For although the Syracusans were Dorians,[15] and the Leontinians were Ionians,[16] these racial affinities do not determine the history of Sicily. Thucydides shows this, for example, in the case of the history of the people who, under the leadership of Lamis came from Megara, which was at least partly a Dorian city.[17] These Megarians joined the Chalcidians at Leontini, but the Ionians there drove them out to Thapsus. Later they were driven from Thapsus and founded Megara Hyblaea, where they lived for 240 years until Gelo, the Syracusan tyrant—and Syracuse was of Dorian origin—expelled them. Thus, both Ionians and Dorians fought the Megarians, who were of mixed ancestry. Furthermore, Ionians expelled the people of Zancle (6.5.4), which shortly after its founding had become a largely Ionian colony (6.5.4). Although Ionian Zancle founded Himera, some Syracusan exiles

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later joined the city, and at Himera the language was mixed Chalcidian and Dorian.

Beyond these examples, the history of Camarina shows that even a purely Dorian city suffered from strife between Dorians, since the Syracusans who founded the city later expelled the inhabitants after they had revolted. Then Hippocrates, the tyrant of the Dorian city Gela, resettled the city, which was later again depopulated by the Syracusan tyrant Gelo (6.5.3).

Hermocrates recognized the relative lack of importance of racial ties to the Sicilians of his day when he spoke at the Congress of Gela in 424. He argued that Athenian ambition endangered all Sicilians, even the Chalcidians, who were of Ionian blood (4.61.2–4.61.6). He also criticized the Athenians' claims on the Ionians in Sicily as specious and serving only Athens' advantage: καὶ ὀνόματι ἐννόμῳ ξυμμαχίας τὸ φύσει πολέμιον εὐπρεπῶς ἐς τὸ ξυμφέρον καθίστανται, "[when we see the first power in Hellas] . . . under the fair name of alliance speciously seeking to turn to account the natural hostility that exists between us" (4.60.1). What was true in 424 of Athens' aims and Sicilian political realities is also true, although on a larger scale, in 416. Thucydides in his own authorial voice even uses the same adverb, "fair seeming" (εὐπρεπῶς, 6.6.1), that he attributed to Hermocrates in his characterization of Athens' motives (4.60.1).[18] On the other hand, Hermocrates is shown seeing both the importance of political cohesion and the danger to Sicily from *stasis* (4.61.1).[19] This remark is prophetic, for it is Sicily's and particularly Syracuse's—unity and Athens' disunity that have the most important effects on the outcome of the Sicilian Expedition. The Athenians wanted to conquer all of Sicily, as Thucydides makes clear:

> ἐφιέμενοι μὲν τῇ ἀληθεστάτῃ προφάσει τῆς πάσης ἄρξαι, βοηθεῖν δὲ ἅμα εὐπρεπῶς βουλόμενοι τοῖς ἑαυτῶν ξυγγενέσι καὶ τοῖς προσγεγενημένοις ξυμμάχοις. (6.6.1)
>
> Being ambitious in real truth of conquering the whole, although they had also the [fair-seeming] design of succoring their kindred and other allies in the island. (6.6.1)

The Athenians use the false reason of kinship here, just as they did in 427 BC in an attempt to control the export of grain to the Peloponnese (3.86.4). Thucydides uses the same word there (τῆς μὲν οἰκειότητος προφάσει), προφάσει ("pretext or plea"), that he also uses in Book 1 to explain the truest cause of the war (1.23.6) and then again here in 6.6.1 (τῇ ἀληθεστάτῃ προφάσει) where the full phrase parallels 1.23.6 (τὴν . . . ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν), "the truest cause or explanation."[20] The importance of these allusions for understanding Thucydides' presentation of the declining value

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of moral and political terms is that kinship had some real value but the Athenians by using it falsely are degrading the value of that bond. "Fair seeming" (εὐπρεπῶς) also conveys this idea.

Thucydides' outline of Sicilian history confirms his position of superior knowledge. Unlike the other Athenians of his day, who did not have experience of the island's size or of its people (6.1.1), Thucydides knows the history of the island. His long and dense narrative of the history of Sicily sets a standard for knowledge that the Athenian leaders of the time, 616–615, cannot match. His *logos* corresponds to the *erga* of the war, while the general Athenian understanding of Sicily diverges widely from the truth and shows how much Athens has fallen off from the time of Pericles.[21] The Athenians' ignorance complements the emotional state of mind in which they desire to conquer all of Sicily (6.6.2). As at so many other points in the *Histories*, ignorance contributes to the dominance of the emotions over reason, and their combination leads to disaster. Thucydides shows the power of this problematical emotional complex earlier in his narrative of the Athenians' earlier military failures in Sicily when he comments on the fact that the Athenians banished their generals Pythodorus and Sophocles and fined Eurymedon for their failure to subdue Sicily (4.65.3). This occurs right after Thucydides has explained that Hermocrates had completed the effort to convince the Sicilians to unite in a peace treaty that kept what they had gained against the Athenians and their allies. But the Athenian people, under the impression that the generals should not have left but should have tried to win, allow "the unexpected success of most of their operations" to fill them "with extravagant hopes."[22]

Thucydides' position as an outcast from Athens enables him to see the effects of the war clearly (5.26). This position also establishes in a metaphorical way Thucydides' authority as one who is able to have clearer access to the truth, since he is neither as much subject as most people to local love of his city nor swayed by rumors and general impressions that people can easily develop in war. He in this way resembles the philosopher that his city wants to banish or put to death, like Anaxagoras,[23] Socrates, and then later, Aristotle.

In Book 1, Thucydides ends his account of early times by noting how uncritically men generally accept tradition (1.20), giving as an example the Athenian people's notion that Hipparchus was tyrant when Harmodius and Aristogeiton murdered him, whereas in fact Hippias was tyrant (1.20, cf. 6.53–60). Men do not normally treat such stories critically, but as the city descends toward *stasis*, emotions more and more affect men's minds so that they become even less capable of ascertaining the truth and less timid in the face of their own ignorance. They care less for the truth, their deeds become more violent, and their speech is further removed from the actual deeds. In 416, the Egestaeans at Athens exploited the Athenians' emotional fears and

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desires when they stirred them up with the argument that Syracuse would first ruin Athens' allies in Sicily, and then unite with Sparta to destroy the empire (6.6.2). The situation here resembles one of the chief points of the introduction of *stasis* into Greek cities generally. One group in Sicily seeks to bring in the Athenians, while another relies on the Spartans (3.82.1). But Sicily unifies behind Syracuse, and the process begins to invert itself. Alcibiades, as the leader of one group in Athens, furthers his own military and political program by advocating support for outside interests, in this case the Sicilian Egestaeans and some Leontinian exiles (6.8.1–6.8.3, 6.19.2). After his exile, Alcibiades turns to Sparta in order to use its power to restore his position. As the *polis* disintegrates, personal fear, suspicion, and greed become more important motives, and these motives have a more pronounced effect on the goals of the *polis* as a whole.

The Athenians had earlier voted to send ambassadors to Sicily to see if the Egestaeans really had the money they said they had, and also to see how the war with the Selinuntines was going (6.6.3–6.7.1). Here, Thucydides again uses the technique of juxtaposition to make an important point. During this winter, while the ambassadors were away, the Athenians shipped cavalry to Methone on the Macedonian border, and also raided Perdiccas' territory. This cavalry kept the Thracian Chalcidians from aiding Perdiccas, despite the Spartans urging (6.7.3–6.7.4). Thus, just before the beginning of the debate on the Sicilian Expedition, Thucydides reminds his audience of the importance of cavalry in military engagements. At Methone, the Athenian cavalry played an important role in Athenian victory, yet the Athenians disregard its potential importance in Sicily, despite Nicias' warnings (6.20.4–6.21.2, 6.22.1). Of course, in Sicily the absence of sufficient cavalry does seriously weaken the Athenian effort.

The cavalry theme illustrates the relationship between appearance and reality at this crucial moment in Athenian history. This expedition to Sicily was the most "expensive and splendid" (πολυτελεστάτη δὴ καὶ εὐπρεπεστάτη, 6.31.1) any single city had ever sent out, since although an earlier expedition under Pericles against Epidaurus, and its continuation under Hagnon against Potidaea, had included as many fighting units, it had not such a vast preparation and escort. Yet this earlier force included three hundred horse (6.31.2), while the Sicilian Expedition begins with thirty (6.43).[24] This small number of horse contrasts with Alcibiades' great expense for the keeping of his own horses (6.15.3), on which he prides himself (6.16.2). Athens had turned her energy toward attractive displays, here for specifically personal purposes, and away from a considered appreciation of the necessities of the war. This contrasts with the Parthenon frieze, where almost half of the sculptures are of horsemen,[25] who elegantly control their mounts. The control here in a procession that leads to the presentation of the

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woman's dress, the *peplos*, shows the Athenians successfully controlling the forces of beasts. The contrast with the images from the Centauromachy on the south side is startling. Control of the animals is a mark of Athenian control of disorder and beastly conduct.[26] The procession also commemorates the Greek victories over the Persians, the barbarous subjects of a king.[27]

In the spring of 415, the ambassadors returned from Sicily and along with the Egestaean envoys presented an "attractive" (ἐπαγωγὰ) but "not true" (οὐκ ἀληθῆ, 6.8.2) report concerning the funds waiting for Athens. This persuasive report seduced the Athenians, showing in the first steps toward the Sicilian Expedition a separation of *logos* and *ergon*. In the broadest sense, the entire debate between Nicias and Alcibiades exemplifies this split between *logos* and *ergon*, since many of Nicias' arguments prove to be accurate as the war develops, but his *logoi* do not have the effect he intends.[28]

PART 3: NICIAS AND THE FAILURE OF ATHENIAN EDUCATION IN *LACHES, CHARMIDES,* AND *MENO*

Nicias correctly predicts the importance of horses in the Syracusan military, but he does so partly to frighten the Athenians, who, he says, must because of them send large contingents of archers and slingers to fight. Nicias also sees the entire Sicilian Expedition as the result of the Athenians' unrestrained desires (6.10.1, 6.10.5, 6.11.5–6.11.6, cf. 6.8.4), using in particular the striking phrase δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων, "a desperate craving for things beyond your reach" (6.13.1, translation Hornblower).[29] Thucydides agrees with him, calling the Athenians victims of *eros* (6.24.3). Yet Nicias' *logos* has no success in taming these passions. In terms of the long shadow cast by Pericles' leadership, we may see Nicias as a force for reason and restraint, while Alcibiades represents the fervid energy of Athens.[30] Alcibiades has one of the crucial and warring virtues of a statesman, courage, but he lacks discipline or *sophrosune*. Nicias' moderation derives partly from his fearfulness and partly from his superstitious character (7.50.4). In the *Laches* Nicias connects courage with knowledge, which on one level must express Platonic irony. Pericles' incomplete but real combination of manliness or courage with moderation has here devolved into the faulty virtues of two warring political and military leaders. The virtues of these two men fit the pattern Plato shapes in the *Statesman* (305e–305c).

Nicias incites the people rather than restraining them and resources that should have given the Athenians confidence seem to foster overconfidence as every provision is easy to obtain because Athens' material position has recovered from the plague and the first ten years of war (6.26.2). This is

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dramatically ominous as one of Pericles' early reasons for confidence in victory was the vast resources of the city.

Nicias' first speech in the second assembly concerning the Sicilian Expedition reveals many of the problems that had by this time begun to beset Athens. Indeed, Nicias' own character is a crucial factor in the decline of the Athenian Empire. Although he can often see the best course of action, and is a pious man, he places the good of the individual before the welfare of the *polis*, and he fundamentally misunderstands the nature of the Athenian people. His lack of control over the emotions of the Athenians in a political setting parallels his weak ability to manage his own wayward ideas and feelings. While we will examine some of his other, later speeches in a subsequent chapter, here we must, in order to understand the role of Alcibiades at the outset of the Sicilian Expedition, consider Nicias' two deliberative speeches in Book 6 in some detail.

In his first speech, Nicias argues that he wants to reconsider the entire expedition, even though he himself as commanding general would be honored by it (6.9.2). He thus seems at first to be devoted to the city, but he qualifies this implication when he asserts that the good citizen takes thought for his own life and substance (6.9.2). This is a good example of dramatic irony in Thucydides as this is one important source in his character of his failures as a leader.[31] As Thucydides represents it, Nicias' view of the relationship between the individual and the *polis* thus differs from what Pericles expressed in his last speech when he urged the citizens to defend the *polis* eagerly (2.60). Pericles persuaded the people to put the welfare of Athens first, since the *polis* can support private difficulties, but individuals cannot resolve the problems of the *polis* (2.60.4). Nicias, on the other hand, wants each citizen to think first of himself, because he believes that this selfish forethought will automatically benefit the *polis* (6.9.2). Nicias' *logos* reflects his character and actions. Partly because he is afraid, he seeks to increase the size of the Sicilian Expedition, and thereby make it in some ways a safer venture. His second speech emphasizes safety, and Thucydides himself clearly supports the idea that Nicias' concern for his own preservation was a real factor in the war (6.24.1).[32]

Pericles, on the other hand, thought first of the *polis* when he said he would give up his houses and land to be public property if Archidamus spared them in the first invasion of Attica (2.13.1). According to Thucydides, Nicias thinks first of his own good fortune, and of the means of preserving it (5.16.1). Since in 422 he wanted peace mainly for personal reasons, we must wonder to what extent such personal reasons influenced his counsels against the Sicilian Expedition. Pericles wanted to make sure that no suspicion (2.13.1) developed against him, but both Nicias and Alcibiades allow or even promote suspicion, Nicias by asserting the importance of private interests and

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Alcibiades by displaying his wealth and position (cf. 6.16.1, 6.16.6). After the mutilation of the Herms, suspicion against Alcibiades becomes a dominant political fact, reminding us of the importance of suspicion in *stasis* (3.82.5). By the time of the oligarchical revolution in 411, suspicion is rampant (cf. 8.66.2–8.66.5). In particular, note Thucydides' conclusions on this subject:

> Indeed all the popular party approached each other "with suspicion" (ὑπόπτως), each thinking his neighbour concerned in what was going on, the conspirators having in their ranks persons whom no one could ever have believed capable of joining an oligarchy; and these it was who made the many so "suspicious" (ἄπιστον), and so helped to procure impunity for the few, by confirming the commons in their mistrust (ἀπιστίαν) of one another. (8.66.5)

Nicias' conviction of the weakness of his own *logos* supports his belief that political leaders are justified in placing their own interests before those of the *polis*. He says that any *logos* of his would be weak (ἀσθενὴς ἄν μου ὁ λόγος εἴη, literally "weak would be his argument," my translation) when compared with the character of the Athenians, especially if he is recommending that they preserve what they have got and avoid risk (6.9.3). He thus seems to believe that he cannot use his l*ogos* or rhetoric to convince the Athenians to act for the common good. This argument suggests that since the common good cannot be represented in a strong way with *logos*, men should focus on their own private interests. Of course, this is directly contrary both to Pericles' practice and to the beliefs Thucydides has him state. For example, in his first speech Pericles takes into account the effect of war on the resolution of the people, yet he is firm in his own understanding of the Peloponnesian War and the importance of not yielding to the Peloponnesians (1.140.1). In other words, although Pericles knows the Athenians' sufferings and their emotional response to those sufferings will weaken their resolve, he has confidence his *logos*—his oratory and his reason—will restore their spirits. It is significant that at this early stage the Athenians recognize the "excellence" (ἄριστα) of Pericles' arguments and vote in support of them (1.145).

One might object that before the war it was easy to persuade the Athenians of their strength, while by 416, their spirits were weakened, they had faced some deprivations, and therefore private interests were paramount. Appeals to these interests thus would be very effective. Yet Thucydides counteracts this reasonable assumption just before he begins his account of the mutilation of the Herms, saying that that city had recovered from the plague and the war, and that preparations for the Sicilian Expedition were relatively easy (6.26.2). Furthermore, in his review of Pericles' career, Thucydides states that his successors put private interest ahead of the public good and were led by the people rather than leading them (2.65.7–2.65.8). Thucydides thus invites

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the comparison of speeches made by Pericles with those, such as Alcibiades and Nicias, who followed him. The material position of Athens just before the Sicilian Expedition resembles the material strength of Athens before the war.[33] At the start of a war, a physical disaster ensues to weaken the city, the plague. Here a spiritual, moral, and emotional disease manifests itself in the mutilation of the Herms (6.26–27) but there is no one who can restore the confidence of the people. Alcibiades and Nicias embody unresolved oppositions between young and old, energy and restraint, idealism versus realism, and motion against rest.[34]

In his last speech, Pericles, on the other hand, had said that he was able to recognize what is necessary and expound it. In addition, he loved his city and was stronger than money (2.60.5). While Nicias meets three of these qualifications, he is not able to persuade successfully. He lacks trust in *logos* and his ability to use it, even though he sees clearly the difficulties the Sicilian Expedition will entail. Nicias gives the Athenians the same advice Thucydides says Pericles gave at the beginning of the war: to be quiet, to secure what they had, and to avoid unnecessary risks (2.65.7, for Pericles' own words, see 1.144.1; cf. 2.13.2). Yet instead of simply allowing Nicias to give his recommendations, Thucydides has him retreat, which should be emphasized in any discussion of Nicias' character so that he says that his *logos* would be weak against the character of the people (6.9.3). Nicias' retreat contrasts directly with the actual effect of Pericles' *logoi* and with his stated beliefs concerning the power of *logos* (2.42.2). Of course, any comparisons between the Funeral Oration and the speeches delivered on the eve of the Sicilian Expedition must be made carefully, especially considering that the Funeral Oration was epideictic, while these later speeches are deliberative. Yet Pericles, Alcibiades, and Nicias all faced the same universal rhetorical problem of assuring the efficacy of their speeches. In fact, Pericles specifically confronted this issue at the beginning of the Funeral Oration, saying that it would be difficult to convince his audience of the truth of what he is about to say (2.35.2), so he gives explanations for why various groups will tend to disbelieve him. Despite these reservations, however, he said he would do his best to deliver the speech, in accordance with the laws and wishes of the Athenians. He did this without expressing any lack of confidence in his ability to persuade, and his subsequent speech must be judged successful.

Thucydides uses this contrast between Nicias and Pericles to show the declining power of *logos* in Athens as the war progresses, although this decline is by no means simple, and the *logoi* of the different Athenian speakers reflect their strengths and weaknesses. Nicias, for instance, knows what needs to be done, but he is (in Platonic terms) ignorant of the souls of the Athenians. The way in which Nicias gives his advice reveals a great deal about his character. He is weak, just like his *logos*. In his first speech

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he does not put his argument directly, while in his second he tries to dissuade the Athenians from their desire for Sicily by recommending that they dramatically increase the size of their force. Instead of stating his position forthrightly, he uses the optative mood, and makes his recommendation itself hypothetical by putting it in the protasis or conditional clause (6.9.3).[35] He shares with Alcibiades an apparent willingness to accept the "character" of the people (τρόπους, 6.9.3, cf. τοῖς παροῦσιν ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις, "character and customs," 6.18.7, my translation) as an unchangeable given. While both begin from an acceptance of the prevailing mood of the people, Nicias tries to change it indirectly and with timid arguments, while Alcibiades rides at the forefront of the people's emotions.

We shall consider Alcibiades' role in the debate in more detail shortly, but here the contrast of Nicias with Pericles is crucial. In the first place, the entire effort of the Funeral Oration is to elevate the mood of the people to the trials of the war. It is not just in the epideictic mode of the Funeral Oration, however, that Thucydides shows Pericles revealing his belief that a sound *logos* can and should be able to move the people. In his third speech facing the Athenians depressed by the war and especially by the plague, he attempts to encourage the people and to change the "anger in their minds" (τὸ ὀργιζόμενον τῆς γνώμης, my translation) to something calmer and less fearful (2.59.3). In doing so, he characterizes "the weakness of mind of the people" (τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἀσθενεῖ τῆς γνώμης, 2.61.2) as the source of "the apparent incorrectness of his *logos*" (καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον . . . μὴ ὀρθὸν φαίνεσθαι). This reverses Nicias' statement, in which his weak *logos* must confront the implicitly strong mood of the people. Unlike Pericles, Nicias is led by the people instead of leading them, even though he correctly assesses the motives of the Athenians, and the lack of wisdom in the Sicilian Expedition.[36]

Although Nicias sees the folly of the expedition, he has an inadequate comprehension of the nature of the Athenian Empire. Near the end of his first speech, he argues that Athens should not enter into alliances that will not directly benefit the city as much as she will have to help the ally in question (6.13.2). Pericles, on the other hand, stated that Athens grants aid not from a calculation of interest but from a fearless trust in her own liberality (2.40.5). Nicias thus places a higher value on the calculation of interest than did Pericles. Nicias' view of what a leader like Athens can and should provide for her allies is a moderate version of what, according to Thucydides, Cleon and the Athenians at Melos hold. Cleon contends that the Athenians' giving of favors to their subjects earned them no obedience, since these subjects obey strength and not good will (3.37.2). In the Melian Dialogue, the Athenians base their arguments on the assumption that might alone determine all relationships between Athens and her allies (5.97, 5.99).

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Nicias' timidity and fear stand in contrast to Pericles' attitudes. Even Nicias' claim that he is not afraid of dying in the Sicilian Expedition suggests his fear (6.9.2). Indeed, in his second speech, he describes himself as fearful that he and the Athenians will find everything in Sicily against them (6.23.3).

Although he has a fearful attitude and does not understand Pericles' concept of the empire, Nicias' perception of the specific motives of the Athenians in sailing to Sicily is correct. He ascribes to the Athenians an unrestrained desire for conquest (6.8.4, 10.1, 10.5, 11.5), which Thucydides confirms in his narrative (e.g., 6.24.3). When Nicias exhorts the Athenians not to desire another empire, he uses the word ὀρέγεσθαι (6.10.5, "desire," "grasp at"), which occurs in Thucydides with very negative connotations several times. The Spartans use the word of Athenian ambition in the speech at Athens in Book 4. They suggest that the Athenians should not do what most men do when successful, that is, grasp at something more (αἰεὶ γὰρ τοῦ πλέονος ἐλπίδι ὀρέγονται, "[they] are led on by hope to grasp continually at something further," 4.17.4). Thucydides agrees that this is how the Athenians' actions should be considered, using forms of ὀρέγω, "grasp at," to express his view (4.21.2, 4.41.4). He also mentions the Athenians' internal grasping at power and position (ὀρεγόμενοι τοῦ πρῶτος ἕκαστος γίγνεσθαι, "each one grasping at being first," 2.65.10, my translation). Thus, by the time Thucydides has Nicias use ὀρέγεσθαι ("grasp at"), the word has developed a set of associations so that by itself it calls to mind the degeneration of the Athenian character. The Athenians' basic energy and activity become mindless grasping in foreign affairs as well as within the city, when the pressure of war perverts it. war, as Thucydides says in his review of *stasis* in Corcyra, equalizes most men's emotions with their situations (3.82.2).

At the outset of the expedition all the Athenians unite, each wanting something for himself, but this unity is fragile because it derives from self-interest (6.24.3). Thucydides makes a similar point in his introduction to Nicias' first speech by using the verb ἐφίεσθαι ("to aim at") to characterize the Athenians' desire (6.8.4, 6.11.5). This word, like ὀρέγεσθαι ("to grasp at"), carries many associations in the *Histories*. Thucydides uses ἐφίεσθαι, "to aim at," of Pausanias' "desire to rule Greece" (ἐφιέμενος τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς ἀρχῆς, 1.128.3), a desire that eventually led to his downfall, just as it led to Athens'.[37] Thucydides also characterizes Athenian ambitions in 416 with a form of the verb ἐφίεσθαι (6.6.1), and thereby shows his own substantial agreement with the analysis he gives to Nicias. Hermocrates too explains the Athenians' purposes in language similar to Nicias', who uses ἐπιθυμίᾳ, "desire" (6.33.2), and ἐφίενται, "aim at" 6.33.4).[38]

Nicias proposes that the Athenians would terrify the rest of Greece most of all if they never went to Sicily, but if they do go, they would excite fear if they merely showed their power and returned home (6.11.4). Thus, Nicias shares with Alcibiades a faith in the power of appearances

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(cf. 6.16.2–6.16.3). This contrasts with Thucydides' report of Pericles, who had scant regard for a show of power (2.62.3), and with Thucydides' own view (1.10.2). Furthermore, as Thucydides describes it, Cleon's concern with that which appears and can be seen contributed to his death (προυκεχωρήκει γὰρ τότε κατὰ τὴν θέαν, "for he had gone out for a look," 5.10.2; καὶ ὡς εἶδεν, "and so he looked," 5.10.3). After some skirmishes and retreats, he was killed (5.10.9).

Nicias, Cleon, and Alcibiades all place a higher value on appearances than did Pericles. They thereby confirm a movement in the *Histories* away from the unity of *logos* and toward the multiplicity and disorder of a world dominated by becoming. Nicias embraces the strategic value of a show of force, which in the end is all that the Athenian armament was since the intellectual power to manage that force was missing.[39]

Nicias accuses the people of "disdaining" their adversaries (καταφρονήσαντες, 6.11.5), while Pericles recommended this attitude (2.62.3–2.62.4). In the same way, Hermocrates' statement that the Sicilians can show "contempt" (τὸ . . . καταφρονεῖν) for their enemies through bravery reveals even early in the Sicilian war a significant and, for the Athenians, ominous difference between Athens after Pericles and Syracuse under Hermocrates (6.34.9). Here we may note that Hermocrates and Syracuse seem to resemble the Athens of the Persian wars and the time shortly after that, while the Athenians become, like the Persians, the losers with large numbers of troops and ships that are poorly managed.[40]

Radically different psychologies of καταφρόνησις ("disdain" or "contempt") stand behind this disagreement between Nicias and Pericles. Pericles bases his "disdain" (καταφρόνησις) on reason (2.64.2). He differentiates it from the confidence a coward may feel because of his ignorance and good luck, since such confidence arises from hope, which is a weak support, rather than from the strength of knowledge. Nicias, on the other hand, ascribes to "disdain" (καταφρόνησις) the emotions Athens' unexpected successes produced (6.11.5). The Athenians, in this view, first "were afraid" (ἐφοβεῖσθε, 6.11.5), but later success puffed them up (6.11.6). Nicias does, as Thucydides shows, correctly perceive the Athenians' state of mind, but he calls this state of mind "disdain" (καταφρόνησις) while Pericles would have called it αὔχημα ("pride," 2.62.4).

Thucydides uses this passage in Nicias' speech to recall Diodotus' analysis of the motivation of the criminal. Nicias ascribes to the Athenians a blind desire for Sicily, which has arisen in part because of their good luck against the Spartans, and he exhorts them not to allow the "ill luck" (τὰς τύχας) of the Spartans "to elate" (ἐπαίρεσθαι) them (6.11.6). Diodotus uses very similar words to describe the role luck plays in unreasonably raising the spirits of one who intends a crime: καὶ ἡ τύχη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς οὐδὲν ἔλασσον ξυμβάλλεται ἐς τὸ ἐπαίρειν ("Fortune, too, powerfully helps the delusion," 3.45.6).

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In both places, the verb ἐπαίρειν is associated with τύχη ("luck" or "fortune"). Diodotus and Nicias are in this way both inheritors of the moderation of Pericles. By the time of the Sicilian Expedition, however, moderation holds less sway over the Athenian people. In presenting not the first debates but the second concerning Mytilene and the Sicilian Expedition, Thucydides invites a formal comparison between the two sets of speeches. This comparison reveals a loss of restraint, since the result of the debate concerning Mytilene was the more moderate course, while after Nicias and Alcibiades give their speeches the Athenians aim even more wildly at Sicily.

Although Nicias exhorts the older men in the audience not to let Alcibiades' comrades intimidate them (6.13.1), his own fear makes him a poor example for them. The more energetic men in the city have become the victims of *eros* (6.13.1), while the better men are afraid and unable to rein in Athens' energy. The entire situation in which Nicias finds himself recalls Thucydides' discussion of *stasis*. Nicias' anticipation of the charge that those who agree with him will be called μαλακὸς ("soft" or "cowardly") suggests Thucydides' first two examples of the degeneration of political discourse in *stasis*: μέλλησις δὲ προμηθὴς δειλία εὐπρεπής, τὸ δὲ σῶφρον τοῦ ἀνάνδρου πρόσχημα ("prudent hesitation [was considered to be] specious cowardice; moderation was held to be a cloak for unmanliness," 3.82.4). Nicias' need to refute this charge in advance exemplifies how, when the citizens of a *polis* are falling into contention, the range of political discourse narrows, and the expression especially of moderate ideas must become more complicated. As Thucydides says, during *stasis* simplicity, of which nobility has the largest share, is laughed away and disappears (3.83.1). The disappearance of simplicity and nobility corresponds to a general loss of moderation at Athens, which Thucydides says is a sign of political degeneration:

> τὰ δὲ μέσα τῶν πολιτῶν ὑπ᾽ ἀμφοτέρων ἢ ὅτι οὐ ξυνηγωνίζοντο ἢ φθόνῳ τοῦ περιεῖναι διεφθείροντο. (3.82.8)
>
> Meanwhile the moderate part of the citizens perished between the two, either for not joining in the quarrel, or because envy would not suffer them to escape. (3.82.8)
>
> καὶ τὸ εὔηθες, οὗ τὸ γενναῖον πλεῖστον μετέχει, καταγελασθὲν ἠφανίσθη
>
> The simplicity, of which nobility has the largest share, was laughed at and disappeared. (3.83.1)[41]

This loss signals again the degeneration toward a state of nature from a more civilized political life. In the state of nature men are completely trapped within

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the world of becoming, while their attempts to civilize their relations with one another allow their essential being as political animals to manifest itself.[42]

τὸ εὔηθες or ἡ εὐήθεια (the latter being transliterated *euetheia*), which are two words for the same idea, the former being more abstract and more inclusive, the latter being the concept itself, mean "simplicity" or "good nature." The word represents what is fundamentally a good quality in humans, but in an adult it can lead to folly or even the conduct of a simpleton. Below in the *Statesman* the Stranger and the Younger Socrates discuss how to soften or moderate courage and how to strengthen and protect the nature of the moderate type. The Stranger introduces the subject by observing that true opinion about honor, justice, goodness, and what is opposite to them is godlike and when it comes into being in men's souls, it comes to be in an inspired or divine birth (*Statesman*, 309c). But combining courage and moderation or discipline (*sophrosune*) in these souls is difficult.

> Ξένος (Stranger):
> τί οὖν; ἀνδρεία ψυχὴ λαμβανομένη τῆς τοιαύτης [309ε] ἀληθείας ἆρ' οὐχ ἡμεροῦται καὶ τῶν δικαίων μάλιστα οὕτω κοινωνεῖν ἂν ἐθελήσειεν, μὴ μεταλαβοῦσα δὲ ἀποκλινεῖ μᾶλλον πρὸς θηριώδη τινὰ φύσιν;
>
> Νεώτερος Σωκράτης (Younger Socrates):
> πῶς δ' οὔ;
>
> Ξένος (Stranger):
> τί δὲ τὸ τῆς κοσμίας φύσεως; ἆρ' οὐ τούτων μὲν μεταλαβὸν τῶν δοξῶν ὄντως σῶφρον καὶ φρόνιμον, ὥς γε ἐν πολιτείᾳ, γίγνεται, μὴ κοινωνῆσαν δὲ ὧν λέγομεν ἐπονείδιστόν τινα εὐηθείας δικαιότατα λαμβάνει φήμην;
>
> Νεώτερος Σωκράτης (Younger Socrates):
> πάνυ μὲν οὖν. (309d–e)
>
> Stranger:
> What then? Is not a courageous soul, having gotten possession of such a truth, made gentle, [309e] most of all then would it not be willing to partake of just things, but not having obtained such a truth does it not incline more to some brutal nature?
>
> Younger Socrates:
> Yes, of course.
>
> Stranger:
> And what if the orderly nature has adopted these opinions, does it not become truly disciplined and prudent, so far as is related to the state, and not participating in these qualities we are talking about, does it most justly receive a certain shameful reputation of simple-mindedness?

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Younger Socrates:
Very certainly. (309d–e)

This is a twofold movement or two separate virtues, occurring both in Athens' relations to other states and in her internal political life. Externally, Athens' being manifests itself in her power, and as we have discussed in connection with Hannah Arendt's remarks on Pericles and the nature of political power, this power persists only so long as other *poleis* or city-states can validate it. Since, at least in Thucydides' estimate, Athens was the most powerful *polis* of her day, it was up to her at the very least to remain moderate enough to permit some other *poleis* to continue independent and thereby witness her power. Unfortunately, Athens did not do this, thereby failing to preserve a political virtue Thucydides rates very highly, moderation in the midst of good fortune.[43] Courage must be moderate or it becomes brutality. Good-natured moderation must be disciplined with prudence (*phronesis*) and *sophrosune* once we are out of the golden age that is implied in this virtue.

Euetheia (τὸ εὔηθες or ἡ εὐήθεια) arises as part of a noble nature. In Book III of the *Laws*, the Athenian Stranger explains that the people of the time of Kronos, the Golden Age, were not insolent and there was no injustice, nor rivalries nor jealousies. "On account of these things and because of what are called their simple good nature, as it is called, they were good," ἀγαθοὶ μὲν δὴ διὰ ταῦτά τε ἦσαν καὶ διὰ τὴν λεγομένην εὐήθειαν (*Laws*, 3.679c). For, being of a simple nature, when they heard things called good or bad, they believed what they heard. For none of them knew how, through prudence, to suspect a falsehood. At that time there was neither *stasis* nor war (*Laws*, 3.678e). In *stasis*, according to Thucydides, everyone is set up in one group or another so that no one trusts anyone else (3.82.1). In the Golden Age, as reported by Plato, no one even knows how to be suspicious.[44]

Once humans have progressed out of the Golden Age in the *Laws*, *stasis* becomes a social and political problem, (*Laws*, Book 5.744d). Socrates asks Thrasymachus in the *Republic* if "justice" (δικαιοσύνη) is "baseness" or "vice" (*κακία*). Thrasymachus responds that justice is, instead, "very noble simplicity" (πάνυ γενναίαν εὐήθειαν, 348d). A bit later Socrates asks Thrasymachus if a just man would want to get the better of another just man, to which Thrasymachus replies that he would not, for otherwise he would not be the "urbane and simple person he is" (ἀστεῖος, ὥσπερ νῦν, καὶ εὐήθης, 349b).

As the war progressed, Athens became less powerful politically and militarily, mainly through her own mistakes (2.65.11, cf. 1.144.1). The loss of political power begins Athens' loss of being, a process that goes on until the Athenian Empire and finally Athens herself as a major political force literally cease to exist except through her timeless monuments.

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As we have seen, there is a decline in rhetorical power in the progression from the speech of the Athenians in Book 1 and Pericles to Cleon, the Melian Dialogue, and Nicias. Next, we shall consider Alcibiades' role more closely.

PART 4. ALCIBIADES' *PARANOMIA* IN THUCYDIDES AND IN THE *SYMPOSIUM*

While Nicias attempts to pursue the moderate strain in Pericles' policies, Thucydides portrays Alcibiades as exaggerating his energetic and ambitious side and hastening the decline from rest to movement. Thucydides marks Alcibiades' appearance in Book 6 with the verb ἐνῆγε (6.15.2, "he urged" [the expedition (to Sicily) with the warmest heart]), which he also uses of Cleon in one of his most important appearances.[45] In 425, several Lacedaemonian envoys came to Athens to urge the people to resolve their differences with Sparta and to cease grasping for a larger empire, but Cleon opposed this recommendation. The Athenians refused the Lacedaemonians' offer of peace, "and grasped at more" (τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο, 4.21.2), a course that Cleon particularly exhorted them to follow:

> μάλιστα δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐνῆγε Κλέων ὁ Κλεαινέτου, ἀνὴρ δημαγωγὸς κατ᾽ ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον ὢν καὶ τῷ πλήθει πιθανώτατος. (4.21.4)
>
> Foremost to encourage them in this policy was Cleon, son of Cleaenetus, a popular leader of the time and very powerful with the multitude. (4.21.4)

Both Alcibiades and Cleon urge war, and both urge it emphatically. Thucydides thus establishes a clear link between them. Each represents the energy of Athens, is popular with the people, and suffers from an excess of personal ambition. The great difference between them is in their ability, Cleon being an inferior military figure, while Alcibiades, in Thucydides' judgment, was both an adept politician and a very good general.[46]

One of the most serious flaws in Alcibiades' character is his concern with himself. Thucydides refers to this feeling when he says that Alcibiades had several reasons for opposing Nicias' recommendations concerning Sicily (6.15.2): political or public differences and a private motive, Nicias' slander of him in his speech. But Alcibiades' most important reason was his desire to be the general who would take Sicily and thereby reap great personal gain in money and fame. Alcibiades needed money because of his extravagant way of life.[47] This emphasis on private advantage is one of the prime characteristics of *stasis* as Thucydides describes it.[48]

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Although Thucydides tells us that much of Alcibiades' motivation was private, in this speech at least Alcibiades does declare certain impersonal principles that guide him in his ambition for Sicily. He enunciates these in his discussion of *polupragmosune* and its importance for the Athenian Empire (6.18). There he argues that unrestrained expansion of the empire is an imperative derived from the character of the Athenian people. This idea is one of the two centers of distortion in political language that appear in this speech, the other being Alcibiades' justification of his arrogance and great expenses (6.16). We will cover this second set of distortions first.

Pericles had said in the Funeral Oration that the Athenians "employ wealth as an opportunity to act rather than as a boast" (πλούτῳ τε ἔργου μᾶλλον καιρῷ ἢ λόγου κόμπῳ χρώμεθα, 2.40.1, cf., 2.41.2).[49] In his last speech, Pericles said that the Athenians depend not on "boasting" (αὔχημα), which is the province of a coward, and which derives from lucky ignorance, but on the disdain, which comes from a knowledge of their superiority (2.62.4). Thucydides makes Alcibiades, on the other hand, begin his defense of himself by boasting that "his lavish display at the Olympic games" (τῷ ἐμῷ διαπρεπεῖ τῆς Ὀλυμπίαζε θεωρίας, 6.16.2), for which he is reviled, brings aid to his fatherland and fame both to his ancestors and to himself (6.16.1). He reinforces this point later when he says that men who are in any way distinguished leave to their homeland a "boast" (αὔχησιν) because they have done "good" (καλὰ) deeds (6.16.5). He thus places a higher value on boasting than did Pericles, although Pericles had far greater reasons to boast. This comparison is especially significant, for both Alcibiades here and Pericles in his last speech face criticism. The speeches share a defensive purpose.

Alcibiades' victories at the Olympic games cost him dearly, but he justifies this cost by claiming that his private expenditures aid the *polis* as much as they help him (6.16.3). Nicias' charges force Alcibiades to defend his expenditures, and thereby limit his ability to address other topics, as he must reply to the personal arguments before he can go on to make points more directly related to public policy. Thus, both Nicias and Alcibiades become enmeshed in the personal instead of the public and general.

Indeed, Alcibiades organizes the entire first section of his speech around himself, and his language reveals his concern with spectacle and impressions. He calls his participation in the games "his magnificence with which he represented [Athens] at the Olympic games" (τῷ ἐμῷ διαπρεπεῖ τῆς Ὀλυμπίαζε θεωρίας, 6.16.2). The root meaning of διαπρεπεῖ is "conspicuous or prominent," while θεωρίας, which here primarily refers to the office of the θεωροί, "envoys sent to games or oracles," also suggests the idea of viewing a spectacle.[50] This attitude toward display reverses Pericles' formulations, which are consistent throughout his speeches, although each has a different

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rhetorical goal. On the eve of the war Pericles advised the Athenians to lament not the loss of houses and their land, but men, who have the energy to gain them (1.143.5). In the Funeral Oration, he depreciates the importance of external monuments of great men and emphasizes the unwritten memories in men's minds (2.43.2). Even in his last speech, Pericles bids the Athenians to take little regard for their houses and land, which are not the source of Athens' power (2.62.3).

Thucydides himself shares the views he ascribes to Pericles, as can be seen most clearly from his discussion of the relative power of the Homeric armament, fifth-century Sparta, and fifth-century Athens (1.10). Although Sparta did not have costly buildings (1.10.2) and temples to demonstrate her power, she was the leading *polis* in the Peloponnese and had many allies.[51] Thucydides says that someone who looked at the ruins of Athens would conclude that her power was twice what it in fact was, judging at least from surface appearances (1.10.2). In general, he recommends that those who would make exact determinations of the power of states should consider power more than appearance (τὰς ὄψεις, "its appearance,"1.10.3). It is straightforward overall to see Thucydides relying on a practical sense in which the reality of power lies behind appearances. This type of analysis resembles Plato's epistemology in the *Republic*, in particular the allegory of the cave, Book 7.514a–517a

PART 5. ALCIBIADES' DEMOCRATIC DESIRE IN PLATO

This problem of the importance of the superficial in Alcibiades raises a question. Both Thucydides and Xenophon agree that Alcibiades had a sound appreciation of military strategy and tactics (cf. 6.15.4 and Xenophon, *Hellenica* II.1.24–29, for example), which means that while appearances attracted Alcibiades, he could see beyond them.[52] How can this contradiction be resolved? An examination of some of the passages from Plato in which Alcibiades appears will help.

First, we can observe that in the *Protagoras* Alcibiades shows political talent in two small but significant scenes. The discussion between Protagoras and Socrates has just broken down over the issue of long speeches versus a dialogue, but Callias restrains Socrates from departing (335c–d). He then tries to persuade Socrates that Protagoras is justified in his belief that he has the right to speak at length, in the same way that Socrates can choose to discuss matters through dialogues. Alcibiades interrupts Callias and points out that Socrates admits that Protagoras has the best of long speeches (336b–d).[53] If the dialogue is to continue, it must be on Socrates' terms. Later, after the

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analysis of Simonides' poem, Hippias wants to propound a thesis about the poem, but Alcibiades insists that Socrates and Protagoras must continue their discussion (347b). Finally, when Protagoras gives no sign of whether he will continue, Alcibiades shames him back into the discussion, pointing out that he is still refusing to say whether he will talk on Socrates' terms (348b–c). The little group in the *Protagoras* resembles a *polis*, and Alcibiades plays an important role in keeping the group together.[54]

In the *Symposium*, Plato explores the contradiction between Alcibiades' abilities and his interest in the external and superficial. Socrates' love for Alcibiades is well-known (*Symposium* 213c), but at least as Alcibiades reports Socrates' feelings, Socrates keenly saw Alcibiades' interest in the external and his *pleonexia*. Socrates, whose external ugliness Alcibiades implicitly acknowledges when he compares him to a Silenus figure (215a–b), accuses Alcibiades of trying to make an unfair exchange when he proposes providing Socrates with his favors (218c–d). Alcibiades says that he wants to make the best he can of himself (218d), but Socrates protests that this would leave Socrates with a trade of gold for bronze (218e), since Socrates' beauty is in his soul, while Alcibiades' beauty is in his "form" (εὐμορφίας, 218e).

On the surface, it would seem that Alcibiades' goal is an internal beauty of the soul to match his physical form, but for Socrates and Plato Alcibiades' motives are complicated. Alcibiades says that he wants to become "the best," but the way he states his desire suggests that he is focusing more on the good in himself than on the good in itself and by itself: ἐμοὶ μὲν γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι πρεσβύτερον τοῦ ὡς ὅτι βέλτιστον ἐμὲ γενέσθα, "for nothing is more important to me than that I become the best possible" (218d).[55] Plato confirms Alcibiades' preoccupation with himself and his boastfulness in two other passages. Alcibiades says that when he was first attracted to Socrates, he thought that because of his beauty he would be able to hear Socrates whenever he wanted (217a). He even admits to pride in his charms: ἐφρόνουν γὰρ δὴ ἐπὶ τῇ ὥρᾳ θαυμάσιον ὅσον, "for I used to take an amazing amount of pride in my youthful beauty" (217a).[56] Later in his praise of Socrates Alcibiades says that at Potidaea the generals intended to award the prize for bravery to him partly because of his reputation and "importance" (ἀξίωμα 220e), but he persuaded them to make the award to Socrates. Plato shows Alcibiades' great arrogance by having him report this.

Plato's understanding of Alcibiades corresponds to Thucydides' on an even deeper level, however. Both agree that Alcibiades wants to use his external charms and appearance to obtain some more substantial quality. For Plato this quality should be the Good, while for Thucydides it should be power to participate in what has *arete* or excellence. As we have discussed, these qualities touch at certain points despite their differences. For Thucydides, power enables its possessor to participate in *arete*, while for Plato the Good provides

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whatever power is worth having. Beyond this, Plato and Thucydides agree that desire victimizes Alcibiades. Alcibiades translates his own desire for more (his *pleonexia*) into a goal of Athens herself (6.18.6), while in accord with Plato's more individual emphasis, Socrates sees Alcibiades as wanting to get more for his beauty than he can offer in return. In short, he accuses him of *pleonexia*: οὐκ ὀλίγῳ μου πλεονεκτεῖν διανοῇ, "you are intending to get the far better deal" (Symposium 218e).[57] Plato also suggests that Alcibiades suffers from a love of victory, for in the *Protagoras* in the scene we have discussed, in which Alcibiades and the others try to keep the discussion between Socrates and Protagoras going, Callias says that Alcibiades is φιλόνικός, "in love with victory" (336e).[58] Thucydides also sees the desire for victory as a serious problem in Alcibiades' character (φιλονικῶν, 5.43.2). In fact, he names love of political victory in general as one of the chief causes of Athens' decline after Pericles (2.65.10). This point helps Thucydides develop Alcibiades into a kind of living symbol of Athens' moral collapse.

In the *Symposium*, Plato shows clearly that Alcibiades suffers from unrestrained or improperly controlled *eros*. Thucydides' analysis agrees with this. Pericles encouraged the Athenians to gaze upon the power of Athens and to become lovers of her (2.43.1). Alcibiades, in accordance with his general interest in the personal as opposed to the public, becomes subject to his desire for his own power. Like the Athenian people in general, he fails to control his passion, but his *eros* is far less positive than a devotion to Athens.

In the *Gorgias* Plato depicts Alcibiades as suffering from the same defects of the spirit that the entire Athenian people had at this time. At the beginning of his debate with Callicles, Socrates says that he himself is in love with philosophy and Alcibiades, while Callicles' favorites are Demos, the son of Pyrilampes, and the Athenian *demos* (481d). Whatever Demos or the people of Athens want, Callicles changes according to their desires (48ld–e). Although Socrates does not directly accuse Alcibiades of following the *demos* rather than leading it, he hints at this fault when he says that Callicles constantly shifts to match the moods of his favorite, just as Alcibiades turns this way and that in the sway of the arguments he hears (482a).

Later Socrates says that when Athens realizes her weakness, she will turn on her leaders, such as Callicles and Alcibiades himself, and blame them for her troubles (519a–b). He yokes Callicles and Alcibiades together as sharing the responsibility for the decline (519b).

Plato and Thucydides agree both on Alcibiades' susceptibility to appearances and on what that implies. In the first place it weakens him as a leader. Thucydides sees Alcibiades' way of life as largely responsible for his recall, which in itself was one of the most important causes of Athens' ruin. In the *Symposium* too Alcibiades is a leader, but he has appointed himself to the position and what he leads is a drunken party (213e). He shows up at the

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party drunk and garlanded with ivy like Dionysus himself, the god of wine.[59] In Thucydides, Alcibiades leads the Athenians, but he does not lead them as Pericles did. Like Dionysus he leads by fostering desires rather than by reducing his followers' spirits when they are unreasonably elated.

In Thucydides' eyes Alcibiades had great abilities, as he also did for Socrates. In the *Symposium*, for instance, despite his flaws of character, he can see not only the external Socrates but also the beautiful golden statues of the gods he has within him (215b, 216d–217b). Yet Plato implies that Alcibiades' education was wanting in the same way as that of Pericles' own children (*Protagoras* 319e–320b, cf. *Meno* 94a–c).[60] As if to confirm this, Plato or a good imitator has Alcibiades in the possibly spurious *Alcibiades I* ask Socrates why he will need an education in political matters, when those who have entered politics are amateurs and he, "through his natural ability, will surpass them" (τῇ γε φύσει πάνυ πολὺ περιέσομαι, 119b–c). This catches a most significant defect in Alcibiades' character, his unwillingness or inability to control his nature through education. Thus, Plato's answer to the questions posed by the contradictions in Alcibiades' character is the vital need that the most capable men have for education and moderation. Alcibiades seems to think education with Socrates involves physical seduction, as becomes clear in the *Symposium*. Another purpose seems to be to help Alcibiades defeat competitors. Education is critical for the development of good leaders in particular in a democracy; this could have helped the Athenians solve the problem of succession in government by providing a group of well-educated citizens.

PART 6. ALCIBIADES' FIRST SPEECH UNLEASHES DESIRE FOR MORE, *PLEONEXIA*

Alcibiades' interest in private gain parallels the people's own private interests as they undertake the Sicilian Expedition. A large part of the people of Athens, and the soldiers too, hope to gain wealth immediately from the expedition, and also to acquire an unending source of pay for the future.[61] When Alcibiades says that it is no folly for him to benefit himself through his private expenditures, and incidentally to benefit the *polis*, he stands on its head Pericles' conception of the relationship of the *polis* and the individual (2.60.2–2.60.4). This overestimation of the importance of the individual and of wealth lead Alcibiades to a rejection of Pericles' standard for the relationship between wealth and the equality of the citizens. Alcibiades claims that it is not unjust for one who benefits the *polis* with his own means, and who is proud of himself and his position, not to accept equality with the rest of the citizens. For the one who is faring poorly shares his misfortune with no one,

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and those in ill luck are not courted. Therefore, he says, the citizens ought to accept being looked down upon by those who are doing well (6.16.4). The disturbing parallel for this in the Funeral Oration is Pericles' claim that Athens does not afford her antagonists shame at losing to Athens, nor does she give her subjects room to question her claim to rule by merit (2.41.3). If any argument could be a single confirmation of Plato's constant and elaborate parallels between the city and the individual in Book 8 of the *Republic*, this example would seem to do that. The city provides a model for her citizens. They will set the pattern of their lives on it or, as in Alcibiades' case, seek to become even more important that the city.

In the Funeral Oration, on the other hand, Pericles states that equality before the law is the right of all citizens. Even more to the point, he emphasizes that virtue is the ground of preferment to public office, and that no one who can help the *polis*, but who is poor, is shut out because of his obscure position (2.37.1). For Pericles poverty is not contemptible, although the absence of action to escape it is (2.40.1). While Pericles sees virtuous character as the basis for the relative positions of citizens in the *polis*, Alcibiades does not mention virtue and focuses only on success. He continues the trend of declining civic virtue by favoring the more emotional, visible, and immediate over against invisible virtues and more rational considerations. While Alcibiades has more immediate practical purposes for his speech than Pericles had in the Funeral Oration, in which the goals are general and the rhetorical conventions laudatory, the nature of Alcibiades' arguments justifies the comparison. He enters into a long discussion of the relationships between citizens, and at the conclusion of his speech enunciates his view of the nature of the Athenian Empire. The generality of the arguments, which is a tendency also of many of the speeches in Thucydides, helps to show Thucydides' interest in prompting comparisons between this speech and the Funeral Oration.

In this same passage justifying his singular position, Alcibiades also suggests his low regard for ἰσονομία (transliterated *isonomia*, "equality before the laws"), which was a cornerstone of Periclean democracy (2.37.1).[62] He says that it is "not unjust" (οὐδέ γε ἄδικον) for "someone who thinks large thoughts not to accept equality" (ἐφ᾽ ἑαυτῷ μέγα φρονοῦντα μὴ ἴσον εἶναι, 6.16.4).[63] He argues that those who would demand equality should "give equal treatment to all" (τὰ ἴσα νέμων, 6.16.4), implying that because people generally reward virtues and abilities, they should do away with equal treatment under the law, as it is inconsistent with differing abilities and stations people have. The elided argument Alcibiades implies appears to be that if we believe in equality, we should accept it everywhere so that those who succeed should not receive better treatment even in relation to their success. While he does not directly repudiate *isonomia*, he implies a rejection of it by using

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expressions such as ἰσομοιρεῖ, "get an equal share"; ἴσον εἶναι, "be equal"; and in particular τὰ ἴσα νέμων, which has a clear echo of *isonomia* in it.[64]

Thucydides uses Alcibiades' praise of the rich and distinguished, which is the other side of his contempt for the poor, to reveal yet another dislocation of Pericles' language. Alcibiades avers that he knows that outstanding men such as he has described (in 6.16.2–6.16.4), and in fact "all who are distinguished in any way" (καὶ ὅσοι ἔν τινος λαμπρότητι προέσχον, 6.16.5, my translation), are while they are alive "irksome" (λυπηροὺς) to their fellows—especially their equals. The word to note here is λυπηροὺς ("irksome"). Although irksome in their lifetimes, these men leave to posterity a desire for claiming connection with them. The vexation these brilliant leaders produce derives necessarily from their distinction. Thucydides has Pericles draw a quite different picture in the Funeral Oration, in which he says that Athenians "do not put on offensive (or irksome) looks" (λυπηρὰς δὲ τῇ ὄψει ἀχθηδόνας προστιθέμενοι, 2.37.2), nor are they suspicious of their kinsmen. Thucydides confirms that Alcibiades was himself offensive to the people, and that this was one of the chief causes of his recall (6.15.4, 6.28.2). In Periclean Athens, trust goes with the absence of this irksomeness of one citizen to another, while Alcibiades irritates his fellow citizens and engenders in them a suspicion of his motives and interests. Suspicion is of course one of the most important psychological characteristics of *stasis*.[65]

Pericles contends in his third speech that the hatred others feel toward Athens naturally results from Athens' achievements. All *poleis* that determine they are worthy to rule are hated and irksome (λυπηροὺς) to others (2.64.5), he says, but this does not last long, and the glory of Athens will supersede it. The Athenians at Sparta in Book 1 use this same word (λυπηροὺς, "irksome," 1.76.1) to describe the way in which, they say, the Spartans would have been perceived if Sparta and not Athens had developed an empire after the Persian Wars. The Athenians defend themselves against the charge that they are hated and irksome by stating that the Spartans would be hated too if they had persevered in rule after the Persians had been driven from Greece. It is thus the view of both these Athenians and of Pericles that in foreign affairs Athens incurred hatred, although in Book 1 the Athenians' admission of this is indirect. In Book 1 the Athenians further lessen the impact of this admission by saying that they were worthy of their position (1.76.2), and that they respect justice more than is required (1.76.3). Although a state of nature forms the basis for relations between *poleis*, an enlightened power such as Athens goes beyond this and exercises her rule with moderation and a respect for sovereignty. Thucydides leaves it to us to speculate how the realm of ordered internal political life might be extended at least geographically to encompass a wider sphere. One clear possibility that was not attained was a much larger Hellenic Empire. Another possibility would be some other

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form of international relations. This is quite obviously a problem still being resolved today. The underlying issue is the relationship between our inherent animal powers and our frequent desire to aim at what Plato names the Good. The source of our desire for the Good could be biological or evolutionarily conditioned.[66] Another possible solution to the question of the origin of our idea of the Good is reference to the divine. While Thucydides does quite clearly seem to disapprove of "breaches of the divine law,"[67] it also seems that the Greeks were hampered at least on an ethical level by their lead patriarch, Zeus, who at least according to Socrates in the *Clouds* is not the source even of rain let alone goodness (*Clouds*, 365–75). The Clouds produce rain.[68] And Zeus shows no respect for women, from his wife all the way down to the humans.

Alcibiades makes a significant shift from Pericles by taking Athens' external relations as a model for her internal practice.[69] Cleon had blamed the Athenians for allowing their trust of one another in their daily life in Athens to determine their attitudes toward their allies (3.37.2), and thereby to transfigure part of the foundation with which Pericles had built up his ideal Athens (2.37.2–2.37.3). Alcibiades, as if already convinced by Cleon's arguments that in foreign relations the Athenians had to be harsher, brings the idea home to suggest an increased harshness among the Athenians themselves. Cleon's position serves as the turning point from Periclean moderation at home and abroad to Alcibiades' advocacy of expansionism in foreign affairs and anomie in Athens. Alcibiades assumes the state of nature as the paradigm for human relations not only between *poleis* but also between citizens.[70] It is thus appropriate that Socrates yokes Alcibiades and Callicles together in the *Protagoras* (519b–c). This is not to say that the *Protagoras* confirms an interpretation of Thucydides but that there is here a coincidence of views between Plato and Thucydides on the subject of Alcibiades' character.

Since, for Alcibiades, citizens live in something approaching a state of nature, fear and greed are their primary motives. Almost as a corollary to this, Alcibiades emphasizes personal gain and sets the rich against the poor. In fact, he devotes the entire first section (6.16) of his speech to separating himself from the rest of the city. The repetition of references to himself (μοι . . . μου . . . μου . . . καὶ ἐμοὶ, 6.16, "me . . . me . . . me . . . and me," 6.16.1), and the first-person verbs, νομίζω ("I think"), εἶμι ("I am"), 6.16.1, and ἐμῷ ("my" referring to Alcibiades' splendid presentation at the Olympics), ἐγενόμην referring in the first-person singular to Alcibiades coming in first, third, and fourth in the Olympic chariot race (6.16.2) and finally for this passage at least Alcibiades' furnishings of general displays and choruses for plays (λαμπρύνομαι, literally, "I make myself brilliant," 6.16.3) all serve to demonstrate Alcibiades' narcissism. This together with the glorification of the distinguished rich citizen (6.16.4–6.16.5) marks Alcibiades' overriding

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concern with private as opposed to the public good.[71] Alcibiades continues his concern for himself even into his conception of public service when he asks the people to consider if anyone could take public affairs in hand better than he (6.16.6). He says that he strives to leave to posterity a desire to claim a relationship with him, and to provide his homeland with the boast that they are fellow countrymen with one who has done such great deeds (6.16.5). Alcibiades thus defends himself against Nicias' attacks (6.12.2), but in doing so he, like Nicias, participates in a general lowering of the tone of debate from public to private considerations. This concern with the personal or private is one of the chief characteristics of *stasis*, in which the governing principle of life becomes each man for himself.[72] The movement from Pericles' public interest to his successors' orientation toward the private and individual is part of a general decline from the one to the many and from being to becoming.[73]

In general, Alcibiades' defense of his life turns Periclean values upside down. In the Funeral Oration, Pericles praised the selfless devotion of those who had died in the war (2.42.4). Even more pointed is the contrast with Pericles' last speech, in which he, like Alcibiades in Book 6, was forced to defend himself against the anger of the people, and thus faced a rhetorical problem similar to Alcibiades'. Like Alcibiades (cf. λυπηροὺς, "irksome," 6.16.5, and φθονεῖται, "he is envied," 6.16.3), Pericles was hated (cf. μισοῦμαι, "I am hated," and μήτε ἐμὲ δι' ὀργῆς ἔχετε, "you should not be angry with me," 2.64.1, my translations), but Pericles defended himself by supporting his policies and reminding the Athenians of their greatness (e.g., 2.64.3). Alcibiades, on the other hand, begins his speech by saying that he is worthy to rule (καὶ ἄξιος ἅμα νομίζω, "I am worthy [to rule]," 6.16.1, my translation), and proves this by reciting his victories in the Olympic games and reminding the people of his splendid personal contributions to choruses and other such public displays. He dwells on the external marks of his own worldly success.

Thucydides presents Alcibiades' contention that he is worthy to rule in such a way that it contrasts with the claims of the Athenian speakers at Sparta in Book 1. They too said they were "worthy of account" and "not to be exposed to so much jealousy for [their] rule," but they are worthy in Athens' name and not in the name of an individual citizen.[74] These Athenians said that they contributed their zeal against the Mede (1.74.2), and the wise counsels of their leaders (1.75.1). They stood alone at Marathon (1.73.4). Although Thucydides reports this speech as being that of a group (1.72.1–1.72.2) so that a claim for individual worth might seem inappropriate, it is interesting to ponder the effect of a group giving a speech. A single speech by a group creates an impression of unanimity.[75] Thucydides thus contrasts a group delivering a single speech praising Athens with Alcibiades' praise of himself. Alcibiades' arguments for his worth seem insignificant in comparison

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to what the Athenian ambassadors said. Although the Athenians at Sparta and Alcibiades have vastly different audiences, Thucydides makes an effective rhetorical point by yoking the two speeches through the same words and phrases. In having Alcibiades apply the words καὶ προσήκει μοι μᾶλλον ἑτέρων, ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, ἄρχειν . . . καὶ ἄξιος ἅμα νομίζω εἶναι ("Athenians, I have a better right to command than others . . . and at the same time I believe myself to be worthy of it") to himself, Thucydides shows him lowering their value (6.16.1).

For Pericles, to be worthy of rule meant that one had certain characteristics essential to a leader, which he outlined in 2.60.5–2.60.7. When Thucydides has Alcibiades say that "it is more fitting for him to rule than it is for others" (καὶ προσήκει μοι μᾶλλον ἑτέρων, . . . ἄρχειν, 6.16.1), he makes him echo Pericles' conclusion that "if [the Athenians] thought he even moderately more than others possessed the qualities he has described" (εἴ μοι καὶ μέσως ἡγούμενοι μᾶλλον ἑτέρων προσεῖναι αὐτὰ, 2.60.7, translation adapted from Marchant),[76] they should not at this time charge him with misdeeds. Yet Alcibiades falls conspicuously short of the requirement that a leader be "stronger than money" (2.60.5). He also suffers from a general *paranomia*, and this extravagance extends to his speech.

Alcibiades concludes his defense of his private character and turns to his claims of political skill and ability as follows:

> ὧν ἐγὼ ὀρεγόμενος καὶ διὰ ταῦτα τὰ ἴδια ἐπιβοώμενος τὰ δημόσια σκοπεῖτε εἴ του χεῖρον μεταχειρίζω. (6.16.6)
>
> Such are my aspirations, and however I am abused for them in private, the question is whether any one manages public affairs better than I do. (6.16.6)

The abuse Alcibiades says occurs in private sums up the theme of the hatred for Alcibiades felt by many citizens, themes that Alcibiades had introduced in the second sentence of his speech: ὧν γὰρ πέρι ἐπιβόητός εἰμι ("The things for which I am abused," 6.16.1). ὧν ἐγὼ ὀρεγόμενος ("such are the things I am striving for," 6.16.6, my translation) refers directly to Alcibiades' own ambitions, but the participle here (ὀρεγόμενος, "striving for") provides another example of a word or idea whose *axiosis* or valuation Thucydides makes Alcibiades change, as he has him use it in a boast, whereas the word generally has very negative connotations in Thucydides.[77] Alcibiades' phrase also contains a dramatic irony, because, while he admits that he is "grasping" for power and attention, he seems not to be conscious of the implications this has for his future and for Athens'. Furthermore, his use of the word here shows his union with the aggrandizing spirit of the people as they embark for Sicily.

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Alcibiades' grasping involved him in attempting to satisfy the various desires of the people, whether for fame, wealth, or just excitement (6.24.3). He represents the degeneration of Athens' energy, and exemplifies what happens to a people whose essence involves motion, when that motion loses its restraint. Despite this unity between Alcibiades' desires and the spirit of the people, Thucydides, as we have seen, criticizes Alcibiades for his extravagant way of life. His extravagance made it much more difficult for him to turn the people from their desires, even if he had wanted to do so.

In *Love among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens*, Virginia Wohl argues that Alcibiades' complicated sexuality and in particular his effeminacy in the very male political world of Classical Athens created many tensions and emotional distortions among the Athenians.[78] While her aims go beyond Thucydides to a critique of Athenian culture, Alcibiades presents us with an inversion of many of the values that Pericles proclaims, but an inversion that is in many ways an outgrowth of these same Periclean values. One simple and profound example of this last point is the contrast between Pericles' statement of some of deepest virtues of the Athenians and Alcibiades' wanton perversion of those virtues. In the Funeral Oration, Pericles says of the Athenians:

> We cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without effeminacy; we employ our wealth as means for action, not as a subject for boasting . . . [2] and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters. (2.40.1–2)
>
> φιλοκαλοῦμέν τε γὰρ μετ᾽ εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας: πλούτῳ τε ἔργου μᾶλλον καιρῷ ἢ λόγου κόμπῳ χρώμεθα. . .[2] καὶ ἑτέροις πρὸς ἔργα τετραμμένοις τὰ πολιτικὰ μὴ ἐνδεῶς γνῶναι. (2.40.1–2)

Yet Alcibiades spends large amounts of money on displays (6.16.2), is soft and erotic, and focuses on his own interests.[79]

PART 7. ALCIBIADES, IMPERIAL AMBITION, AND PLATONIC EDUCATION

In the last part of his speech, Alcibiades expounds his concept of *polupragmosune*, an idea that expresses his energy. His first significant break with Pericles in this section is his condemnation of military restraint (ἐπεὶ εἴ γε ἡσυχάζοιεν, "since if all were to keep quiet," 6.18.2), which he rejects again in 18.3 and 18.6. When Thucydides comments on Pericles' political life, he mentions that Pericles advised the Athenians that during the war they

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should "remain quiet" (ἡσυχάζοντάς), tend to their navy, not try to further their empire, and not run risks with the city. If they did these things, they would win (2.65.7). The word ἡσυχάζοντάς means that the Athenians should conduct the war in a quiet, cautious way.[80] It incorporates the strategy of not meeting the Spartans in a land battle (1.143.5), of wearing them out in a war rather than risking everything on one engagement (1.141.6), and of keeping a guard over the sea and the city (1.143.5). It also summarizes the rest of the advice in 2.65.7: the Athenians roust not attempt to acquire a new empire, nor should they involve the city in danger (cf. 1.144.1). What Alcibiades promotes devalues all these ideas of Pericles. It also represents a step beyond even what Cleon advised, for Cleon blamed the allies for "plotting against them" (ἐπιβουλεύοντας, 3.37.2), while Alcibiades recommends such plotting (ἐπιβουλεύειν, 6.18.3) as necessary for Athens herself to undertake against any who would interfere with her empire.[81] Both men connect this plotting with their view of the danger to the empire (ἐπικινδύνως, "dangerously," 3.37.2; κίνδυνον, "danger," 6.18.3), Cleon saying that it would be dangerous for the Athenians to allow themselves to treat their allies softly (μαλακίζεσθαι, "show weakness or softness"), and Alcibiades arguing that they are in danger of being ruled by others.

Thucydides has composed this last section of Alcibiades' speech with a number of echoes from Pericles' speeches. A list of some of the echoes will be useful. Italicized words are exactly or almost exactly repeated.

Alcibiades:

1a. ὥσπερ καὶ *οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν* ἅμα νέοι γεραιτέροις βουλεύοντες *ἐς τάδε ἦραν αὐτά*, καὶ νῦν τῷ αὐτῷ τρόπῳ *πειρᾶσθε προαγαγεῖν* τὴν πόλιν. (6.18.6)

By which *our fathers*, old and young together, by their united counsels brought our affairs *to their present height*, do you *endeavour still to advance them* (i.e., the city). (6.18.6)

1b. *οἱ γὰρ πατέρες ἡμῶν* τοὺς αὐτοὺς τούτους οὕσπερ νῦν φασὶ πολεμίους ὑπολείποντας ἂν ἡμᾶς πλεῖν καὶ προσέτι *τὸν Μῆδον* ἐχθρὸν ἔχοντες τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκτήσαντο. (6.17.7)

Our fathers with these very adversaries, which it is said we shall now leave behind us when we sail, and *the Mede* as their enemy as well, were able to win the empire. (6.17.7)

Pericles:

1a. *οἱ γοῦν πατέρες ἡμῶν* ὑποστάντες *Μήδους* καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ τοσῶνδε ὁρμώμενοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἐκλιπόντες, γνώμῃ τε πλέονι ἢ τύχῃ καὶ τόλμῃ μείζονι ἢ δυνάμει τόν τε βάρβαρον ἀπεώσαντο καὶ *ἐς τάδε προήγαγον αὐτά*. (1.144.4)

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Did not our fathers resist the *Medes* not only with resources far different from ours but even when those resources had been abandoned; and more by wisdom than by fortune, more by daring than by strength, did not they beat off the barbarian and *advance their affairs to their present height?* (1.144.4)

1b. *τῶν τε πατέρων*. (2.62.3)

Of the fathers. (2.62.3)

Alcibiades:

2. *ὅσοι δὴ ἄλλοι ἦρξαν*. (6.18.2)

and *by all others that have held it* [empire]. (6.18.2)

Pericles:

2. *ὑπῆρξε δὴ ὅσοι ἕτεροι ἑτέρων ἠξίωσαν ἄρχειν*. (2.64.5)

[all] *who have aspired to rule others*. (2.64.5)

Alcibiades:

3. ἐς *ὅσον βουλόμεθα* ἄρχειν. (6.18.3)

The *exact point at which we wish* to make our empire shall stop. (6.18.3)

Pericles:

3. *ἐφ᾽ ὅσον* τε νῦν νέμεσθε καὶ ἣν ἐπὶ πλέον *βουληθῆτε*. (2.62.2)

Not merely *as far as* you use it at present, but also to what further extent *you may think fit*. (2.62.2)

Alcibiades:

4a. βραχὺ ἄν τι προσκτώμενοι αὐτῇ περὶ αὐτῆς ἂν ταύτης μᾶλλον *κινδυνεύοιμεν*. (6.18.2)

We should make but few new conquests, and *should imperil* those we have already won. (6.18.2)

4b. διὰ τὸ ἀρχθῆναι ἂν ὑφ᾽ ἑτέρων αὐτοῖς *κίνδυνον* εἶναι, εἰ μὴ αὐτοὶ ἄλλων ἄρχοιμεν. (6.18.3)

If we cease to rule others, we are in *danger* of being ruled ourselves. (6.18.3)

Pericles:

4. ὡς τυραννίδα γὰρ ἤδη ἔχετε αὐτήν, ἣν λαβεῖν μὲν ἄδικον δοκεῖ εἶναι, ἀφεῖναι δὲ *ἐπικίνδυνον*. (2.63.2)

For what you hold is, to speak somewhat plainly, a tyranny; to take it perhaps was wrong, but to let it go is *unsafe*. (2.63.2)

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Alcibiades:

5. *ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι*. (6.18.6)

Like everything else. (6.18.6)

Pericles:

5. *ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι*. (1.142.9)

Like everything else. (1.142.9)

While these echoes would seem to suggest some similarities between Alcibiades' recommendations and Pericles', the echoes lead beyond this and show how Alcibiades violently exaggerates Pericles' policies.[82] Thucydides clearly wants us to make these comparisons, just as we did between Cleon and Pericles, and also to consider how and why Pericles' regime allowed or even fostered such developments. For instance, to take our last example (5) first, Alcibiades' use of the phrase *ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι* ("*like everything else*," 6.18.6) recalls Pericles' argument to the Athenians that the Spartans will not find the art of seamanship easy to acquire. Just as he does with some of Cleon's echoes of Pericles, Thucydides uses this echo to indicate a deliberate recollection of Pericles. Pericles says that, just like anything else, the art of seamanship cannot be practiced occasionally with any success (1.142.9). Alcibiades extends this concept of the need to practice much further when he says that the city itself must "struggle" (ἀγωνιζομένην) continuously or "all its skills will grow old and decay" (πάντων τὴν ἐπιστήμην ἐγγηράσεσθαι). This extension of the concept of *polupragmosune* implies that the city must not remain quiet (ἡσυχάζῃ) or it will wear itself out (6.18.6, translations adapted from Crawley).[83] Alcibiades echoes Pericles' language in order to imply similarity between his recommendations and Pericles' policies. The extreme extension of Pericles' recommendation into perpetual movement parallels the limitlessness of *eros*.[84]

At the introduction to his justification for expanding the empire, Thucydides shows Alcibiades again using language resembling Pericles'—indeed the language is part of the traditional account of Athens' defeat of the Mede—in order to suggest a continuity of policy (see example 1 above). The next two sets of echoes (examples 2 and 3) do not seem close enough to prove that Alcibiades is deliberately mimicking Pericles, though placed in the context of other echoes they clearly recall him. Thucydides frames Alcibiades' policies in Periclean language in order to emphasize for the reader the contrast between the two men as Alcibiades seeks to spur the people on toward Sicily. Both Pericles and Alcibiades agree that it would be very dangerous for Athens to give up the empire. The difference between their speeches, however, lies in

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the purposes behind them. While Pericles was trying to keep the Athenians from giving up the war and coming to agreement with the Lacedaemonians (2.59.2), Alcibiades is using the same arguments to extend the war and to urge what the people already want. He is the opposite of Pericles, who was able to reduce the Athenians' high spirits or restore their courage. The fourth example (4) shows Alcibiades proposing that restraint in adding to the empire the Athenians will endanger it, while in Pericles' third speech the danger is that Athens will actually attempt to retire from her empire.

The first example (1) establishes simply that Alcibiades like Pericles respects the older generations that brought Athens to her present glory. Thus, Thucydides first suggests a comparison between Pericles' and Alcibiades' ideas, and then underlines their strong differences in Alcibiades' frequent use of Pericles' language.

In light of the result of the Sicilian Expedition, Alcibiades' notion of the danger of remaining quiet becomes an example of dramatic irony. His claim that the Sicilians have weakened themselves by *stasis* (6.17.3–6.17.4) is also ironic, given the *stasis* developing at this time in Athens.[85] Thucydides uses this irony to distance himself from Alcibiades' arguments.

Pericles uses his first speech to spur the Athenians on to a war that he believes will improve their position. He uses his last speech to boost their flagging spirits for the war. And he uses the Funeral Oration partly to urge the people to accept their losses, aim to exceed what they have already done, and embrace the future he sees for them on rational grounds. The speeches urge the Athenians toward goals they have not yet attempted but those goals are based on rational, if incomplete, considerations. As we have seen, he mentions memorials to both the good and the bad the Athenians have done (2.41.4). Alcibiades dangerously takes this idea further when he says in his speech addressing the Sicilian Expedition that the Athenians should not choose the inactive role of not sailing to Sicily, which confuses character with action or inaction in a situation. He urges the Athenians to follow what he says is "the safest rule of life [and] to take [their] character and institutions for better and for worse, and to live up to them as closely as [they] can" (καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέστατα τούτους οἰκεῖν οἳ ἂν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις, ἢν καὶ χείρω ᾖ, ἥκιστα διαφόρως πολιτεύωσιν. 6.18.7). To hew to one's character even when one knows it to be "worse" (χείρω) does not correspond to accepting that one has had to do bad or evil acts to obtain some greater good (setting aside the question of the danger of Pericles' words). What Alcibiades advocates is reckless. The Athenians apparently agree become even more focused and eager to leave for Sicily (6.19.1).[86] The Athenians' embrace of their own character right here is narcissistic, like Alcibiades himself. Their spirit has little in common with Thucydides' own intellectual energy that seeks to understand and to engage his readers in the

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process of understanding by presenting an intensely drawn picture of the war. Nor does it match the goals of Socrates, whom Alcibiades wants so desperately to attract in the *Symposium.* Yet Socrates believes that we should look to what is excellent and best in virtually every sphere of life (*Phaedo*, 97c–d), and we should always reach for the things we do not know partly because if we do seek in this way we will become better and braver and less idle (*Meno* 86b). Alcibiades must believe that it is good for him to settle even for his worse characteristics, but in this he is ignorant.

One crucial difference between Pericles and Alcibiades appears in the latter's understanding of his enemy, in this case Syracuse and Sicily. Thucydides gives complete assent to Pericles' strategy, while he shows in several ways Alcibiades' incorrect understanding of what was necessary for Athens at this stage of the war. For example, Alcibiades infers from the mixed ancestry of the Sicilians and from their frequent changes of government that Athens will be able to take advantage of civil strife (6.17.2–6.17.4). Thucydides, on the other hand, has already shown that Sicily did unite when Athens threatened earlier. In 424 Hermocrates had, at the Congress at Gela, argued that the Sicilians should put down the "internal strife" (οἰκείου πολέμου, 4.64.5) and settle their differences. Sicily at that time suffered from a kind of *stasis* (4.61.1), and if the various *poleis* could unite, Hermocrates contends, they would be able to repel the Athenians.[87] Thucydides uses the same verb (καταστρέψασθαι, "to subdue") at 4.65.3 and at 6.1.1 to connect these two Athenian attempts on Sicily. Alcibiades apparently either ignores or does not know of Sicily's earlier unity.

In 415 after the debate between Hermocrates and Athenagoras, the Sicilians emerge with a sensible preparation for war, despite the civil "strife" (ἔριδι, 6.35.1) among the Syracusans. An unnamed general speaks against the immoderation of personal attacks (6.41.2) and urges defensive measures (6.41.3–6.41.4). Alcibiades could have foreseen this, if he had listened to Nicias, who warned of the Sicilians' preparations, and hinted at their similarity to the Athenians, using ὁμοιοτρόπως, "just like [ours]," to describe their power (6.20.3). The democratic Syracusans possess an adaptability similar to the Athenians', as Thucydides himself states before the last great naval battle in the harbor at Syracuse (cf. ὁμοιοτρόποις, "of like ways" with the Athenians, 7.55.2).[88] Yet Alcibiades ignores Nicias' warnings, and asks the Athenians to embark upon an adventure that is in accordance with his theory of empire, and violates that of Pericles.[89] One important and interesting corollary point related to forms of government is that the obvious military superiority of Syracuse, which Thucydides faithfully reproduces as superiority, supports the notional superiority of democracy or governments with significant popular control as a form of government when democracy is functioning reasonably well.

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Alcibiades' theory of empire continues the Athenian move toward tyranny, in which the Melian Dialogue was an important step.[90] His idea that Athens must continually expand in order to survive means that in the end Athens' goal must be to rule all independent *poleis*. The desire for external expansion parallels the desire among some politicians, like Alcibiades, for more and more power inside the city.[91] In our discussion of Pericles and of the speeches in Book 1, we outlined the role of political power (*dunamis*) both in the formation of the Athenian Empire and in the relations between Athenian citizens. The power of Periclean Athens rested on the recognition by Hellas of Athens' worth. That is to say, Athens' power, as we have understood it with reference to Hannah Arendt's discussion in *The Human Condition*, was in very large part a power that resided in the shared political space of the Greeks.

The perpetual expansion of Athens implies at the very least a rejection of the sovereignty of a large number of independent Greek cities. It is also an attack on the principle of sovereignty. It derives from an unlimited desire for more, which, since it is unlimited, becomes a desire for omnipotence. This raises several questions about the very nature of empire. Did the Athenian Empire have a natural limit or an inherent moderation? Is it possible for a political and military empire even to have a natural limit? A subsidiary but significant question is whether Pericles, at least as Thucydides presents him, believed that Athens had to remain moderate in order to prosper, and whether he acted on that belief.

We can answer the last question rather easily. Thucydides says that while Pericles led Athens during the period of peace, he led moderately (μετρίως) and kept the city safe (ἀσφαλῶς, 2.65.5). This is Thucydides' considered conclusion, and he presents very little evidence to contradict it. As for the questions about the natural limits of empires, whether they are inherently expansionary and ultimately tyrannical and flawed, Pericles' moderation would be at odds with the natural tendency of Athens as an empire. It is important to keep in mind that Pericles does not recommend a fixed end to expansion of the empire. In Thucydides' report, he advises the Athenians not to run risks "during the war" (ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ, 2.65.7). A full answer to these questions regarding the nature of empire would require at the least a comparative study of the history of several imperial powers, but in the ancient world at least empires had definite limits, as the histories of Rome and Persia show. Both empires reached points beyond which they could not effectively expand. Furthermore, specifically in the Greek world, Alexander's empire stretched too far, and after his death it broke into a number of pieces.[92] In other words, in the ancient Greek world and to some extent in the Roman world there were natural limits to empire that made answers to the theoretical question moot or undiscovered.

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In general, we have argued for interpreting the Funeral Oration as representing an ideal version of the Athenian *polis*. Yet this ideal is problematical for Thucydides, since it is subject to immediate decline with the first attack of the plague. Indeed, because the plague enters Athens via the Piraeus (2.48.2), Thucydides' narrative suggests some potential weakness in Athens at the heart of her strength (1.92.6–1.92.8). This weakness is Athens' openness to the world, her outward political aspect, which subjects her to external influences, and which leaders after Pericles, particularly Alcibiades, exaggerated into a quest for continued expansion. The physical means of this outward orientation are the port of Piraeus, the Athenian navy, and Athens' commercial endeavors.

This openness is for Plato in the *Laws* the source of great danger. Early in Book 4 of the dialogue, the Athenian Stranger ascribes all sorts of political evils to the location of a *polis* near the sea (705a–b). Pericles, on the other hand, rejected laws designed to keep the *polis* free of outside influences (2.39). But by his placement of the description of the plague so close to the Funeral Oration (only one chapter separates the sections), Thucydides hints at the weakness of Athens, which is her susceptibility to outside influence, and perhaps he, like Plato, implies criticism of her external orientation as such. Yet Thucydides does not comment directly on the question of whether empires are inherently expansionary, or whether limits can be imposed. To draw definite views on these matters solely from this early intimation of criticism of Athens would be to take a too literal approach to interpreting Thucydides. He raises the question only by implication early in his history, returning to it much more definitively in the person of Alcibiades, who carries Athens' external orientation to an extreme by claiming that the empire must expand or perish (6.18.3, 6.18.6).[93]

When Alcibiades states that the empire may be inherently limitless, he is actually extending one of Pericles remarks, that Athens' rule of the sea gave her the power to expand as she wished (2.62.2, see example 2 above). Despite the greater moderation of Pericles' aim—to keep Athens in the war—his remark is dangerous, since it can and does lead directly to Alcibiades' refinements. As we have discussed, in this third speech of Pericles there is some decline his first two speeches.

Since we have Thucydides' clear testimony that a crucial factor in the decline of Athens lay in the inferiority of Pericles' successors, and since of all those who followed Pericles, Alcibiades had the greatest opportunity to rule Athens effectively, we must consider what in Thucydides' eyes led Alcibiades the wrong way. It is instructive that in the same passage in which Pericles commends the Athenians' outward view, he observes that the Athenians conduct themselves freely, and pursue their education by "living in an unconstrained manner" (ἀνειμένως διαιτώμενοι, 2.39.1). Their relaxed

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trust in their character and in their place in the world begins with an education not strong on restraint. Thucydides' criticisms of Alcibiades' way of life have a special point in this regard, especially when they are considered in the light of Plato's views on both education and Pericles' successor. Pericles' praise of pursuing courage not with "laborious training" (ἐπιπόνῳ ἀσκήσει) but by living in unconstrained manner in essence praises the looseness of an Athenian upbringing. The Stranger specifically links courage and *sophrosune* in the *Statesman* when discussing instruction (*paideusis*, 308e, cf. also 309d). While this could be seen as a somewhat typical Spartan criticism of the Athenian way of life, Sparta did win the Peloponnesian War.

While in the *Republic* Socrates, Glaucon, and Adeimantus discuss the education of the Guardians at length, the less idealized version of a discussion of education we find in the *Laws* provides apposite and perhaps more reasonable points of comparison of the basic level of the underlying theory of education with what seems to have been the outcome of Alcibiades' education. The *Laws* emphasizes the ordering and direction of natural tendencies, in particular play and the enjoyment of music and movement in the education of children (653d–654a).[94] Choral dance and song should be controlled by *nomoi* so as to direct the energetic play of children in orderly ways (799a), and the play of children, which they follow with pleasure (667e), can and should be structured so as to produce learning in what is serious. While education is a very large subject in Plato, the emphasis on music and dance reveals Plato's fundamental educational interests, the order that is implied for education in the structure of music and dance. Children love pleasure, imitation, motion of their limbs, and making noise.[95] This is then the raw material that parents and educators can use to develop a sense of ordered thought and action. The goal of this education is excellence or *arete* (*Laws*, 643b–e).[96] While Alcibiades has many talents, moderation in any form is not one of them in the prelude to the Sicilian Expedition.

Since they are tame animals, when humans have education aiming at virtue (*arete*), they can become the tamest and most divine animals, but when their education is weak or bad humans become the wildest beasts (6.765e–766a). One important reason why education should focus on what "the soul of a child enjoys at play" (τοῦ παίζοντος τὴν ψυχὴν, 643d) is that it should lead to a kind of desire (ἔρως or *eros*, 643d) for what we must do as adults in regard to the excellence or virtue of whatever our occupation becomes (643c–643e). The emphasis of education should be on virtue or *arete*, not on the occupation (644a), however, since if we are educated in virtue or *arete* (ἀρετὴν, 643e), we will apply that quality toward whatever job or role we have and become "perfect" or "complete" (τέλειος, 643d) in it.

Yet first we must receive the education (*paideia*) that "makes one desirous and a lover of being a perfect citizen [knowing how] to rule and to be ruled

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with justice" (ποιοῦσαν ἐπιθυμητήν τε καὶ ἐραστὴν τοῦ πολίτην γενέσθαι τέλεον, ἄρχειν τε καὶ ἄρχεσθαι ἐπιστάμενον μετὰ δίκης, 643e–644a). This is an intellectually elegant and precise correction of Pericles' admonition to his citizens to gaze upon the power of the city and become lovers of the city or the power of the city (2.43.1).[97] Plato clarifies a point that for Pericles appears to have been unclear and that in the hands of Alcibiades becomes, by a reciprocal relationship, a type of narcissism. People love their city or their nation, but beneath that there is a love of the place the city has in the world, its power. If that power is its rule or its empire, the love easily slides into a love of the power of the city and from there into a love of one's own power as part of that larger power. This can then become of a simpler devotion to oneself established through one's power. This can lead to profound social diseases like violent nationalism or even violent expressions of religious supremacy. In Plato's view, on the other hand, there is a *logos* here to consider that belongs to those who are not thinking or considering (οὐ γὰρ ταῦτα ἡγουμένων, ὡς ἔοικ', εἶναι παιδείαν ὁ νῦν λόγος ἂν εἴη) that these things (trades and professions) are the object of learning but instead are relying on a *logos* that educates one "to be desirous and a lover of being a perfect citizen [knowing how] to rule and to be ruled with justice." Alcibiades gazed on his city and in effect became the leader, though a flawed one, not one who knew how to rule and how to be ruled with justice. Erotic desire to rule the city and also to be the chosen one of Socrates rules him, just as it rules Meno, who Socrates says wants to rule him and to be a tyrant (*Meno*, 76b–c). It is also telling that Meno at first defines virtue as ruling the city and ruling his wife (71e) as if rule all by itself were virtue with justice.

Thucydides points out that it was easy for the Athenians to blame Alcibiades for the mutilation of the Herms because they were also able to refer to "the rest of his undemocratic license in his general habits" (ἐπιλέγοντες τεκμήρια τὴν ἄλλην αὐτοῦ ἐς τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα οὐ δημοτικὴν παρανομίαν, Thucydides 6.28.2). Once those brought up in accordance with the Athenian Stranger's recommendations in the *Laws* for education are adults, they follow the golden string, which is "called the common law of the city" (τῆς πόλεως κοινὸν νόμον ἐπικαλουμένην," *Laws* 644e).

It is also important for justice that the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws* removes the injustice of not educating women in the same way as men. Not only is this unjust, however. It is also an "amazing mistake of the giver of laws" (θαυμαστὸν ἂν ἁμάρτημα νομοθέτῃ, 7.805b) as the state brings up the women so that they have no education and thus cannot contribute (7.805a). This represents a profound rebuke of one half of the Athenian way of life.

In Plato's estimation, Pericles and Athens were unable to educate their most promising citizen, Alcibiades. Thucydides does not draw so clear a line,

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but his presentation of Alcibiades, and in particular his connection of him with the narrative of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, does imply that he saw the same cause of Alcibiades' weakness as did Plato. We shall return to this subject in the next chapter. In the meantime, however, we can draw on our earlier discussions, which point toward some conclusions first about Alcibiades' own ideas of how a *polis* should be ruled, and second about the specifically political knowledge—and his knowledge is an indication of the value of his education—Thucydides shows him to have.

Alcibiades takes that which is already present in the world as his ideal when he concludes his speech with an exhortation to the Athenians to conduct themselves as much as possible in accordance with their character and laws (6.18.7).[98] Alcibiades and Cleon use the same rhetorical device to make this point. Both must defend their positions against attempts to change a resolution. Both appeal generally to the need for a *polis* to have stable laws (cf. νόμοις ἀκινήτοις, "undisturbed laws," 3.37.3), yet both make specious use of this need.[99] Cleon accuses the Athenians of a lack of restraint as they reconsider their resolution to depopulate Mytilene, while Alcibiades broadly identifies the Athenian way of life with an expansionary foreign policy. On the other hand, Cleon still demonstrates Pericles' ability to criticize the people, while Alcibiades panders to their desires. Thucydides contrasts Pericles' ability to control the emotions of the Athenians (2.65.8–9) with Alcibiades' demagoguery, and thereby offers one way of reflecting upon the differing aims of Alcibiades' first speech and the Funeral Oration. An important goal of the Funeral Oration was to raise the spirit of the people to equal the requirements of the war. Pericles presents an ideal portrait of Athens partly in the desire to help the Athenians reach this ideal, but the ideal is flawed in ways that lead directly to the type of citizen and leader Alcibiades becomes. On the other hand, Pericles' speech is successful, that is, it is an effective speech, although it is difficult to measure the success of the speech in the same way one would measure the effect of a deliberative speech.

One of Alcibiades' tasks in his speech is to encourage the people to undertake a further war that he believes is in Athens' interest. Alcibiades' speech is also successful, at least in part. He persuades the people to undertake the Sicilian Expedition, but he does this by flattering them rather than by directing their energy toward an ideal. This flattery has the effect he desires as the people become even more eager for the expedition (6.19.1).[100] Alcibiades fails in his other goal, which is to convince the Athenians that his way of life is worthy of their approval, since after the mutilation of the Herms he was condemned. In the Funeral Oration, on the other hand, Pericles presented his view of the Athenian way of life, and whatever criticisms Thucydides ultimately has of it, they are veiled and must be drawn out carefully. In other

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words, the way of life Thucydides has Pericles present is convincing, while Alcibiades' speech is not.

The success of Alcibiades' argument for the Sicilian Expedition shows the important connection between rhetoric and knowledge. While Alcibiades knows enough about the Athenians' state of mind to convince them, he does not know what the correct policy in fact should be. This situation illustrates the point Socrates makes in the *Phaedrus*, when he says that the intending orator not only must understand his audience but also must have correct knowledge (259e–260d).[101] Alcibiades' failures are failures of knowledge: he recommended the wrong policy, he fostered the emotions of the people rather than controlling them, and he failed to understand the *poleis* he was attacking.[102] These failures derive from a lack of knowledge of political leadership. His education had not prepared him to lead.

Thucydides does not say outright that the art of leadership depends on knowledge, but his reports of the various Athenian speeches and the effects of those speeches tend toward such a conclusion. Certainly right knowledge is required in Thucydides if a speaker is to persuade his audience toward a successful course of action. The example of Pericles' speeches confirms this. In his last speech, for example, he says that it is required for a leader to know what is necessary (τε . . . δέοντα) and to be able to "expound" it (ἑρμηνεῦσαι, 2.60.5, cf. 2.60.6).

PART 8. *STASIS*

Before we proceed to review the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, it is important to summarize the way Thucydides uses the speeches of Nicias and Alcibiades to show the separation between thought and action that has occurred since Pericles' time. Pericles says that a leader must both know and be able to explain what is necessary. While Alcibiades does not understand what is necessary with regard to foreign expeditions such as that to Sicily, that is, following Pericles' recommendations and not engaging in new wars while the old one continues, he has the rhetorical ability Nicias lacks. When Alcibiades speaks before the Sicilian Expedition, he uses certain arguments that are required by his view of the situation, but he deviates from what was actually necessary for the Athenians by recommending a misguided adventure. He uses arguments required by the policy he wishes to recommend, but the policy he recommends is not the right policy.

Nicias, on the other hand, sees what is necessary, but he cannot expound it, with the result that his attempts to frighten the people merely encourage them further. Alcibiades and Nicias, each having an inadequate share in the virtues

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of a great political leader, and neither sufficient by himself as one whole ideal political man, reveal the disunity of Athens at its head. The people reflect his lack of harmony when they set out for Sicily in a spirit of unified disunity (6.24.3). Thucydides suggests the importance of internal conflict at Athens (and the lack of it at Syracuse) for the entire expedition by noting that the transports and other small craft are advised to gather at Corcyra (6.30.1), which Thucydides describes as the primary example of *stasis* in Greece. The Athenians depart for Sicily from a political position of incipient *stasis*. The land forces contend with one another in the excellence of their equipment (6.31.3). As a result, the different groups fall into a rivalry and strife among one another, and the rest of Greece begins to look upon the expedition more as a display than as an armament for war (6.31.4).

Thucydides reinforces the theme of *stasis* here by observing the race of the ships for Aegina, from whence everyone makes for Corcyra (6.32.2). Later, after the debate between Hermocrates and Athenagoras, and its resolution by an unnamed general, Thucydides again reminds us of Corcyra, the point from which the Athenians depart (6.42.1). Although the competition between the ships and the soldiers is a traditional part of the beginning of a military expedition, here it takes on more gravity, as Thucydides suggests that Athens is out of control.

Thucydides uses language that increases the sense of doom even amid all the excitement and the reassuring spectacle of military power. The *eros* that falls upon the people portends no good, and Thucydides focuses on the sense of sight in a way that reminds us of his low regard for visual evidence (1.10.1–1.10.2). Thucydides portrays Alcibiades and Athens as declining from substance to appearance, from moderation and knowledge to emotional ignorance, and from orderly activity to confused motion. The distortions of Athenian political language from the early speeches to those that occur later in the war reflect and confirm this decline. Pericles promotes Athens as a "school of Hellas" (2.41.1). Yet when Pericles exhorts the Athenians to gaze upon the city or its power and become lovers of it (2.43.1), he unleashes an *eros* that in the end destroys the city. In the *Laws* (643e–644a), Plato presents an alternative account of how love for one's country should be expressed, the *logos* of the Athenian Stranger that each citizen should have an education that, among other purposes, trains her or him to have an *eros* to be a just citizen. This is not the education of a philosopher king, but it is a philosophically informed education.

After their inauspicious departure for Sicily, Thucydides' next report of debate among the Athenians occurs with the discussion at Rhegium between the three Athenian commanders, Alcibiades, Lamachus, and Nicias. As soon as they had arrived at Rhegium, they received news from their three advance ships that there would be very little money available from Egesta.

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As Thucydides notes, this did not surprise Nicias, although it was more unaccountable to Alcibiades and Lamachus (6.46.2).

Thucydides uses his report of their conference to show each general giving advice suitable to his character. For example, after the bad news about no money being available from Egesta, Nicias proposed to limit the purposes of the expedition if the Egestaeans in fact could not provide the promised funds. If the Egestaeans failed to make good their promise, he said, the Athenians should settle matters between them and the Selinuntines, coast past the other Sicilian cities, and "display" (ἐπιδείξαντας) their power (6.47). Nicias argues against running risks by spending Athens' resources, which Thucydides' reports in words that recall the account of Pericles' policies after his last speech (καὶ τῇ πόλει δαπανῶντας τὰ οἰκεῖα μὴ κινδυνεύειν, [Nicias's opinion was that the Athenians should . . .] "not endanger the state by wasting its home resources," 6.47, cf. 2.65.7). Nicias continues in his role as the inheritor of Periclean moderation, but his interest in display hints at the growing emotionalism of the people and its leaders. The importance of display here carries forward this theme from Alcibiades' victories at the Olympic games.[103]

Lamachus, on the other hand, recommends the strong use of force at Syracuse while the Syracusans are in the greatest panic, since, as he says, an army is most frightening when it first appears (6.49.1–6.49.2). Thucydides seems later to imply his agreement with the principle behind Lamachus' recommendation: In 413 when Demosthenes arrives with a relief force for Nicias, Thucydides makes us privy to Demosthenes' ideas that he should not waste the advantage he has in the fright of the enemy at his first appearance, the way Nicias had done (7.42.3). Thucydides makes Demosthenes' thoughts here very vivid by reporting them in direct discourse. He then summarizes Demosthenes' reasoning:

> ταῦτα οὖν ἀνασκοπῶν ὁ Δημοσθένης, καὶ γιγνώσκων ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ παρόντι τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ μάλιστα δεινότατός ἐστι τοῖς ἐναντίοις, ἐβούλετο ὅτι τάχος ἀποχρήσασθαι τῇ παρούσῃ τοῦ στρατεύματος ἐκπλήξει. (7.42.3)
>
> And well aware that it was now on the first day after his arrival that he like Nicias was most formidable to the enemy, Demosthenes determined to lose no time in drawing the utmost profit from the consternation at the moment inspired by his army. (7.42.3)

The impartial and unemotional tone of the word γιγνώσκων ("well aware" or "knowing"), which suggests that Demosthenes was recognizing as true something which to Thucydides himself seemed to be correct, implies very clearly that Thucydides agrees with Demosthenes.[104]

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Thus, Thucydides here implicitly criticizes Alcibiades' first plan, which was to win over the Sicilian cities by negotiation (6.48). Indeed, the immediate results Alcibiades obtains after the conference are mixed. The Camarineans refused to meet with the Athenians (6.52), while at Catana the Athenians have better success when they send in Alcibiades to speak and engage the attention of the people. They use this opportunity to break into the city and frighten the Syracusan party in the town (6.51). While this is a useful device, it shows the declining importance *logos* has at this stage in the war. The content of Alcibiades' speech is irrelevant. Thucydides does not even report it. The Athenians use Alcibiades' speech as a mere pretext for diverting the people.

Nicias had said during the debate at Athens that the money the Egestaeans offered was a fabrication (6.22), which turns out to be the case (6.46.1–6.46.2). This first disappointment prepares the reader for the much greater Athenian disappointments to come, and at the same time reinforces two important themes in the narrative of the Sicilian Expedition. Nicias' ability to discern that the Egestaeans do not have the money they promise fits well with his definition of courage in the *Laches*, where his third definition is that it is knowledge of what to fear and what and what to have confidence about (*Laches*, 195a). But his later conduct confirms that if courage is knowledge he lacks both, when, after Demosthenes argues that the Athenians should withdraw from Syracuse (7.49), the Athenian soldiers, overawed by a lunar eclipse, urged their generals to wait and Nicias refuses even to consider the question for at least the twenty-seven days prescribed by the soothsayers (7.50.4). This is yet another way in which Plato's understanding of Athenian political leadership in the second half of the fifth century BC seems to conform to at least one important thread of an understanding of Thucydides' text, that Athens was not ready politically for the Peloponnesian War no matter how clear the need for the war seemed to be or how well organized, trained, and financed the military and navy of Athens was.

First, Nicias' caution and restraint would have served the Athenians well, if they had heeded him before they left for Sicily (although later during the fighting it becomes a great liability). Second, the Athenians and their more energetic leaders, Alcibiades and Lamachus, have allowed their emotional desire for more conquests to sway their judgment.

Nicias argued that the money the Egestaeans were offering was ready most of all in word (6.22), but the Athenians disbelieved him and, trusting the reports, allowed themselves to be taken in by a ruse, which Thucydides explains at some length later (6.46.3–6.46.5). He elaborates on this in order to show that the Athenians have been deceived into mistaking appearances for facts. Their emotional state of mind leads the Athenians to trust appearances,

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which, as Thucydides presents it, is also what happened in the cases of the mutilation of the Herms and the desecration of the Mysteries. The Athenians trust informers against Alcibiades, thereby depriving the expedition of the leader it needed the most.[105] Thucydides develops his portrait of this state of mind into one of the most unusual digressions of the *Histories*, the account of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. This digression illustrates the Athenians' reliance on appearances as opposed to knowledge of facts. The parallel development in political language is the separation of words from the deeds they are meant to describe. As the war progresses, political discourse becomes more superficial and ceases to describe actions and positions accurately.

NOTES

1. For the force of οὐ μέντοι ἀλλὰ at 5.43.2, see Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, p. 30. Denniston translates: "but nevertheless his opposition was also due to personal pride and ambition."

2. For a good review of Nicias' role in the *Histories*, see John Kirby's "Narrative Structure and Technique in Thucydides VI–VII," *Classical Antiquity* 2 (1983), pp. 183–211. Although the main purpose of the article is to show how Thucydides has deliberately arranged the narrative of the Sicilian Expedition, there is also a review of Nicias' career, which to me seems somewhat too favorable in light of Nicias' fear and hesitation. Kirby is right to emphasize Nicias' ability to see what needs to be done in many of the actions in which he is involved (pp. 190–92), but he underestimates the importance of his weaknesses. See also Nanno Marinates, "Nicias as a Wise Advisor and Tragic Warner in Thucydides," *Philologus* 124 (1980), pp. 305–10, who compares Nicias to Artabanus in Herodotus. Like Kirby, she argues that Thucydides "tries to mitigate [Nicias' failure[s] by underplaying [his] mistakes and by avoiding explicit criticism."

For the more traditionally critical view of Nicias, see, e.g., Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, pp. 93–95, 189, 199. See also J. R. Ellis, "Characters in the Sicilian Expedition," *Quaderni di Storia* 5, no. 10 (1979), pp. 39–69, esp. pp. 53–54, who emphasizes Nicias' fear of the *demos* in Book 7.

3. Daniel P. Tompkins, "Stylistic Characterization in Thucydides: Nicias and Alcibiades," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972), pp. 181–214, makes the same point about Nicias "constant concern with himself," and relates it to his "habit of making concessions and admissions of inadequacy." (p. 188)

4. Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*, pp. 76–77. Pouncey sees a consistent concern for the public good against private interest all through Pericles' speeches and deeds in Thucydides. For him the primacy of this civic virtue in the laudatory Funeral Oration extends to the two other speeches, belying the argument in, e.g., Loraux's *The Invention of Athens*, that such idealistic interests in this speech derive

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from its falsifying and ideological aims. Pouncey refers to 1.140.1 and 2.60.2–2.60.4 in particular.

5. Marc Cogan in "Mytilene, Plataea, and Corcyra: Ideology and Policy in Thucydides, Book Three," *Phoenix* 35, no. 1 (1981), pp. 1–21, sees the beginning of this sort of ideological appeal in Diodotus' recommendation (3.47.1–3.47.2) that the Athenians support democracies or democratic movements (see esp. pp. 10–11). He pursues this idea in much greater depth in his *The Human Thing*.

6. Cogan, *The Human Thing*, pp. 62–64. See also in particular Cogan's very persuasive discussion of how ideological politics can be seen in the war and in Thucydides, pp. 268–69 n. 18.

7. See Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, p. 311; and White, *When Words Lose Their Meaning*, pp. 80–81.

8. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, p. 317.

9. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, sees the crucial importance of Alcibiades in these changes, yet he makes the changes a reflection of a shift in "attitude" by Thucydides and not a matter of Thucydides' conscious use of contrast.

10. See, e.g., Bedford and Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," pp. 61–64.

11. Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar*, pp. 273ff.

12. Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar*, p. 283.

13. For the view that the evidence of the ancient reception of the dialogue does not provide a clear argument in favor of its authenticity, see the review by Francisco J. Gonzalez (University of Ottawa) of the book *The Platonic Alcibiades I: The Dialogue and Its Ancient Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) by François Renaud and Harold Tarrant. The review can be found at: https://ndpr.nd.edu/news/the-platonic-alcibiades-i-the-dialogue-and-its-ancient-reception/ "Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews 2016.03.20" (accessed November 1, 2019). The book itself argues for the ancient reception of the dialogue as evidence of its authenticity, while the review provides a compendium of the book's failure to produce any substantial evidence of such reception.

14. The Syracusans had reduced Leontini in 422. See Thuc. 5.4.2.

15. See Dover, *Historical Commentary*, 6.4.1 n.

16. Dover, *Historical Commentary*, 6.3.1 n.

17. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower, Anthony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, 4th ed., s. v. Megara (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

18. Charles F. Smith, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 6* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1913).

19. For the view that the political discord on Sicily is a kind of *stasis*, see Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*, pp. 35–37.

20. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III:* 6.6.1 n. See also Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 81.

21. See Ellis "Characters in the Sicilian Expedition," who examines Thucydides' use of characterization in Books 6 and 7 to show his systematic attribution of the beginnings of major actions to the motivations of characters (p. 58). For Ellis, this proves a lack of objectivity on Thucydides' part, especially when Thucydides ascribes motives to characters. Thucydides takes great pains, however, to establish his

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trustworthiness. For the purposes of understanding Thucydides as a thinker it is best to accept his version of events, and to consider why he chose to attribute to individuals much of the action in his account of the Sicilian Expedition. Ellis' criticisms do raise some questions about Thucydides as a source, however.

22. Hornblower's translation of a difficult sentence in the text: αἰτία δ' ἦν ἡ παρὰ λόγον τῶν πλεόνων εὐπραγία αὐτοῖς ὑποτιθεῖσα ἰσχὺν τῆς ἐλπίδος. *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume II*: 4.64.4 n. See also Hornblower, "Narratology and Narrative Techniques in Thucydides," in *Greek Historiography*, ed. Simon Hornblower (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 157–58.

23. For Anaxagoras' life and trial in Athens, see Patricia Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, a Text and Translation with Notes and Essays*, pp. 130–36, esp. 131 and 136, reviewing his trial for impiety. For the subject of the apparent political problems that Aristotle suffered in Athens, see *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* s. v. Aristotle, essay by Christopher Shields, 2015, under "Aristotle's Life." https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/#AriLif (accessed June 15, 2019). For the question of Socrates' relationship with Athens, see the essay by Thomas Pangle, "Introduction" to *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy* by Leo Strauss (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 18–23 ("The Theological-Political Problem").

24. Hans-Peter Stahl in "Speeches and the Course of Events in Books Six and Seven of Thucydides," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. Philip A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 60–77, follows the cavalry theme with great care. See pp. 66 ff.

25. Jenifer Niels, *The Parthenon Frieze* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 2006), p. 132.

26. Robin Francis Rhodes, *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 90, 92.

27. Niels, *The Parthenon Frieze*, p. 187, Robin Francis Rhodes, *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 92, 169.

28. Kirby, "Narrative Structure and Technique in Thucydides VI–VII," p. 210.

29. See Hornblower's dense and valuable note on this in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 6.13.1.

30. Tobias Joho, "The Revival of the Funeral Oration and the Plague in Thucydides Books 6–7," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 57 (2017), pp. 16–48, esp. pp. 21 ff.

31. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 164.

32. Daniel P. Tompkins, "Stylistic Characterization in Thucydides: Nicias and Alcibiades," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972), pp. 188, 204.

33. Tobias Joho, "The Revival of the Funeral Oration and the Plague in Thucydides Books 6–7," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 57 (2017), p. 20.

34. Joho, "The Revival of the Funeral Oration and the Plague in Thucydides Books 6–7," p. 21–22.

35. As Tompkins, "Stylistic Characterization in Thucydides," p. 185 n. 15, notes, Nicias uses the potential optative "more than any other speaker in Thucydides except Hermocrates."

36. Nicias' general attitude toward the Sicilian Expedition resembles Archidamus' position before the war. Both are cautious in opposition to military conflict that they

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feel endangers their respective cities. Both are also ineffective with their people. These similarities extend to verbal parallels in their speeches. For instance, when Nicias begins his speech by asking for more deliberation (καὶ μὴ οὕτω βραχείᾳ βουλῇ περὶ μεγάλων πραγμάτων, 6.9.1), his plea recalls Archidamus' speech (μηδὲ ἐπειχθέντες ἐν βραχεῖ μορίῳ ἡμέρας περὶ πολλῶν σωμάτων καὶ χρημάτων καὶ πόλεων καὶ δόξης βουλεύσωμεν, ἀλλὰ καθ' ἡσυχίαν, "[we must] not be hurried into deciding in a day's brief space a question which concerns many lives and fortunes and many cities, and in which honor is deeply involved,—but we must decide calmly," 1.85.1, translation Crawley). Both men ask for moderation: ὁ ἀγών, εἰ σωφρονοῦμεν, "the struggle if we are moderate" (or "wise"), 6.11.7, translation Crawley; if one should reckon "moderately," σωφρόνως 1.80.2.

37. At 4.87.5, Brasidas denies that the Spartans "are aiming at empire" (οὐδ' αὖ ἀρχῆς ἐφιέμεθα).

38. Cf. also 6.85.3, 8.46.3.

39. Cf., e.g., Greenwood, *Thucydides and the Shaping of History*, p. 51.

40. See the comment of Tim Rood: "Thucydides, by contrast, presents Syracuse as a new Athens and Athens as a new Persia without any allusion to the fact that Syracuse had already resisted foreign invaders in 480 BC. He even has the Syracusan leader Hermocrates encourage his fellow citizens by alluding to the general failure of large expeditions abroad" (6.33.5–6). Tim Rood, "Thucydides, Sicily, and the Defeat of Athens," *KTÈMA Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques*, Université de Strasbourg 42 (2017), p. 34, halshs-01670082 at https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01670082, 2017 (accessed August 9, 2019).

41. Cf. James Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, Volume I. Book 1 348d n.

42. See Adam Parry, "Thucydides' Historical Perspective," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972), p. 53.

43. In his praise of the Spartans and Chians for their ability to keep a moderate course (ηὐδαιμόνησάν τε ἅμα καὶ ἐσωφρόνησαν, "[They] knew how to be moderate and wise in their prosperity," translation Crawley), Thucydides indicates the high value he places on moderation as a political quality (8.24.4).

44. For the Golden Age of Kronos in early Greek poetry, see Hesiod, "Works and Days," lines 109–35 in *Hesiod: Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.)

45. Noted by Jacqueline de Romilly, "Les problemes de politique interieure dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide," p. 93. Details such as this are very significant in Thucydides, as indeed this entire study aims to demonstrate. De Romilly makes the very apt observation: "Et la subtilite de sa methode d'analyse, puisque l'esprit qui anime le recit historique constitue un approfondissement perpetuel menant du plus particulier au plus general, et du vrai au 'plus vrai'" (p. 93).

Edouard Delebecque, on the other hand, in his *Thucydide et Alcibiade* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications des Annales de la Faculte des Lettres, 1965), is much more concerned to find clues to the composition of the *Histories*. He looks for the chinks in the armor ("les defauts de la cuirasse," p. 241) that enable us to discover the ephemeral alongside the eternal.

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46. See A. W. Gomme, "Four Passages in Thucydides," in *More Essays in Greek History and Literature*, ed. David A. Campbell (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 109. Gomme makes Cleon and Alcibiades the principal heirs of Pericles and sees their difference as a matter of Alcibiades' ability as compared with Cleon's lack of intelligence and his inhumanity (pp. 107–9). J. Hatzfeld, in his *Alcibiade*, emphasizes Alcibiades' instability.

47. P. A. Brunt in "Thucydides and Alcibiades," *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 65 (1952), pp. 56–96, argues that Thucydides blames the *demos* for mistrusting Alcibiades, and not Alcibiades for his way of life because Alcibiades was Thucydides' informant (pp. 62–66). He lays great stress on 6.15.4 and argues that Thucydides emphasizes reactions of the *demos* to Alcibiades' *paranomia* and not the *paranomia* itself. As I have suggested in the text, however, the situation is somewhat more complicated than this. Thucydides does blame Alcibiades implicitly for failing to lead the people, and Alcibiades' political language shares in the general extravagance of his way of life. His lack of restraint mirrors the *demos*' lack of restraint. For Alcibiades' self-interest, see also 8.48.4, where Phrynichus sees that Alcibiades cares neither for oligarchy nor democracy, but only for his own recall. Thucydides concurs in this judgment (ὅπερ καὶ ἦν, "the very thing which was true," said of the judgment on Alcibiades, my translation, 8.48.4).

48. τὰ μὲν κοινὰ λόγῳ θεραπεύοντες ἆθλα ἐποιοῦντο, παντὶ δὲ τρόπῳ ἀγωνιζόμενοι ἀλλήλων περιγίγνεσθαι, ἐτόλμησάν τε τὰ δεινότατα, "[The leaders] . . . sought prizes for themselves in those public interests which they pretended to cherish, and, recoiling from no means in their struggles for ascendancy, engaged in the direct excesses," 3.82.8, cf. in 2.65.7 the "private ambitions and private interests" that leaders after Pericles pursued.

49. Pericles' rather boastful (κομπωδεστέραν) assertion in 2.62.1 implies some approval of boasting, but as we have seen there is some change of tone from the Funeral Oration to Pericles' last speech. Gomme, *Historical Commentary*. 2.62.ln., also sees this difference of tone. This passage (2.62.1–2.62.2) has important implications for Thucydides' implied criticisms of Pericles, as we shall see.

John Finley, *Thucydides*, p. 218, contrasts Alcibiades' attitude toward wealth with Pericles' willingness before the war to turn over his estates to the people (2.13). This is quite an important, and often neglected, point.

50. *LSJ* s.v., θεωρία.

51. Thucydides uses the two words, κατασκευαῖς πολυτελέσι, "expensive buildings," at 1.10.2 and at 2.65.2, where he is explaining the Athenians' loss of heart for the war, which was an important reason for Pericles' last speech (2.59.3).

52. For a modern favorable appraisal of Alcibiades' military abilities, see W. Liebeschuetz, "Thucydides and the Sicilian Expedition," *Historia* 17 (1968), pp. 289ff.

53. See Larry Goldberg, *A Commentary on Plato's Protagoras* (New York: Peter Lang, 1983), pp. 131–44, for a thorough analysis of this complicated passage.

54. Goldberg, *A Commentary on Plato's Protagoras*, p. 214.

55. Translation Seth Benardete, *Plato's Symposium*.

Pouncey on *The Necessities of War*, p. 110, propounds "three possible hypotheses" for making a coherent whole of Thucydides' estimate of Alcibiades:

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1. Alcibiades is intended to be the archetype of the selfish politician whose personal ambition ruined Athens.
2. Alcibiades is above and apart from inferior, selfish politicians and is hounded by their persecution to protect his own interests.
3. Thucydides sets out to offer the reader explanation 1, but is constantly prompted by his sympathy for Alcibiades to shade it toward explanation 2.

Pouncey believes that the third explanation is the correct one, but I think there is more unity in the portrayal than this, and that Thucydides' and Plato's depictions of Alcibiades have important similarities. Alcibiades is indeed selfish, but he was also very capable, and presented an attractive aspect to Athenian political life.

56. Translation Benardete.

57. Translation Benardete.

58. As Goldberg, *A Commentary on Plato's Protagoras*, p. 336, has pointed out, Alcibiades shares this characteristic with Protagoras himself. Interpreted in the broadest sense, he shares it with many of the Sophists, for instance, Thrasymachus and Callicles.

59. For the relation of ivy to Dionysus, see *Euripides: Bacchae*, edited with introduction and commentary by E. R. Dodds (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 25, 81, 177. See the notes on 81 and 177 of E. R. Dodds, *Euripides: Bacchae*.

60. Gilbert Murray, "Reactions to the Peloponnesian War in Greek Thought and Practice," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 64 (1944), p. 3.

61. For a discussion of the theme of ἐλπὶς (hope) up to 6.32.2, see F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, pp. 209–20. Harry C. Avery in "Themes in Thucydides' Account of the Sicilian Expedition," *Hermes* 101 (1973), pp. 1–6, carries the theme into Book 8.

62. I agree with J. R. Grant, "Thucydides 2.37.1," p. 105, that μέτεστι δὲ brings forward and comprehends two qualifications of democracy, as it was commonly understood, introduced by μὲν and δὲ . . . [that] the Athenian constitution is, to be sure, a democracy, but [that] Pericles insists that there is both equality before the law, and equality of opportunity for . . . public service."

63. The subject of μὴ ἴσον εἶναι in Alcibiades' speech is τὸν . . . ὠφελοῦντα to be supplied from the context of the preceding sentence (see J. Classen, ed. and J. Steup, rev., *Thucydides*, 6.16.4n.). ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ μέγα φρονοῦντα is in apposition to this subject (Classen-Steup on 6.16.4). Alcibiades' point is that since the unfortunate man (ὁ κακῶς πράσσων, "the one faring badly") does not have an equal share of disaster with anyone, it is just that the one who benefits the state (and who must, therefore, be rich) should, "priding himself on his position," be superior (see Gomme, *Historical Commentary*, 6.16.4n.)

64. Lowell Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 125, suggests that τὰ ἴσα νέμων mocks *isonomia*.

65. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War*, p. 42, 310.

66. For example, de Waal, *Primates and Philosophers*.

67. See Leo Strauss, "Preliminary Observations on then Gods in Thucydides' Work," p. 96. "Preliminary" appears to be a dry comment on an extraordinarily complex subject related to the relationship between Hebraic Jerusalem and Athens.

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68. Aristophanes, *Clouds* in *Oxford Classical Texts: Aristophanis: Fabulae*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

69. David Grene, *Greek Political Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, reprint of 1950 edition originally published under the title *Man in his Pride*, 1965), pp. 30–31. Macleod "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," pp. 68–87, observes that Alcibiades' arguments at 6.16.5 say "about individuals something like what Pericles says about empire." He compares 6.16.5 with 2.64.5 (p. 75). See also Lowell Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides*, p. 125.

70. See Timothy J. Galpin, "The Democratic Roots of Athenian Imperialism in the Fifth Century B.C," *The Classical Journal* 79, no. 2 (1983), pp. 100–9. Accessed November 30, 2019. www.jstor.org/stable/3297244. Galpin's conclusion is that for the Athenians rule over others followed from Athens' values of equality and freedom. Athens was an imperial democracy by right as well as by power. As a result she eventually ruled as a tyrant. In practical terms, the problem was not that the empire developed but that no new system came out of it. This is a failure of political *techne*, as adumbrated in Plato's *Statesman*. Galpin addresses the historical record generally not merely Thucydides, though Thucydides fairly represents the same issues.

71. Both Tompkins, "Stylistic Characterization in Thucydides," pp. 204–5, and Macleod, "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," pp. 76–77, have noted the disturbing rhetoric of Alcibiades' claim that his youth and folly have aided the city (6.17.1). By using unclear pronouns (αὐτήν, αὐτῆς, literally "it," and "of it" referring to Alcibiades' youth), Alcibiades implies a praise of his own ἄνοια ("folly"). Tompkins (p. 205) notes this implied praise of folly in 6.16.3. This certainly represents a change in the value of words from Pericles' speeches.

72. See Cogan, *The Human Thing*, p. 95, who states that these speeches by Nicias and Alcibiades are the only group of speeches "reported in the history in which clearly recognizable personal attacks are employed as arguments." Cf. Guy L. Cooper, III, "Alcibiades' Criticism of Nicias at Thuc. 6.18.1," *The American Philological Association* 109 (1979), pp. 29–38, who interprets the difficult syntax of μὴ βοηθοῖμεν at 6.18.l (μὴ is rarely the negative of a potential optative) so that μὴ βοηθοῖμεν is an example of hypophora, that is, it reports something Alcibiades implies Nicias is likely to have said (p. 34). As Smith notes on Thuc. 6.18, "μή because a neg. answer is implied." William Watson Goodwin, *Syntax of Greek Moods and Tenses* (London: Macmillan, 1965 reissue of original 1889 edition), para. 292.2, notes that this negative μή with the optative "if the idea of prevention is involved in it." He cites this passage and observes that μή here is preceded by a positive question.

This interpretation adds another example to Alcibiades' direct attacks on Nicias. Cooper calls this an instance of Alcibiades' quick, pithy style (p. 38), which Tompkins, "Stylistic Characterization in Thucydides," pp. 204–14, also ascribes to him.

73. Pouncey in *The Necessities of War*, pp. 142–44, views the progression from the general to the individual as one of the most important changes the war induced on the people who conducted it. war, he says, breaks political bonds and isolates men.

74. For the Greek, see ἥ τε πόλις ἡμῶν ἀξία λόγου ἐστίν (1.73.1) and ἆρ' ἄξιοί ἐσμεν, ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, καὶ προθυμίας ἕνεκα τῆς τότε καὶ γνώμης ξυνέσεως ἀρχῆς

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γε ἧς ἔχομεν τοῖς Ἕλλησι μὴ οὕτως ἄγαν ἐπιφθόνως διακεῖσθαι (1.75.1). The paraphrases in the text are mine. Note the convoluted grammar at 1.75.1. See Charles Morris' *Commentary on Thucydides Book 1*, 1.75.1 n. "[The] periphrasis means . . . to be in a position exposed to envy," like ὑπόπτως διακεῖσθαι, viii.68.8. μὴ οὕτως ἄγαν = ἧσσον. The question, as with οὐκ οὖν, implies a forcible assertion: "verily, we do not deserve to be regarded with so much jealousy." The difficult grammar conveys the difficulty the Athenian ambassadors have in making their point on the verge of a war that is like a revolution in the entire Greek world.

75. Pouncey in *The Necessities of War*, pp. 142–44, views the progression from the general to the individual as one of the most important changes the war induced on the people who conducted it. war, he says, breaks political bonds and isolates men. See also Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, p. 317.

76. E. C. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 2* (London: MacMillan & Company, 1891).

77. Thucydides himself and several speakers use this word: (1) 2.65.10 (Thucydides); (2) 4.17.4 (Spartan envoys at Athens; much of this Spartan speech coincides with what appear to be Thucydides' opinions about the good sense the Athenians would have shown by ending the war after Pylos.

At 4.21.2 he himself uses almost the same words as the Spartans); (3) 4.41.4 (Thucydides); (4) 4.92.2 (Pagondas); (5) 6.10.5 (Nicias). In his first speech (1.144.1) Pericles expresses the same idea as does Nicias, but he uses slightly different language.

78. Virginia Wohl, *Love among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 124–70.

79. Wohl, *Love among the Ruins*, p. 133.

80. For ἡσυχάζοντάς of a defensive war, cf. 1.69.4–1.69.5. ἡσυχάζετε (1.69.4) includes ἀμύνεσθαι "a defensive action generally" (1.69.5). Cf. also *Euripidis: Fabulae, Vol. 3: Helena; Phoenissae; Orestes; Bacchae; Iphigenia Aulidensis; Rhesus*, ed. James Diggle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), where ἡσύχως means cautiously.

Some commentators have felt a difficulty in ἡσυχάζοντάς. Gomme thinks we should add "with the hoplite infantry" to the text (e.g., Gomme, *Historical Commentary* 2.65.7 n.). This plain rewriting would implicitly endorse naval exploits during the war, but there is no evidence for it. B. X. de Wet in "The So-Called Defensive Policy of Pericles," argues that we need not follow Gomme's suggestion, but that we must understand ἡσυχάζοντάς to refer only "to the particular requirements of the strategy around Athens itself" (p. 117). But if Thucydides had intended to record this very particular point, there should be some evidence for it. Hornblower avoids this subject here, wisely, I believe.

81. Macleod, "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," p. 82.

82. Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 212–13, contends that although there are connections between Alcibiades' speech here and those of Pericles, there is no "deliberate attempt to contrast Alcibiades' ideas with those of Pericles." Of course, I have been making the case that the relationship is primary and significant.

In the 1979 reissue of her book, de Romilly includes some additional remarks (pp. 369 ff.) in which she addresses the criticism she has received of this view of

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the relationship between speeches, particularly as it applies to those of Pericles and Cleon (cf. pp. 156–71). De Romilly now says that while these "resemblance[s] might be there on purpose," Thucydides does not mean for his readers to make a systematic comparison (p. 373). For the other view, see Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*, pp. 79 and 180 n. 5.

83. Cf. Henry R. Immerwahr, "Pathology of Power and the Speeches of Thucydides," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. P. A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), p. 30. See Victor Ehrenberg, "*POLUPRAGMOSUNE:* A Study in Greek Politics," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 76 (1947), pp. 46–67, esp. 47–53. Ehrenberg makes a case that Thucydides and others applied the term *polupragmosune* to Pericles' active foreign policy. Ehrenberg also recognizes the significant shift in this policy Alcibiades undertakes (p. 52). Cf. A. W. H. Adkins, "*Polupragmosune* and 'Minding One's Own Business': A Study in Greek Social and Political Values," *Classical Philology* 71 (1976), pp. 311–17, where Adkins examines *polupragmosune* as a pejorative term.

June W. Allison "Thucydides and *POLUPGRAMOSUNE*," *American Journal of Ancient History* (1979), pp. 10–22, has challenged Ehrenberg's thesis as it applies to Thucydides. She points out that the word appears only once in Thucydides, in Euphemus' speech at 6.87.3 (in company with the related adverb ἀπραγμόνως "not in a meddlesome way" at 6.87.4), and that Ehrenberg does not even make use of this one example (p. 11). This article is a valuable tonic, but it takes the case too far. Thucydides does use the related words ἀπράγμονα in ἡσυχίαν ἀπράγμονα, "peaceful quiet," and ἀπραγμοσύνη, "do-nothing policy" (1.70.8, 2.64.4, and 6.18.6–6.18.7, e.g., translations Crawley), and the concept is well-attested outside of Thucydides.

More recently see Robert D. Luginbill, *Thucydides on War and National Character* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 97, n.5, who comments that the use of the antonym suggests that the basic idea was broadly understood as part political discourse in Athens. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III:* 6.87.3n, cites Allison and notes the arguments against her point. See also Daryl E. Girssom, Dissertation 2012, Dept. of History, Penn State University, Thucydides' Dangerous World: "Dual Forms of Danger in Classical Greek Interstate Relations," p. 274 n. 20. I believe the use of the word in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, line 833, (produced 425 BC) is conclusive. The idea was already an important idea in Athenian politics in 425 BC. As regards the idea that discussions of *polupragmosune* are of recent origin in scholarship, see Smith, *Commentary on Thucydides Book 6*, 6.87 n.

84. Mary P. Nichols, *Thucydides and the Pursuit of Freedom* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), p. 109.

85. Dover's comment (*Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 6.17.4n.) that στασιάζουσιν at 6.17.4 must refer to Syracuse and not Sicily is overly logical. Alcibiades uses the word to reinforce his general argument for the disunity of Sicily. See also Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 6.17.4 n., apparently supporting the idea that the *stasis* engulfs all of Sicily in Alcibiades' mind if ironically not in fact as the war goes on.

86. See Nichols, *Thucydides and the Pursuit of Freedom*, p. 109, where she says, "The liberation of *eros* that characterizes Thucydides' Alcibiades and against which

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Thucydides warns us is not a liberation from the restraints of law or politics in the pursuit of higher goods; rather it is a liberation from the goods that human beings pursue, and in light of which they understand themselves."

87. Thucydides makes it clear from Hermocrates' use of *stasis* at 4.61.1 and of οἰκείου πολέμου (civil war) 4.64.5, and from Alcibiades' use of forms of στασιάζω (revolutionary fighting) at 6.17.3 and 6.17.4 that he intends both the strife in Syracuse and Sicily's internal discord to be understood as examples of *stasis*. Thucydides opposes the *stasis* that was averted in Syracuse and Sicily to the developing *stasis* in Athens, and sees Sicily's unity as a great source of strength against an opponent weakened by internal quarrels. Cf. W. R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 121, who explains that Hermocrates identifies the interstate warfare in Sicily with *stasis* so that he can make the strong point that such warfare will weaken Sicily against Athens.

88. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 172, discusses this point.

89. John H. Finley, *Three Essays on Thucydides* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), provides good arguments that Thucydides saw the entire Sicilian Expedition as a mistake. He adduces in particular 2.65.11 and 6.1.1 (pp. 156–57). This does not mean that the expedition could not have succeeded, especially if Alcibiades had been kept on, but the possibility of success does not rectify the original error.

90. Cogan in *The Human Thing*, p. 98, observes that in Alcibiades' speech we can see the "turning inward of ['the Athenians'] expressed attitude that we saw in the Melian Dialogue." He also makes the important point that in this debate concerning Sicily both Nicias and Alcibiades use fear as the starting point for their arguments (pp. 279–280 n. 18). See also C. D. C. Reeve, "Alcibiades and the Politics of Rumor in Thucydides," *Philosophic Exchange* 42, no. 1 (2011–12), pp. 2–13. Reeve comments on how Alcibiades benefits from the power of rumor in a democracy because the people can talk about their kinship with someone they envy, i.e., Alcibiades, but then they come to be suspicious of him (pp. 4–5). This suspicion then creates a fearful city that wants to control more and more.

91. See David G. Smith, "Alcibiades, Athens, and the Tyranny of Sicily (Thuc. 6.16)," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 49 (2009), pp. 363–89, esp. pp. 367–71.

92. See Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 3–4, has some interesting remarks on the relevance of Thucydides to our post–World War II era. The history of the United states points toward the same conclusion. For a long time the United States pursued an expansionary policy, hoping to fulfill what was termed its "manifest destiny." Yet the United States did reach what now seems to be a natural limit, and our territorial expansion has ceased.

93. Chester G. Starr, "Thucydides and Sea Power," *Mnemonsyne* 31 (1978), pp. 343–50, compares Thucydides on sea power with the "Old Oligarch's" comments. He notes the ancient discussion of the evils of maritime influences.

94. See generally R. G. Bury, "Theory of Education in Plato's 'Laws,'" *Revue Des Études Grecques* 50, no. 236/237 (1937), pp. 304–20. Accessed October 11, 2019. www.jstor.org/stable/44271515.

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95. Bury, "Theory of Education in Plato's 'LAWS,'" p. 307.

96. Andrew Domanski, "Principles of Early Education in Plato's 'Laws,'" *Acta Classica* 50 (2007), pp. 65–80. Accessed October 12, 2019. www.jstor.org/stable/24592466. See in particular p. 69.

97. In the *Phaedrus* (270a), Socrates presents Pericles' rhetoric as comically lofty and filled with the empty ideas he sees in the work of Anaxagoras.

98. See Dover, *Historical Commentary*, 6.18.7n.

99. Macleod, "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," p. 85, carefully analyzes this section of Alcibiades' speech, and notes in particular Alcibiades' reference to Nicias' τὸ . . . λύειν τοὺς νόμους ("breaking our customary procedures," 6.14, my translation following Hornblower, 6.14n.).

100. Macleod, "Rhetoric and History (Thucydides 6.16–18)," p. 79, sees the irony in 6.17.4, where Alcibiades says that some of the states in Sicily may come over, "if they receive pleasing offers" (εἴ τι καθ' ἡδονὴν λέγοιτο, translation Crawley, adapted). Alcibiades is one of those who "speaks sweetly" to the people. Macleod aptly compares 2.65.8, διὰ τὸ μὴ κτώμενος ἐξ οὐ προσηκόντων τὴν δύναμιν πρὸς ἡδονήν τι λέγειν, "[Pericles] was never compelled to flatter [the Athenians]," translation Crawley.

101. In the *Republic*, knowledge is of course vital for the philosopher-king. See, e.g., 485a–b.

102. The Sicilian Expedition was in fact a mistake. It lessened Athens' chances of winning the war, although it did not totally ruin those chances. I take Thucydides' remarks at 2.65.11 on this subject literally:

ἡμαρτήθη καὶ ὁ ἐς Σικελίαν πλοῦς, ὃς οὐ τοσοῦτον γνώμης ἁμάρτημα ἦν πρὸς οὓς ἐπῆσαν, ὅσον οἱ ἐκπέμψαντες οὐ τὰ πρόσφορα τοῖς οἰχομένοις ἐπιγιγνώσκοντες. (2.65.11)

[There were many blunders] and amongst them the Sicilian Expedition; though this failed not so much through a miscalculation of the power of those against whom it was sent, as through a fault in the senders in not taking the best measures afterward to assist those who had gone out. (2.65.11, translation Crawley)

A literal translation expresses Thucydides' meaning: "it was not so much a mistake of conception." In support of this interpretation, see the excellent paper "Thucydides 2.65.11," pp. 161–73, esp. pp. 161–67, by H. D. Westlake. See also Dover, *Historical Commentary*, 7.42.3n. Hornblower in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume I*: 2.65.11 notes, "The reason why the opinion here expressed is so surprising is that the narrative of Books VI and VII . . . does clearly imply that the Athenians had indeed badly underrated their enemy." This is true and important. The answer lies in the dramatic nature of the unfolding narrative. We learn as we read that the Athenians were wrong about their enemy, that the expedition was folly but they still might have won had they maintained their political and military composure. Here the emphasis is on the failures in leadership but as Thucydides develops the narrative the deepening weakness of Athens makes the tragedy even more clear.

103. For Thucydides' judgment of external appearance as a means of appraising power, see 1.10.2. This does not mean that a display of power does not have military uses. For instance, in 428 after Mytilene has revolted, the Lacedaemonians decide

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to invade Attica. To counter this, Athens sends out 100 ships to provide a "display" (ἐπίδειξίν) of power (3.16.1). This overwhelming show of force disheartens the Lacedaemonians completely (3.16.2).

This situation in 428 differs sharply from the case of the Sicilian Expedition, however. In 428 the Spartans are threatening Athens, and the Athenians need to draw a military line. In 416 the Syracusans do not threaten Athens, and the entire expedition violates Pericles' strategy for the war. Nicias' display, like the expedition as a whole, was gratuitous.

104. Dover (*Historical Commentary*) on 7.42.3 argues that this is Thucydides' judgment but Hornblower, A *Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 7.42.3 n, shows that the rhetorical and literary effect is more complicated. This thought starts out earlier in this section (καὶ νομίσας, "and having considered,") as Demosthenes' but the reasoning about how the Syracusans thought or would have thought if the Athenians had stayed seems like Thucydides' own explanation of what was going on: (ὅπερ ὁ Νικίας ἔπαθεν (ἀφικόμενος γὰρ τὸ πρῶτον ὁ Νικίας φοβερός, ὡς οὐκ εὐθὺς προσέκειτο ταῖς Συρακούσαις, ἀλλ᾽ ἐν Κατάνῃ διεχείμαζεν, "as Nicias had done, who by wintering in Catana instead of at once attacking Syracuse had allowed the terror of his first arrival to evaporate in contempt"). The purpose of the apparent authorial intrusion here appears to be to confirm that Nicias' reasoning was wrong.

See Dover, *Historical Commentary*, vol. IV, pp. 276–88, for a review of the scholarship. See also Mark Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," pp. 186–88. Barnard observes that historians today generally see in the mutilation itself a more serious political act than does Thucydides. Hornblower's review of the scholarship in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, pp. 433–40, is now more complete and more current.

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The digression is of course one of the most famous sections in Thucydides. See in particular S. Sara Monoson, *Plato's Democratic Entanglements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 19–51, and in particular pp. 42–49 for a review of Thucydides' account of this story that was foundational for the Athenians. The welcome English version of Hans-Peter Stahl's original German (with various changes and new sections) is, overall, perhaps the most nuanced and comprehensive account, *Thucydides: Man's Place in History* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2009), pp. 1–13.

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Chapter 7

Harmodius and Aristogeiton and Political Myths

Thucydides introduces the digression after the Athenians return from Camarina to Catana. On their way back they pillaged some Syracusan territory, but the cavalry and light troops drove them away (6.52.2). This small reversal serves as a warning to the reader of the future influence of the cavalry. Next, when the Athenians arrive at Catana, they find the Salaminia ready to carry Alcibiades back to Athens. The Athenians had been looking "suspiciously" (ὑπόπτως, 6.53.2, 6.53.3) into both the sacrileges against the Mysteries and the mutilation of the Herms. Suspicion, which Thucydides here relates to the people's fearful state of mind (6.53.3), is of course a sign of political degeneration. The Athenians had heard that the tyranny of Pisistratus and his sons had become harsh near its end, and they had learned that they themselves and Harmodius had not put it down, but that the Lacedaemonians had done this for them (6.53.3). Thucydides uses the Athenians' lack of understanding of this series of events as an example of how men generally, even the Athenians, are ignorant of their own traditions and history.[1]

Near the end of the introduction to his work Thucydides also refers to the story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, there connecting it with the common way in which traditions are accepted without any test of their validity (1.20.2–1.20.3). He there opposes his own method to this uncritical acceptance of stories and myths, and further notes the distinctions between what he is doing and the work of the poets and chroniclers (1.21). One clear purpose Thucydides has in Book 1 is to establish his own credibility as he begins his history of the Peloponnesian War, but he also has more complicated purposes that only come to the surface in the full narrative in Book 6.

He begins the digression by calling the act of Harmodius and Aristogeiton a "piece of daring" (τόλμημα) undertaken "on account of an erotic accident" (δι' ἐρωτικὴν ξυντυχίαν, 6.54.1).[2] Thucydides describes "Hipparchus' having

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been named as the tyrant as a piece of ill-fortune" (Ἱππάρχῳ δὲ ξυνέβη τοῦ πάθους τῇ δυστυχίᾳ, 6.55.4), and further suggests that the conspirators' actual meeting up with Hipparchus at the Leocorium "was itself an accident" (περιέτυχον, 6.57.3, cf. περιτυχόντες, 1.20.2) deriving from their alarm at observing Hippias talking with one of their comrades. The accident here, as Thucydides presents it, is that Harmodius' and Aristogeiton's emotional alarm contributes to the impetuosity. Then they act "without looking about themselves" (ἀπερισκέπτως, 6.57.3). While it is true that none of these words in isolation would necessarily convey the idea of chance, all of them together combined with the actual circumstances of the assassination confirm that Thucydides makes chance a significant subsidiary theme of the digression. This theme relates closely to Thucydides' description of the deed as erotic, since in Thucydides chance often exposes men to the dangers of their passions. For example, Cleon's victory at Pylos is largely a matter of luck, and as Cornford and others have shown, it led the Athenians into an unrealistic desire for more and an unwillingness to end the war while they had the advantage.[3]

In his account of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton Thucydides opposes his *logos* to the *erga* or deeds he describes and implies that *logos* can be used to obtain truth. He develops a dense complement of thematic references between his account of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton and his narrative of the beginning of the Sicilian Expedition. These themes, which include the role of *eros* in political life, assassination and revolution, the elevation of the private world into the public sphere, suspicion, fear, and the nature of *arche* or rule, turn the digression into an extended metaphor for the decline of Athenian public life and political discourse under the pressure of the war. Thucydides emphasizes the importance of this narrative by using the first person (ἣν ἐγὼ ἐπὶ πλέον διηγησάμενος ἀποφανῶ, "which I will relate at some length," 6.54.1) to introduce his version of the events.[4]

Erotic passion and the resulting loss of perspective prompted Harmodius' and Aristogeiton's assassination of Hipparchus. At the end of the digression, Thucydides summarizes the importance of *eros* in these events, when he says,

> τοιούτῳ μὲν τρόπῳ δι' ἐρωτικὴν λύπην ἥ τε ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς καὶ ἡ ἀλόγιστος τόλμα ἐκ τοῦ παραχρῆμα περιδεοῦς Ἁρμοδίῳ καὶ Ἀριστογείτονι ἐγένετο. (6.59.1)
>
> In this way offended love first led Harmod ius and Aristogeiton to conspire, and the alarm of the moment to commit the rash action recounted. (6.59.1)

This sentence richly combines several of the *Histories*' most important themes. Thucydides characterizes what Harmodius and Aristogeiton did as

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τόλμα ἀλόγιστος, using the same phrase as in his first example of the change in the *axiosis* of words during *stasis*.[5]

At 3.82.4 Thucydides says that in *stasis*, τόλμα ἀλόγιστος ("reckless audacity") was considered to be ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ("the courage of a loyal ally"). He makes his view of the affair plain by naming the deed of Harmodius and Aristogeiton as τόλμα ἀλόγιστος ("reckless audacity") and calling it by its correct name. This confirms his position as an Athenian (1.1.1) whose *logos* conforms to the *erga* of the war. Unlike other Athenians (6.54.1, 1.20.2), Thucydides knows the facts. Political passion has not clouded his judgment.

Pericles also, like Thucydides, distinguishes thoughtless daring from "bravery" (τόλμα) combined with "forethought" (γνώμη), when he says in his first speech that the fathers of the present Athenians repelled the Mede and advanced the empire more with γνώμη ("forethought") than with τύχη ("luck"), and more with τόλμα ("bravery") than with δύναμις ("power," 1.144.4).

Thucydides employs an elaborate ring structure to frame his narrative. He refers to *eros* at the beginning and end (6.54.1, 6.59.1). He calls the affair an act of ἀλόγιστος τόλμα ("reckless daring," see τόλμημα, 6.54.1, τόλμα, 6.59.1). He notes the affair's implications for the "tyranny" at Athens (τυράννων, 6.54.1, τυραννὶς, 6.59.2). Finally, through his use of the phrase τόλμα ἀλόγιστος (6.59.1), he alludes to his role as the expounder of the truth of the Peloponnesian War, while at the beginning of the digression, he refers explicitly to his narrative intentions (6.54.1), and implies that he will tell the "correct" story (ἀκριβὲς, 6.54.1) in contrast to what the Athenians believe.

In this narrative Thucydides joins his role as an Athenian citizen who participates in the affairs of Athens, albeit in a distant way, by writing about them and telling the truth while glorifying the city, with his role as a philosophical historian, who uses the Peloponnesian War to convey eternal human truths. He uses the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton to show that men in general (6.54.1) are not accurate in their traditions (cf. 1.20.1), and also to correct the unthinking view of their own history the Athenians have. The Peloponnesian War is for Thucydides war as such, while Athens is the archetype of the *polis*.[6] This ability of Thucydides to see the general in the particular is impressive, but it is also characteristic of many of the great Attic authors and thinkers. For instance, Aeschylus sees in the story of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, and Orestes, the development of δίκη ("justice," transliterated *dike*), while Sophocles uses the fate of Oedipus to objectify human guilt. Plato and Socrates share this ability too. In many of the dialogues, the immediate circumstances of the interlocutors set the topics for the discussion.[7]

Thucydides' method of writing, which forces the reader to ask why he has arranged his material as he does and what his reasons are for emphasizing one detail or event over another, constantly increases the general implications of

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the specific events he describes.[8] This aspect of his writing can be clearly seen in the treatment of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, which stands out in the midst of the history of the Sicilian Expedition. His account of this affair at first seems out of place as it slows down the reader's progress toward Syracuse, but it reveals essential aspects of Athenian politics and forces the reader to consider wider truths about political decline generally, and the decay of political discourse in particular.

The most striking similarity between Thucydides' treatment of the state of mind of the Athenians at the time of the Sicilian Expedition and his narrative of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton is the force of *eros* (cf. 6.13.1, 6.24.1). This *eros* is both the emotional cause and the full flowering of Athenian *pleonexia*.[9] Hipparchus makes a fatal mistake when he tries to seduce Harmodius, and Harmodius responds by denouncing him to Aristogeiton. This denunciation recalls the denunciations of Alcibiades by various informers (6.28, 6.53.2). This is not to say that either Hipparchus or Hippias in some allegorical way represents Alcibiades, but only that the emotional situations in both cases have correspondences. Both Athens in this period and the tyrants much earlier occupied positions of power (6.54.3, cf. 6.28.2). As a result, people "fear" them (φοβηθέντες, 6.15.3, ἐφοβεῖτο, 6.53.3, the verb φοβέω means to "alarm" or to "put to flight"). The passive forms, which we have here express being afraid, and "suspicion," which was so prevalent in the Athens of 415 (ὑπόπτως, 6.53.2, 6.53.3, ὁ δῆμος . . . ὑπόπτης, 6.60.1, ὑποψίας, 6.60.3, ὑπωπτεύθησαν 6.61.3, ὑποψία 6.61.4), contributed strongly to the attacks on Alcibiades. All of these Greek words are derived from forms of the word for suspicion, which is ὑποψία, transliterated *hupopsia*, that is, looking underneath something, regarding something in a stealthy way. Hipparchus' approach to Harmodius engenders suspicion and also fear too at 6.54.3 and 6.57.2.

An even wider connection between the Athens of 415 and the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton lies in the relationship between the public and the private worlds.[10] Alcibiades had attempted to turn his private accomplishments into public events (6.16.1–6.16.2), and the citizens feared the license of his private life (6.15.4). By 412–411 Alcibiades' private political situation, his exile, becomes a dominant public fact of the war, as he has provided Sparta with crucial advice, and then intrigued to be recalled to Athens. In the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, a private erotic attraction leads to public deeds,[11] which in turn change the entire tenor of the regime (6.54.5–6.54.6, 6.59.2). Suspicion and fear—first Aristogeiton's (6.54.3), and then Hippias' (6.59.2)—foster this change.

The first stage of the transformation of a private concern into a public affair is Hipparchus' approach to Harmodius. All of Hipparchus' actions and desires have by their nature, since he is a member of the ruling family, public

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implications, and *eros* is often the downfall of political leaders. The second and crucial step in the shift of the private into the public realm occurs with the assassination itself when Harmodius and Aristogeiton make their private case a very public political matter. This seems to have changed the relationship between private and public, as the younger men were educated by older lovers so that personal relationships became political.[12]

For Thucydides, the rule of the Peisistratids was moderate, despite some abuses of power (6.54.5–6). The plot against the leaders and the assassination itself represent the most serious political problem. Thucydides says that in response to Harmodius' rejection, Hipparchus resolved not to use force against him, but only to insult him (6.54.4). He explains this in a clause expressing the reason, observing that this tyranny was not grievous to the citizens, and had freed itself from envy (6.54.5), because the rulers practiced "virtue" (ἀρετὴν, transliterated *arete(n)*), used their power with intelligence, exacted only low taxes from the people, and in general ran the city well (6.54.5). This view of the Peisistratid rule resembles the picture the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 draw of Athens herself early in the history of the empire, and Thucydides uses similar language in each case to emphasize the comparison. The speakers there claim that Athens, on account both of her willingness to defend Greece and of her intelligence, does not deserve to be regarded with jealousy (1.75.1). Furthermore, Athens obtained her empire without violence (1.75.2). Although Aristogeiton fears Hipparchus' power (6.54.3), Hipparchus is unwilling to use force (6.54.4).[13]

Just like the people of Athens described by the Athenian ambassadors, the Peisistratids respect justice and established laws (6.54.6, cf. 1.76.3–1.77.2), taking care, nevertheless, that their power is not challenged. The Peisistratids' rule became harsher (6.53.3, 6.59.2) and turned into what we today call a tyranny as *eros* grew and impelled rash action, just as did Athens' hegemony, most notably in the case of the Sicilian Expedition.

The narrative of Harmodius and Aristogeiton has other implications for the *Histories* generally. Thucydides states that the Athenians of 415 knew that it was not Harmodius and Aristogeiton, but the Spartans who had overthrown the tyranny (6.53.3). This is a forceful reminder that at one time the Athenians had depended upon the Spartans for their freedom. A crucial purpose of the war, according to Pericles, is to free Athens from Spartan power (1.1401.141). Ironically, and unfortunately for the Athenians, their suspicions of one another, which the memory of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton helps to incite (6.53.3), ultimately lead to their downfall and subjection to Sparta (2.65.11).[14]

In a more complicated parallel, Hippias, like Alcibiades, became an exile from Athens and went to live in Asia Minor. Hippias later set out for Marathon with the Medes when they invaded Greece (6.59.4). This last stage

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of Hippias' life serves as a warning: Hippias, whose last years of rule were harsh, joined forces with the Medes, and participated in a most serious trauma for Athens. Alcibiades, like Hippias, later allies himself with eastern forces in Asia Minor. On an even broader level, Athens, like some of her exiled leaders, has become more tyrannical, and begun herself to resemble the Mede.[15]

Harmodius and Aristogeiton use a religious festival, the Great Panathenaia, as the cover for their attack and thereby violate a religious rite and certain customs associated with it (6.56.2). This recalls the charges against Alcibiades, that he parodied the rites of the Mysteries, and that he may also have been involved in the mutilation of the Herms. Thucydides thus suggests that the violation of religious customs marks a crucial point in political decline. This breaking of *nomoi* and loss of respect for religion are for Thucydides general signs of the degeneration of the *polis*, which he observed also during his description of the plague and the *stasis* in Corcyra (3.82–3.83; see especially 3.82.8).

The day of the Great Panathenaia was the only day on which citizens could meet and bear arms "without suspicion" (ὕποπτον, 6.56.2) from the tyrant. Harmodius and Aristogeiton abuse this custom by having their collaborators carry daggers (6.58.2) and thereby, after they have been found out, make the tyrant suspicious. As we have seen, the Athenians of 415 had become very suspicious of one another, and their suspicions were not satisfied until one of those in custody turned informer and denounced those who had taken part in the mutilation of the Herms (6.60.2).[16] Thucydides denies that this information was the full account, but partially exculpates Andocides from a potential charge of bad faith by concluding that he had done the city a great benefit (6.60.5). Despite the conclusion of the investigation into the mutilation of the Herms, the Athenians, instead of letting the subject of religious profanation go, decided that since they had found out the truth concerning the Herms, they should punish Alcibiades for his part in the parody of the Mysteries because they thought it had been done with some motive of conspiracy (6.61.1). Unluckily for him, a Lacedaemonian army happened to come up to the Isthmus, acting in concert with the Boeotians. Thucydides uses ἔτυχε, "it so happened" (6.61.2), to indicate the chance nature of this occurrence. Chance feeds the emotions of the Athenians. They then mistake an accident for a plot (6.61.2).

The Athenians are victims of their own emotions. Thucydides thus again emphasizes the importance of correct knowledge, as he did earlier in this narrative by giving many proofs of his argument that Hippias was tyrant and not Hipparchus (6.54.6–6.56).

The narrative of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton highlights Thucydides' interest in his portrait of Athens in political decline. Thucydides makes the specific point that an inaccurate *logos* of the affair contributes to

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the decline, and in doing so he suggests that in general a *logos* that matches the *erga* is crucial to political prosperity.[17] This raises again the question that lies behind all the speeches and action in the *Histories*, that is, what is for Thucydides the proper relationship of action to reason or *logos*. Here again we can see Thucydides as a philosophical historian.[18] His foremost concern is to use history to instruct in the broadest sense of that term, and in doing so he focuses attention on the abstract and general (1.22.4). In short, he uses the Peloponnesian War to find eternally recurring patterns in human action. The close relationship Thucydides builds between the narrative of Harmodius and Aristogeiton and the fate of Alcibiades reinforces Thucydides' implicit arguments that proper knowledge or education is crucial for the health of the *polis*, and that Alcibiades lacks this education. Just as the Athenians of Hippias' time suffer from *eros*, fear, and lack of knowledge and thereby first alienate and then lose a good leader so also do the Athenians of 416/415 fall victims to *eros* and suspicion. These passions first lead to Alcibiades' exile and then to Athens' rapid decline. The story of Harmodius and Aristogeiton provided an impetus toward democracy that gave energy and political strength to Athens. But by the time of Alcibiades' ascendancy, the myth had outlived its usefulness. Stories such as this one, "when they preserve the standard of the mean," help to produce works that are "good and beautiful" (*Statesman*, 284a–b).[19] In 416 at the start of the Sicilian Expedition, this myth no longer engenders such works as personal motivations have taken over and the public virtues the story seems to promote have been lost. The political problems in Athens require a new myth and a new philosophical archetype, but nothing emerges. There is no statesman who can weave a renewed *polis.*

In the words and deeds described by Thucydides, we find events of significant philosophical import. The question then arises whether some group of those events themselves represent the highest type of life, or whether for Thucydides the highest values can be found in the interrelationship between his work and his raw material. Hannah Arendt takes the first position and elevates the life of action by arguing that in its highest forms it participates in the philosophical.[20] For her philosophy gives legitimacy to the life of action. She finds in Thucydides' Pericles the highest type of man because his political life, especially the Funeral Oration, was philosophically informed. Arendt thus relies on the high position of philosophy or *logos* to give weight to her version of the highest life. This implies, however, that *logos* is higher than action.

Although Arendt seems not to accept this point, Thucydides implicitly does. Thucydides' *logos* comprehends and elucidates the *erga* of the Peloponnesian War. His work thus comprehends the events it illuminates.[21] For Thucydides a significant purpose of contemplation is to influence the life of action. This tension seems to haunt Plato, first of all because of the way political conflict

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and violent political passion killed Socrates. But if the *Seventh Letter* is genuine the same tension affected Plato personally, as in addition to personal motivations for intervening in political life in Sicily, he fears that he might be nothing but a *logos*: μὴ δόξαιμί ποτε ἐμαυτῷ παντάπασι λόγος μόνον ἀτεχνῶς εἶναι τίς, Plato was afraid of his reproach of himself: "Lest I seem to myself simply in every way a mere *logos*" (*Seventh Letter*, 328c).

Action seems on the surface to assume primacy also in Thucydides partly because he was an Athenian and he turned his work partly into a political instrument.[22] Yet he made history political not simply because he was an Athenian and wished to influence Athenian politics or even to establish a view of Athens for posterity. His primary reason for this innovation was that he saw man as essentially political. For him, man's being resides in his political nature. *Logos* or rhetoric allows man to express that nature. Within this political world Pericles represents an ideal, but Thucydides himself draws contingent political truths from this ideal and from Athens' decline. Perhaps the most important of those contingent truths was his claim of Pericles' superiority as a leader despite the flaws he reveals in Pericles through his narrative and the speeches.

How should we interpret Thucydides' spirited defense of Pericles when he at the same time reveals in his narrative the flaws in his rule. If his flaws were not so serious we might believe that we are meant to see them simply as honest reports of actual weaknesses. On some level, they are definitely that. Thucydides aims to tell the truth. But there is also a way in which Thucydides, like Socrates and ultimately like Plato also, was an Athenian who lived at a time when one's political stance mattered very much.

Socrates in particular was the ultimate exponent of this view, as the *Crito* demonstrates. There Socrates takes the voice of the Laws to present the arguments he sees in favor of accepting his own death for crimes he believes he did not commit, and which more than 2,000 years of readers seem to have been persuaded by his *Apology* that he did not commit. It is hardly possible not to be troubled by these arguments in the *Crito*. For people in modern democratic republics ostracism and exile of politically difficult figures seem strange, though of course we all have politicians in mind who seem from time to time to argue for the renewal of such ideas, but Athens was a very intensely political city in a very dangerous world. Thucydides was exiled (5.26.5) and used the exile to his advantage to explain the war and why he thought Pericles was a great leader. The answer to the conundrum of Socrates' refusal even of de facto exile appears to be the very same intensity that characterized Athenian public, political, intellectual, and artistic life. Socrates' citizenship was profoundly important to him. He seems to have lived in order to bring forth ideas in Athens.[23] Yet he is willing to leave his own children and to disregard arguments from Crito about the immorality of this (*Crito*, 45c–46a).

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In response, Socrates even cites the Athenian laws that prescribe that he care for his children (50d–51a). It is not even clear that Plato was convinced by Socrates' arguments. Note what the Athenian Stranger says on the subject of one's obligations to one's children in the *Laws*:

> ἡμεῖς δὴ μηδὲν ὀνόματι διαφερώμεθ᾽ αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ᾽ ὁ νυνδὴ λόγος ἡμῖν ὁμολογηθεὶς μενέτω, ὡς οἵ γε ὀρθῶς πεπαιδευμένοι σχεδὸν ἀγαθοὶ γίγνονται, καὶ δεῖ δὴ τὴν παιδείαν [644β] μηδαμοῦ ἀτιμάζειν, ὡς πρῶτον τῶν καλλίστων τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἀνδράσιν παραγιγνόμενον: καὶ εἴ ποτε ἐξέρχεται, δυνατὸν δ᾽ ἐστὶν ἐπανορθοῦσθαι, τοῦτ᾽ ἀεὶ δραστέον διὰ βίου παντὶ κατὰ δύναμιν. (644a–b)
>
> Let's not, then, disagree over a word [education], but let stand now the statement with which we agreed, that those, at least, who are rightly educated generally become good, [644b] and it is quite necessary to dishonor education in no way, as it is first among the finest things transmitted to the best men; and if ever it goes astray, but it is possible to set it right again, to this task one must, throughout life, be addressed with all one's might. (644a–b)

This cannot be put in accord with the *Crito*. It seems there is a deep and irreconcilable conflict between what Socrates felt he owed Athens and what Plato felt is owed to children.

Plato was, Phaedo says, "he thinks," absent on Socrates' last day (*Phaedo*, 59b). At the very least this suggests some distance between Plato and Socrates. The intensity and personal involvement of Thucydides resembles this intensity of Socrates. He does not show any inclination to quarrel with his exile, perhaps partly because it would have been ignoble to do so, but also because exile was a way in which Athens as state managed failed leadership. Thucydides' acceptance of his situation served him well in his researches (5.26.5). Similarly, Thucydides defends Pericles though he shows his weaknesses and even, like a tragedian, uses them for great pathos. In another example of the intensity of Athenian political life, Aristophanes was so troubled by the response of his first version of the *Clouds* that he wrote another.[24] Despite the fact that Aristophanes bore a great deal of responsibility for charges being made against Socrates (*Apology*, 18c), the speech that Plato gives to Aristophanes in the *Symposium* is one of the most remarkable myths, and one of the most amusing, many have ever read. The sense of community is palpable in these figures. Arendt is right: their sense of reality as a product of their interactions with one another produces a lived epistemology that dictates what the world actually was for them.

Pericles' flaws were real, but the war he had a major hand in starting was in fact one of the greatest wars ever fought. The writing of the history of the war demanded the truth despite what appear to be Thucydides' personal political

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convictions about Pericles. Reality for Thucydides also was communal. The decline from the flawed ideal of Pericles shows itself very clearly in the Athenian speeches Thucydides presents. As we have seen, under the pressure of the plague and the war, these speeches show distortions from the political language of Pericles and some of his contemporaries. As we will see next, this distortion continues in the speech of Euphemus at Camarina, and reaches a sharp peak in Alcibiades' speech at Sparta.

NOTES

1. In his long and informative note on 6.54–6.59, Dover (*Historical Commentary*) discusses the somewhat puzzling way in which Thucydides portrays the relationship of the digression to its context. In particular, Dover considers the apparent contradiction between Thucydides' statement that the Athenians learned that the tyranny was put down by the Lacedaemonians and his claim that the Athenians say "nothing accurate" (ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν, 6.54.1). Thucydides has just said that the Athenians understood one thing at least, that the Lacedaemonians and not Harmodius and Aristogeiton had put down the tyranny, and this is in fact correct knowledge. Dover resolves the apparent contradiction by arguing that "nothing accurate" is an exaggerated expression borne of Thucydides' rhetorical purposes. On the whole, this seems a satisfactory explanation of the contradiction. Hornblower in his *Commentary* 54.1 n. reviews Dover's points and agrees.

2. At 1.33.1, ξυντυχία means "conjunction" (*LSJ* s.v. ξυντυχία) but includes an undertone of chance, as the Corinthians want to impress upon the Athenians that they are lucky to be given the opportunity to receive the benefit of their request. At 3.112, ξυντυχία refers to the "very moment" (*LSJ*) of the battle, while at 7.57.1 the word means simply "circumstance."

Two other uses are more interesting: Diodotus says that as long as poverty or excess impel men, and the other υντυχίαι (plural) of life remain under the sway of some incurable power, these various forces will lead men into danger. Here the literal meaning of the word is again conditions, but the undertone of accident or chance is just below the surface. Thucydides also associates ξυντυχία here with passions, just as he does at 6.54.1. Note also that τύχη (chance) follows soon after (3.45.6).

3. See F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, pp. 82–109, especially pp. 87ff. See also Hunter, *Thucydides, the Artful Reporter*, pp. 103ff.; and H. Herter, "Freiheit und Gebundenheit des Staatsmannes bei Thukydides," *Rheinisches Museum* 93 (1950), pp. 133–53.

4. Hans-Peter Stahl, *Thukydides: Die Stellung des Menschen im geschichtlichen ProzeB* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1966), p. 2. For some forceful arguments demonstrating the parallels between the Athens of 415 and the narrative of the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, see Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 178ff.

5. Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," p. 43, notes that the deeds of Harmodius and Aristogeiton were not part of a *stasis* because the issue for them was private. In a strict sense this is of course correct, but the affair did become a public one, as Stahl,

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Thukydides, p. 6, has seen, and hence has important implications for Thucydides' view of *stasis.*

6. Cf. Peter Pouncey's remarks on this subject in *The Necessities of War*, pp. 144–46. Pouncey sees the war as representative for Thucydides of human nature in general.

7. For a discussion of this characteristic in Thucydides, see Grene, *Greek Political Theory*, p. 74. Some examples of this aspect of Plato's and Socrates' thought are: In the *Phaedo*, Socrates and his interlocutors discuss the immortality of the soul as Socrates prepares to die. In the *Euthyphro* the subject is piety, which is appropriate, since Socrates is going to be tried for impiety, and Euthyphro is prosecuting his father. In the *Ion*, Ion is returning from Epidaurus, where he has heard rhapsodes. The subject of the discussion is art. Phaedrus and Socrates talk about love and rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* after Socrates discovers that Phaedrus has been with Lysias, who has been trying to persuade Phaedrus concerning the nature of the best kind of love. The *Republic* opens after Socrates has just been to the Piraeus. This foreshadows the issue of the philosopher coming down from his studies to be with the people. Polemarchus instigates the dialogue by restraining Socrates. This raises the questions of justice and compulsion. See Bloom, *The Republic of Plato*, p. 310.

8. For an introduction to some of the issues involved in determining the proper way to read Thucydides, see Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 3–19.

9. Cf. Euripides, *Euripidis: Fabulae, Vol. 3: Helena; Phoenissae; Orestes; Bacchae; Iphigenia Aulidensis; Rhesus,* ed. James Diggle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), where Achilles describes the motivation of the Greek expedition to Troy as a δεινὸς ἔρως. This shows that late in the war at least some Athenians (other than Thucydides) saw violent passion for conquest as characteristic of Athens.

10. Stahl, *Thukydides*, p. 6.

11. See Diego Paiaro, Grégory Reimond, and Anne Stevens in "*Eros* and Politics in Democratic Athens: The Case of the Tyrannicides," *Clio. Women, Gender, History*, no. 43, Gender and the Citizen (2016), pp. 139–51, for a full review of the idea that the Athenian concept of manliness (ἀνδρεία transliterated *andreia*) was not what we today think of as manliness. It specifically included pederasty and a relationship in which the younger man became a kind of apprentice to the older.

The point is stated clearly by Andrew Stewart in *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 73: The statue of Harmodius and Aristogeiton by Kritios and Nesiotes in the Agora in Athens "not only placed the homoerotic bond at the core of Athenian political freedom, but asserted that it and the manly virtues (*aretai*) of courage, boldness, and self-sacrifice that it generated were the only guarantors of that freedom's continued existence."

12. See Paiaro, Reimond, and Stevens in "*Eros* and Politics in Democratic Athens," p. 146: They make the case that *eros* became a political bond, a kind of political *philia*, which means and "affectionate regard" usually between equals, an affection that can also be a kind of family relationship. See *LSJ* s. v. φιλία.

13. See Stahl, *Thukydides*, p. 3, for a persuasive discussion of how Thucydides' narrative reinforces the argument that the tyranny of Hippias was not burdensome.

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14. S. Sara Monoson in *Plato's Democratic Entanglements* concludes that not only does "Thucydides' review of the myth demonstrate that the Athenians got it wrong but [it also shows] the enduring significance of doing so. Citizens miss the link between increased suspicion (between fear and violence) and fail to take the reality of a sometimes tense relation between personal and public interests of citizens to guide their deliberations" (p. 56).

15. See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On Thucydides*, translated and annotated by W. K. Pritchett (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), chapter 39, pp. 31–32. See also Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 155–56.

16. See Dover, *Historical Commentary*, vol. IV, p. 273. As Hornblower, *Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III* notes, "The Anonymous Prisoner is Andokides," 6.60.2 n. Hornblower speculates that Andokides was one of Thucydides' sources of information.

17. Stahl, *Thukydides*, p. 9.

18. Jaeger, *Paideia: Volume I*, pp. 382ff.

19. See Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 125–26.

20. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, pp. 15–18, 183–84.

21. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 229–30.

22. Jaeger, *Paideia: Volume I*, p. 384 and n. 7.

23. Dana Villa, *Socratic Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 260–65.

24. Ian C. Storey, "The Dates of Aristophanes' *Clouds* II and Eupolis' *Baptai*: A Reply to E. C. Kopff," *The American Journal of Philology* 114, no. 1 (1993), pp. 71–84. Storey argues persuasively that the traditional date for the second version, 418 BC, is correct; he also follows the traditional view that the second version was not produced but only written.

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Chapter 8

Euphemus and Alcibiades

The End of the Athenian Logos

After Alcibiades escaped the anger of the Athenian people, the army was left with just Nicias and Lamachus as generals, and they were able to lead the Athenians to a victory, but not without two telling developments. First, Nicias begins his speech exhorting the troops by claiming that men like his do not need a long exhortation (6.68.1), implicitly suggesting a reduction in the power of any speech he might give to encourage the troops. Although it is common for speakers to begin a speech by rejecting what they are setting out to do, as Pericles does at the start of the Funeral Oration (2.35), Thucydides uses this *topos* to show the weakness of Nicias' attitudes. It is significant also that Thucydides has Nicias assert that compared with a good speech to a "weak" (ἀσθενοῦς, 6.68.1) army, the forces he has will more effectively inspire courage. He does not say that his force is inferior, but his use of the word ἀσθενοῦς ("weak") here leaves an impression of weakness, and this impression accords with the weakness he fears in his speech. This is the kernel of an attitude of Nicias' that will later lead him to make exhortatory speeches that are clearly at war with certain fundamental beliefs of both Pericles and Thucydides. The Athenians win this battle, but the Syracusan cavalry prevents them from following it up (6.70.3). Nicias' speech and this military engagement present the essence of the entire Sicilian Expedition from the Athenian point of view. The Athenians give up their reliance on *logos* and fail despite their resources to make the best arrangements for the expedition. Athens, although powerful enough to win in Sicily, suffers defeat there.

Hermocrates, on the other hand, emerges from this Sicilian defeat with a clear understanding of the need for order among the soldiers, and for the consolidation of power instead of allowing fifteen generals to give commands (6.72.3–6.72.4). Thucydides says that Hermocrates possessed intelligence,

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experience, and courage (6.72.2), and Hermocrates shows this by the way he learns from the Syracusans' defeat.

Somewhat later, Hermocrates and Euphemus deliver speeches to the Camarineans, whom the Athenians are trying to bring over to their side on the strength of an old alliance (6.75.3). As Thucydides presents it, fear is the dominant rhetorical topic of these speeches.[1] The Camarineans are not powerful enough to withstand either the Syracusans or the Athenians, so Hermocrates (6.78.2) and Euphemus (6.85.3, 6.87) must each attempt to persuade the Camarineans that their own side offers more safety than does the other.

Hermocrates immediately makes clear to the Camarineans that he sees the restoration of the Leontinians as an Athenian pretext for reducing Syracuse and Sicily (6.76.2). This argument is true, as Thucydides has made clear, while Euphemus resorts to evasions in order to make his points (6.83.4).[2] Because the argument is true, Hermocrates can raise the issue of justice and use it to Syracuse's advantage. The Camarineans, he says, made a pact to assist Athens when she was wronged, not to help her when she does wrong (ὅταν ὑπ᾽ ἄλλων καὶ μὴ αὐτοὶ ὥσπερ νῦν τοὺς πέλας ἀδικῶσιν, "not when as now they are wronging their neighbors," 6.79.1)

Hermocrates appeals to the Camarineans to help Syracuse and Sicily as a whole present a united opposition to Athens. To this he joins the argument from justice, asserting that Camarinean neutrality would not in fact be just, as such a stance would contribute to a Sicilian defeat (6.80.1–6.80.2).[3] As it turns out, Sicilian unity—or at least the lack of an effective opposition to Syracusan hegemony—becomes a crucial problem for the Athenians.

At the beginning of the expedition Alcibiades had claimed that political discord would weaken Sicily in general and Syracuse in particular (6.17.2–6.17.5), and he attempted to pursue a strategy based on this perception before he was condemned (cf. 6.48). As we saw earlier, Thucydides provides evidence for internal strife at Syracuse and for viewing the lack of concord among the Sicilians as analogous to *stasis*.[4] He also documents the existence of an Athenian faction in Syracuse (6.103.3–6.103.4, 7.48.2, 7.86.4). At the conclusion of the debate between Athenagoras and Hermocrates, however, when the unnamed general advises against the sort of personal attacks that Athenagoras has made (6.41.2) and recommends the prudent course of taking defensive measures in case the Athenians are coming (6.41.3–6.41.4), he begins to heal the divisions within the state.[5] This development reduces the likelihood of *stasis* within Syracuse, and takes away one of the Athenians' most significant hopes.

One very important development from the paired speeches of Hermocrates and Euphemus at Camarina is the disappointment of the Athenians' hopes for a victory through the fomenting of dissent against the primacy of Syracuse.

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This touches on the theme of political discord and contrasts Athens' inability to acquire new allies with Syracuse's growing hegemony in Sicily. At the conclusion of the debate, Thucydides says that the Camarineans' fear of Athens and their greater fear (6.88.1) of Syracuse determine their decision to remain neutral. This is a defeat for the Athenians despite Hermocrates' arguments that even Camarinean neutrality would hurt Syracuse. The Athenians, being the foreign and invading power, needed friendly bases for operations. An irony of the debate is that both Hermocrates and Euphemus seem on the surface to be seeking to persuade the Camarineans not to fear them, but the Camarineans decide that even though they are well disposed toward the Athenians, they fear the Syracusans more (δεδιότες . . . οὐχ ἧσσον, literally "not less fearing the Syracusans") and hence cannot afford to cross them (6.88.1).

The importance of the Camarineans' fear in this debate recalls the speech in Book 1 of the Athenian ambassadors, who wanted to provide the Spartans with a demonstration of the power of Athens and to induce respect for her and fear of defeat in the war (1.72.1, cf. 1.78). Fear proves the dominant emotion in the outcome of each debate. The Spartans voted that the Athenians had violated the treaty, mainly because "they feared" (φοβούμενοι) the increasing power of Athens (1.88), while fear of the Syracusans' close power makes the Camarineans stay neutral (6.88.1). In Book 1 also, imperial hegemony is the underlying subject of the Corinthians and especially of the Athenians.

Indeed, there are a large number of verbal similarities between the speech of the Athenians in Book 1 and what Euphemus says at Camarina. Although not exactly the same, the rhetorical situations resemble one another. In both cases, Thucydides presents two *poleis* as they vie to interest a third in taking a position. A significant difference is, of course, that in Book 1 the Spartans—the most significant *polis* opposing Athens—are the objects of the two appeals, while in Book 6 Euphemus and Hermocrates attempt to win over a relatively insignificant state. In Book 1 the Athenian ambassadors attempt to persuade the Spartans not to wage war, while in Book 6 Euphemus wants the Camarineans to join the Athenians.

Euphemus begins his speech by claiming that Athens "holds her empire reasonably" (ὡς εἰκότως ἔχομεν, 6.82.1), just as do the Athenians in Book 1 (ὡς οὔτε ἀπεικότως ἔχομεν ἃ κεκτήμεθα, "not unreasonably do we have what we possess," 1.73.1). Both Euphemus and the Athenian ambassadors claim that Athens is "worthy of her rule" (cf. the ambassadors' ἀξία λόγου, literally "worthy of report," 1.73.1 and ἆρ' ἄξιοί ἐσμεν . . . ἀρχῆς . . . , 1.75.1, "surely we are worthy . . . of the empire" with Euphemus' ἀνθ' ὧν ἄξιοί τε ὄντες ἅμα ἄρχομεν . . . , "in exchange for which we are worthy . . . ," 6.83.1). The differing justifications offered for these two claims reveal the change that has occurred in Athens, both in her spirit and in her political language.

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In Book 1, the Athenians offered the traditional ground for their assumption of empire: they "alone by themselves" (μόνοι) overthrew the Mede at Marathon, and when he came again, they abandoned their city for their ships and fought at Salamis (1.73.4). The Greek fleet defeated the Mede, and to this fleet the Athenians contributed the greatest number of ships, the most intelligent general, and unhesitating courage (1.74.1).[6]

Euphemus' justifications differ. In the first place, he begins to make his case with an appeal to the racial argument of Ionians versus Dorians (6.82.2), which, as we saw earlier, Thucydides has discredited.[7] Euphemus asserts that the Ionians have always been at war with the Dorians (6.82.2). Next, Euphemus says that as Athens did not wish to be subject to the Peloponnesians, she built up her own power (6.82.3). The new point here, compared to what the Athenians say in Book 1, is that now Athens' desire to free herself from Sparta is seen as eternal and thus antedating the Persian Wars. It is an outgrowth of racial animosity. While there is some truth to the idea that quarrels between the Athenians and the Spartans developed out of their differing heritage and ways of life, the account Euphemus gives here is oversimplified and inaccurate. After the Median War, the Spartans, according to Thucydides, allowed Athens to take up the leadership of the Hellenes. They did this first because they feared that their own leaders would follow Pausanias' example, and second because they thought that the Athenians were useful for the moment to Sparta (1.95.7). It was only later, after the revolt at Ithome, that the two powers had an open dispute (1.102.3), although the Spartans were warily suspicious of Athens even before this, when the Athenians built their walls (l.90–1.92).[8]

This raises the question why Euphemus employs this racial argument, especially as the Camarineans are themselves Dorians (3.86.2), and thus would not be expected to be well-disposed toward the Ionian Athenians. The main rhetorical reason is that Thucydides has given to Hermocrates at the end of his speech a strong appeal to Dorian kinship, using assonance and alliteration to emphasize the emotional power of his words (προδιδόμεθα δὲ ὑπὸ ὑμῶν Δωριῆς Δωριῶν, "we are delivered over [literally, 'betrayed'] by you, Dorians by Dorians," 6.80.3, translation mine). Euphemus can hardly be shown to ignore this appeal. Nevertheless, his reply is weak. He could have been made to correct quickly—and accurately—Hermocrates' arguments, and to say that racial enmity was not the issue, but that Athenian and Syracusan power were. This would have addressed the heart of the debate, which is fear.

Although Hermocrates is given a number of points about the need for Sicilian unity, the core of his argument is fear. On the surface, his argument seems to be that Camarina has less to fear from Syracuse than from Athens, but his most potent argument is that Syracuse is powerful. Indeed,

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as Thucydides explains the matter, this was the most important factor in the Camarineans' decision to support Syracuse (6.88.1). When Hermocrates addresses an imaginary Camarinean, who may fear or envy Syracuse, he does not deny that his city is to be feared and envied. Indeed, he admits this freely (6.78.2). He concludes his speech by reminding the Camarineans that if Syracuse wins the war without their help, they will pay a heavy penalty. His very last words remind the Camarineans of the long-term Syracusan enmity (ἔχθραν μὴ ἂν βραχεῖαν, literally by litotes "an enmity not brief," 6.80.5) they will incur if they side with the Athenians. Euphemus is shown to mishandle his response to the racial argument, to confuse the actual facts and to give up more rhetorical ground to Hermocrates than is required.

Fear and the power that inspires it are the heart of the debate, but Thucydides has Euphemus introduce the power of Athens in an awkward way. Instead of proclaiming to the Camarineans that Athens was a power to be respected, Euphemus says that Athens has done nothing wrong in reducing the Ionians. He thus is made to demonstrate Athens' power by adducing the example of her subjection of her kinsmen (6.82.3), yet he does this in the context of his argument that the Dorians and Ionians have always been enemies (6.82.2), which is an argument that would tend to suggest if not harmony then at least alliance within racial groups. This implication of harmony or alliance is not consistent with the point that the Athenians have subjugated their kinsmen, the Ionians. Thus, the confusing racial question makes almost opaque what should have been Euphemus' main points, Athens' power and her worthiness to rule.

Thucydides has presented the rest of Euphemus' speech as suffering from other shortcomings related to the question of Athens' power and worth, which a comparison of echoes to the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 reveals. It is useful to keep in mind that the goal of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 was to show the power of the Athenians and to counsel the Spartans that war with Athens was not a small matter (1.72.1). Euphemus also should have used arguments similar to those in Book 1 to show the power of Athens. Those arguments, as we saw, proved Athens' power by showing that Athens' deserved her position and was furthermore so powerful that she could afford to respect justice more than necessity would require. Athens' power at the beginning of the war rested not just on her military force but also on the example of leadership she provided.

Euphemus presents these arguments in an inferior and partial way, as if he wanted to follow the earlier line but did not understand the real power behind the speech. He reduces power to force and leaves out of his account of the Athenian Empire the most distinctively Athenian characteristics—ξύνεσις ("quick comprehension" or "intelligence" transliterated *sunesis*) and confidence in the Athenian way of life.

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What follows is a list of the echoes Thucydides has included in Euphemus' speech and the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1. Italics mark direct echoes.

Athenian Ambassadors:

1. *ππαρεσχόμεθα ἀριθμόν τε νεῶν πλεῖστον* καὶ ἄνδρα στρατηγὸν ξυνετώτατον καὶ *προθυμίαν ἀοκνοτάτην*. (1.74.1)

We provided the *largest* number *of ships*, the ablest commander, and the *most unhesitating zeal*. (1.74.1)

2. *τεκμήριον δὲ μέγιστον αὐτὸς* ἐποίησεν. (1.73.5)

The *best proof* of this was furnished by the invader *himself*. (1.73.5)

3. *ἐκλιπόντες τὴν πόλιν*. (1.74.2)

after abandoning our city. (1.74.2)

4. φαμὲν γὰρ Μαραθῶνί τε *μόνοι* προκινδυνεῦσαι *τῷ βαρβάρῳ* (1.73.4)

We assert that at Marathon we were at the front, and faced *the barbarian single-handed* (1.73.4)

5. ἡμῖν δὲ προσελθόντων τῶν ξυμμάχων καὶ *αὐτῶν δεηθέντων ἡγεμόνας καταστῆναι* (1.75.2)

and because the allies attached themselves to us and spontaneously *themselves* asked *us to assume the command* (1.75.2)

6. *πᾶσι δὲ ἀνεπίφθονον* τὰ ξυμφέροντα τῶν μεγίστων πέρι κινδύνων *εὖ τίθεσθαι*. (1.75.5)

And no one can quarrel with a people for making, in matters of tremendous risk, *the best provision* that it can for its interest. (1.75.5)

Euphemus' Speech:

1. ὅτι τε *ναυτικὸν πλεῖστόν τε καὶ προθυμίαν ἀπροφάσιστον* παρεσχόμεθα ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας (6.83.1)

[We, therefore, deserve to rule] because *we placed the largest fleet and an unflinching patriotism* at the service of the Hellenes, (6.83.1)

2. τὸ μὲν οὖν *μέγιστον μαρτύριον αὐτὸς* εἶπεν. (6.82.2)

The *best proof* of this the speaker *himself* furnished (6.82.2)

3. *ἐκλιπόντες τὴν πόλιν*. (6.82.4)

after abandoning our city. (6.82.4)

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4. καὶ οὐ καλλιεπούμεθα ὡς ἢ *τὸν βάρβαρον μόνοι* καθελόντες εἰκότως ἄρχομεν (6.83.2)

We make no fine professions of having a right to rule because we overthrew *the barbarian single-handed.* (6.83.2)

5. *αὐτοὶ* δὲ τῶν ὑπὸ βασιλεῖ πρότερον ὄντων *ἡγεμόνες καταστάντες* οἰκοῦμεν. (6.82.3)

and *ourselves being appointed* leaders of the king's former subjects, we continue to be so. (6.82.3)

6. *πᾶσι δὲ ἀνεπίφθονον* τὴν προσήκουσαν σωτηρίαν *ἐκπορίζεσθαι.* (6.83.2)
no one can be quarrelled with for *providing* for his proper safety. (6.83.2)

These echoes highlight differences between the ideas motivating the two speeches, not real similarities.[9] The differences fall into three categories: (1) A decline in the respect paid to ξύνεσις ("quick comprehension"),[10] (2) a refusal by Euphemus to single out Athens for her valor against the Mede, and (3) a general change from the justification of the empire on the basis of an enlightened view of power to reasoning based on brute force.[11]

In line with this emphasis on pure force, Euphemus' account of the worthiness of Athens to rule refers to the power and bravery of the Athenians (see nos. 1 and 2 above), but not to the "intelligence" (ξύνεσις) of their leadership, although this claim forms an important part years earlier in the Athenian ambassadors' account of their position (1.74.1, see also γνώμης ξυνέσεως, "the wisdom of (their) counsels," 1.75.1). As we have seen, Thucydides and Pericles, like the Athenian ambassadors, place a high value on ξύνεσις or "intelligence" and the omission of this quality in Euphemus' speech is very telling. His omission of this characteristic not only shows that Thucydides is presenting the values of the Athenians as shifting toward uncontrolled action and the replacement of thought with action and force. It also calls to mind Thucydides' chapters on *stasis*, when he says that the intelligent approach to everything was considered an inability to act on anything (3.82.4).[12]

The second echo (no. 2) shows the different uses to which the same words are put in the two speeches. In Euphemus' speech the subject of the verb "spoke" (εἶπεν) is Hermocrates, while in Book 1 the subject of the verb "furnished" (ἐποίησεν, "provided" or "furnished") is the Mede. Hermocrates and the Mede are alleged "themselves" (with αὐτὸς appearing with and modifying both Hermocrates and the Mede) to provide the greatest proof (*μέγιστον μαρτύριον*) of what the speaker is in each case claiming, the Mede by his retreat after his loss at sea, and Hermocrates by his use of the racial argument. In the first place, the defeat of the Mede did show Athens' worth, while the racial argument (to which τεκμήριον, "proof" or "indication," refers) is

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flawed. Second, the Athenians in Book 1 attempt in general to prove the extent of their worth to Hellas, while Euphemus wants to justify the taking and holding of the Athenian Empire. In Book 1, the Athenians' defeat of the Mede justifies and explains the emergence of the empire, while Euphemus argues that the Athenians obtained an empire because they needed to protect themselves and were strong enough to do so.[13] In other words, Euphemus explicitly leaves out of account the Athenians' single-handed valor on behalf of their allies, which the Athenians in Book 1 specifically mention (1.74.2–1.74.3). Euphemus instead contends that the Athenians needed to have an empire to forestall their domination by the Spartans (6.82.2–6.82.3). Furthermore, they had the right (οὐδὲ ἀδίκως, [acting] "not unjustly") to reduce the Ionians and islanders, as they had attacked Athens in company with the Mede (6.82.3–6.82.4).[14] For these reasons, Euphemus says, the Athenians assumed rule over their kin. Here again he uses the same phrase as did the Athenian ambassadors (see no. 4, above). In Book 1, the Athenians said that the allies asked to be attached to Athens (1.75.2). Euphemus, on the other hand, has given up this more complicated view in favor of the simple rule of the stronger, which is what lies behind his contention that Athens has become the leader of those formerly subject to the king because the Athenians recognize that in this way the Peloponnesians will not dominate them. Euphemus explicitly refers to the rule of the stronger when he says that it was no more fitting for the Spartans to rule after the war with the Mede than it was for the Athenians, except insofar as the Spartans were at the moment stronger. (6.82.3)

The last echo noted above (no. 6) summarizes in each case that Athens deserves her empire.[15] The speakers claim that what Athens has done will not engender reproach. Then they each turn immediately to the interest of the audience—the Spartans in Book 1 and the Camarineans in Book 6—they are trying to persuade (cf. 1.76.1 with 6.82.3). The use of the same words and subjects heightens the contrast between what the Athenians in Book 1 say and Euphemus' disavowal of fine phrases (καὶ οὐ καλλιεπούμεθα, 6.83.2). While for the Athenians in Book 1 the phrase ἐκλιπόντες τὴν πόλιν (echo no. 3 above, "having abandoned the city") is one of the traditional fine phrases applied to Athens' bravery against the Mede, Euphemus changes the tone of the phrase by using it invidiously to blame those kinsfolk of the Athenians who sided with the Mede. The similarity of the wording of the references to Athens' single-handed overthrow of the Mede (echo no. 4 above) shows further how Thucydides has manipulated the traditional language concerning Athens to show the change in the Athenians' views. In Book 1 the Athenians use the words to justify their position, while Euphemus disavows this claim as "fine phrases."

Euphemus' point regarding fine phrases explicitly recalls the rejection by the Athenians at Melos of ὀνομάτων καλῶν ("fine phrases," 5.89). At Melos

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too, the speakers characterize as "fine phrases" the argument that Athens is worthy to rule because she put down the Mede.[16] Through this echo, Thucydides uses Euphemus' speech to mark the continuity between these two stages in the degeneration of political discourse at Athens.

Thucydides also indicates the distance he sees between Euphemus' position and a higher political plane by having him characterize Athens' foreign policy in terms of simple fear and a plain desire for power. Just before Euphemus rejects fine phrases, he says that Athens wished to increase her power against the Lacedaemonians, but he is made to use a word—ὀρεγόμενοι "reaching out for, grasping at," (6.83.1)—that we have seen carries very negative connotations for Thucydides. Later in the same section, he says that Athens holds her empire "through fear" (διὰ δέος), and that on account of this same fear Athens has come to Sicily (6.83.4). While this may be a true description of the Athens of 415, Pericles saw the Athenians as fearless (2.40.5). In fact, the expedition itself provokes fear, at least in Nicias, who correctly sees that the expedition itself is the danger (6.24.3). Of course, Euphemus' understanding of the nature of the Athenian empire does not provide him with a good basis for explaining to the Camarineans that Athens has come to expand her empire, but he did not have to invoke fear as the motivation.[17] In providing this explanation for Athens' Empire and her presence at Sicily Euphemus is shown to use an ineffective and inappropriate argument, since the Camarineans base their decision on their own fears regarding Syracuse and Athens. Euphemus would have done better to frighten the Camarineans instead of proclaiming Athens' own fear.

Fear is not a sound basis for foreign policy as Pericles describes it in the Funeral Oration when he says that Athens alone not with a "reckoning" (λογισμῷ) of advantage but with a "fearless" (ἀδεῶς) trust that her freedom "benefits" (ὠφελοῦμεν) others (2.40.5). Euphemus, on the other hand, puts a very high value on the expedient or useful, saying that for a tyrant or city with an empire nothing that is "useful" (ξυμφέρον) is "unreasonable" (ἄλογον, 6.85.1).[18] Euphemus also says that what is "not sure" (μὴ πιστόν) for the tyrant or imperial power is "not kin" (οὐδ' οἰκεῖον, 6.85.1), turning Pericles' formulation around so that Athens' trust in her own spirit becomes reliance on a political ally or accomplice.[19] For Euphemus, as Thucydides has portrayed him, the only political motivations are simple fear and greed (6.85.3).

Euphemus' definition of what is appropriate for the tyrant or imperial power expands Pericles' statement in his last speech that Athens was like a tyranny (2.63.2), and at the same time recalls Cleon's forceful reassertion of this dictum (3.37.2).[20] A second new development here is of a more formal nature: Euphemus for the first time uses this comparison before an outside, non-Athenian audience. The likening of Athens to a tyranny, which in Pericles' last speech provides early warning of political decay, has here

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become a settled part of Athenian political language. When Thucydides has Cleon use the phrase, he shows him aping Pericles. When Euphemus uses it, this topos has become an ordinary part of the speech of an ordinary Athenian political figure. This is part of the significance of Thucydides' naming of Euphemus here. Euphemus, whom Thucydides mentions nowhere else and about whom he gives no other information, not even his patronymic, is any Athenian politician. He represents the common public speech of his day.[21] In this, he resembles the unnamed Athenian generals at Melos.

Euphemus makes his statement about what is appropriate for tyrant cities as an explanation for how Athens "has enslaved" (δουλωσαμένους) the Chalcideans, but will allow the Sicilians to remain free (6.84.3). The enslavement of the Chalcideans recalls Euphemus' statement that it was not unjust for Athens to reduce their kinsmen, the Ionians, whom the Syracusans assert Athens "has enslaved" (δεδουλῶσθαι, 6.82.3). Yet here again Euphemus presents the case incorrectly, according to Thucydides' own contention that early in the history of the empire the Ionians and others came over to the Athenians willingly (1.96.1). Once again Euphemus' *logos* does not match the facts, and his entire argument suffers as a result.[22] It would have been much more effective for him to emphasize Athens' fair treatment of her allies and her power against her enemies rather than to prove Athens' might by accepting Hermocrates' contentions (6.76.3–6.76.4) that Athens behaves harshly toward her allies.

Euphemus' claim that for the tyrannical man or imperial power nothing is unreasonable if "expedient" (ξυμφέρον, 6.85.1), nor is anything that is not trustworthy, kin, directly recalls Thucydides' account of the degeneration of political language in *stasis:*

> καὶ μὴν καὶ τὸ ξυγγενὲς τοῦ ἑταιρικοῦ ἀλλοτριώτερον ἐγένετο διὰ τὸ ἑτοιμότερον εἶναι ἀπροφασίστως τολμᾶν. (3.82.6)
>
> Until even blood became a weaker tie than party, from the superior readiness of those united by the latter to dare everything without reserve. (3.82.6)

As Hans-Peter Stahl puts it, Euphemus' speech represents the climax of the "devaluation" of the concept of justice in Athenian political speech.[23] Thucydides' point at 3.82.6 is that the political party becomes in *stasis* a much stronger tie than family. Euphemus accepts this view as the normal state of things. It is a view that fosters suspicion (3.82.5), which can be seen in the present situation, as Euphemus repeatedly mentions the Sicilians' suspicion of Athens' motives (6.83.3, 6.85.3, 6.86.2, 6.87.1). Because Athens is a tyrant city, all her actions arouse suspicion, which is a sign of the general political decay in Hellas.

After Euphemus' speech, the Camarineans decide to ally themselves with neither Athens nor Syracuse. This is a defeat for the Athenians, because they

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have made it their strategy to win Sicilian allies and thereby isolate and overpower Syracuse. Camarina was well-disposed toward Athens, but Euphemus could not create a more solid alliance. Camarina sees Syracuse' power as too close to allow an alliance with Athens (6.88.1). This reveals the essential mistake of the Sicilian Expedition, which was that Sicily was too distant for Athens to dominate, especially while waging war on Sparta. The decline in Athenian political discourse from book 1 to the end of Book 6 parallels this mistake. The *logos* of the Athenian Empire has lost its power to articulate Athens' virtues and direct the energy of her people.

NOTES

1. See 6.76.1, 6.78.2, 6.79.1, 6.80.1–6.80.2, 6.83.3–6.83.4, 6.85.3, 6.88.1. Cf., 6.78.1–6.78.2, 6.87.5.

2. "The language is studiously imprecise," as Hornblower puts it, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 6.83.4 n.

3. Cogan, *The Human Thing*, pp. 107–8 and n. 33, p. 283.

4. See, e.g., Cogan, *The Human Thing*, pp. 104ff. Cogan notes (p. 104) that Athenagoras states clearly the position of democratic partisanship (6.39.1–6.39.2).

5. D. H. Frank, "The Power of Truth: Political Foresight in Thucydides' Account of the Sicilian Expedition," *Prudentia* XV (1984), pp. 106–7.

6. In much the same tone as that used by the ambassadors, Pericles also refers to the Athenians' victories against the Mede (1.144.4). Like the Athenians at Sparta, Pericles refers to courage and intelligence, showing the similarity of his thought to what the Athenians say.

7. Cf. also Cogan, *The Human Thing*, p. 110.

8. Before this point the Spartans were ready to help the Thasians in their revolt from Athens, but were hindered by an earthquake and problems with their own subjects (1.101.1–1.101.2). Cogan, *The Human Thing*, pp. 109–11 and n. 36 on pp. 283–85, makes some very good points about Euphemus' inaccuracy on the racial question. For similar, but less detailed, reviews of the racial issue in this speech, see de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, pp. 243–44. See also, pp. 82–83 and, for an account of the rhetorical *topoi* of the racial argument, Juergen Gammel, *Rhetorisches Argumentieren bei Thukydides* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966), pp. 56 ff.

9. See Cogan, *The Human Thing*, pp. 110 ff.; Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 183ff.; A. E. Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," pp. 36ff.; and H. Strasberger, "Thukydides und die politische Selbstdarstellung der Athener," *Hermes* 86 (1958), pp. 17–40.

10. Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," identifies a decline in respect for ξύνεσις and an increase in "quick irrational actions" as the most significant aspects of Thucydides' description of *stasis* (pp. 152–54). The narrative of the revolution in 411 reveals this same characteristic in Athens. See Barnard, pp. 187, 192–94.

11. Karl Bayer, "Athenische Realpolitik," in *Festschrift fur Franz Egermann* ed. Werner Suerbaum and Friedrich Maier (Munich: Institut fur klassische Philologie.

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Universität München, 1985), p. 65, sees in this aspect of Euphemus' speech the influence of the teaching of the sophists. He considers Euphemus' speech to be composed of sophistic ideas.

12. Later in 3.82 Thucydides provides other examples of the misuse of ξύνεσις. See 3.82.5, where partisans in *stasis* define success in a plot as intelligence. This further forces the meaning of the word toward more direct action and violence.

13. See Bayer, "Athenische Realpolitik," p. 61.

14. In his last speech, Pericles, on the other hand, admitted the injustice of taking the empire, but defended keeping it on the grounds of safety (2.63.2).

15. See de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, p. 250 n. 2.

16. See Raubitschek, "The Speech of the Athenians at Sparta," pp. 36–38.

17. H. R. Rawlings, *The structure of Thucydides' History*, pp. 121–22, observes that when Euphemus says the Athenians have come to Sicily to protect their interests, he is pretending to provide a "realistic" and "candid" explanation of Athens' motives, but is in fact deceitful.

18. Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 184 and n. 65, makes this comparison.

19. de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, p. 126; and Gomme, *Historical Commentary*, 3.85.ln.

20. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume 3*, 6.75.4n.

21. See Gregory Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity*: *The Limits of Political Realism*. http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft767nb497/ Chapter 10: Athenian Theses: Problems in the Data: Euphemos at Kamarina and the Melian Dialogue (accessed January 2, 2020).

"Euphemos airily dismisses all higher principles. The Athenians are like a *turannos*, but he argues that this is, in its own way, an advantage to third parties. Athens's status as *turannos polis* makes its motives transparent. The Athenians are thus as reliable (or at least predictable) as if they adhered to a traditional code of ethics. What is expedient (*sumpheron*), what gives advantage (*ôphelei*), and what is useful (*chrêsmon*) absolutely constrain Athenian behavior. If something is in their interest, then it is expedient. If something touches their personal interest (*oikeion*), then they may be relied upon to pursue it. Euphemos perfectly expresses the logic that statesmen of the major powers openly follow. The sentiments expressed above would excite little comment if they appeared in a *New York Times* news analysis—except that these principles would appear so obvious that the editor would probably excise or shorten them."

22. Crane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity* (accessed December 1, 2019). *Ibid.*

"The general gap between *erga* and their proper *logoi* provides the rhetorical basis for Euphemos' argument. Objective realities determine actions, and thus the Athenians can be trusted because restraint in Sicily is in their interests. The same argument, however, also renders Euphemos' words problematic for two reasons. First, he is lying. His admission that Athens is a *turannos* and pursues its interests may be true, but not in the fashion that he claims. As Strasburger [note below] pointed out a generation ago, this kind of false candor is subtle and devious, for the speaker only pretends to 'lay all his cards on the table.'"

H. Strasburger, "Thukydides und die politische Selbstdarstellung der Athener," *Hermes* 86 (1958), pp. 498–530 and in particular p. 52.

23. Stahl, *Man's Place in History*, p. 126 n. 54.

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Chapter 9

Alcibiades as a Traitor and Grand Version of Meno

Shortly after the debate at Camarina, Alcibiades arrived at Sparta and delivered a speech propounding to the Spartans the strategy they needed to follow to win the war. His two crucial recommendations are that the Spartans send forces, and particularly a commanding general to Syracuse, and that they fortify Decelea in Attica (6.91.4–6.91.6). In the course of suggesting these actions, however, Alcibiades must overcome two significant rhetorical problems, one being his family's association with democracy, while the other is the suspicion the Spartans must feel of him simply because he is an Athenian. Alcibiades thus faces in Sparta problems similar to those he faced in his speech advocating the Sicilian Expedition. He must again overcome his audience's doubts about his character.

The suspicions of Alcibiades in both cases focus attention on the personal and individual, and away from general considerations. In both cases, he must plead that his personal activities have benefited his audience in general. Before the Sicilian Expedition, he claims that his ostentatious display at the Olympics has brought fame and a reputation for power to the Athenians (6.16.2–6.16.3), while at Sparta he adduces his attentions to Sparta concerning their loss at Pylos (6.89.2, cf. 5.45.1–5.45.4). In the speech at Sparta, he makes the contrast between public and private very clear in his opening sentence:

> ἀναγκαῖον περὶ τῆς ἐμῆς διαβολῆς πρῶτον ἐς ὑμᾶς εἰπεῖν, ἵνα μὴ χεῖρον τὰ κοινὰ τῷ ὑπόπτῳ μου ἀκροάσησθε. (6.89.1)

> I am forced first to speak to you of the prejudice with which I am regarded, in order that suspicion may not make you disinclined to listen to me upon public matters. (6.89.1)

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These few words exemplify some of the most significant themes of the *Histories*. Just as he did in his speech before the Sicilian Expedition, Alcibiades here attempts to confound the distinction between public and private by claiming that his private activities have great public benefit. He begins by observing the necessity of addressing the calumny against him before he can turn to the substance of his speech. As we saw earlier in the comparison of Alcibiades' first speech with Pericles' last, we can observe here that while Pericles confronts his audience's disfavor by proclaiming the great importance of the state to the individual (2.60.2–2.60.4), Alcibiades insists upon the opposite. He thus continues and reinforces the trend in the *Histories* as the war goes on for political figures, especially Athenians, toward the particular and away from the general. Thucydides makes clear through Alcibiades' language the opposition of suspicion to the common good by using τὰ κοινὰ ("public matters") and τῷ ὑπόπτῳ (the idea of "suspicion") together. Suspicion is one of the most potent forces behind the perversion of political language, because under its influence men look behind words for hidden meanings. They see prudence and think that it is cowardice, or they observe a plot and consider it a sign of clever anticipation.

In defending his family against the Spartans' natural apprehension at taking advice from a descendant of the Alcmeonidae, Alcibiades claims that his family's historic opposition to tyrants has earned them the reputation of favoring democracy. But the fact is, he says, everything opposed to tyranny is named the δῆμος ("the people," 6.89.3).

Since he is addressing Spartans, Alcibiades needs to put as much distance as possible between himself and the democracy. Thus, he argues that his family, mostly because it opposed tyranny, got the leadership of the people and with it a reputation for favoring democracy. Alcibiades then disavows democracy completely, calling it an "acknowledged folly" (ὁμολογουμένης ἀνοίας 6.89.6), thereby contradicting Pericles' praise of democracy in the Funeral Oration and devaluing the concept itself (2.37.1).[1] It is true, however, that Alcibiades could not praise democracy to a Spartan audience. It is more significant that Alcibiades is in front of a Spartan audience seeking their favor than that he condemns democracy there. His presence in Sparta and his aims there make him a traitor. That he is a traitor to the democracy in his words is only a subordinate aspect of his general political position, which is that of a traitor in deed.[2]

Alcibiades states that he and his family have tried in political matters to be "more moderate" (μετριώτεροι, 6.89.5) than the existing lack of restraint at Athens. This statement, at least as it applies to Alcibiades, contradicts the largest part of Thucydides' portrait of him (cf., e.g., 6.15). It is a common rhetorical tactic to claim one thing (here moderation) at the very moment one becomes an egregious example of its opposite, and

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Thucydides shows Alcibiades as guilty of this trick here. His claim to moderation contrasts with the real moderation of Pericles (2.65.5), as well as with the moderation in foreign affairs claimed by the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 (1.76.4). Alcibiades lack of moderation, his excess, represents in him a chief cause of his failures, for as the Stranger says in Plato's *Statesman*, excess beyond the "nature of the mean" and deficiency too separate good men from bad:

> Ξένος:
> τί δέ; τὸ τὴν τοῦ μετρίου φύσιν ὑπερβάλλον καὶ ὑπερβαλλόμενον ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς ἐν λόγοις εἴτε καὶ ἐν ἔργοις ἆρ᾽ οὐκ αὖ λέξομεν ὡς ὄντως γιγνόμενον, ἐν ᾧ καὶ διαφέρουσι μάλιστα ἡμῶν οἵ τε κακοὶ καὶ οἱ ἀγαθοί. (283e)
>
> Stranger:
> But what then? As for the natural existence of excess beyond the standard of the mean, shall we not say that it really is? and also inferiority to the mean, whether in words or deeds, and do not the bad men and the good men differ especially in such [excess or deficiency]? (283e)

The Stranger asserts that there is a "nature of the mean," and that words or deeds that go beyond that or fall short of it are dangerous and represent the real difference between good men and bad men. This seems to apply directly to Alcibiades' speaking in Sparta, where his words and recommendations for battle lead to deeds against the Athenians that are even worse. But the Stranger's words apply to Nicias too as he fell short of the measure needed for the war, both ironically in his speech in which he recommends raising the stakes of the expedition to Sicily and in his actual generalship while there. Thucydides quite obviously also focuses on such patterns replicated in both words and deeds, as he notes in his discussion of his method (1.22).

In the *Symposium* also Plato notes but in serious playfulness Alcibiades' excess in deeds as he shows up drunk and leaning on a flute girl, while he leads "some other attendants" who seem to follow him around (ἄλλους τινὰς τῶν ἀκολούθων, 212d). Here Alcibiades' use of a young girl as a physical support may remind the reader of Meno's desire for a wife at home to obey him (71e). Alcibiades has personal followers, just like Meno and his many personal attendants (τῶν πολλῶν [82β ἀκολούθων τουτωνὶ τῶν σαυτοῦ ἕνα), one of whom Socrates rightly guesses will make a good pupil (*Meno*, 82a–b). Indeed, Alcibiades is at Sparta in 415/414 with a new set of followers, a group of fellow fugitives (Ἀλκιβιάδης μετὰ τῶν ξυμφυγάδων, Thucydides 6.88.9). These young men, Meno and Alcibiades, with their trains of personal subordinates generally seem themselves to be following the lead and manner of the great Sophist Protagoras, whom Plato reveals to us in the *Protagoras*

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walking on the portico of the rich man, Callias (314e). Socrates names many of Protagoras' followers walking with him (314e–315a), and then says that of the rest of the followers (οἳ ὄπισθεν ἠκολούθουν ἐπακούοντες) most seem to be foreigners (πολὺ ξένοι ἐφαίνοντο), whom Protagoras has brought with him (315a).

In the *Symposium* Alcibiades, who has been drinking heavily unlike the other speakers that evening, who are relatively sober (*Symposium* 176a–e, cf. 214c), responds to the request for a speech praising Socrates with a question as to whether he should attack him in words and get vengeance on him (214d–e) for the mistake of rejecting him, thereby committing, Alcibiades thinks, a personal outrage against him and his personal beauty (219b–d). Yet of course what is outrageous is Alcibiades' *logos.* He speaks of his personal beauty as if it has a life of its own, like some kind of religious image or icon.

Alcibiades' recommendations provide Sparta with a sound strategy for defeating Athens, but in order to persuade the Spartans to undertake it, he needs to set aside their natural disinclination to listen to a traitor.[3] He attacks this problem directly, claiming that he is Athens' greatest patriot at the very moment that he is betraying her most seriously. Alcibiades insists that he is "patriotic," φιλόπολις, though the words τῶν πολεμιωτάτων "[joining with the city's] worst enemies," juxtaposed as they are with this claim of love of country, call the assertion into question immediately (6.92.2). He flaunts the paradox and contradictions inherent in his situation in order to make his denial of them more breathtaking. This is characteristic of his rhetorical style.[4] Alcibiades' argument that he is a lover of his country recalls Pericles' similar claim (2.60.5). Of course, the difference is that Thucydides' narrative supports Pericles and not Alcibiades.[5] In any clear and principled way of speaking being "patriotic," φιλόπολις can be readily understood. Plato in the *Republic* (V.470d and VI.503a) uses the same word in the same way that Pericles uses it, and not at all like Alcibiades' contortions. In order to justify his claim, Alcibiades redefines a number of terms, including φυγάς, "fugitive" or "outlaw," when he says that he is an outlaw from the baseness of those who drove him out of Athens, and by implication not from Athens properly understood, or at least as he wishes to define her for the Spartans (6.92.3).[6] Alcibiades says that because Athens has exiled him, it is "no longer his homeland" (ἐπὶ πατρίδα οὖσαν ἔτι, 6.92.4). A true lover of one's country is for him not the one who, having lost it, does not attack it but the one who, on account of his desire for the *polis*, in every way tries to recover it (6.92.4).

Thucydides portrays Alcibiades here as literally arguing for the validity of twisting the *axiosis* of words to support his sense of his own personal importance. Alcibiades' attempts at a redefinition falter near the end of his speech, however, when he boasts that as a "friend" (φίλος) of Sparta he will be able to help her destroy the power of Athens because he used to be a dangerous

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"enemy" (πολέμιός, 6.92.5) and now he knows the Athenians' plans. This contradiction shows the hollowness of Alcibiades' new type of patriotism. He must turn back to the language he has just repudiated (and use words such as φίλος) in order to communicate with his new allies. Alcibiades' strategy may have been to weaken Athens so much that the Athenians would have to recall him, and then, with his help, they could win the war. If this was indeed his policy, it makes him at once larger than Athens but in the end smaller. He is larger because he in some sense controls the destiny of the city, but smaller because he has forgotten the lesson that Pericles propounds: If a man fares well but his *polis* founders, he will suffer ruin, but if the *polis* prospers, it can raise up even the man in unfortunate circumstances (2.60.3).

Alcibiades' redefinitions of patriotism represent a late stage in the decline in Athenian speakers' expressed view of Athens. From the claims to worth in the speech of the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 and Pericles' eloquence in the Funeral Oration, through Cleon's vitriolic attack on the people, and the rejection of "fine phrases" (ὀνομάτων καλῶν, 5.89) first by the Athenians at Melos and then by Euphemus, Thucydides traces a growing alienation of the Athenian people from the real source of their power, their character as free Athenians fearlessly trusting in their own "liberality" (τῆς ἐλευθερίας, 2.40.5).

Alcibiades' last speech caps this decline. He redefines love of country to be at least in his case a wish for Athens' destruction. He can do this only because in him, as interpreted by Thucydides, the private and personal has emerged completely victorious over public spirit. He expresses the negation of the political life as such, since he wants to destroy Athens. The first casualty is the rhetorical space in which to express political ideas. This speech represents the end of public Athenian political discourse in general, but also very particularly because Alcibiades, the leading Athenian political figure of the time, has been exiled from even the possibility of speaking at Athens. In Book 7, Thucydides presents only Nicias' letter to the Athenians, which, as we shall see, has a very private and personal character, and the speeches of generals to their armies. These speeches are not deliberative political speeches at all, but merely exhortations to men who must follow their orders.

While the decline and collapse of the Athenian Empire that follows this speech is tragic, a historical view of the matter might well conclude that the failure was structural and built into the idea of a hegemonic empire overseen by a single *polis*, Athens. The empire had several sources, the first of which was obviously leadership in the defeat of the Persians. Here the hegemony was a "willing [choice] of the allies [from the war against the Persians] on account of their hatred of [the Spartan general] Pausanias" (ἑκόντων τῶν ξυμμάχων διὰ τὸ Παυσανίου μῖσος, 1.96.1, my translation). Thus, the immediate source of Athenian political power was as a place of safety for the

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weaker Greek *poleis* first from the Persians and then from "the imitation of tyranny more than military leadership apparent" in Pausanias (καὶ τυραννίδος μᾶλλον ἐφαίνετο μίμησις ἢ στρατηγία, 1.95.3, my translation). The word tyranny here resonates dramatically in Pericles' statement in his last speech that Athens was already at that time a tyranny (2.63.2).[7] When we read this in Pericles' speech a dramatic sense of foreboding naturally arises.[8]

One important problem in late fifth-century Athens that Thucydides' *Histories* appears to expose is that the ruling paradigm of foreign relations for Athens was insufficient for the power that Athens had. A defensive alliance against a neighboring power that was not acting aggressively could not continue to serve as an excellent and attractive model for leadership without significant reconsideration. This problem first became apparent after about 450 BC when the imminent danger from Persia receded. In their speech at Sparta the Corinthians address the Spartans concerning their apparent ignorance "in regard to foreign affairs" (πρὸς τὰ ἔξω πράγματα, 1.68.1). In comparing Athens with Sparta, they call attention to the innovative spirit of the Athenians:

> ἀνάγκη δὲ ὥσπερ τέχνης αἰεὶ τὰ ἐπιγιγνόμενα κρατεῖν: καὶ ἡσυχαζούσῃ μὲν πόλει τὰ ἀκίνητα νόμιμα ἄριστα, πρὸς πολλὰ δὲ ἀναγκαζομένοις ἰέναι πολλῆς καὶ τῆς ἐπιτεχνήσεως δεῖ. δι᾽ ὅπερ καὶ τὰ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀπὸ τῆς πολυπειρίας ἐπὶ πλέον ὑμῶν κεκαίνωται. (1.71.3)
>
> It is necessary just as in an art or *techne* for improvements to prevail. And for a quiet state established customs, usages, and laws are best, but for those who are compelled into many things there is a need of much invention, and the affairs of the Athenians that have reformed, more than you, from their extensive experience. (1.71.3)

Here the art of the ruler—the ruler of Athens at the time being Pericles—is a kind of *techne*, which is consistent with one important aspect of the art of ruling, as the Stranger explains it in the *Statesman* (284a–e), an art that relies on a mean that is the moderate, the fitting, the appropriate, and the necessary. This is the art of the statesman, as we have mentioned, the art of the ruler in our world, whose art is similar to philosophy but involves *phronesis* (prudence) to mediate between the world of appearances or seeming (our regular everyday world) and the ideal world of the Forms. This is where Pericles should be judged. Yet he did not innovate in the management of the empire. He did not deliver a new founding law or structure, but that was part of his responsibility as the statesman and the good lawgiver (τὸν δὴ πολιτικὸν καὶ τὸν ἀγαθὸν νομοθέτην, *Statesman* 309c–d), as is education (309d). By itself, this failure to develop some new structure to

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fit the developing demands on the Athenian Empire would not necessarily have made his rule unsuccessful, though it could have led to failure even if he had succeeded in other crucial areas of innovation. The new requirement was to see that Athens had to continue to be an education for Hellas, an education in internal political structure and in democratic ideals expressed as foreign policy. The older appeal of Athens as the leader in a defense against Persia could not for long withstand the philosophical and political assault of an empire that was turning into a tyranny in which the only two positions were ruler and ruled.

Pericles served as a general. As we have seen, this was a political innovation that seemed to be required by the Persian Wars. Pericles lived during the time of political figures who were reformers, for example, Ephialtes, and just after the time of Kleisthenes. Yet in his weaving of the powers of the customs and people of Athens he did not produce a revised program of foreign policy, nor did he revive a middle legislative branch like a senate that might have seen to the long-term interests of the state, nor did he educate the next generation of leaders. In his defense we may say that the plague was a matter of chance, a chance that was doubly troubling as it killed him, too, but knowing that chance can topple any plan is part of the skill of the statesman, as is developing plans to project in case dangerous chances appear. This is the type of planning required to redefine what is not as what is "other" or different from what one imagines to be the case. This is true especially in war. Nonbeing, the Eleatic Stranger tells Theaetetus in the *Sophist*, partakes of being (260d–e). But the philosopher looks to the Forms that are in trying to understand the intermixture that is our shared lives (*Sophist*, 253b–c, 253d–e). The Sophist appears as one who makes false images and false images of things that are (264b). Thus, Pericles' moderation is real in him but does not become real in the actual law of Athens when he is no longer there and resembles more a likeness (εἴδωλον) or apparition (φάντασμα) than a real being (264c–d). Pericles, to be an effective lawgiver, had to look to the world of being so that he could mix that with this world so as to have the true result of the lawgiver's *techne*, law that could enable Athens' continued success. What he offered was speeches about moderation that worked as long as he was giving them. This makes his political presence a kind of image. "For as long as he was at the head of the state during the peace, he pursued a moderate and conservative policy; and in his time its greatness was at its height" (2.65.5). While he gauged the power of the city rightly, once he was gone the Athenians did the opposite of what he recommended and "conducted themselves badly with respect to their allies and themselves" (κακῶς ἔς τε σφᾶς αὐτοὺς καὶ τοὺς ξυμμάχους ἐπολίτευσαν, 2.65.7). In this he appears a Sophist, whose example delivered a false education or no education to his people and to his successor, Alcibiades.

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Indeed, Pericles did not die a young man. Succession should have been present to him. His own nonbeing impinged on him in very real ways that he could have seen as what was other or different from his own experience. Even though by their nature the particulars of the chances can only rarely be foreseen, the statesman must reckon them in contemplating war. This does not mean that the statesman should focus so much on measure and the mean that courage evaporates, however. But it is more than difficult to lead courageously when one has died. This type of planning dependent on the longevity of a powerful ruler has a depressing history of failure.

The result of the war internally for Athens was *stasis* (*Statesman* 308b), a most hated disease (νόσος, 307d) of the state. This fell out in the related failures of its two most important leaders after the first part of the Peloponnesian War, Nicias and Alcibiades, Nicias suffering from an apparent belief in a foolish myth of his luck and a character that did not control its native sense of measure with any real discipline, and Alcibiades suffering from an excess of erotic energy and courage, similarly not controlled with any discipline at all until it was too late.

Thucydides seems to have prompted some reflection in Plato on the need for strong legal structures such as the *Laws* suggests. Thucydides in his praise of the revised constitution of the 5,000 notes that lawgivers were elected and a constitution was formed. While it is possible that this structure might have worked and it did happen that in these days Alcibiades accomplished great deeds for Athens in Thucydides' view (8.66), it was quite likely inherently too late, just as it was in fact.

NOTES

1. When Thucydides says that the Athenian *polis* was in name a democracy, but in fact rule by the leading citizen, his view is not at variance with Pericles'. As Pericles describes the Athenian form of government, it was also in name a democracy, but allowed for the rule by the best. His formulation agrees with Thucydides' (2.65.2).

2. N. M. Pusey, "Alcibiades and τὸ φιλόπολι," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 51 (1940), pp. 215–31, argues that Alcibiades' claim to be φιλόπολις ("patriotic," 6.92) proves that the Greeks of his day had no such strong feeling of patriotism as we normally think they did. But he does not reconcile this, for instance, with Pericles' claim to be φιλόπολις (2.60.5), or with Nicias' appeals to the Athenian homeland (7.69.2).

3. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, pp. 228–30, demonstrates the great importance of Alcibiades' advice for the eventual Spartan defeat of Athens.

4. At 6.18.6, when he says that if the city is quiet, it will wear itself out, he also indulges in this kind of extravagant paradox.

5. See Finley, *Thucydides*, 1963 reprint, pp. 229–32.

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6. Finley, *Thucydides*, 1963 reprint, p. 229.

7. See the thorough discussion of Polly Low on pp. 5–9 of her "Hegemonic Legitimacy (and its Absence) in Classical Greece," which appears in *Ancient Greek History and Contemporary Social Science*, ed. Mirko Canevaro, Andrew Erskine, Benjamin D. Gray, and Josiah Ober (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), also available electronically Published to Edinburgh Scholarship Online: January 2019, DOI: 10.3366/edinburgh/9781474421775.001.0001.

8. Low, "Hegemonic Legitimacy (and Its Absence) in Classical Greece," breaks down the forces of validity for ancient Greek hegemony into "constitutionalism," "outcomes," and "values and principles." This last grouping of "values and principles" is the least politically resilient of the three areas (pp. 5–9).

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Chapter 10

Nicias and the Failure in Sicily

After Euphemus' speech in Book 6 there are no more strictly deliberative speeches in direct discourse by Athenians, although Thucydides does provide Nicias' letter to the Athenians at the beginning of Book 7. He also reports Nicias' last two speeches to his troops, which we will consider here as they are the last significant examples of Athenian direct discourse in the *Histories* as a whole.

We will first look at Nicias' letter, which is the closest Thucydides brings us to an extended deliberative speech in direct discourse for the remainder of his work. He prepares us for the dejected tone of this letter by presenting a dramatic shift in the military situation in Sicily. Soon after Gylippus' arrival in Sicily, the fortunes of the Syracusans begin to change. Gylippus comes to Epipolae at a crucial juncture, which Thucydides marks by saying that as he arrived the Syracusans had come to a significantly dangerous pass (7.2.4). Gylippus succeeds not only in preventing the Athenians from completing their wall but also in carrying the Syracusans' own wall past that of the Athenians (7.6). The establishment of this Syracusan wall meant that even if the Athenians should defeat the Syracusans in battle, they would not be able to wall off the city (7.6.4). This fact, along with the decline of the Athenian naval forces and the strength of the Sicilian cavalry, convinces Nicias that he faces a most serious problem (7.11.2–7.11.3, 7.12.3). As a result, Nicias writes a letter to the Athenians.

Nicias' letter may be thought of as more likely to be completely genuine in its wording than the other speeches.[1] This does not affect conclusions about changes in Athenian public discourse, however, because Thucydides has made the artistic choice to present the letter. In doing so, he has not relaxed his authorial presence. Nicias offers in the letter once again to resign from his command, this being the third time that he has sought to avoid the

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responsibility he has to lead. He previously wished to step back concerning Pylos (4.28.1–4.28.3), and before the Sicilian Expedition itself (6.23.3). Nicias seems to be the type of man Pericles in his third speech said was not fit for leadership because he wished to withdraw from the responsibilities of the empire (2.63.2).[2] Because of his fear, Nicias wishes to retire (5.16.1, 6.23.3, cf. 4.28.1–4.28.2).[3] Even in his reason for writing a letter rather than entrusting his thoughts to the messenger, Nicias shows fears. He writes rather than trusting messengers to deliver his speech because he "fears" (φοβούμενος) either their inability to speak, the weakness of their memory, or that they will not deliver the bad news because they do not wish to anger the Athenians (7.8.2).

The last speech of Pericles provides a good contrast with Nicias' letter, since Pericles was attempting to answer criticism of himself and his policies, while Nicias is trying to forestall criticism (7.14.4). Nicias says that he has written his letter in part out of concern for his own safety (7.14.4). This concern contradicts Pericles' advice to the Athenians at the time of the plague to cease being grieved over private troubles and to pay attention instead to the common safety (2.61.4). Pericles reinforces this advice twice near the end of his speech. He says that the Athenians must bear their heaven-sent misfortunes (2.64.2), and keep in mind that those who least of all allow their troubles to beset their minds are the most powerful men (2.64.6). Nicias, on the other hand, specifically mentions a complaint he has concerning his kidneys as an important reason why he should be relieved of his command (7.15.1). As Thucydides presents the subsequent narrative, Nicias seems to have exaggerated the effect his ailment had on him, or perhaps to have recovered from it, because Thucydides does not mention it again as a factor affecting his position or conduct. The dramatic effect of this seems like a form of somber comedy. Nicias' predisposition at this point in his career was a basic desire to avoid danger and commit himself to the forces of chance as little as possible (5.16.1). The problem that is bothering him here, his kidneys, bladder, and their functions, is a problem that soldiers do face, though perhaps his case of it was more serious than it is for most soldiers most of the time.

Nicias' expressed attitude toward his command and his responsibilities is not in the mold of those whom Pericles lauds in the Funeral Oration. Pericles praises those men both for their complete dedication to the good of Athens and for their lack of regard for their own safety (2.42.4). Those Athenians, Pericles says, wished to preserve their good name and so avoid a "shameful report" (τὸ . . . αἰσχρὸν τοῦ λόγου, 2.42.4). In his letter, in contrast, Nicias says that the forces have left off their fortifications and are "waiting quietly" (ἡσυχάζομεν) on account of the multitude of enemy forces (7.11.3). This inactivity, which is very unnatural to the Athenians, suggests the weakness of their position and leadership. Nicias' own words confirm how weak he is.

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He says that he cannot solve the problems in front of him because the nature of the men he leads prevents him (7.14.2). After he describes a number of the problems besetting the expedition, he says,

> τούτων δὲ πάντων ἀπορώτατον τό τε μὴ οἷόν τε εἶναι ταῦτα ἐμοὶ κωλῦσαι τῷ στρατηγῷ (χαλεπαὶ γὰρ αἱ ὑμέτεραι φύσεις ἄρξαι). (7.14.2)
>
> But of all, my greatest trouble is this: that being general, I can neither make them [the seamen] do better (for your natures are hard to be governed). (7.14.2, translation Hobbes)

Nor can he find new troops in Sicily (7.14.2). Nicias cannot control his troops. He names the cause of this situation as the Athenians' nature, which, we may infer, it is difficult for Nicias to rule. The problem may have been partly the nature of navy men, since they have to have personal expertise in order to succeed on a ship, unlike the infantryman until recently. It may also be the case that the Athenian democracy developed very quickly so that the seamen have not yet learned how to moderate the natural spiritedness that comes from expertise in dangerous situations.[4] Marchant makes the very interesting point that only great military leaders like Themistocles and Pericles could control such troops. This may be a clue to Pericles' overconfidence,[5] though to separate Thucydides' view from some actual historical fact, it is important to keep in mind that Thucydides focuses on the present only here: Nicias does not know how to handle the situation and does not want to be at war. Nicias also sees the same problem a year later after Demosthenes' night attack has failed. Then Nicias does not want to return to Athens because, as Thucydides describes his motives, he "knows the nature of the Athenian people" (ἐπιστάμενος τὰς Ἀθηναίων φύσεις, 7.48.4).

Unlike Pericles, Nicias is led by the people rather than leading them. In his letter he protests, like Cleon, that the Athenians make a difficult audience for a political figure (7.14.4, cf. 3.38). Here again Nicias says that he knows the "nature" of the Athenians (τὰς φύσεις ἐπιστάμενος ὑμῶν, 7.14.4). Nicias does not know, however, that understanding the nature of the Athenians is not enough for an important political leader. He must be able to lead the people, and in order to lead them he must be able to persuade them. Yet he, like Alcibiades (6.18.6–6.18.7), takes the nature of the Athenians as something that should be followed rather than led. As political discourse declines at Athens, so does the quality of political leadership.

Later in Book 7 Thucydides continues his presentation of Nicias' lack of attention to Athens' real interests and of his concern for what the Athenian people think of him. After Demosthenes arrives at Sicily and his night attack fails, for example, Nicias refuses to end the expedition despite Demosthenes'

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arguments (7.47). Among other points that persuade Nicias is his knowledge that the Athenian people will condemn him and probably execute him for his failures (7.48.4). Nicias does not want to die unjustly because of a shameful charge (ἐπ' αἰσχρᾷ τε αἰτίᾳ καὶ ἀδίκως, 7.48.4). Instead, he would rather "die in private" (τοῦτο παθεῖν ἰδίᾳ, literally "suffer this [death] in private"). The adverbial ἰδίᾳ ("in private") on the surface contrasts with the public condemnation Nicias fears, but it also has a more subtle implication: Nicias chooses to preserve his private good name by dying a soldier's death instead of taking the public risks his position requires. He does this for reasons of conventional morality, to avoid a shameful accusation. This contrasts with the risks and penalties Pericles accepted as a consequence of his own policies (2.65.3). He lacks the ability to control his orderliness, which often becomes excessive and arises at the wrong time (*Statesman*, 307e). This results also in what seems to be a lack of courage that puts him in the hands of the enemy (*Statesman*, 307e–308a).

In his presentation of Nicias' part in the debate between the generals after Demosthenes' arrival, Thucydides reports in great detail Nicias' various additional reasons for wanting to stay in Sicily (7.48–7.49). Nicias relies especially on the reports of discord he has from within Syracuse (7.48.2–7.48.3, 7.49.4). He thus attempts to follow Alcibiades' strategy of working with factions within the various Sicilian cities. Unfortunately for Nicias, as we have seen, although there still apparently was a pro-Athenian group within Syracuse, Hermocrates commanded enough political power to accomplish his plans. This gives a pathetic cast to Nicias' hopes and shows that his understanding of the situation does not correspond to the facts. Despite this, Nicias is able to communicate his "hesitation and delay" (ὄκνος τις καὶ μέλλησις ἐνεγένετο) to the other Athenian generals, and they refrain from ending the expedition (7.49.3–7.49.4). This delay shows Nicias' lack of understanding for Pericles' reminder that hesitation in war is fatal (1.142.1). The Stranger in the *Statesman* also notes this risk in general (307e).

When Gylippus arrives both with fresh troops raised from across Sicily and with heavy infantry from the Peloponnese (7.50.1), he disheartens the Athenian generals, and they agree to depart. On the point of departure an eclipse of the moon occurs, and Nicias refuses to allow the army to depart until the thrice nine days specified by the interpreters of the omen have passed (7.50.4). Thucydides directly remarks here on Nicias' "excessive" (ἄγαν, 7.50.4) attention to divination and similar arts. Nicias thus again allows his attachment to conventional mores to hinder him from the wisest course.

Nicias' leadership grows weaker as the position of his troops decays, and in his two final speeches to the troops he relies on hope to save the Athenians from their predicament. After the Athenians have resolved to wait the prescribed time after the eclipse of the moon, Gylippus sees that he can use their

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hesitation to his advantage (7.50–7.51). The Syracusans realize that they would do best to force the Athenians into an immediate naval engagement (7.51). This they do and come away victorious (7.52), leaving the Athenians demoralized. Thucydides comments that this situation was a great unexpected event for the Athenians (7.55.1). The Sicilian cities were the only cities they had ever encountered who were democratic and of a similar character to themselves (7.55.2). Furthermore, the Athenian strategy of fomenting political discord in the *poleis* there had simply not worked (7.55.2).

These comments culminate Thucydides' themes of the political strength of Sicily and especially Syracuse as opposed to the disarray in Athenian politics. In the face of the Syracusans' attempt to close up the Great Harbor, the Athenians hold a council to prepare for the upcoming battle, and then go out and man the ships. In this desperate situation, Nicias must deliver his first exhortation to his troops. Two of his arguments suffer from serious deficiencies.

Thucydides in the first place shows Nicias making a crucial mistake when he claims that his forces have overcome the technical difficulties they had in previous battles, in which the Syracusans rammed the Athenians' ships straight on, using reinforced cheeks. The Athenians have added grappling irons (7.62.3), but Thucydides notes directly after Nicias' speech that the Sicilians had provided against this by stretching hides over the prows of their ships (7.65.2). Since this is Nicias' most significant practical point, it is important that Thucydides contradicts it so quickly. Nicias' *logos* does not represent the military facts, nor will it lead to victory. To consider the matter in Plato's terms where skills in various fields bring the particular under the general and under the rule of measure, he seems to lack even the *techne* of the general let alone the ability to command.

Nicias' second mistake is more complicated. He rightly gauges that on the Athenian side the battle will be from ships, but it is folly to argue that this is to the advantage of the Athenian navy. Nicias is made to use the word πεζομαχίᾳ ("land battle") to refer to the type of battle the Athenians will be fighting, even though they will conduct the battle from their ships (7.62.2). In 425, during the battle at Pylos, Thucydides uses the verbal form of this word, ἐπεζομάχουν ("they were fighting a land battle," 4.14.3).[6] The action at Pylos has other substantial similarities with Nicias' plans for the battle in the harbor, as Thucydides himself notes (7.71.7).[7] At Pylos chance led to the Athenian victory, and this victory was a reversal of the order of things (4.12.3, cf., 4.13.4).[8] Furthermore, the luck at Pylos directly involves the land battle (4.14.3). Before the battle in the harbor of Syracuse, Nicias exhorts his men to "keep in mind the reversals and surprises in wars" (μνήσθητε τῶν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις παραλόγων), and to hope that fortune (καὶ τὸ τῆς τύχης κἂν μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐλπίσαντες) will be with them (7.61.3).

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In this extreme situation, Nicias falls back on the hope that his good luck will carry him through. This failure that typifies Nicias presents us with his deficient understanding of courage, which for him is intellectual, since the part of courage that deals with what is unknown cannot rely on foreknowledge but only on trained and learned expertise exercised in the moment of danger. This is the expression in Nicias of Pericles' failure, his failure to grasp how to incorporate that which is of necessity outside of his calculations, the other that in regard to calculation is incalculable chance, into his overall plan.

The hopes Thucydides has Nicias express are consistent with the general view of the fortunes of war Pericles stated in his first speech, but fundamentally inconsistent with Pericles' sure sense of the *techne* of war and with his courage (1.140.1, 1.142.5–7). At the beginning he warned those Athenians who opposed his views of the upcoming war not to lay claim to a reputation for intelligence if things went against Athens. He said that sometimes affairs turn out stupidly, and that men are accustomed to blame "chance" (τὴν τύχην) for as many things as turn out "contrary to expectation" (παρὰ λόγον, 1.140.1). With these verbal echoes, Thucydides calls attention to the contrast and shows once again how under the pressure of the war and political discord words change their value, notably here in the case of Nicias. Nicias sees chance as his main hope, while in Pericles' more well-thought-out view, it is simply an incalculable danger of war. Yet in Pericles' case the view of chance is not fully developed, as the examination of the excellence and skill of the ruler in the *Statesman* shows. For Nicias the virtual supplication for hope is absurd. The contrast here between Nicias and Pericles also illustrates clearly Thucydides' comment that war equalizes men's emotions with their situations (3.82.2). The war leaves Nicias with no cover for his fundamental concern with luck. His speech to the troops here bears out the judgment Thucydides gave in his summary of Nicias' role in the establishment of the peace named after him (5.16.1). Since Nicias believes that success and failure owe a great deal to luck, he wants to commit himself as little as possible to its vagaries, Thucydides says (5.16.1). Ironically, in this extreme moment, Nicias must commit his hopes to chance. While Nicias' hope is shown as emotional and irrational, for Pericles the only hope worth having is one with a rational basis.

Near the end of this same speech, Pericles says that hopes or expectations that are based on his reasonable prescriptions for the war can be trusted (1.144.1). Pericles tells the Athenians to conduct themselves in the war as did their fathers, more with their "minds" (γνώμῃ) than with "luck" (τύχῃ, 1.144.4). In a similar manner in his last speech, Pericles says that "skillful intelligence" (ξύνεσις) makes courage stronger, and does not trust in "hope" (ἐλπίδι), which is the strength of those in impossible situations, but

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in "judgement based upon the actual circumstances" (γνώμῃ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων, 2.62.5).

Gylippus, in his exhortation to his troops, which answers Nicias' first speech here in Book 7, says that the "hope" (ἐλπίς) of his men is twofold because they have defeated the Athenians once before (7.67.1). This hope is of the sort Pericles said the Athenians could have in the outcome of the war as a whole, because they had good grounds for their expectations. Gylippus provides very specific reasons why his troops will emerge victorious over the Athenians, while Nicias' only substantive grounds for favorable expectations are the fortified prows of their ships and the ineffective plan to use grappling hooks. Because of the Syracusans' preparations, neither of these advantages holds. Gylippus' grounds for his expectation of success are first that the Athenians will, contrary to their normal custom, be trying to imitate the Spartans' style of warfare (7.67.2) and second that the Athenians will have so many men on their decks that confusion will overcome them as they try to use methods not their own (7.67.2). In Thucydides' version of the scene, Gylippus' hope dramatically answers Nicias' and shows the weakness of Nicias' position.

With the words πάντες οὐκ ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῶν τρόπῳ κινούμενοι ταράξονται ("[How will the Athenians not be] falling all into confused movement among themselves through fighting not according to their own tactics?" 7.67.2, translation Crawley, adapted), Thucydides uses Gylippus to bring to the forefront once again a theme very important throughout the course of the *Histories*, that of orderly versus disorderly movement. The troubling *kinesis* of war and the diseased *kinesis* of *stasis* have destroyed the Athenians' political coherence or position of orderly movement necessary for successfully planned and well-conducted military action.

In the *Sophist* the Stranger asks Theaetetus whether he knows that illness and *stasis* are the same (228a)?[9] This suggests the relationship the plague has in Thucydides' narrative as a harbinger of civil strife and also a model for understanding it. In human life generally there is nothing at rest (*Statesman*, 294b; *Cratylus*, 415b). In bad motion Socrates finds cowardice, perplexity, and confusion (*Cratylus*, 415c), while in good motion he finds *arete* (415d), the easy flow of the good soul (*Cratylus*, 415d).

In these last moments of the Sicilian Expedition, the Athenians' military actions have themselves become completely disordered, and Gylippus notes the importance of this for his own expectations of victory. The Athenians, he says, have no trust in their own forces, but will rely on their "fortune" (τύχης) as they try to force their way out of the harbor (7.67.4). The Athenians are in disorder and their "luck has betrayed itself" (τύχην . . . ἑαυτὴν παραδεδωκυῖαν, 7.68.1). Gylippus has exact knowledge of the Athenians' state of mind. Thucydides gives him references to τύχη (chance) that point at

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Nicias. The confusion in the individual resembles the confusion in his troops. This pattern recurs in Socrates' many comparisons of the problems in the souls of individuals resembling general political problems in various regimes in Book VIII of the *Republic.*

There are a number of parallels between Pericles' Funeral Oration and the indirect discourse addendum (7.69) to Nicias' speech before the battle (7.61–7.64), as H. R. Rawlings has pointed out.[10] Thucydides makes both men appeal to Athens as a free homeland (2.36.1, 2.37.2, 7.69.2), and to their audience's families (2.36.4, 2.45.1–2.45.2, 7.69.2). Just as Nicias asks his men not to extinguish his forebears' reputation for "virtues" (ἀρετάς, 7.69.2), so Pericles reminds his audience of their fathers' great deeds (2.41.1–2.41.3, 2.42.2–2.42.3).[11] Yet the lack of specificity in the report of what Nicias said contributes to an overall deflation of tone. Thucydides' undramatic method of recording Nicias' speech indicates the low value Thucydides places on Nicias' use of the appeals.[12] To mark this change in the Athenians' moral courage since the Funeral Oration and the beginning of the war, Thucydides notes that the Athenians, after the defeat in the harbor, do not claim their dead (7.72.1–7.72.2, 7.75.3). The parallels between the Funeral Oration and what Nicias is reported to have said, taken together with the comparison between the Funeral Oration and the neglect of burial after the defeat in the harbor, point toward a dramatic contrast. Thucydides shows us that Athens' spirit along with her *nomoi*, whether they are *nomoi* of important social practices or the *nomoi* of political discourse, have collapsed under the pressure of the war.[13]

Thucydides uses the deliberations and events leading up to Nicias' last speech to his army to bring together some themes that are significant for the entire work. After the Syracusans defeat the Athenians in the naval battle in the harbor, Thucydides says that the Athenians suffered a "panic" (ἔκπληξις, 7.71.7, cf., 7.79.5, 7.80.3, 7.81.2) greater than ever before. This panic represents the complete defeat of order in the Athenian force at Syracuse. It also anticipates the panic that eventually takes over at Athens during revolution of 411 as the *polis* sinks into a "great disorder and panic," suspicion, and fear, that is, full-blown *stasis* (ἦν δὲ θόρυβος πολὺς καὶ ἐκπληκτικός, 8.92.7, cf. ἔκπληξις, "panic," 8.96.1). Defeat of the ill-considered expedition leads to panic.

In panic, *logos* disappears. The result is a loss of hope in any safety other than what is contrary to *logos*. One important sign of the disintegration of order occurs when, after Demosthenes and Nicias resolve to try to force their way out of the harbor with the remainder of the fleet, the sailors refuse to board the ships (7.72.4). These sailors are the sad descendants of the Athenians of the time of the invasion of the Mede, whom the Athenian ambassadors praised for their willingness to abandon their ruined city "to

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board their ships" (ἐσβῆναι ἐς τὰς ναῦς, 1.74.4, cf. the same phrase at 1.73.4, 1.74.2). Themistocles advised the Athenians to become a nautical people and to depend upon the skills they would thereby develop (1.93.7). As a result, although their position on land was desperate when the Mede invaded and, as the Athenians say in Book 1, their city had literally ceased to exist except "in short hope" (ἐν βραχείᾳ ἐλπίδι, 1.74.3), this hope was grounded in Themistocles' calculations of the power of the sea. At the end of the Sicilian Expedition, Nicias' and the Athenians' hopes are empty. The reversal has become complete: As the Syracusans have become more nautical, they have surpassed the Athenians in the skills required to win battles, while the Athenians, with their superiority in skill lost, have become bound to the land.

In the face of this complete collapse, Nicias must deliver his last speech exhorting his soldiers to break free from the Sicilian forces, but he can only make appeals to the conventional and to hope (7.77.1, 7.77.3).[14] Just as in Nicias' previous speech (7.61.3), Thucydides shows again here that Nicias turns to a hope that what reason tells him is impossible will in fact occur. In this last speech he bases his hope on the belief that he has lived justly among men and shown devotion "to the gods" (ἐς θεοὺς, 7.77.2). He also refers to his famous "good fortune" (εὐτυχίᾳ, 7.77.2). These appeals rooted in pathos recall the words of the Melians, who look to "hope" (ἐλπὶς, 5.102), although they have no grounds, and "trust in fortune from the divine" (πιστεύομεν τῇ μὲν τύχῃ ἐκ τοῦ θείου, 5.104, translation adapted from Crawley), because they are "pious (or 'reverent' or 'observant') men fighting against unjust" (πιστεύομεν τῇ μὲν τύχῃ ἐκ τοῦ θείου, 5.104).[15] At the end of the Sicilian Expedition roles have changed, and Nicias employs sentiments the Athenians ridiculed at Melos (5.103, 5.105).

Thucydides has Nicias conclude his speech by reminding his troops that men are a *polis*, while walls or ships without men are not (7.77.7). This recalls Pericles' admonition in his first speech that the Athenians should not lament the loss of houses and land, but of men, since these things do not acquire men, but men acquire them (1.143.5). In each case, the speaker seeks to remind his audience that power comes from the intelligence, spirit, and courage of men, not from possessions. The situations differ so markedly, however, that Nicias' words are hollow. The Athenians whom Pericles addressed had a well-equipped navy and a great deal of money (2.13.2–2.13.3), while Nicias' ships not only have been weakened but have been surpassed technically. More importantly, the defeats the expedition has suffered, particularly the loss in the naval battle in the harbor, have completely dispirited his men (7.76). The resemblance of what Nicias says to what Pericles had said ironically masks an underlying difference. Nicias and his men have been defeated already. The idea he presents is once again misapplied to the facts before him.

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After the Athenians' complete loss in a panic-ridden retreat (7.79.5, 7.80.3, 7.81.2), Nicias surrenders to Gylippus, trusting in the help he rendered Sparta in the release of the prisoners at Pylos (7.86.3–7.86.4). This "friendship" (προσφιλεῖς) cannot withstand the fears of the Syracusans and Corinthians, who persuade the allies to execute both Nicias and Demosthenes (7.86.4). As Thucydides observes in discussing *stasis* in Corcyra, fellow citizens killed fellow citizens (3.81.4) and eventually even members of the same family turned against one another (3.82.6, 3.82.8). Here Thucydides delivers his well-known final notice of Nicias, saying that Nicias least of all deserved to come to such misfortune as he did, on account of his practiced attention to conventionalized virtue.[16]

> καὶ ὁ μὲν τοιαύτῃ ἢ ὅτι ἐγγύτατα τούτων αἰτίᾳ ἐτεθνήκει, ἥκιστα δὴ ἄξιος ὢν τῶν γε ἐπ' ἐμοῦ Ἑλλήνων ἐς τοῦτο δυστυχίας ἀφικέσθαι διὰ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐς ἀρετὴν νενομισμένην ἐπιτήδευσιν. (7.86.5)

> This or the like was the cause of the death of a man who, of all the Hellenes in my time, least deserved such a fate, seeing that the whole course of his life had been regulated with [practiced attention to conventionalized] virtue. (7.86.5, Crawley, modified as noted with [brackets])

Thucydides' reserved praise of Nicias' *arete* evokes pathos, not the feeling of glory one has at the deaths commemorated in the Funeral Oration. Nicias' virtue is conventional, and not the approach to an ideal *arete* in Pericles. Nicias' attention to customary or "conventionalized" virtue is complete.[17] In fact, the completeness of it is an obvious weakness. His decision to wait in Sicily after the eclipse is an egregious example of how Nicias' conventional *arete* was not a sufficient virtue for the role he had. This kind of limited praise contains a gentle and respectful irony.[18] Thucydides told us earlier that Nicias wished to die in private (7.48.4), thereby preserving his good name. This to some extent confirms that νενομισμένην ("conventionalized") modifies both ἀρετὴν (*arete*) and ἐπιτήδευσιν "practice." Both his practice of virtue and the virtue itself have become private attributes not public. It is left to Thucydides in his effort to present his material in as measured and orderly way as possible to connect Nicias' private virtue with his public role. This effort toward measure and reason delivered with clear *logoi* and *erga* or facts shows Thucydides' sense of the value of moral clarity presented with clear standards even in the most difficult and complicated cases like Nicias'. He was not a great leader but he succeeded in being a good man in a very difficult time, which is not an easy accomplishment. When Thucydides notes Nicias' misfortune, his choice of words implies his reservations about the man. Thucydides says that Nicias did not deserve "to come to such a point of misfortune" (ἐς τοῦτο δυστυχίας ἀφικέσθαι). The use of δυστυχίας recalls

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Nicias' excessive concern with his good luck. Thucydides reminds his readers of Nicias' failings even at this extreme point in his life. This is not to deny that Thucydides' praise is praise. As we have seen, Nicias inherits Pericles' moderation if not his daring, and moderation is one of the cardinal political virtues for Thucydides (8.24.4), though he is too moderate in action. This virtue is not enough for an Athenian leader, however, and Nicias suffers for his weakness.[19] This virtue must be controlled with moderation (*sophrosune* as "discipline") as the Stranger points out in the *Statesman* (307e). It must also be complemented with courage.

On the point of his own death when Socrates discusses what becomes of various types of men after they die, he seems to recall Thucydides' comments on Nicias when he discusses moderate men. In the *Phaedo*, he says,

> "Then," said he, "those who are the happiest, and those who leave for the best place, are those who have practiced from habit and from careful attention, popular and political virtue, which they call moderation and justice generated without philosophy and mind." (82a–b)
>
> οὐκοῦν εὐδαιμονέστατοι, ἔφη, καὶ τούτων εἰσὶ καὶ εἰς βέλτιστον τόπον ἰόντες οἱ τὴν δημοτικὴν καὶ πολιτικὴν [82β] ἀρετὴν ἐπιτετηδευκότες, ἣν δὴ καλοῦσι σωφροσύνην τε καὶ δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ ἔθους τε καὶ μελέτης γεγονυῖαν ἄνευ φιλοσοφίας τε καὶ νοῦ. (82a–b)

Such men return to earth as ants, wasps, and bees or even humans who are moderate (82b). Plato shows his interest in Nicias in the dialogue *Laches*, where Lysimachus, Melesias, Socrates, Laches, and Nicias discuss courage. Laches emphasizes Nicias' lack of understanding or wisdom by referring in a kind of Platonic irony to Nicias' fondness for seers (μάντεις transliterated *manteis*, 195d), whose prescriptions to wait twenty-seven days after an eclipse of the moon in 413 caused Nicias to delay attacking the Syracusans that long (7.50.4).[20] This allowed Syracuse to practice their tactics at sea, which leads them to a decisive naval victory over the famed Athenian fleet (7.52).

Thucydides emphasizes Nicias' devotion to divination (θειασμός, 7.50.4), which leads him to trust the seers. Laches seems to taunt Nicias with his weaknesses, his medical problems that require doctors, as discussed by Nicias himself (*Laches*, 195c) and his interest in the prognostications of seers (*Laches*, 195e). Nicias argues that there is another virtue, courage, that determines whether the predictions of seers or the prognosis of his doctors should affect what he does (*Laches*, 196a, 196d). Thucydides also relates Nicias' kidney condition as a factor in his military commands, first as a reason why he stays behind and secures the Athenian fortification at Epipolae west of Syracuse from an attack (6.102.1), and second as a reason he cites in

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his letter to the Athenians why he should later in the winter of 414/413 resign his command (7.15.1).

Nicias' argument in the *Laches* (196d) that the seers and doctors can tell him what will happen, while courage determines what he fears and does not fear is contradicted by what Nicias in fact decides to do as narrated by Thucydides: He remains behind at Epipolae because of his kidneys. He tries to resign his command because of his kidneys but is overruled by the Athenian people. Finally, he jeopardizes and then loses an advantage over Syracuse because of the eclipse of the moon. He either lacks knowledge of what to do or lacks courage or both. In the *Laches*, Socrates draws out the implications of Nicias' fears, devotion to divination, and lack of understanding of what courage is by showing him that on his stated views Nicias thinks virtue (*arete*) and courage are the same thing (199e). In other words, he does not know what courage is.

Laches exploits this conclusion to suggest to Nicias that the two of them should cede to Socrates the task of educating Melesias and Lysimachus, the sons of the great Athenian leaders Thucydides (not the historian) and Aristides (200a). In the end, Socrates does take on the task of correcting the plan for the education of the Athenians, notably in the *Republic*. The person who should control what we learn and do not learn in our world is the statesman, as the Stranger has it in the *Statesman* (304c). Hence the turn of Pericles, we may suppose, to Anaxagoras, and the rejection of Pericles and Anaxagoras by Socrates earlier in his life and on his last day in the *Phaedo*.

The Athenians retained Nicias as general after the first Sicilian debate despite his desire to prevent the expedition, and then again when he asks to resign in his letter. Yet they would have been better off with a better general. Thucydides and Plato thus seem here also to agree that the leaders of Athens were not capable of leading their people or educating their children, tasks that in Athens were part of the same political responsibility. As Socrates puts it, this is the responsibility the adults bear to introduce *arete* or virtue into the souls of their children (*Laches* 190b, cf. 185a–e), which is the same as the political art, at least as it is presented in the *Gorgias* (504d–e, 514e–514a).[21]

This then immediately suggests the question that arises in the *Meno*, can *arete* be taught? The conclusion of that dialogue is an *aporia*, a complete lack of a solution (*Meno*, 99e–100a). Socrates concludes that we arrive at *arete*, virtue or value, through some kind of divine intercession (100b). This question preoccupies Plato to some extent because the outcome of the Peloponnesian War raises the question: How did Pericles fail to lead the citizens to *arete* and wisdom? Part of Plato's answer seems to be that Pericles encouraged *eros*, which according to the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws* (VI. 782e) is the most serious of the three great human sicknesses of want, hunger, thirst, and *eros*. This last sickness manifests itself in man as an unlimited desire (*Laws*, XI. 918d).

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The application of this problem of *eros* in man to Athens' expansionism and insistence on rule is obvious in Plato and in Thucydides. It can also be seen in Alcibiades and in Meno, who says *arete* in a man is to be able to run the city, benefit his friends, harm his enemies, and protect himself (71e). From Meno's perspective the crucial virtue of a woman is to be obedient to her man as she preserves his household (71e). Finally, Meno has slaves, but one seemingly chosen at random is clearly his equal or more in ability, as his quick learning in how to double the size of a square of four square feet shows (82b–85c). Meno's desires are not tamed, as he shows even in discourse about shape and color. As soon as Socrates has answered Meno's questions about shape, Meno wants Socrates to tell him what color is (76a). Socrates connects this desire with Meno's erotic manipulation (76b), which is then a signal failure of Pericles' rule when he encourages the citizens to become lovers of their city and its power, which in turn failed completely in the Peloponnesian War because Athens did not educate her citizens, Pericles did not educate his charges, and many other Athenian families failed to educate their children. Thucydides shows us this in his narrative of the words and deeds of Alcibiades.

NOTES

1. Such is the position of Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 188, and so, apparently, Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Vol. 3*, 7.10–17 n.

2. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, pp. 140–54, compares Pericles' indirect discourse speech (2.13) with Nicias' letter, noting that many of the same subjects appear in both sections and that Nicias' letter shows a dramatic change in Athens' political spirit and fortunes. Although there are many contrasts in the two men's views of military matters, there are no convincing verbal echoes. If we may reason from the absence of something in this case that Thucydides presents regularly in other speeches, we might conclude the Nicias does not use Pericles' language because he resembles him very little.

3. Finley, *Thucydides*, pp. 234–35 and 240, notes the fearfulness in Nicias' character.

4. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides: Book 7*, 7.14n.

5. Marchant, *Commentary on Thucydides: Book 7*, 7.14n.

6. Cf. πεζομαχίᾳ at 1.49.2.

7. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, p. 188 n.2, comments on the "close link" between "Pylos and the events in Sicily." She cites 7.18.2, 7.71.7, and 7.86.3.

8. See Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, pp. 82ff. and especially pp. 88ff.

9. See esp. Seth Benardete, *Plato's Sophist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), Commentary pp. II.94–95.

10. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, pp. 154ff.

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11. For a discussion of the use of these *topoi*, see Strasberger, “Thukydides und die politische Selbstdarstellung der Athener,” pp. 17–40.

12. Donald Lateiner makes this argument in his useful article, “Nicias’ Inadequate Encouragement,” *Classical Philology* LXXX (1985), pp. 201–13. See especially pp. 202–4. Lateiner also suggests that ἀρχαιολογεῖν, which Thucydides applies to his report of Nicias’ speech in 7.69.2, means that Nicias spoke in the same tired old way as one would expect of man whose *arete* was of the old fashioned sort (pp. 207–8, 210–11). This *arete* does not include ξύνεσις (“intelligence,” p. 210), and it is not adequate for coping with complicated military problems (p. 208). Thucydides’ description of the Peisistratids as practicing *arete* and ξύνεσις makes clear that *arete* does not normally include ξύνεσις (6.54.5). Lateiner’s arguments provide good reason for taking Thucydides’ final notice of Nicias as very restrained, limited praise. In general Lateiner sees Thucydides’ assessment of Nicias as “hedged,” and unfavorable because Thucydides thought Nicias “an incompetent Athenian politician and commander throughout” (p. 210).

13. To say that Nicias’ speech is a type of “funeral oration,” as Rawlings does, *The Structure of Thucydides’ History*, p. 157, seems to me too schematic. Furthermore, Nicias’ delivers his speech before the loss in the harbor.

14. De Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, p. 292.

15. The correct translation of ὅσιοι here is “pious” or “reverent” or “observant,” not “just” (Crawley) in the sense of relating to justice among humans. See LSJ s. v. ὅσιος. This seems to be important here as the Melians could perhaps have counted on justice to some extent for some time during the life of the Athenian Empire, but the gods were not ever a realistic hope. Their speech is accurate in the sense that their appeal is, on a practical level, hopeless, as we see in the outcome.

16. Dover, *Historical Commentary*, 7.86.5n., makes the case that we should take both πᾶσαν and νενομισμένην with ἐπιτήδευσιν in Thucydides’ famous judgment on Nicias. Leaving aside the question of πᾶσαν for the moment (see the next footnote), it seems forced to take νενομισμένην exclusively with ἐπιτήδευσιν. As Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 205 n. 53, asks, what does Dover’s translation, “all observed into goodness,” really mean? This is not a completely decisive point with Thucydides, as he has several passages in which his meaning has to this day remained impossible to settle for certain (cf. e.g., the clause beginning τὸ δ’ ἔργον in 2.42.4), but it does have weight. Another point against Dover is that Thucydides’ judgment regarding Nicias is on the whole guarded and negative. See Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides*, pp. 185–7, 193f., and 281. See also Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides*, pp. 140f. The vexed question then is whether νενομισμένην modifies ἐπιτήδευσιν or ἀρετὴν. Pierre Huart, *Le Vocabulaire de L’Analyse Psychologique dans L’Oeuvre de Thucydide* (Paris, 1968), p. 451 n. 1, takes νενομισμένην with both ἀρετὴν and ἐπιτήδευσιν. This seems right. Hornblower’s argument (in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 7.86.5n.) against Tim Rood (*Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* [Oxford: Oxford Classical Monographs, 1998], p. 184 n.9) seems right in every way except that it neglects one of Nicias’ most prominent qualities, his conventionality. Overall, Hornblower is right to bring up the concept of “polyinterpretability” here as elsewhere. We do not actually know how hearers would feel the meaning

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of sentences with what seems like extreme hyperbaton, where, as here, a word that applies emotionally to a subject but perhaps not clearly to that subject would affect the reader's perceptions. Could Nicias' virtue be thought of as anything but conventional, for example? Was not his actual dedication toward conventionality and not originality? He worked hard at attaining virtue, that is, he practiced it. Yet the virtue he sought was conventional, or as I have rendered νενομισμένην, "conventionalized" (in Nicias' traditional view of virtue).

It may be reasonable to see Thucydides in a sentence like this demonstrating his own version of Athenian versatility (2.41.1). Similarly, at one of the emotional peaks of the Funeral Oration Thucydides, the clause beginning τὸ δ' ἔργον in 2.42.4, it is possible that the apparent lack of clear references and obvious relations of one word to another reflects the rapid blur of death itself. Here in the obituary on Nicias we may glimpse some of that feeling in tension with Thucydides' desire for conceptual clarity. One rhetorical and probably deliberate result of this is that we readers stop to think.

If in his final words on Nicias Thucydides praises him without qualification for his *arete*, how does the overall portrait square with this? Nicias' career covers a larger part of Thucydides' text than does that of any other major figure, and he is one of the characters Thucydides develops most carefully. It is natural to expect Thucydides' final judgment to reflect this.

17. See Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 208.

18. A. W. H. Adkins, "The *Arete* of Nicias," *Greek. Roman and Byzantine Studies* 16 (1975), p. 388, suggests that Thucydides' praise is not ironic, and that the praise is of Nicias' "competitive" virtues (as defined by Adkins in *Merit and Responsibility*, p. 6), which include in this case his success as a general and his reputation for that success. This interpretation ignores Thucydides' own values, which he opposes to many traditional values, and thus seems to me to contradict Thucydides' portrait of Nicias.

19. The contrast between true *arete* in Thucydides and Nicias' attention to common *arete* resembles Plato's distinction between conventional justice, as defined by the example of Cephalus' life, and the philosophically determined justice that Socrates and his interlocutors examine after Cephalus leaves. Cephalus' notion of justice is conventional (*Republic* 33la–b), and he is too old in spirit to bear up under the questioning of Socrates. As soon as Socrates begins to question the simple idea that justice is speaking the truth and giving back what one has taken (331d), Cephalus hands on the discussion to Polemarchus. Cephalus says that he must retire to perform his regular sacrifices (331d). Nicias' position is much like Cephalus', except that as far as we can tell from Plato, Cephalus lives out his old age without trouble, while Nicias suffers partly because of his conventional views. Thucydides' thought resembles Plato's in that both distinguish ideal virtues from commonplace ones, and both see true understanding as the path from the merely conventional to the philosophical.

20. *Plato: Ion, Hippias Minor, Laches, Protagoras*, trans. with Comment by R. E. Allen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 57 (commentary).

21. See Charles H. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 152–53.

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Chapter 11

Revolution in Athens

Why Democracy Failed

Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores
And make a sop of all this solid globe:
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead:
Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong,
Between whose endless jar justice resides,
Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
Then every thing includes itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite;
And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself.

Shakespeare, "Troilus and Cressida," Act I, Scene iii, lines 109–10, 116–24. Ulysses is speaking of the confusion in the Greek camp as Achilles refuses combat.

Since it contains no speeches in direct discourse, Book 8 of the *Histories* poses special problems for a study of the speeches in Thucydides, whether the subject is Athenian speeches or speeches in general.[1] Our focus has been to examine the use of certain words and phrases in the Athenian speeches, and to use these words as pointers toward an understanding of various related facets of the work, especially Thucydides' perception of a decline in the power of

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logos and the implication of this decline for other changes in Athens. The lack of speeches in Book 8 has been explained in a variety of ways, most of which depend upon whether one accepts the notion that the work is incomplete.[2] While the work does break off before what seems to have been its intended conclusion, there is another, more significant reason for the absence of speeches in Book 8. By this stage of the war, the rhetorical space necessary for deliberative speeches has been destroyed by political strife. *Logos* has been rendered worthless. Thucydides makes this point dramatically by not quoting any speeches. As we have seen, the absence of speeches does not really begin abruptly with Book 8. The last direct discourse in Book 7 that has a deliberative function is Nicias' letter at the beginning of Book 7, and this is not even a speech. Despite this, Book 7 is generally recognized as a very finished piece of work.

The first stirrings of *stasis* and then *stasis* itself begin by changing the *axiosis* of words until in the end *stasis* destroys discourse. It swallows up all words into force and violence.[3] Book 8 depicts the last stages of this process, as Athens declines into a revolution, which illustrates and amplifies many of the developments apparent in comparisons of the Athenian speeches in the first seven books. Overall, Thucydides' reveals the decline of political discourse at Athens during the war. This decline mirrors several other movements in the *Histories*: from public to private, from trust to suspicion, from power (in Hannah Arendt's sense) to violence,[4] from *arche* or legitimate rule to tyranny, from orderly motion to bad or negative motion, and from being to disorganized becoming. Since all these movements reach their culmination in Book 8, this book in many ways exemplifies the conclusions of this study.

PART 1. BOOK 8 AS AN OBITUARY ON THE FAILED ATHENIAN CONSTITUTION

The most important figure in Book 8 is Alcibiades. After he delivers his prescription to the Spartans for winning the war by sending troops and a general to Syracuse and by fortifying Decelea, Alcibiades looms over the remainder of the *Histories* and becomes himself one of the main points of contention during the *stasis* of 411. For example, in the first steps toward the revolution of 411 Alcibiades tries to use Tissaphernes to reduce the power of Athens to a point where he might be recalled (8.46.1–8.46.2, 8.47.1). He appears to have influence with Tissaphernes and proposes to the Athenian leaders at Samos that he would return to Athens with them and bring over Tissaphernes if Athens would replace the democracy that exiled him with an oligarchy (8.47.2). Thucydides thus connects the exile of Alcibiades with this attempt in 412 to subvert the democracy. He thereby shows that the exile of

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Alcibiades is linked to the revolution at Athens not simply thematically but also as a cause of that revolution.

Phrynichus, however, sees in Alcibiades' designs no real preference for one form of government over another, but simply a desire for his own recall (8.48.4). Thucydides confirms Phrynichus' assessment (ὅπερ καὶ ἦν, "the very thing that was the case," 8.48.4). Instead of concerning themselves with Alcibiades, Phrynichus thinks that the Athenians should seek most of all "to avoid *stasis*" (ὅπως μὴ στασιάσωσιν, 8.48.4).

This maneuver by Alcibiades to bring in Tissaphernes (it is the first of many) illustrates one of the themes of Thucydides' general discussion of *stasis*. The ability to enlist an outside power provides a faction with opportunities it would not have on its own (3.82.1). Similarly, once Phrynichus realizes that a proposal to restore Alcibiades will be made, he himself seeks common cause with the Spartan commander Astyochus, but Astyochus uses the information Phrynichus provides in order to ingratiate himself with Tissaphernes (8.50.3).[5] Phrynichus realizes that in harming Alcibiades, he may hurt Athens herself (8.50.2), but this does not stop him.[6] Like Alcibiades in his speech at Sparta, Phrynichus in his second letter to Astyochus tries to avoid the stigma of treason. He argues simply that he should be able to do whatever he can to save his life (8.50.5). While Alcibiades' defense of his treason was daring in its outlandishness and attempt to redefine the terms of the discussion, Phrynichus sees the matter more baldly. Thucydides thus uses these two men as examples of the growing importance of private motives as they replace public virtues (3.82.8).[7]

While Alcibiades attempted to obtain the favor of Tissaphernes, Pisander and his colleagues, after their mission to Samos, returned to Athens to see what would have to be done to recall Alcibiades (8.53.1–8.53.2). A debate ensues in which Pisander argues that since Alcibiades cannot return and bring with him the trust of the king unless there is a more moderate form of government, Athens should turn to an oligarchy (8.53.3). Since Pisander makes this case to each of his opponents separately (8.53.2), this direct discourse is not a speech. It has a dramatic effect nonetheless. It focuses the reader's attention on the dangers Athens faces and emphasizes the importance Alcibiades' return has for Athens. Despite Pisander's appeal, however, and despite the establishment of an oligarchy, Alcibiades does not at this time return to Athens (8.63.4). The main reason Thucydides provides for Alcibiades' decision not to join the oligarchical movement is that he does not wish to do so. An explanatory clause (καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐπιτήδειον αὐτὸν εἶναι ἐς ὀλιγαρχίαν) reports the reasons of the Athenians at Samos for their decision to leave Alcibiades alone: Alcibiades is thought "not to be suitable or friendly to oligarchy," presumably because his family has always been on the side of the people, the *demos*.

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This word ἐπιτήδειος ("suitable," "fit," or "friendly") appears frequently in Book 8 as a political catchword referring to oligarchs or their sympathizers.[8] For example, at 8.48 Alcibiades arranges with emissaries from Samos to bring over Tissaphernes and the king. These emissaries then return to Samos and form a compact of ἐπιτηδείοι ("suitable ones," 8.48.2) so that the group becomes the center of oligarchic activity on Samos. At Athens somewhat later, Pisander brings an accusation against Phrynichus for betraying Iasus and slandering Amorges, but his reason for making the charge is that he does not think Phrynichus is the "appropriate man" (ἐπιτήδειος) for dealing with Alcibiades (8.54.3).[9]

Beyond its use as an oligarchic catchword, however, ἐπιτήδειος ("suitable") and related words suffer distortions in the heated political atmosphere of Athens. In the first case, after Thucydides notes the murder of Androcles by some of the oligarchic groups at Athens, he says that they also killed others who were not on their side (ἀνεπιτηδείους, "unsuitable," 8.65.2). This is a good example of the perversion of language Thucydides describes in his discussion of *stasis* in Book 3. The perversion consists in the casual violence of the application of the word ἀνἐπιτήδειος ("unsuitable"), which Thucydides seems to be picking up almost as a quotation, to someone whom one thinks it is convenient or suitable to kill. While Thucydides is not directly reporting the words or thoughts of the conspirators, the construction of the phrase (οἳ ἐδόκουν ἐπιτήδειοι εἶναι ὑπεξαιρεθῆναι, "whom they though it convenient to put away," 8.70.2, translation mine) makes it clear that Thucydides is using the catchword to report what he regarded as the thoughts of the conspirators. The cluster of examples of this and related words just before this instance builds up the implications of the word here.[10] These examples of the distortion of ἐπιτήδειος ("suitable") reflect an underlying lapse of normal civil restraints on violence. In 3.82 Thucydides comments on the general violence of *stasis* (3.82.1–3.82.2), yet he makes the twisting of the *axiosis* of words the starting point for his specific remarks on the changes wrought by the emotionalism of *stasis*. Thus, while it is true that *stasis* generally and in Athens in particular is horribly violent, Thucydides makes the violence done to language an important additional part of his general analysis. He carries this over into his presentation of *stasis* in Athens, which in his narrative exhibits both physical violence and the corruption of language.

Thucydides' narrative of the actual revolution unites his treatment of language in *stasis* with several other themes we have traced through the *Histories*.[11] Suspicion becomes rife (8.66.4–8.66.5) especially among the leaders of the people. As Thucydides tells us later, this suspicion was one of the goals the Four Hundred had in mind when they established their conspiracy but gave it out in a calculated misuse of political language that the government was of the Five Thousand and not of the Four Hundred. This

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misuse is in one sense merely a lie, but systematic political lies destroy public discourse. The effect of such lies is thus the same as the effect of consistently calling "recklessness" (τόλμα ἀλόγιστος) "courage" (ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος) or using the second phrase to describe something that is in fact the first. In fact, deliberately to call recklessness courage when one knows that the deed is in fact recklessness is a lie too. Lies destroy trust, and trust is an important part of the foundation of a healthy *polis.*[12]

The Four Hundred wanted neither for the Five Thousand to exist nor for it to be clear that they did not exist. This would create suspicion among the people as to who was in fact a member of the Five Thousand (8.92.11). This lack of trust isolates men and forces them to think of their private interests instead of the public good. As the people become fragmented into small groups, there is a general dissolution of the unified community in favor of the individual.

In the passage describing the attempts of the people to overthrow the Four Hundred, Thucydides shows how, once this process of political and linguistic dissolution has started, it is difficult to return to a more normal state. The people who want to overthrow the Four Hundred cannot openly declare what they want, because they fear that the Five Thousand may exist, and that they might say something inappropriate to one of them (8.92.11).[13] This situation leads to yet another example of linguistic corruption, and Thucydides describes it directly. Instead of rallying the *demos* with a clear address, those who want to overthrow the Four Hundred resort to the phrase, ὅστις τοὺς πεντακισχιλίους βούλεται ἄρχειν ἀντὶ τῶν τετρακοσίων ("whoever wished the Five Thousand to govern instead of the Four Hundred," 8.92.11). The new revolutionaries "hide under the name of the Five Thousand" (ἐπεκρύπτοντο γὰρ ὅμως ἔτι τῶν πεντακισχιλίων τῷ ὀνόματι, 8.92.11). This is hypocrisy of course, which depends for its effectiveness upon a perceived consistency in the use of terms. Hypocrisy on a broad scale undermines political discourse because as it becomes known that political figures are not dealing fairly and honestly with one another, suspicion flourishes.

In his narrative of the actual overthrow of the government, Thucydides comments explicitly on the division between the words that the conspirators used and the deeds to which they were actually referring. The Four Hundred have a public *logos* that only Five Thousand should share in the ruling of the *polis* but this does not correspond to their private aims (8.65.3). Thucydides calls their *logos* a "fair" (εὐπρεπὲς, 8.66.1) phrase for the multitude.[14] He thus is making this an example of the phenomenon he noted in Book 3, where he says that the leaders of each side in a city suffering *stasis* each have their own "fair phrases" (ὀνόματος . . . εὐπρεποῦς, 3.82.8). The cry of the radical democrats is political equality, while the oligarchs proclaim a "moderate aristocracy" (ἀριστοκρατίας σώφρονος, 3.82.8).[15]

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This passage crystallizes the way in which the loss of the freedom for political speech leads to violence. Political language becomes more private and less objective as it becomes more emotional, and suspicion rots the trust on which political discussion rests. As men find they can no longer rely on discourse, they resort to violence, and in a countermovement violence itself eliminates the possibility of dialogue. Since the existence of rhetorical space for political discourse helps to define man for Thucydides,[16] the destruction of this space implies a loss of man's being as man and not an animal. During war, men sink into mere violence without any political control and thus descend into the realm of becoming. As political discourse degenerates and men become more tyrannical, using violence to effect their ends, they lose their strictly political power, which depends upon their ability to act together. As a result their power decays, along with that of their *polis*. Athens' military, political, and cultural decline at the end of the war confirms this development.

While today we view democracy or modified republican democracy as among the best forms of government or the actual best form, we rely on Thucydides and the history of Athens to help understand what democracy was in its early development. It appears that there is a strong correlation between democracy and the creation of new capacities in human civic, commercial, artistic, and private life.[17] This led to a high level of measurable material prosperity and also to higher levels of intellectual achievement but in this important early example of democracy, the government in Athens, war and the lack of a lasting system of government that could direct the various forces needed for it to continue prove a toxic and deadly mix that poisons the underlying positive forces inherent in the freedom implied in democracy.

Although Pisander was the most visible figure in the revolution of the Four Hundred, Thucydides says that the chief architect of the plot was Antiphon. While Thucydides praises him for his intelligence and rhetorical abilities, he does not mention other crucial characteristics of a great leader, such as patriotism and freedom from corruption (8.68.1). In addition, Antiphon practiced his abilities behind the scenes. This shows how Athens has fallen off from the open debate that prevailed even into the beginning of the war. Although Antiphon's speeches may have contained much of great value, he did not make a public figure. The suspicions the multitude had of his "cleverness" (δεινότης) prevented him from having a true public political voice (8.68.1).[18] Thucydides notes that Theramenes and Phrynichus also participated in the plot, commenting on Theramenes' abilities in particular. He sums up the passage by observing that it required men of such intelligence to deprive the Athenians of their "freedom" (ἐλευθερίας, 8.68.4). This represents the demise of the freedom Pericles extolled in the Funeral Oration (2.40.5). Trust vanishes with that freedom, as suspicion and fear rule Athens' internal councils and her foreign relations. Thucydides makes a point of praising these men here for their abilities

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partly because he wants to show that politics has, as it were, gone indoors. The best men act in private, not in public. This represents a late stage in the decline from *parrhesia* (free, open speech), *isegoria* (free speech and equality), and *koinonia* (open community of purpose), which are the underlying emotional and practical bases of democracy. Diodotus represented an earlier stage in this decline when he could not appeal to all the moralizing arguments that could have been at disposal.

Alcibiades is, however, a partial exception at this juncture. While much of Alcibiades' activity is private, he does later perform a notable public service for his city when he prevents the Athenian navy at Samos from sailing against Athens (8.86.4–8.86.5). Here he does one of the types of deeds for which Thucydides praises Pericles. He restrains the emotions of the people (cf. 2.65.9). Thucydides prepares the reader for an appreciation of this public-spirited act when he observes that Alcibiades, in advising Tissaphernes not to end the war too quickly (8.46), recognized that if he did not destroy Athens he might be able to effect his own recall (8.47.1).[19] Because he remains apart from the events in Athens, Alcibiades does not become directly implicated in *stasis* and can remain to some extent free of the emotionalism of Athens immediately prior to and during the revolution.[20] On the other hand, and more importantly, Alcibiades looks to his own good first, not Athens', as Phrynichus realized and Thucydides confirms (8.48.4). Alcibiades was at that time willing to foment *stasis* for his own benefit to prepare his recall. The narcissism of this idea is overwhelming.

Some months later in 411 there is a kind of harsh wistfulness about Alcibiades' late-earned tribute from Thucydides, just as there is in Socrates' assertion that Alcibiades should not have the place of honor next to the beautiful Agathon in the *Symposium* (223a–b). Alcibiades is attracted to the beauty of Agathon, though his exclusion from the three productive thinkers at the end, Agathon, Aristophanes, and Socrates, confirms that he really is barren. In the end only Socrates can restrain his tendencies toward luxury and a lack of restraint, to recall from the *Gorgias* Callicles' ideas of what happiness is (492c). Callicles specifically rejects the many, who praise σωφροσύνη καὶ . . . δικαιοσύνη ("moderation or discipline, and justice") "on account of their lack of manliness" (διὰ τὴν αὑτῶν ἀνανδρίαν, 492b–c). Later in the dialogue, Socrates complains to Callicles that the Athenians have corrupted the city because of their lack of moderation and justice (σωφροσύνη καὶ . . . δικαιοσύνη, 519a). These are the same qualities Diotima says are the greatest and most beautiful parts of prudence, the parts that are concerned with the ordering of cities and habitations (*Symposium*, 209a–b). This suggests an even deeper problem of justice in Athens as compared with an ideal state, the complete lack of any political standing, let alone equality, for the women of Periclean Athens whose glory is to not fall short of their natural character and

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to be left out of talk by men for good or for bad (Funeral Oration, 2.45.2). The contrast with Plato's vision of the role of women in a just state in the *Republic* could not be more complete (Book V, 449d and following). In the *Meno*, Meno's first definition of *arete*, that is, excellence or virtue, is a compendium of the virtues of the different classes of people from top to bottom including slaves and women. Women are to manage their homes well and "obey their man" (κατήκοον οὖσαν τοῦ ἀνδρός, 71e). Of course, Meno's definitions are very conventional because he is young, but they reflect a hierarchy of personal values that do not accord with justice or with any rational valuation of Meno's character itself as Xenophon's later account of him in the *Anabasis* makes clear (II.6.21–27, 29). Meno's slave shows himself more capable of learning than Meno (*Meno*, 84a–85c). Presumably, any spouse he had would have done as well as Meno or more likely better. We are left to wonder about how to find justice in states that, leaving one-half the population out of account, are willing to forego the full benefit of those contributions (*Laws*, VII.805a–b).[21]

Thucydides marks the beginning of the plot to overthrow the democracy and recall Alcibiades with the verb κινέω, "move or set in motion." The idea for the plan, he says, was set in motion (ἐκινήθη, 8.48.1) first among the sailors at Samos.[22] The language of Thucydides' description of *stasis* at Athens corresponds to his portrait of *stasis* in general. Negative *kinesis* in the political sense is the enemy of rational and open *logoi*, unless those *logoi* control it. Thucydides' subsequent narrative confirms this.

The *ekklesia* or assembly ratified the proposals for the establishment of the Four Hundred without one person speaking in opposition (8.69.1). This shows how *logos* in the sense of public discussion has disappeared from Athens. Coupled with this disappearance is the violence of the Four Hundred, who carry hidden daggers (8.69.4) and employ 120 youths whenever they need something violent done. This recalls the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, although the situation seems on the surface to be reversed. The daggers are in that case concealed in the cloaks of those who want to assassinate Hippias and Hipparchus (6.57.1, 6.58.2), but here in 411 BC the tyrants have the daggers. In the popular mythology of Athens, Harmodius and Aristogeiton killed the tyrants and brought democracy to Athens. But their motivation was erotic. Pericles unleashed this misunderstood and dangerous *eros* in the souls of the Athenians and they became a tyrannical people. Pericles was himself not a tyrant. He was more the steward of a democracy that itself became tyrannical once he was gone and no longer able to restrain the people. Pericles defines bravery as the source of freedom and freedom as the source of happiness (2.43.4), but as Socrates says in his discussion of democracy in the *Republic*, freedom is the finest thing a democracy has, and democracy is the only worthwhile regime for a person who is "by nature"

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(φύσει) free (*Republic*, VIII.562b–c). Yet the insatiable desire (ἀπληστία) of democracy is what leads to tyranny (*Republic*, VIII.562c). This insatiable desire is what Pericles set free. When the democratic city ends up with bad bearers of wine and becomes drunk, it will blame its leaders and charge them with being oligarchs who are polluted with a curse (*Republic*, 562c–d). Plato's characterization of the risks of democracy seems to combine the beliefs of the people in Athens about Alcibiades and his alleged role in the mutilation of the Herms (6.28.2) and perhaps also the original Spartan charge that the Alcmaeonid family of Pericles suffered from a curse (1.126.2–10, 1.127.1).

It is important to remember, moreover, that in Thucydides' view the rule of the Peisistratids was virtuous until the assassination (6.54.5). Harmodius and Aristogeiton and their supporters on the one hand, and the Four Hundred on the other, seem the violent enemies of intelligent leadership. This then recalls Thucydides' praise of the government the Peisistratids, who practiced *arete* and used their "intelligence" (ξύνεσιν) for the most part (6.54.5). In addition, they provided for succession by ensuring that some members of their family were in the leadership of the state at the time, the *archons*. To the extent that Thucydides expresses the respect for a single leader or leading family that has *arete* and wisdom, he seems to agree with Plato in least in their shared inclinations for rulers who know the right thing to do. Thucydides seems to have modified that approach in his praise of the government of the Five Thousand (8.97.2). Plato apparently never did (*Statesman*, 292e–293a, 297b–c), though Socrates of course did appreciate the benefits of democracy. We can only speculate for Thucydides, since he never finished his book, concerning whether he would show or might even state that laws could preserve many of the elements of democracy by reducing the power of the leaders. For any democracy or other type of government to continue, the laws must first secure control of the desires of the leaders.[23] In the *Statesman*, the Stranger at least seems to agree with this in principle as even a single ruler, a king, must rule in accordance with the laws (301a–b) even though the laws are only imitations of the truth (300c).

The remainder of Book 8 provides several more examples of the change in the level and type of political discourse at Athens, notably when Chaereas returns to Samos and exaggerates the brutalities of the Four Hundred (8.74.3). This time, however, moderate heads prevail, and the soldiers at Samos decide not to sail on to Athens (8.75.1). Later, as the Four Hundred's rule has come into jeopardy, there are many "secret" (κρύφα) complaints against them (8.92.2). The Four Hundred are by this point treating with the Spartans to hand over Athens and building a wall to let them in if necessary (8.90). The Four Hundred will, if they are threatened with the reinstatement of the democracy, turn over Athens to Spartan control. This would have been the end of Athens, but a counterrevolution occurs as the Athenians realize that

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they are faced with a new war worse than the existing *stasis* or “private war” (τοῦ ἰδίου πολέμου) they have on their hands already (8.94.3).

The rule of the Four Hundred collapsed, according to Thucydides, because of the private ambitions of the members of the oligarchy. Although those who were discontented with the Four Hundred said that they wanted to establish some “more equal form of government” (τὴν πολιτείαν ἰσαιτέραν, 8.89.2), this was only a “political figure of speech” (σχῆμα πολιτικὸν τοῦ λόγου, 8.89.3) designed to hide their real ambitions. Alcibiades’ power encouraged those who wanted to overturn the government (8.89.4). In this analysis of the oligarchy of the Four Hundred that arose out of the democracy, Thucydides unites the themes of his chapter on Pericles and his successors with his analysis of *stasis* in Book 3. Thucydides ascribes the cause of *stasis* in general to “rule developing from greed and ambition” (ἀρχὴ ἡ διὰ πλεονεξίαν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν, 3.82.8, translation mine). These emotions, which manifest themselves as “the desire to be first in the state” (ὀρεγόμενοι τοῦ πρῶτος ἕκαστος γίγνεσθαι, 2.65.10), are for Thucydides one of the most important reasons for Athens’ decline. In 411, “each man who wants to seem to be with the people in fact desires the leadership of the people for himself” (ἠγωνίζετο οὖν εἷς ἕκαστος αὐτὸς πρῶτος προστάτης τοῦ δήμου γενέσθαι, 8.89.4). Under the cover of the call for a fairer form of government, these men intrigue for their own position. Thucydides uses almost the same words in his chapter on Pericles’ successors: ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας διαβολὰς περὶ τῆς τοῦ δήμου προστασίας (“but choosing rather to occupy themselves with private cabals for the leadership of the commons,” 2.65.11). The leaders of the Four Hundred called for moderation, while those who were staging the more democratic counterrevolution asked for fairness. These are the same cries, Thucydides says, that men use in *stasis* generally:

> οἱ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι προστάντες μετὰ ὀνόματος ἑκάτεροι εὐπρεποῦς πλήθους τε ἰσονομίας πολιτικῆς καὶ ἀριστοκρατίας σώφρονος προτιμήσει, τὰ μὲν κοινὰ λόγῳ θεραπεύοντες ἆθλα ἐποιοῦντο. (3.82.8)
>
> The leaders in the cities, each provided with the fairest professions, on the one side with the cry of political equality of the people, on the other of a moderate aristocracy, sought prizes for themselves in those public interests which they pretended to cherish. (3.82.8)

Athens’ strength and some actual selflessness on the part of her citizens (8.75.1, 8.86.4–8.86.5) allow the *polis* to continue the war for several more years, and even to win some significant victories, but Thucydides’ analysis is intellectually of a piece. In a sense, this residual power proves another of Pericles’ points: Athens had great resources.

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Thucydides' understanding of the causes of *stasis* in Athens is the same in his summary of Pericles' life as it is in his review of the fall of the oligarchy of the Four Hundred. Both of these analyses in turn complement the general understanding of *stasis* Thucydides provides in Book 3. Socrates sees very similar forces at work in *Republic* Book 8, where he points out that the oligarchs in a city in *stasis* or on the verge of it bring in outside oligarchical states, just as the democrats generally bring in democratic allies (VIII. 556e–557a).

PART 2. *EROS* AND THE BEST FORM OF GOVERNMENT

There remains one crucial passage for discussion in which Thucydides speaks for himself. After the dissolution of the government of the Four Hundred, the Athenians embark upon a mixed constitution, and Thucydides comments,

> καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα δὴ τὸν πρῶτον χρόνον ἐπί γε ἐμοῦ Ἀθηναῖοι φαίνονται εὖ πολιτεύσαντες: μετρία γὰρ ἥ τε ἐς τοὺς ὀλίγους καὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς ξύγκρασις ἐγένετο καὶ ἐκ πονηρῶν τῶν πραγμάτων γενομένων τοῦτο πρῶτον ἀνήνεγκε τὴν πόλιν. (8.97.2)
>
> *Then for the first time, at least in my lifetime, the Athenians seem to me to have had a good constitutional arrangement.* For the mixture of the high and the low was measured, and this first raised up the state after her manifold disasters. (*Italics* indicate Hornblower's part of this translation. See *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III* 8.97.2n. Continuation translation is mine.) (8.97.2)[24]

The meaning of the second half of this statement has caused less dispute, but the first half has raised a number of questions. The passage has caused some consternation because it seems to contradict the view that, for Thucydides, Pericles' rule represents the political ideal. In the first place, however, Thucydides here in Book 8 is commenting only on the form of government.[25] As a model, the mixed constitution is for him of a higher order than is democracy. Pericles' position in the democracy in a sense violated that form of government. The emphasis should be on "measured (μετρία)" as this word implies that a prudential measure was used to decide on the principle of representation of various classes. It is not entirely clear how long this balance was maintained in the running of the government. It should be kept in mind that the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, Aristotle or, more likely, his students or others associated with him, state the same opinion about the interim Constitution of the Five Thousand (apparently with a *boule* of 500 or 400 separate from the government of the Four Hundred):

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δοκοῦσι δὲ καλῶς πολιτευθῆναι κατὰ τούτους τοὺς καιρούς, πολέμου τε καθεστῶτος καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὅπλων τῆς πολιτείας οὔσης. (Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 33)

But Athens seems to have been governed well in this critical time, despite the war going on and the government being of those who bore heavy arms. (Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia*, 33)

This appears to be a rewrite of Thucydides that does not resolve the historical questions Thucydides' comments leave for us. It seems best to take this point and Thucydides' as general judgments that cover a variety of the less significant circumstances and details, many of which are quite important.[26]

Thucydides implicitly criticizes the Periclean ideal. The imperial image of the *polis* Pericles presents in the Funeral Oration easily shifts to something like a tyranny.[27] Pericles appears not to have foreseen completely the effect his image of the *polis* would have on internal political relations.[28] In fact, Pericles does seem to have failed, at least in practical terms, to anticipate the danger of demagogues like Cleon arising in a democracy in particular and in a world in which tyrants both good and bad had been prevalent. This is a significant political and theoretical weakness of Pericles that is part of his failure to guard against what was to him, perhaps, unknown in his Athens but which could have been foreseen. When Pericles exhorts the citizens to gaze upon the power of the city and become lovers of her (2.43.1), he engages a very dangerous emotion, especially appropriate to tyrants (Herodotus, 6.62, Plato, *Republic*, 573b–573e, 574d–575a).[29] *Eros* is by itself limitless. When Athens loses Pericles, it loses the restraints that he could place on this *eros*. The Sicilian Expedition results as the Athenians, driven by *eros* (6.24.3), expand the openness of Athens (2.38.2–2.39.1) into an impulse for constant expansion. After his death, the *eros* Pericles asks of his people lacks the control he had provided. With him gone Athens resembles the team of winged horses Socrates envisions in his description of *eros* and the soul in the *Phaedrus*, but without the charioteer to guide them (246a–246d, 253c–254e). Pericles' death releases Athens from the orderly motion that his vision of the war offered. First, the Athenians desire to expand the empire, then they turn their *eros* inward and the citizens seek to dominate one another. The city declines into tyrannical foreign relations, and then into internal suspicion and *stasis*. Plato's view of how *eros* should relate to one's approach to one's own country or city, as expressed in the *Laws*, is more measured and more carefully woven into the fabric of the political realm. There political *eros* "makes one desirous and a lover of being a perfect citizen [knowing how] to rule and to be ruled with justice" (ποιοῦσαν ἐπιθυμητήν τε καὶ ἐραστὴν τοῦ

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πολίτην γενέσθαι τέλεον, ἄρχειν τε καὶ ἄρχεσθαι ἐπιστάμενον μετὰ δίκης, *Laws*, 643e–644a).

Plato's view of the role of *eros* in political arrangements differs sharply from what Pericles expresses. While Pericles—as Thucydides presents him—is a lover of the *polis*, the philosopher's *eros* in Plato is for knowledge (*Republic*, 490b, cf. 475b).[30] Although Pericles says that the Athenians are lovers of beauty and wisdom (2.40.1), this love is part of the *polis*. For Plato, on the other hand, the philosopher who could be the leader of the *polis* must be persuaded to participate in the life of the *polis*. In opposition to his desire to contemplate being, he must be persuaded to come down into the *polis* and rule it (*Republic*, 519c–520a, cf., 486a–486b, 540b–540e). For Plato the founding of the *polis* may be erotic, in that men are not self-sufficient and must make common cause with other men and perhaps most importantly with women.[31] At the highest level in the *Laws*, in the more practical vision of just law compared with the more abstract vision of the *Republic*, the erotic is directed away from the political Athenian community of the males of the species, toward the family (*Laws*, Book V, 740a and following),[32] and then toward the eternal.[33] Pericles' *eros* is for the *polis*. The *eros* of Plato's philosopher-king is for knowledge in the *Republic*. In the *Laws*, the *eros* of everyone else in the city on a practical daily level is for the family. The shift toward family in the *Laws* as compared with the *Republic* is clear and large.[34] This shows part of Plato's response to Pericles' and the Athenians' view of the state as a primary space for the expression of one's fundamental worth and identification. The Athenian Stranger in the *Laws* proposes a reorientation of the model for human political life to a focus on Athena (*Laws*, Book VII, 796b–c), which would seem to lead away from the Athenian tyrant killers and the implied model of democracy springing from a combination of the personal and the political. The Stranger elevates the ideal to the Greek divine in the person of Athena, the goddess of weaving, war, and wisdom.[35]

The setting of Athena as an ideal figure again for Athens parallels on a mythological level the philosophical ideal of raising truth above man's measure of it. Pericles also aims for and projects an objective *logos*. He can give an account of what he understands (2.60.6), and *logos* controls his action. As for Thucydides, he claims eternal significance and importance for his *logos* (1.22.4). In other words, although Thucydides' purpose is the education of the *polis* and not knowledge as such, he adheres to "the truth" (τὸ . . . σαφὲς,1.22.4) and not to man's measure of it. A significant difference between Pericles and Thucydides is that Pericles' highest life is action in this world, while Thucydides' goal is to provide knowledge of men. Plato's goal, on the other hand, is higher than Pericles' or Thucydides' aims. Thought as such is higher than the *polis*, and it is of universal extent, while the study of the *polis* only pertains to man's relation to other men.[36] What Thucydides seeks to do

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at least some of the time is to find the universal in the particular, though he proceeds dramatically and generally not discursively. As Hornblower points out, Pericles' generalization concerning the primacy of the power of the state in ensuring our well-being seems Platonic.[37] Yet Pericles had to manage the actual world around us, though he could and did, especially but not only in his rhetoric, make use of higher forms of thought than material victory and well-being.

What then was Pericles' conceptual mistake in planning the war that he saw as inevitable? To judge from the points of Thucydides and Plato, his failure seems to have been in not developing a new set of laws and customs or *nomoi*, to reorganize the direction of Athens toward a government more in line with the fundamental shift toward equality and democracy that appears to have been the main appeal of Athens to foreigners as well as to the less powerful citizens, women, slaves, and other unrepresented residents already there. The shift amplified the importance of *isonomia*, *koinonia*, *parrhesia*, and *isegoria*; equality before the law; a sense of shared community identity; and freedom and equality of speech. In Plato's *Statesman* in particular it appears that the Stranger's formulation of the true power of "the statesman and good lawgiver" (τὸν δὴ πολιτικὸν καὶ τὸν ἀγαθὸν νομοθέτην, 309c–d) is as one who uses the tools of *phronesis* (φρόνησις, 272c, cf., φρόνιμον, 309e and 263d [of the crane]), which is probably best translated as "wisdom," to subsume the particular under the general.[38]

The role of the lawgiver is secondary to the role of the leader as a "kingly man with wisdom" (ἄνδρα τὸν μετὰ φρονήσεως βασιλικόν, 294a) but "it is clear that the lawmaking art belongs to the art of the king" (δῆλον ὅτι τῆς βασιλικῆς ἐστιν ἡ νομοθετική, 294a).[39] The reason the lawgiver's art is subordinate to the kingly art (and all of these arts are τέχναι, the plural of τέχνη [*techne*]) is that the king (or leader in our world) as a dispenser of wisdom is more capable of suiting judgments to the particular circumstances of particular people than any static law can be since human life is always in motion (294a–b). But in his role as general (*strategos*), Pericles' expertise appears to owe a lot to military solutions. It is very rare that leaders of any sort can function as wise kings. Thucydides makes a strong case that Pericles' judgments were valid, wise, and practical, but they turn out badly in the long run of a very long war partly because of chance and partly because of a failure to include a satisfactory estimation of the power of chance on Athenian rule externally as an empire and internally as an aspiring democracy subject to the stresses of political, military and other interests. In addition, the failure to includes succession in the plans was fatal to the Athenian Empire.

Many of the problems that Pericles' policies led to could have been controlled or ameliorated or even solved through significant constitutional change or law. While it is hard to see a clear institutional path for a general

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to effect such change, Thucydides' estimate of Pericles' personal power is almost certainly correct, which would suggest that if he had been inclined to initiate changes in how leaders were elected or in the setup of new or revived middle, moderating force (like a senate or *boule* in historical Athenian terms) in Athenian politics to focus on the long-term interests of the *polis*, he would have had a reasonable chance of success. This is not to say that Pericles needed to solve all of the contradictions inherent in the contrast between Athens' democratizing power and the city's imperial, patriarchal, and intensely male structure, but addressing some of them would have enhanced Athens' power and prestige and authenticated for a new generation her political leadership. Athens had a history of such figures beginning with Draco and Solon and continuing with Kleisthenes and Ephialtes (likely working with Pericles early in Pericles' career),[40] any or all of whom could have supplied Pericles with a model. Indeed, Ephialtes was also a *strategos*.[41] Thucydides indicates Pericles weaknesses or mistakes as a leader through his dramatic and sophisticated narrative technique, which highlights the ways in which some of these problems and contradictions affect Athens' efforts in the war and hampers her success. The slightly ironic way in which all of the reasons for Pericles' trust in Athens' victory is presented despite the obvious failure of those reasons to ensure success will remind the careful reader of one of the signal failures in the Athenian way of life, intellectual arrogance amounting to *hubris.* The other side of this is the resulting failure, which recalls a different tragedy, the *Persae* of Aeschylus and the failure of the Persian invasions of Greece. The failure of the Athenian Empire recalls, partly through allusions to Herodotus, and also partly through allusions to Aeschylus' *Persae*, the failure of Persia in its invasions.[42]

In the *Statesman*, the Stranger presents the work of the leader of the state as a kind of weaving—weaving different types of people together, weaving even the potentially discordant souls of individuals into productive citizens.[43] The statesman, as a practitioner of the art (*techne*) of politics, prevents and resolves the potential problems caused by *stasis* in the souls of individuals and in the citizens as a group. He thus must resolve problems with individuals whose disordered souls affect others and the *polis* generally but also relations between various groups and classes. When a soul, like Alcibiades', for example, is wicked or base, it suffers from "*stasis* and sickness of the soul" (στάσιν . . . καὶ νόσον τῆς ψυχῆς, *Sophist*, 228). This state corresponds to political disease. The remedy for this is to resolve the ignorance in the soul through various kinds of teaching (229a–231c). In Socrates' hands, this is dialogue.

In the hands of a statesman, the tools for resolving disagreement and ignorance are engaging in discussion in various chambers of representative government and giving speeches. This is clearly a difficulty as this type of communication, by speeches, is the hallmark of the Sophists not of Socrates.

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The resolution to this problem in the *Statesman* is that the political art (a *techne*) brings into being something that does not previously exist. This is why weaving makes such a clear metaphor for political speech and action (292d). The political art calls into being something that does not already exist,[44] a practice in politics, an agreement, a law, a treaty, a constitution, or other political artifact. If the artifacts have a kind of permanence in a physical form, for example, a law that derives from wisdom, or a determination that is not a law but that does result from wisdom or *phronesis*, then the practioner of the political art has brought something into being.

Pericles should have woven something new, probably through a constitutional change but also through changes in customs or acts, probably including a restructuring of the empire and payment for it so that it would not incline to a tyranny. Some changes were needed to further ensure victory in what proved to be a failed military plan. We can also see in Socrates' criticisms of Pericles and in Pericles' actual conduct as reported by Thucydides, an image of the failure Socrates sees in the thought of Anaxagoras. Anaxagoras says that mind (*nous*) arranges everything and reasons through everything, in the formulation of Socrates in the *Phaedo*, yet nowhere does Anaxagoras explain how everything is better or will be better, nor does he even use mind as an explanation (97b8–98b2). Instead, Anaxagoras relies on material causes such as air, ether, water, and other such things (98c). Then Socrates makes an analogy to human activity and says that in this type of reasoning someone like himself talks because of air and sound, leaving mind (*nous*) out of account altogether. So by analogy, in war one might say that someone wins or loses not because of plans and ideas but for material reasons. No doubt this does happen but in our practical world of *phronesis*, events and material and *nous* are all mixed together. In the world of Being, *nous* determines everything. In Parmenides' poem our daily, familiar material, world, is the world of *doxa*, the world of "Seeming," or what is not.[45] Yet in the *Sophist*, as we have seen, the Stranger links what is not with what is other (*Sophist*, 252a–257a and in particular 256d–e), and corrects Parmenides, for whom the world of seeming is the world of what is not (e.g., Frag, 8.7–9), and what cannot be spoken (Frag. 8.8–10).[46] The Stranger's move justifies epistemologically our thought of what is not, which Parmenides forbids. This solves in some ways the profound problems that develop for philosophy if the world we all know we actually live in cannot be addressed by thought.

Pericles clearly can see how important mind can be. He recognizes the world of thought even though he lives and operates in the world of seeming. The Funeral Oration attests to that, which is part of its powerful and perennial appeal. But he did not follow the thought of Socrates, who sees in his own way the connection between *nous* and the world of seeming, as he explains in the *Phaedo*. Thus, Pericles' vision of the world of thought is partial and static.

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He does not join it with our world in a complete way. Yet as a leader Pericles focuses on material advantage in war and provides the excellent advice of a very good general in his speeches. He sees the world largely as Anaxagoras sees it. In his indirect discourse speech in Book 2 (2.13 ff.) of the *Histories*, Pericles concentrates on the material factors of the war and in particular on the money the Athenians have on hand and as income from their allies (2.13.2),[47] as Edith Foster has shown. He also emphasizes Athenian power. Pericles' contribution in understanding the possibilities of Athenian rule here focuses on Athens' material and financial advantages and how to deploy her strengths militarily. Of course such matters are crucial in war, but Pericles does not show how this war will make things better, nor does he explain how it will extend the ideas of Athenian democracy. In short, *nous* or mind in the way Socrates understands these ideas does not lead the discussion for Pericles. Pericles seems to have followed the patterns of Anaxagoras' thought here.[48] *Nous* does not lead him to a new theory of democratic empire, or any new normative idea of the best way to lead such an empire.[49] On the other hand, Pericles did recognize the importance of the idea of human freedom, as the Funeral Oration attests. Yet he did not understand actively how to expand it.

This leads us back to Thucydides' relationship to Pericles. Pericles' responsibility for Athens extended beyond his life to the education of his successors, but unfortunately, as Plato points out several times, he could not educate his own children and wards, much less other leaders. As we have seen, Thucydides also suggests a criticism of Pericles concerning the education of Alcibiades. Pericles' inability to educate his most able successor symbolizes his inability to educate the people of Athens in general. Thucydides' effort is to address this problem through his *logos*. He wants his work to be "useful" (ὠφέλιμα, 1.22.4) to all men, but especially to those who must act in the world. In this sense, Thucydides' *Histories* surpasses the *erga* of Pericles. Pericles' leadership represents for Thucydides an ideal of philosophically informed action, but Thucydides' *logos* is both the handmaiden to such action in that it represents it and superior to it because it incorporates the goal of providing for successors.

Thucydides describes the Peloponnesian War in abstract terms, such as κίνησις ("movement"), τύχη ("chance"), and ξυνέσις ("intelligence"), that make clear his intent to use the war to explore the entire range of human political conduct. He thus implicitly claims that his *logos* is the true political *logos*. It includes and surpasses even Pericles' *logos*. Thucydides' words witness the truth and the tragedy of Athenian greatness, and not only this truth. His words comprehend the Peloponnesian War and through it war as such. For Plato, the tragedy of Athens is embodied in the execution of Socrates and in Socrates' war to the end against the hatred of reason. Pericles says

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that Athens needs neither a Homer to praise her nor one whose words will please, and claims that the great deeds of the Athenians will make her famous (2.41.4).[50] Thucydides is not Athens' Homer, but he seeks to educate political man.

Because this goal is so important to Thucydides, he appears to view with horror the degeneration of political language that takes place in *stasis*. This degeneration is a threat to his entire enterprise generically, and more importantly and more broadly to man as a political being. In order to help his readers see this threat clearly, Thucydides documents it in his chapters on revolution in Corcyra and then provides examples of how Athenian political discourse degenerated in the course of the war. These examples allow us to see the nature of correct political speech, and to recognize the types of perversion to which such speech is liable. Alcibiades' ways of expressing himself reveal a preoccupation with appearances and himself as a kind of erotic force in Athenian political life. His conduct becomes a catalogue of examples of how political wisdom works or fails. *Eros* becomes a significant focus and source of the failures, as Plato's revelation of his character in the *Symposium* makes clear. Or, as Victoria Wohl puts the matter, "Without contesting [the traditional] reading of eros as a metaphor for empire, this chapter reverses the equation and reads empire as a metaphor for eros."[51] The point of this particular reversal is that in our daily lives empire is a political phenomenon that can become a very dangerous form of rule that we call tyranny.

The overall emotional impact of the failure of Athens in Thucydides' *Histories* is a sense of profound tragedy complete with an overarching dramatic *peripeteia* or reversal, the Sicilian Expedition, complete with the fear and pity we see in *Oedipus the King*.[52] The error or mistake in the terms of a Greek tragedy would be the curse of the Alcmeonids passing through the family of Pericles on his mother's side to Pericles himself (1.127.1), who then makes a "great mistake" (ἁμαρτία μεγάλη) in pursuing war with Sparta.[53] If the Spartans are to be believed, the curse results from an offense against Athena herself. He did not understand all the factors he needed to understand so great an undertaking. He lacked the discipline or *sophrosune* to keep in mind the limitations on his knowledge of the role of chance in war, some of which he could have controlled through improved constitutional structures and a plan for succession. We have a "recognition" (ἀναγνώρισις, Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1452a) of the mistake by Nicias and in our view of Nicias, who undeservedly falls from great fortune to great misfortune because of a series of mistakes he makes that are smaller than those of Pericles. Nicias recognizes the mistake and amplifies it. More generally, his own mistakes include his military errors, his reliance on seers, and most importantly his failure to understand the people of Athens when he proposes enlarging the expedition to Sicily in hopes of deterring them from military adventurism in Sicily.

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At the end in Syracuse, he sees the danger he and his army face (7.69.2). When he addresses his men later, he exhorts his men with the thought that they should rely on their own courage (7.77.7), because "men make a city not walls or ships empty of men" (ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, καὶ οὐ τείχη οὐδὲ νῆες ἀνδρῶν κεναί, 7.77.7). This directly echoes Pericles' encouragement to the Athenians not to be disturbed by Spartan incursions into Attica that result in the loss of houses and land, since "they do not gain men, but men acquire them" (1.143.5).[54] Yet Nicias' failure, as we have seen, is a misunderstanding of courage itself.

NOTES

1. There is one small exception to the absence of direct discourse by Athenians in Book 8, Pisander's reply to his opposition during the discussion of the recall of Alcibiades (8.53.3). Pisander seems to have made these remarks separately to individuals, however (8.53.2).

2. The work as a whole is incomplete, and Book 8 in particular contains a number of difficulties. Andrewes (*Historical Commentary*) has assembled a great number of the "indications of incompleteness" (Vol. V, pp. 361–83. For Book 8, see pp. 369ff.). For a useful summary of work on "die thukydideische Frage," see Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History*, pp. 250ff. As Rawlings says (agreeing with de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, p. 6), the study of the composition of the work "has failed, almost entirely, to help us interpret" Thucydides (p. 253). This is not to deny that Book 8 is incomplete, only to suggest that without some new external evidence, pursuit of the question of composition will yield meager results. Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 229–30, and Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*, pp. 136–37, agree in seeing a general internal coherence of Book 8 and its consistency with the rest of the *Histories*.

For an interesting speculative attempt to understand Book 8 as we have it, and on the assumption that Thucydides' last words in Book 8 are his intended conclusion, see J. A. Wettergreen, "On the End of Thucydides' Narrative," pp. 93–110.

3. I am using Hannah Arendt's term, force, which for her is closely allied with violence. See *The Human Condition*, pp. 181–82.

4. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, pp. 220–21.

5. H. D. Westlake in "Phrynichos and Astyochos (Thucydides VIII.50–1)," pp. 99–104, has argued that Thucydides' narrative of Phrynichus' interactions with Astyochus is puzzling, since it is difficult to accept that Phrynichus would have sent a second letter to Astyochus after having heard that Asytochus had betrayed the contents of the first. While this second letter is hard to understand, Thucydides does say that after Phrynichus found out about the betrayal, he was distraught (θορυβούμενος, 8.50.5). This is probably one of those passages in which we can see the lack of finish of Book 8. It is possible that Phrynichus' emotional state led him to make this mistake. As Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," has pointed out, emotionalism and improvised action characterize *stasis* (pp. 152–56, 161–62). (But see also his own

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interpretation of the problem of the second letter, pp. 190–91.) It may also be that Phrynichus contrived the second letter as a trap. Certainly, he benefited from it in the end (8.51.1).

6. Cf. Pouncey, *The Necessity of War*, p. 133, on Phrynichus' betrayal of Athens.

7. Cf. Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," pp. 34ff.

8. See Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 223 n. 25. As Connor notes, an "ἐπιτήδειος ("a suitable one") was someone you could rely upon, a good friend. The word becomes a feature of oligarchic language, meaning someone who was suited to the oligarchy, that is who could be relied upon to support it, 8.48.2; 8.54.3; 8.63.4; 8.64.4; cf. 5.76.2. Hence, opponents of the oligarchy were the "unsuitable ones" (8.65.2). See Andrewes, *Historical Commentary*, 8.64.5n., and Connor, p. 222 n. 21, for some additional comments.

9. For another example of an aristocratic political catchword (καὶ μὴ περὶ πολιτείας τὸ πλέον βουλεύσομεν ἐν τῷ παρόντι ἢ περὶ σωτηρίας, "The safety of the state, not the form of its government," 8.53.3) embedded in Thucydides' narrative, see L. A. Bieler, "A Political Slogan in Ancient Athens," pp. 181–84.

10. ὑπεξαιρεθῆναι at 8.70.2 is itself a euphemism that actually refers to killing (cf. ἀπέκτειναν, 8.70.2). See LSJ s. v. ὑπεξαιρέω, A. 2.

11. Pouncey, *The Necessities of War*, pp. 139–50, and especially p. 147, makes the valuable point that in Book 8 Thucydides portrays how *stasis* takes over Athens and therefore the entire war.

12. See in particular, Clifford Orwin, "*Stasis* and Plague: Thucydides on the Dissolution of Society," p. 837.

13. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 8.92.11 n.

14. τοῦτο ("this") in ἦν δὲ τοῦτο εὐπρεπὲς πρὸς τοὺς πλείους ("But this was a mere catchword for the multitude," 8.66.1, translation Crawley) refers to the content of the entire preceding sentence (8.65.3), in which Thucydides reports the *logos* of the oligarchs with Pisander, that only persons serving in the war should be paid, and that only Five Thousand should share in rule. Connor (*Thucydides*, p. 223) paraphrases ἦν δὲ τοῦτο εὐπρεπὲς as "their claim was specious." This paraphrase emphasizes (properly in my view) that Thucydides is concentrating on the speciousness of the *logos*.

15. Σωφροσύνη often has an oligarchic overtone. See Andrewes, *Historical Commentary*, 8.64.5n. See also 8.64.5 itself, σωφροσύνην γὰρ λαβοῦσαι. Hornblower notes at 8.64.5 in *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III* that "this is the clearest example anywhere in Thucydides of the oligarchic meaning of Σωφροσύνη." As Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 222 n. 21, sees, this passage provides examples of Thucydides' representations of political slogans. Once the Four Hundred effectively take over, others are afraid to speak in opposition (8.66.2). If they do speak, some convenient (ἐπιτήδειος) form of death is devised (8.66.2). This example of ἐπιτήδειος again suggests its use as an oligarchic catchword.

16. See Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 184. This idea is also central to Cogan's *The Human Thing*. Cogan defines *to anthropinon* ("the human") in Thucydides as the use of public rhetorical speech for human action (pp. 237–38, 253–54).

17. See Josiah Ober, *Democracy and Knowledge: Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 60, 73–79.

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18. See Andrewes, *Historical Commentary*, 8.68.ln., for a sound appreciation of the reservations in Thucydides' praise of Antiphon.

19. It may be that Alcibiades helped Athens earlier too, just after the defeat in Sicily when Agis was persuaded to encourage revolts in Ionia and not Euboea (8.5.1–8.5.2). This is part of the argument Wettergreen, "On the End of Thucydides' Narrative," makes that Alcibiades' treachery to Athens is less clear in fact than it seems on the surface. Perhaps, he suggests, Alcibiades seemed to betray Athens because he had no alternatives that would be helpful to Athens or to himself. See especially p. 102. Certainly, a revolt in Euboea was more dangerous to Athens than revolt in Ionia (8.95–8.96.1). On the other hand, Agis is the subject of ἀναπείθεται in 8.5.2, and no agent of persuasion (such as Alcibiades) is named.

20. Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," pp. 194–95. Alcibiades' return at least temporarily improved Athens' fortunes, which raises the question of how and whether it would be possible for a *polis* to survive and prosper if its basis was personal interest. How would the inverse of Pericles' Athens fare (2.60.2–2.60.4)? The *Histories* as a whole tells us that such a *polis* would be doomed, but Alcibiades' exile allows the question of the relationship of personal interest to the good of the *polis* to be formulated in an almost pure form, in a fashion similar to Glaucon's and Adimantus' insistence in the *Republic* that the issue of justice in the *polis* must be discussed in absolute terms (358e–367e). Socrates' interlocutors want the value of justice to be tested by a case in which the most unjust man fares well and the most just man has only justice and no other benefit (361a–361d). Thucydides uses the contrast between Alcibiades and Pericles to pose in a pure form the fundamental question of the relationship of the individual to the *polis*.

21. See also Leo Strauss, *The Argument and the Action of Plato's Laws*, Chicago: Midway Reprint, University of Chicago Press, 1983, pp. 106–8.

22. See Barnard, "*Stasis* in Thucydides," p. 61, for a good discussion of the relationship of κίνησις and similar words to *stasis*. Note especially 8.71.2 and the use of ταράσσω, which has a related meaning, "agitate, disturb, throw into disorder," twice in 8.71.1. Cf. ἐταράχθησαν at 2.65.11.

23. In framing a government, which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself (https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-51, originally published in *The New York Packet*, Friday, February 8, 1788).

24. Translation in *italics* Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 8.97.2n. Continuation translation is mine.

25. Andrewes, *Historical Commentary*, 8.97.2n., provides a thorough review of the various ways of understanding these words, settling on an interpretation, however, that is as difficult at least as the words themselves. Andrewes softens the litotes of οὐχ ἥκιστα δὴ to be nothing more than a "weak superlative" (p. 334), meaning something like "exceptionally" (p. 339). But this leaves the δὴ out of account entirely, even though it is very common in Thucydides with superlative adjectives and adverbs. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, p. 207, reports thirty-six instances in Thucydides.

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Andrewes argues also that τὸν πρῶτον χρόνον refers not to the "first time" in Thucydides' life (ἐπί γε ἐμοῦ) but to the first phase of the rule of the Five Thousand. The most decisive objections to this are (1) that Thucydides nowhere distinguishes such "phases" and (2) that the mere hint of them here without further elaboration would be so elliptical as to be completely obscure. Even Andrewes must guess at what they would be (p. 333). The translation thus should be: "And not least of all, for the first time in my life at any rate, the Athenians appear to have governed themselves well." By "governed themselves well," Thucydides means established a good form of government. Under Pericles Athens reached her peak, but the form of government as such did not embody principles that would enable it to survive. That the constitution of 411 did not last is not a decisive objection to this interpretation, since it was almost an accident of war, and Athens had declined appreciably by this point.

Connor, *Thucydides*, p. 228 n. 34, objects to taking εὖ πολιτεύσαντες as referring to the form of government, as opposed to the actual results of political life, but gives no argument other than a desire to "reject the premise that the eighth book must reflect the same attitude as the second." But the presence of τὴν πολιτείαν in the preceding sentence surely helps to slant εὖ πολιτεύσαντες toward form of government, as Andrewes points out (p. 331).

I am generally following Hornblower here (*A Commentary on Thucydides: Volume III*, 8.97.2 n.). The idea of a mixture in the formation of government here decidedly shifts the focus away from the personal qualities of leaders and toward the realization that Thucydides seems to entertain here that a well-crafted constitution might have prevented the defeat of Athens.

26. See Peter John Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 411–12, for a full discussion.

27. Cf. A. French, "Thucydides and the Power Syndrome," pp. 27 and 29, who sees the problem of empire in the nature of power as such.

28. Grene, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 30–31.

29. See Connor, *Thucydides*, pp. 178–79; and Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 133–34.

30. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 128.

31. Strauss, *The City and Man*, pp. 99–100.

32. See Michael L. Parker, *Sex and the Soul: Plato's Equality Argument in the Republic*, Dissertation, The University of Cincinnati, 2006, pp. 178–81, available at https://etd.ohiolink.edu/ (accessed May 3, 2019). Parker notes that the shifts in the *Laws* as compared with the *Republic* in the status of private property, the reinstitution of marriage, and new laws regarding family and inheritance derive from a large reorientation in the state proposed there toward a focus on family and private property.

33. This does not mean that Plato dismisses patriotism. In the *Crito*, in what is perhaps the Socrates' most complete statement on the subject, he says that he cannot disavow his homeland, because one's country is, compared with one's mother and father, more to be honored (τιμιώτερόν), reverenced (σεμνότερον), and is more sacred (ἁγιώτερον, 51a). Consistently with the *Republic*, however, Socrates does not refer to *eros* here, nor does he do so in *Apology* 30a when he mentions his kinship with his fellow Athenians.

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34. Yet the position of women as equal to that of men carries over from the *Republic* to the *Laws* in that in the *Laws* women may participate in almost all magistracies. See David Cohen, "The Legal Status and Political Role of Women in Plato's *Laws*," *Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité* 34 (1987), pp. 34, 37.

35. Pangle, *The Laws of Plato*, "Interpretive Essay," p. 488.

36. Strauss, *The City and Man*, p. 237.

37. Hornblower, *Thucydides*, pp. 120–26, esp. p. 123.

38. Paul Stern, "The Rule of Wisdom and the Rule of Law in Plato's *Statesman*," *The American Political Science Review* 91, no. 2 (06, 1997), pp. 264–76, esp. p. 271.

39. Paul Stern, "The Rule of Wisdom and the Rule of Law in Plato's *Statesman*," p. 271.

40. For the history of these reformers, see P. J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World*, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing, 2010, p. 23. For the history of Ephialtes and his political relationship with Pericles, see David Stockton, *The Classical Athenian Democracy*, pp. 41–42.

41. Robert W. Wallace, "Ephialtes and the Areopagus," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, Vol. 15, Number 3, 1974, p. 263.

42. Tim Rood, *Thucydides Persian Wars*, in *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, *Mnemosyne*, Supplements, Volume: 191, Ed. Chris(tina) Shuttleworth Kraus, Leiden: Brill, 1999, pp. 141–68.

43. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 98–118.

44. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, p. 148.

45. *Parmenides of Elea,* text and translations by David Gallop, Fragment 1.31–32, 8.51–61, and 9–19.

46. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Sophist*: *The Drama of Original and Image* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 271–81 and esp. 280–81.

47. E. Foster, *Thucydides, Pericles and Periclean Imperialism* (Kindle location 1866–1870 esp.).

48. See fragments B11, B12, B14, and B14 for the largest parts of what remains of Anaxagoras' discussion of *nous* (Patricia Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia*, pp. 22–24).

49. See Patricia Curd, *Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, Fragments and Testimonia*, p. 144, for the general case of this limitation in his thought.

50. See Colin Macleod, "Thucydides and Tragedy," in *Collected Essays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 152–53, who discusses the tragic elements contained in Pericles' Funeral Oration, especially Athens' dependence upon words to maintain her fame.

51. Wohl, *Love Among the Ruins*, p. 172. Some have seen *eros* as a way of interpreting empire. Wohl lists at least six in p. 171 n. 1.

52. Victoria Wohl "Thucydides and the Political Passions," in *The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides*, ed. Ryan Balot, Sarah Forsdyke, and Edith Foster (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 455. She refers to Francis Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (London: Edward Arnold, 1907), pp. 75–250.

53. Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1453a.

54. Macleod "Thucydides and Tragedy," pp. 143–44.

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Conclusion

Through choice of material, emphasis, and a wide variety of literary and rhetorical devices, Thucydides implies his own interpretation of the events and speeches he presents. Thucydides elaborates in the Athenian speeches his understanding of the relationship between *logos* and *ergon* in the context of the development of *stasis*. Echoes Thucydides has inserted in the speeches are especially useful in tracing the decline of Athenian political discourse. Thucydides' own ideas about the *polis* seem to emerge from a careful examination of the text, but it is crucial to our understanding of Thucydides' work that we keep in mind that he rarely speaks in his own voice. Discovering his meaning requires attention to the facts and speeches he presents, but as with a tragic play, the way it is interpreted depends on new insights and, because the work is historical, even new revelations of fact.

After the first statement of the of the nature of Athens and her empire by the Athenian ambassadors in Book 1 and the glorious interpretation of Athens in the Funeral Oration, Pericles' last speech reveals an incipient falling off in political tone as a result of the plague and the first invasion of Attica. The plague itself and Pericles' third speech adumbrate Athens' decline, particularly through Thucydides' description of the destruction of *nomoi* by the plague and Pericles' comparison of the empire to a tyranny. Once Pericles has died, Thucydides displays the first substantial disunity within Athens during the Mytilenean debate. Although there were certainly disagreements during Pericles' rule, as when he himself was fined, Thucydides reduces the emotional impact of these disagreements by not presenting any speeches in opposition to Pericles. The pair of speeches by Cleon and Diodotus have the formal effect of reinforcing a sense of division.

In the Mytilenean debate, moderation has been hidden in Diodotus' appeals to psychology and expediency. With Cleon, Thucydides shows us the archetype

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of the demagogue. Thucydides wants his readers to feel in his subsequent narrative the powerful effects of the growing demagoguery in Athenian public life. Cleon looms over the remainder of the work, in the first place as the foremost Athenian advocate of war (5.16.1), then as a type whose presence is to be imagined as ascendant in Athens. Later his image appears in the demagogic strains of Alcibiades' character, and finally in the partisan warring of 411.

Athens' recovery of strength during the Peace of Nicias proves febrile and unhealthy, leading directly to the exaggerated hopes and desires of the Sicilian Expedition. Thucydides dramatically prepares us for this expedition through the Melian Dialogue, in which the Athenian speakers deliver a bold statement of the aims of empire unfettered by the moderation, honor, and glory of Books 1 and 2. As we have seen, Athens' dangerous *pleonexia* threatened from the beginning (1.70.8), and even in the Funeral Oration Thucydides shows us glimpses of it in Pericles' definition of the city as a kind of idea and aspiration separated from Attica as a place and even from the Athenians' family structures, but in the Melian Dialogue the desire for more becomes its own rationale. Pericles encouragement of an unbounded emotion, *eros*, as a foundational emotion for political life, is dangerous from the start and destructive at the end.

Alcibiades inherits Pericles' intelligence and quickness, while Nicias has his restraint. The division of these qualities into more than one man reflects the growing disunity of the *polis*. After the condemnation of Alcibiades, the Athenians leave their fortunes in Nicias' more moderate hands, but moderation alone proves insufficient for effective leadership. With his digression concerning the affair of Harmodius and Aristogeiton Thucydides establishes three points crucial to the thesis of this study. First, he uses the emotional atmosphere surrounding the overthrow of the tyrants to draw out the implications of the high emotions of 416 and 415. Second, the digression shows at a crucial point in Athens' degeneration Thucydides' own stance as an author with respect to the words and deeds he describes. This second point leads to a third related issue, that of the importance of proper knowledge or education for the continuation of sound rule. The understanding of this issue in Thucydides leads directly to Socrates' constant focus on education as a crucial component in the resolution of one of the most difficult political problems, how to provide for a succession of rulers. Cabals and assassinations accompany bad structures in government and people at war with one another. Thucydides seems to aim at starting the discussion of the practical resolution of this issue when he comments on the oligarchic revolution in 411 (8.97.2). This small and still implied and not realized step in political understanding leads eventually to discussions of the mixed constitution taking us up to our present strengths and flaws in establishing and refining such constitutions today.

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One long-standing political lesson of Athens in the West has been the argument that democracy failed, as Madison implies in *Federalist 63*.[1] Yet Josiah Ober has made a compelling case that while Athens was a democracy, it promoted artistic, material, architectural, and general human flourishing better than any other Greek *polis*.[2] This specifically includes the period 403–322 BC in addition to the obvious period from 478 BC to 404. In 335, for example, Athens was prosperous relative to other *poleis* and in some ways wealthier than it was during the height of Pericles' rule, since state income was at the same level as 100 years before but there were no large contributions from subject states.[3] Culturally, Athens was wealthy with artists like Praxiteles, two of the greatest philosophers in the West, Plato and Aristotle, the continuing plays of Aristophanes, the rise of mathematics partly through the work of Theaetetus and Eudoxus, who seems to have deeply influenced Euclid in the theory of proportions,[4] and Xenophon the historian and the great orator Demosthenes.

On a broader level, however, the failure of Imperial Athens to spread democracy to the Greek states of the Mediterranean represents the loss of a profoundly important opportunity. In the first place, Athenian democracy ended in 322/321 BC with the victory of Antipater after the death of Alexander. Both the successors to Alexander and later the Roman government degraded the freedom of the small Greek *poleis* that they allowed to remain nominally independent. Eventually, the Roman government extinguished the remnants of freedom that they and various Hellenistic kings allowed to continue by a kind of neglect or royal grace. By the third century AD, almost all of the "democratic institutions had ceased to exist for all practical purposes."[5]

On a formal level Athens failed to win the war partly because the hegemonic structure is inherently weak. Legitimacy in a hegemony derives from a kind of constitution, in Athens' case the Delian League, a positive outcome, that is, the defeat of the Persians, and shared values or customs, for example, a desire for freedom for all Greek *poleis* and then by implication for all Greeks.[6] The Delian League as an idea lost respect among the allies when the Treasury was transferred from Delos to Athens (1.96). Once the Persians were clearly defeated and not coming back, the need for the outcome of the military activities of hegemonic Athens seemed no longer apparent, though there was some continuing need for Athens as a defensive threat that might have been managed with a far lighter structure than Athens actually used. This led to the creeping implication that the League was a tool for domination of Athens' allies. All of this along with Athenian military action against allies eroded respect for the shared norms and values of the people living in the Athenian Empire, which included the change in the valuation of words, especially words conveying moral approbation or opprobrium. The erosion of shared values themselves and the values of words that allow people to

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talk about them then changed social and political values in Athens itself also as external imperial words and deeds corroded Athenians life. This process contributed mightily to the failure of Athens.

Athens also failed because the constitution had no clear provisions that would guide the people toward good successors to powerful leaders, partly because so few positions in the government were filled by election. Before the ascendancy of the generals (*strategoi*) as the leaders, the Athenians had nine *archons*, who, after being elected, ruled the city up until the reforms of 487 BC. After this, *archons*, including the *archon polemarch* (the lead *archon* military general) were chosen by lot, which reduced their power substantially.[7] One result was that because the generals or *strategoi* were elected they became in effect the most important officials in the government even though their formal; mandate was to manage military affairs.[8] The education required to support democracy was weak despite the intense pederastic culture or perhaps because of it. The structure of the government was not politically coherent since many or even most offices were filled by lot, which led to a concentration of power in the hands of elected generals like Pericles. This tended to emphasize the influence of the military and especially the navy in Athens, which led to an emphasis on power over against reasoned rhetoric and discourse.

If we consider the *Histories* in this way, the political problems that beset the Athenians were all solvable or at least subject to amelioration. A constitution that had a greater mixture of the aristocracy might have moderated some of their political passions. They could have recognized that a government led by generals would be more warlike than successful, at least in the long run if peace presented itself. Democracy may in fact work better in small populations, which could have led to the consideration of a mixed constitution that was based on local democratic politics overseen by a more republican central government. The Athenians ruined the legitimacy of their own empire with their continuation of a structure of control needed for overt war with Persia, but which was almost certainly not needed for an internally respectful defensive alliance.

With Euphemus' and Alcibiades' speeches at the end of Book 6, and throughout the last two books of the *Histories*, Thucydides outlines the collapse of Athenian political discourse. This collapse mirrors the decline in Athens' spirit and political virtue. In this last section of the work, Thucydides shows how many points of political decay were implied by basic tendencies in Athenian public life. These tendencies could be seen, although in a restrained and even transmuted form, in the Funeral Oration itself. In a larger sense, the echoes between speeches in the later books and Pericles' early appearances were already present in these early speeches. While Alcibiades' words echo Pericles', Pericles' also echo Alcibiades'. Athens' end was

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present in her beginning. As Thucydides has Pericles say, everything by nature decays (2.64.3).

This reading of selected aspects of the *Histories* tends to confirm the thesis of the general unity of the work. Thucydides' careful intertwining of themes and the overall dramatic movement of his presentation of the war argue for unity of purpose and thought. They also imply a relatively late date for the final composition of the work. Although Thucydides certainly wrote some parts earlier than others, many final touches even on early books betray an understanding of the overall direction of the war.

An important question underlying Thucydides' enterprise is the extent to which we can attain historical knowledge. The answer, even only in the case of Thucydides and certainly if we try to develop a larger historiographical view, would seem to require a separate inquiry. For that inquiry, the *Meno* seems like a good place to start since Meno himself was a young man aiming to rule (71d–72a), but like most of us he did not know how to learn.

We can aim to find out what actually happened, the *erga*, just as we can come very close to a complete transcription of political speeches and records, the *logoi*, but what we must consider with greater humility are the cumulative reasons or explanations, the *logoi* in a different sense, underlying why events occur the way they do and the apparent particular reasons why individuals do what they do and also their intentions. In these cases we may find relative truths, almost certain facts, clear understandings that last for many years, and more immediate revelations. But the underlying idea driving Thucydides, if we consider the prodigious effort he clearly undertook and came close to completing, appears to be that we must aim to understand and we must believe that understanding, however partial, can be reached. This is a specific case, on that reading, of the general statement Socrates makes in the *Meno*:

> καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἐμοί, ὦ Μένων. καὶ τὰ μέν γε ἄλλα οὐκ ἂν πάνυ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λόγου διισχυρισαίμην: ὅτι δ' οἰόμενοι δεῖν ζητεῖν ἃ μή τις οἶδεν βελτίους ἂν εἶμεν καὶ ἀνδρικώτεροι καὶ ἧττον ἀργοὶ ἢ εἰ οἰοίμεθα ἃ μὴ ἐπιστάμεθα μηδὲ [86ξ] δυνατὸν εἶναι εὑρεῖν μηδὲ δεῖν ζητεῖν, περὶ τούτου πάνυ ἂν διαμαχοίμην, εἰ οἷός τε εἴην, καὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ. (86b–c)

> And I, Meno, for myself and in regard to the other points at least, I would not confidently assert on behalf of the argument, but [I could assert confidently] that by thinking we must investigate the things no one knows, and that we would be better, more brave and less lazy than if we should think that it is not possible to find or necessary to investigate what we do not know, concerning this I would surely fight, if I could, both in word and in deed. (86b–c)

As Jacob Klein points out, this approach may contain all of human excellence, including at least from a moral point of view, our habits and customs.[9]

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The modesty of the claims of Socrates here supersedes his customary irony. In similar fashion, Thucydides' claims for his hopes for his work are modest also.[10] He says that if his work is judged useful that "will be sufficient" (ἀρκούντως ἕξει, 1.22.4).

How then should we consider the process in which Thucydides has engaged us? His approach resembles that of Greek Tragedy in that he presents a great action that depends on a mistake or many mistakes that derive from judgments arising through character. He presents us with his own determinations in his own almost oracular voice, as if he is engaging us in a conversation that reveals what seems to him to be the case, bolstered by his narrative, the speeches he presents, and what appear very clearly to be painstaking researches behind the narrative and speeches.[11] The dramatists presented their tragedies first to their fellow citizens in a setting full of religion. Where is Thucydides' truth? It seems to be in a kind of wisdom (Greek *phronesis*) that mediates between truths we believe are eternal and the facts, speeches, and ideas in front of us. He appears to believe that we will be in conversation with him, testing his ideas, verifying his facts, and coming to conclusions that may change depending on our circumstances. This is not relativism, however, as we must test our conclusions against facts, reasons, others' responses, and most importantly against our own ideas so that we are not discordant with ourselves, as Socrates says to Callicles in the *Gorgias* (482b–c).[12] Part of Thucydides' aim in his work must be to contribute to the civic conversation in Athens as to how to interpret what happened to Athens in the Peloponnesian War. Plato's response too can be seen at least partly in those terms including a view of Thucydides' discourse. The *Statesman* in particular presents us with a political discussion of how measure generally and how we measure speech and writing particularly should be understood. While it is quite reasonable to see Socrates as engaged in a conversation that we should see as part of our obligation as citizens of wherever we live,[13] Plato also should be seen as participating in the same discussion, perhaps with more of a longing for an ideal truth propounded by a philosophical ruler, but also with a sense of realism about the impossibility of this solution in this life as long as we are embodied souls who cannot yet know the truth we aspire to understand, as Socrates says in the *Phaedo* (66e–67a).

NOTES

1. *Federalist 63* is usually now ascribed to Madison, sometimes also to Madison and Hamilton together. From *The Debate on the Constitution*, Part 2 (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1993), p. 318. See https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-63

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2. Ober, *Democracy and Knowledge*, pp. 70–75, esp. p. 71.

3. Josiah Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press reprint edition 2016), p. 250.

4. Sir Thomas Heath, *A History of Greek Mathematics, Volume 1* (New York: Dover Publications, 1981, republication of original 1921 edition from the Clarendon Press), pp. 325–26.

5. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient World*, p. 300.

6. Low, "Hegemonic Legitimacy (and its Absence) in Classical Greece," pp. 5–9, citing the work of D. P. Rapkin and D. Braaten, "Conceptualising Hegemonic Legitimacy," *Review of International Studies* 35 (2009), pp. 113–49.

7. Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, Written in the School of Aristotle, translated with commentary by Peter J Rhodes (Liverpool: Aris and Phillips Classical Texts, 2017), chapters 21–22.

8. See Vincent Azoulay, *Pericles of Athens*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2014), pp. 54 ff., for his discussion of the increasing power of the *strategoi* and the parallel decreasing power of the *archon polemarch*, the *archon* who was the lead general before the office of the *strategoi* became powerful, i.e., up to about 487 BC. Azoulay refers to Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, chapter 58, for that last point.

9. Jacob Klein, *A Commentary on Plato's Meno* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), pp. 183–84.

10. Stahl, *Man's Place in History*, p. 218.

11. Hannah Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics," *Social Research* 71, no. 3 (2004), p. 434. www.jstor.org/stable/40971709 (accessed December 10, 2019).

12. See *Plato: Gorgias*, translated with introduction, notes and interpretive essay, James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 143.

13. Dana Villa, *Socratic Citizenship*, p. 299.

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About the Author

John T. Hogan has a PhD in Classical Languages and Literatures from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an AB in Greek and Latin from Vassar College. He also attended Williams College.

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