Thucydides and Political Order

Concepts of Order and the History of the Peloponnesian War

Edited by

Christian R. Thauer
& Christian Wendt

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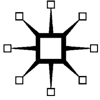

THUCYDIDES AND POLITICAL ORDER
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Preface

This book is the result of a long-term interdisciplinary collaboration between Christian Wendt, a classicist, and Christian Thauer, a political scientist, which began several years ago at the Freie Universität Berlin.

When Christian Thauer graduated in 2004 from the Freie Universität Berlin with a paper on Thucydides in International Relations, his supervisors were Thomas Risse in the Department of Political Science and Ernst Baltrusch from the History Department. Inspired by Baltrusch's work on ancient Greek international order, Christian's exam paper suggested a reading of Thucydides for International Relations that takes into account the ancient Greek polis-world.

It was at that time that Christian Wendt—then a PhD student of Ernst Baltrusch—met Christian Thauer. Wendt was also working on Thucydides in relation to international order, looking at Thucydides as an early work of international law. Both Christians soon decided that, in addition to their own disciplinary work, they should collaborate, convinced that a joint interdisciplinary approach would offer them a new way of looking at Thucydides. In 2005, they organized a small colloquium at the Freie Universität concerned with Thucydides and antique international relations, involving both political scientists and historians. In 2011, thanks to funding from Topoi, in the context of the German Excellency Initiative, they organized a larger, international and interdisciplinary workshop on Thucydides in history and political science today. This brought together historians and political scientists of different backgrounds in a conference, titled "Between Anarchy and Order: Herrschaftskonzeptionen bei Thukydides" in April 2012 in Berlin. This conference allowed Wendt and Thauer, in close cooperation with Thucydides-scholars from around the world, to further develop their idea of an international order-based approach to Thucydides.

The results of this conference are published in two closely interconnected volumes, this very book and a second one entitled *Thucydides and Political Order: Lessons of Governance and the* History of the Peloponnesian War, also published in 2016 with Palgrave Macmillan, to which we refer here as *LoG*. On the one hand, they showcase different disciplinary and national-academic traditions, interests, and approaches in relation to Thucydides—and styles of academic writing and debate. On the other hand, their compilation in these volumes is, as a whole, greater than the sum of their parts in that they all highlight different aspects of a key issue in relation to Thucydides. This key issue concerns the question of international order. The two volumes consist of an interdisciplinary dialogue on Thucydides on the basis of this issue. They thus suggest their own original approach to the ancient author, while at the same time showcasing the various states of the arts in the different academic communities interested in him.

We express our gratitude to a number of persons and institutions for their support, intellectual input, inspiration, funding, and encouragement in the process: The Excellence Cluster Topoi funded the workshop and gave us the support we needed in organizing the publication of these two volumes; intellectually, Ernst Baltrusch and his work informed and inspired us and made our collaboration possible; Andreas Corcoran and Marly Schaule for their translations of the German contributions to English, as well as Aideen Carty, Ben Earley, Noa Swisa, and Seth Jaffe for their assistance in reading and editing.

We thank the contributors to our workshop and to these two volumes for their collaboration and time spent with us, and their patience and tolerance in the process (which are essential success factors in interdisciplinary work)! We hope to continue our conversations about the *History of the Peloponnesian War* in the near future!

Jerusalem and Berlin, June 2015

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PART I

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

Thucydides and Political Order

Christian R. Thauer and Christian Wendt

Today, more than ever, the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, written by Thucydides some 2,400 years ago, is considered to be one of the "Great Books"[1] of our time.[2] Historians refer to it as the founding document of modern history-writing.[3] Political scientists view the *History* as being the first textbook of International Relations (IR),[4] if not of political science in general.[5] Moreover, it is deemed to be one of the first accounts of democratic theory.[6] In military academies around the world—and particularly in the United States, the self-identified "Athens of modern times"—the prospective military establishment studies the *History* as a textbook in military strategy.[7] In 2003, the preamble of the European Union's *Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe* opened with Thucydides's account of Pericles's Funeral Oration.[8] We could list many more examples of the "use and abuse of Thucydides" today:[9] Peter Handke's literary allusion to Thucydides comes to mind, and Bob Dylan's *Chronicles*.[10] Suffice to say that Thucydides succeeded in his attempt to compose a *ktēma es aiei*, a "possession for all time" (1.22.4).

But what is the subject matter of this enduring possession? What is it that Thucydides wished to convey? What reaction did he intend to evoke by describing the events in this particular way? What was his "opinion"? What are the lessons we can draw from the *History* today? Disturbingly, we do not have a clear answer to these questions. This is partly due to the fact that we cannot rely on the authority of Thucydides himself in this regard. Nowhere does Thucydides state his opinions explicitly. As a consequence there is a common

presumption that, rather than through direct voice, Thucydides conveys his message and meaning implicitly through the composition of his text: the way the narrative is told and structured.[11] This, in turn, is what makes the *History* so attractive to us moderns: almost any position can, through creative interpretation, be associated with Thucydides (see Morley, chapter 2 in this volume).

Historians, for example, have read the "Methodenstreit" into the *History*, that is, the debate about what history-writing is and should be.[12] Historicism, empiricism, positivism, rationalism, postpositivism—Thucydides has been made the forefather of more than one position in this debate.[13] In IR, those who lead the "great debates"[14] regarding IR theory have adopted the ancient text for purposes of self-reference and thereby have reconstructed Thucydides as a theorist of international politics (see Thauer, chapter 3 in this volume). Classical realists such as Hans Morgenthau hail Thucydides as being the first thinker of their tradition.[15] Neorealists such as Kenneth Waltz believe that Thucydides had already "implied" their theory.[16] Constructivists, too, are convinced that Thucydides was the first of their kind—and not of the moderate type, but the "thicker," radical version.[17]

Recent scholarly activity in both disciplines has begun to deviate from this pattern however. In political science, scholars have come to realize that, in the past, their readings of the ancient text have often been overly influenced by contemporary IR theory and the idea of a "Westphalian"[18] international order—an order of which it is safe to say that Thucydides was not aware of.[19] They also acknowledge now that the *History* is a more complex text than previously assumed. On the one hand, power politics seems to play a significant role in the narrative of Thucydides.[20] On the other hand, norms, traditions, identity, and ethical considerations are also important themes in the *History*.[21] Whereas previous readings were rather selective in their choice of passages that supported one particular theory of IR and subsequently presented them as evidence that Thucydides had already implied it, recent approaches have come to consider the text in its entirety and look for ways to fruitfully reconcile its inner tensions and ambiguous composition.

Historians, in particular classicists, have always been much more aware of the complex nature of the *History*.[22] Recently, however, they too have shifted their focus of attention in light of the manifold and

often contradictory interpretations of Thucydides in modern times. Many historians now take interest in the reception of the ancient author, asking why Thucydides's (and not someone else's) text is so ubiquitous in both contemporary historiography and debates about political theory.[23] This approach is particularly valuable. It allows us to understand the underlying mechanisms behind intellectual history construction.

In view of these recent developments in both disciplines, this book intends to foster a dialogue between classicists and political scientists on Thucydides. It builds on the major success of a previous book, edited by Ned Lebow and Barry Strauss titled *Hegemonic Rivalry: From Thucydides to the Nuclear Age* (1991). *Hegemonic Rivalry* is a collection of essays by leading classicists and IR scholars of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The essays discuss Thucydides in the context of the Cold War and nuclear deterrence. The book was very influential, particularly among political scientists writing on Thucydides from the early 1990s onward.

Today, however, almost 25 years later, there is a renewed demand for an interdisciplinary dialogue. Times have changed: the Cold War is long over. Scholarly work in both disciplines has progressed and taken other directions. The disciplinary gap between classicists and political scientists has widened again in the process. In an attempt to counter this current, we organized a conference in Berlin, in April 2012, on Thucydides in history and political science today, attended by historians and political scientists of various sorts and backgrounds. The conference was titled "Between Anarchy and Order: Herrschaftskonzeptionen bei Thukydides."[24] Two edited volumes, result from this conference: this very book and a second one to which we refer here as *LoG*, as explained in the preface. We believe they make a contribution to scholarly work on Thucydides in at least three ways.

First, they give the reader an overview of recent scholarly work, interests, and developments in both disciplines with regard to Thucydides. This is not only of interest from an interdisciplinary perspective, but also within political science and history, too. There is insufficient exchange of knowledge and interaction between different strands of research. For example, until recently IR scholars had taken little notice of the extensive body of work produced by political theorists on Thucydides, and vice versa. Historians, in

turn, had rarely discussed how their readings of the *History* relate to research of other classicists on ancient Greek "international" order. By bringing together contributions from these different strands of research, across and within the disciplines, these volumes allow those interested in Thucydides to gain an understanding of relevant work of others, and, potentially, establish connections and synergies between them.

Second, our two books establish the question of "political order" as a common theme in regard to Thucydides and the *History* for historians and political scientists alike (an aspect which is further elaborated later in this chapter). All contributions engage with this question which means that these volumes do not only showcase differences in perspective between and within the disciplines, but also mark out the common ground between them.

Third, by looking at the different disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches that are taken in order to study Thucydides and political order, we identify a common research agenda for future scholarly work on Thucydides across the disciplines. By pointing out the necessity and the mutual benefit of the heuristics developed here, we hope that these volumes will become a point of reference for a new and better understanding of this central text.

I. Beyond the Disciplinary Divide: Political Order as the "New" Thucydidean Question

When we first devised a plan for the conference in late 2011 our aim was to organize a broad interdisciplinary dialogue. Although there has been an impressive output in history and political science on Thucydides ever since the publication of the book by Lebow and Strauss, the ensuing debates are, by and large, somewhat detached from each other. In order to (re-)connect these disciplinary debates and literatures, we invited a selection of established and younger scholars from both history and political science, and from the different strands within the two disciplines (Ancient History: Ernst Baltrusch, Martin Dreher, Hans Kopp, Klaus Meister, Neville Morley, Peter Spahn, Christian Wendt, and Wolfgang Will; Political Science: Ryan Balot, Liisi Keedus, Ned Lebow, Christine Lee, Clifford Orwin, Tim Ruback, and Christian Thauer). We encouraged the participants to present whatever they considered important

or relevant. That is to say, we intended not to impose a strict agenda during our gathering in April 2012 in Berlin.

Unsurprisingly, the presentations featured a wide range of topics—from philological discussions of individual concepts in the *History* (see Spahn, chapter 4) to the importance of Thucydides for Leo Strauss (see Keedus, *LoG*, chapter 4). What we did find surprising, though, was that, despite the wide range of topics and approaches that came to the fore, a significant common ground between the different inter- and intra-disciplinary interests emerged in the discussions. All works presented, each in their own way, shared an interest in the question of "political order"[25] in Thucydides and, thus, this constitutes the unifying theme—the new "Thucydidean question."[26]

It implies that there are substantive questions and problems which supersede apparent disciplinary divides: it shows that scholars from different disciplines working on similar aspects, questions, or problems of political order in relation to Thucydides may actually have more in common than scholars from the same discipline, but whose research foci differ. Four distinct interests in political order in relation to Thucydides stand out.

1. Political Order as "Foreknowledge"

The first point of interest concerns methodology. When we approach Thucydides, we inevitably do so with our own preconceptions of political order: For example, we take it for granted that there is a clear distinction between domestic and international politics; we are led by theories of IR which conceptualize international politics in a certain way; we are influenced by ideas about (Athenian) "democracy" and (Spartan) "totalitarianism"; in our understanding of political order we ontologically privilege statesmen and powerful individuals over impersonal institutional dynamics (or vice versa); we have internalized a certain position in the agent–structure debate, which is so ubiquitous in the social sciences and humanities today. One could add to this list countless more possible predispositions with which we may encounter the *History*. Reflecting on such "foreknowledge"[27] of social order is, from a hermeneutic standpoint, a precondition for any meaningful interpretation.[28]

In particular, the chapters of part II of this volume "Methodological Reflections and Perspectives," discuss political order in relation to

Thucydides in such a reflective way. Neville Morley opens up with chapter 2 on "Contextualism and Universalism in Thucydidean Thought," in which he points out that it is ultimately our preconceptions of what determines political order—timeless laws or historical contingency?—which determine our interpretations of the *History*. In his contribution, Christian R. Thauer offers a reflection on IR readings of Thucydides in chapter 3. He argues that in his discipline—and the same is true for many historians—scholars routinely apply anachronistic assumptions and theories about the nature and structure of international politics of today's world to the ancient text—of which Thucydides simply had no knowledge. From a classical philological–phenomenological perspective, Peter Spahn and Martin Dreher in chapters 4 and 5, warn modern readers not to jump to conclusions too hastily with regard to key constructs of social order in Thucydides. They show that the meanings of two such constructs, *archē* and *turannis*, change throughout the text of the *History*. Moreover, they point out that the very connotations that accompany these concepts today make it difficult to engage in unprejudiced interpretation.

In turn, Ernst Baltrusch (*LoG*, chapter 1), reflects on anachronistic assumptions, alleging that there was a balance-of-power-system between Athens and Sparta, which are often imposed on the *History*. He shows that such assumptions often lead to a specific interpretation of Thucydides's account of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War which, however, lacks historical weight. Christine Lee criticizes realist and Straussian readings of Thucydides as imposing a political ontology which is conducive to misinterpretation. In his chapter on Thucydides as a "statesmen's manual," Christian Wendt reflects on the underlying assumptions behind Straussian and other readings of the *History* as a guidebook for political leaders. He argues that, when stripped of such presumptions, Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* is a book which offers potential insights to anyone involved in political decision-making rather than a manual accessible and fruitful only to the statesman (see *LoG*, chapters 5 and 7).

2. Political Order as an Interpretative Approach

Our second concern is, again, a methodological one: to find the "right" interpretative approach. A deconstruction of existing readings

of the *History* with respect to anachronistic assumptions about political order alone does not improve our understanding of the *History*. We also need to reconstruct the text, and thus relate it to the debates, models, concepts, and ideas of the contemporary reader.[29] In particular, the chapters in part III of this volume, "Representations of Political Order in Thucydides," show that this can and should be carried out in an attempt to assess and overcome the fallacies that have emerged from a history of false assumptions about Thucydides's world. The three chapters apply contemporary models, metaphors, concepts, or theories of political order and, thus, identify aspects of Thucydides's text that have so far escaped the attention of research.

Clifford Orwin's chapter (chapter 6), which opens part III, focuses on the body-metaphor in Thucydides's description of the plague and the so-called pathology of war. He demonstrates how the concept of corporality provides us with a better understanding of the relationship between civic community and political order in these central text passages, and the *History* in general. Hans Kopp discusses in chapter 7 the application of the concept of sea power to the *History*. He argues that previous approaches interpreting Thucydides as a theorist of sea power did not sufficiently distinguish between the (modern) theoretical concept, Thucydides's own comments, and the speeches in his narrative. He shows that some of the protagonists in the *History* in fact suggest strategies that could be interpreted within the context of a theoretical approach to sea power. However, he also makes the point that Thucydides himself was no advocate of policies based on naval strength at all. In chapter 8, Ryan Balot provides new enriching insights about Thucydides's text by drawing on the notions of social capital and trust/distrust. In focusing on two of the most prominent political leaders in the *History*, Pericles and Alcibiades, he shows that the capacity to evoke trust in the citizenry (in the case of Pericles)—or the lack thereof (Alcibiades)—was crucial for their ability to organize collective action within Athens.

A number of suggestions of how to fruitfully apply models, concepts, and theories of political order and thus enhance our understanding of the *History* are to be found in other chapters as well. Christian R. Thauer, Ernst Baltrusch and Christian Wendt of both volumes conclude—each with slightly different perspectives—that Thucydides's account of the war between Athens and Sparta should be embedded within the context of ancient Greek inter-*polis* order.

Ned Lebow, in *LoG*, chapter 2, asserts that the notion of modernization—and its detrimental effects on traditional conceptions of order—can be most helpful in clarifying the events Thucydides describes. It allows him to interpret Thucydides as a model theorist of the tragic politics of great power.[30]

3. Political Order as a "Possession for All Time"

Third, we ask what political order Thucydides himself envisioned, against which he might have judged the events he described. Whereas the first two points of interest are primarily concerned with methodological questions, that is, how we can understand the "possession for all time" Thucydides claims to bestow on us, this third interest focuses on what this *ktēma es aiei* is in substance. Obviously, this lies at the heart of any interpretation.[31] Part I of *LoG*, "The Nature, Endurance, Destruction and Consequences of Political Order according to Thucydides," features chapters that suggest such definitions. In his analysis of the reasons Thucydides mentions for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, Ernst Baltrusch concludes that Thucydides's ideal point of reference was the well-functioning prewar international order of ancient Greece. Ned Lebow argues in the same vein, though from a different perspective. Lebow also maintains that Thucydides disapproved of the disrespect the political elites in Athens afforded traditional customs, conventions and norms over the course of the Peloponnesian War. However, whereas Baltrusch is convinced that Thucydides believed that the Athenians could have, and should have acted differently, Ned Lebow connects the reasons for such Athenian contempt to the structural forces of modernization. In his view, the rapid growth of Athens and the modernization this entailed, ultimately, undermined its lasting success. Wolfgang Will suggests in his chapter that the so-called Funeral Oration of Pericles reveals Thucydides's ideal vision of democracy for Athens. Moreover, he believes that Thucydides laid out this vision in the *History* as a political statement with the distinct intent of countering the version of democracy Athens had implemented following the debacle in Sicily, that is, as a commentary on the downfall of Athenian order.

Chapters in other sections of both volumes also address the question of the ideal political order Thucydides may have envisioned.

Christian R. Thauer concurs with Ernst Baltrusch that the model against which Thucydides judged the events described in the *History* was the "international" order of ancient Greece as it existed prior to the war and during the first years of it. Ryan Balot focuses on the intra-*polis* order of Athens. He claims that trust was an essential resource for Athens's successes—many of which Thucydides admired. However, trust turned into distrust once the "wrong" political leader (i.e., Alcibiades) had risen to power. Hence, Thucydides's ideal envisaged a harmonious Athens in the sense of a relation of mutual trust between political leadership and the citizenry.

4. Thucydides as a Model Historian (or Theorist) of Ideal Political Order

Finally, a fourth focal point is the role that Thucydides plays as a model theorist or representative of an ideal political order in philosophical traditions and schools of thought. Such a focus on lineage creation, for which Thucydides's work is obviously very important,[32] is interesting not only for a history of ideas.[33] It also invites a reflection on approaches that are used to interpret the *History* itself and thus inevitably leads to the question of how schools of thought incorporate texts—in particular as most readers, for better or for worse, will have associated themselves with some affiliation in this respect. The chapters in part II of *LoG*, titled "Thucydides as a Model Historian (or Theorist) of Political Order" are especially aware of this special function that Thucydides is afforded by intellectual schools of thought. Drawing on sources that have not been considered in this context before, Liisi Keedus analyzes in *LoG*, chapter 4 the importance of Thucydides for Leo Strauss's thinking. She shows that to Strauss, Thucydides was a model political theorist and a bulwark against historicism, as well as a sourcebook for the true nature of men and politics. Christine Lee's chapter, *LoG*, chapter 5, stands in close relation to that of Liisi Keedus. She critically discusses the widespread use of Thucydides as an ontological authority among realists, in particular Straussians. She argues that the reading of Thucydides as a model realist leads to misleading interpretations of the text and a neglect of its ethical dimension. Klaus Meister shows in *LoG*, chapter 6 that Thucydides was already used as a model for explaining a disintegration of political order in

the Roman historian Sallust's writings—which in turn influenced many subsequent readings of the *History*. Finally, Christian Wendt discusses in *LoG*, chapter 7—in pushing Christine Lee's criticism even further—whether Thucydides may be employed as a "manual for statesmen." In difference to the classical realist-Straussian perspective, Thucydides should be understood as suggesting an analytical approach to the study of politics in general. Wendt's reading of Thucydides as a reflection on the right parameters of political decision-making emphasizes the need for an extensive appreciation of contextual and situation-specific factors.

II. A "Hermeneutic Circle" of Thucydides and Political Order

Combined, the four focal points constitute a heuristic framework of interpretation, a type of "hermeneutical circle" that relates Thucydides to the theme of political order: any substantive claim about the "possession for all time" which Thucydides may have had in mind (focal point 3) should be based on a convincing choice of an interpretative approach to the text (focal point 2). Such an approach should be based on a thorough reflection of the right type of foreknowledge with which we encounter the text of Thucydides so as to avoid the imposition of anachronistic assumptions (focal point 1). Such reflection, in turn, must be led by an awareness of the impact influential schools of thought may have on the ways in which Thucydides is "used and abused" (to paraphrase Johnson Bagby)[34] as an authority (focal point 4) and thus recognize the many implicit and indirect ways in which the text is interpreted on the basis of *a priori* assumptions. Conversely, any interest in Thucydides as a model theorist of ideal political order should be informed by a careful interpretation of his text and its "possession for all time" (focal point 3). In this way, the four focal points thus form a process toward a richer interpretation of Thucydides's work.

The chapters in the two volumes are subdivided according to these four focal points. This volume consists of contributions that in particular discuss points one and two, while *LoG*'s chapters contribute especially to an elaboration of points three and four. While published in two separate volumes, the chapters thus form a substantive unity and must be read and understood in the context of each other.

Future research in the disciplines of history and political science may resort to the framework of interpretation and reflection the two volumes offer. Certain chapters in them take first steps in this direction, combining the interests mentioned previously. One example is Hans Kopp's chapter, which reflects on a methodologically sound application of modern sea power theory (focal point 4) to the Thucydidean text (i.e., he arrives at conclusions with respect to focal point 2—the choice for the right interpretative approach—through a discussion of focal point 1, methodological reflection).

Furthermore, we think that in the future the usefulness and heuristic qualities of this framework can be improved and thereby raise new and innovative research questions. There are significant synergies to be gained among the chapters, supporting each individual interest in political order in relation to Thucydides. For example, concerning focal point 1—methodological reflections—, it would be of great interest to investigate how the philological and phenomenological approaches by Peter Spahn and Martin Dreher relate to those of Neville Morley and Christian R. Thauer. From a hermeneutical perspective, any interpretation of an individual concept within a text reflects to some extent what the interpreter believes is true about all of it (text and context), and vice versa. However, rarely have philological or phenomenological "micro"-inquiries also included a reflective process on this "macro"-level. The majority of reflections about the narrative of the *History* as a whole, in turn, have not given much thought to the implications these may have for the micro-level, that is, whether the presumptions about the meaning of words and concepts are sound from a philological perspective. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to ask how Peter Spahn's analysis of the term *archē* throughout the *History* and Martin Dreher's understanding of *tyrannis* relates to Neville Morley's argument that our interpretation of the *History* is largely determined by our belief (or lack thereof) in timeless laws and historical contingencies. Also, how do their understanding of these central terms and concepts resonate with Ernst Baltrusch's or Christian R. Thauer's approach, who argue that we should read Thucydides's narrative in the context of ancient Greek "international" relations? How can micro-level approaches benefit from macro-level approaches, and vice versa? We believe that these questions offer many insights and, it goes without saying, future controversy.

III. Overview of the Chapters

Concepts of Order and the History of the Peloponnesian War

Neville Morley (University of Bristol) opens up the volume's methodological reflections on Thucydides and the modern reader with a discussion of how Thucydides has fared within the history of ideas. Analyzing readings of Thucydides throughout history, he presents a framework for understanding the diverse traditions of interpretation and appropriation of the ancient author in the modern world. He draws a fundamental distinction between, on the one hand, the use of the text as a historical source and, on the other, its appropriation for timeless truths about the nature of politics. He does so demonstrating that the one reading is as intentional and deterministic as the other. Thus, he adds a general perspective to this volume's aim to overcome at least some of the determinism in the use and appropriation of Thucydides by the modern reader.

Christian R. Thauer (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) makes the case for a post-"Westphalian" reading of Thucydides's pre-"Westphalian" text. He argues that in particular in political science, many interpretations are based on strong, unfounded, and often anachronistic assumptions concerning the nature and workings of the ancient text, and concerning the nature and workings of international politics around the time of the Peloponnesian War. Therefore, he urges that political scientists should take into stronger consideration the classicists's findings about the inner workings of the Thucydidean text and the nature of ancient Greek "international" order.

Peter Spahn (Freie Universität Berlin) dwells on a methodological challenge that one encounters while reading Thucydides. Thucydides's text confronts the reader with a plethora of philological challenges: words and concepts vary in meaning depending on the situation described in the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. To illustrate this, Spahn discusses the polyvalence of the concept of *archē* throughout the narrative of Thucydides. He shows that the meaning of *archē* changes several times over the course of the narrative. Thus every interpretation has to take into account this context-dependency of central terms and concepts in Thucydides. In other words: using *archē* as a *terminus technicus* referring to a clearly defined, "fixed"

meaning would be misleading. Interpretations relying on modern translations are prone to failure should they not acknowledge the inherent hermeneutic difficulties of that approach and the dangers of misapprehension resulting from a simple reading.

Martin Dreher (Universität Magdeburg) looks at methodological challenges one may encounter in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* on a phenomenological level. He does so by discussing the Greek *turannis* mentioned and commented on by Thucydides repeatedly. He shows that a close look at the way Thucydides portrays tyranny on several occasions reveals that he is not taking a clear stance toward this type of political regime. The *turannis* in Thucydides, as a historical phenomenon and mode of government, must thus be distinctly differentiated from the metaphorical use of the term (as in the debates on *polis turannos*), bearing clear derogative connotations. Dreher shows that the complexity and the (intentional) ambivalence in structure, terminology, and arguments necessitates a certain amount of patience on the part of the reader unburdened by ideological restraints.

In part III, "Representations of Order in Thucydides," **Clifford Orwin (University of Toronto)** discusses the body metaphor and its defining relevance for the emergence, persistence, and crisis of political order in Thucydides. By taking this viewpoint, his interpretation of the plague and the so-called pathology of war suggests that, in Thucydides, civic community and order are closely linked to ideas which transcend the restrictions of corporality. At the same time, however, in the event of war the body is exposed to such a vast amount of stress that it ultimately succumbs to it. The body may then emerge as a threat to the political regime. The utopia created by Pericles is undermined by exactly this stress incurred on the body of Athens by the pathologies of war, which subsequently leads to the disintegration of the city's value-system.

Hans Kopp (Freie Universität Berlin) discusses the importance of the representation of Athens as a sea power in Thucydides. Was Thucydides a "theorist of sea power," as is often claimed despite any further substantiation? Kopp shows these approaches to be misleading, even if sea power was a crucial factor in the Peloponnesian War. According to Kopp, concepts developed by Thucydidean speakers have a strong utopian appeal and are repeatedly deconstructed by Thucydidean realism.

Ryan Balot (University of Toronto) argues that civic trust is of defining importance for the survival of political orders, their reproduction, legitimacy, and effectiveness in organizing collective action. He discusses trust in relation to Alcibiades and Pericles, two of the most prominent protagonists in Thucydides. Balot argues that the creation of civic trust was the main reason behind the success of Periclean politics—even at the time of the plague, when the *polis* was submerged in a crisis. Alcibiades, by contrast, was not trusted. Alcibiades's main political problem was the *polis*'s lack of trust in him in the sense that he was unable to organize collective action successfully. Balot also shows, by drawing on the Corcyrean *stasis* in Thucydides, that distrust and perversion of trust inevitably lead to the destruction or crisis of political order.

Lessons of Governance and the History of the Peloponnesian War (*LoG*)

Ernst Baltrusch's (Freie Universität Berlin) reflections on international law in Thucydides open up part I of the sequel (*LoG*), "The Nature, Endurance, Destruction and Consequences of Political Order according to Thucydides." Baltrusch analyzes the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in the context of international law as it was known in ancient Greece. He shows that it is misleading to attribute the outbreak of the war between Athens and Sparta to the latter's fears of a looming destruction of their balance-of-power system. Instead, he argues, Athens perpetually broke what was considered international law at the time of Thucydides, and it was this law-breaking behavior that ultimately forced Sparta—and unwillingly so—into war. In the context of his analysis, Thucydides emerges as a source and theorist of ancient international law, and it is even possible to infer that Thucydides believed a sound international order to be a viable alternative to the catastrophe of the war he witnessed.

Richard Ned Lebow (Dartmouth College/King's College London) takes the debate about political order in relation to Thucydides to a more general level, as he combines the historical perspective to a theoretical approach. He sets out to place Thucydides within a wider theoretical discourse about the construction and deconstruction of order and its relevance to modern problems. Orders endure and collapse for many reasons and multiple dynamics govern the respective underlying processes. Thucydides, however, addresses a special

case: the breakdown of order is caused by a fundamental process of modernization that undermined traditional norms as elites tended to accept conventions that became more and more arbitrary.

Wolfgang Will (Universität Bonn) analyzes the *epitaphios* (Funeral Oration) of Pericles. He argues that we find a representation of the only form of government Thucydides would have been inclined to accept in this *epitaphios*. As Pericles is portrayed in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* as an ideal-type leader, so is the model of democracy that is outlined in the *epitaphios* as straightforwardly utopian and ahistoric. According to Will, Thucydides uses the *epitaphios* for the end of sketching out an ideal alternative model of democracy to the one Athens implemented after the downfall of the city in Sicily. Will thus argues that the *epitaphios* was inserted into the work by Thucydides in the wake of the Peloponnesian War for the purposes of convincing his contemporaries of the existence of a potentially "better" political order for Athens.

In part II, "Thucydides as a Model Historian (or Theorist) of Political Order," **Liisi Keedus (Tallinn University/University of Tartu)** analyzes the influence Thucydides had on Leo Strauss's writings and thinking. She argues that for Strauss, Thucydides was a model of political philosophy and a bulwark against "modern" historicism. In contrast to purportedly value free and apolitical modern history-writing, Thucydides, according to Strauss, sought to teach the truth about men, politics, and war to those who were both willing and capable. Unlike the modern relativists, Thucydides judged and claimed that the truth of his judgment would not fade in the passing of time. No less importantly, in contrast to modern historians "sitting at the feet of great politicians" Thucydides placed himself above them, with statesmen sitting at his feet. Thucydides, according to Keedus, was thus a model for Strauss and the development of his thinking.

Christine Lee (St. John's College, Annapolis) shows that there is a strong tradition of realist and Straussian readings of Thucydides. These usually promote him to an ontological authority. Lee warns, though, that doing so poses serious problems, not only because it leads to flawed readings of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*; but also, more importantly, it militates against the political and ethical conclusions Thucydides's narrative is meant to uphold. Thucydides, she argues, has set some traps for the unsuspecting reader who considers him a purveyor of transhistorical and invariable truths.

Klaus Meister (Technische Universität Berlin) relates Thucydides to Sallust and argues that Sallust used Thucydides to portray the decay of the Roman Republic. Sallust is one of the most famous classical references for later reception of Thucydides. Meister shows, however, that Sallust took liberties in his interpretation of Thucydides. Meister shows that the authority of Thucydides as a model for political order had already been established during that era. But already then, interpreting Thucydides was influenced by political interests just as much as by the desire to capture the message he intended to convey with his text.

And finally, **Christian Wendt (Freie Universität Berlin)** poses the question: can Thucydides be used as a manual for future statesmen? His answer differs significantly from the Straussian and realist affirmations. Wendt argues that Thucydides's "possession for all time" (1.22) is in fact not a substantive theory of action, but rather an analytical approach to politics. Thucydides's insights were meant to be accessible not only to statesmen, but also to all people involved in decision-making. Factors which are sometimes understood as antithetic—such as the law or self-interest—become two sides of the same coin, because they constitute the framework of analytical thinking. It is impossible to exclude them from the attempt to achieve a correct and comprehensive perception of any given situation. In line with Baltrusch, Thauer, and Lebow, Wendt underlines the importance of prevailing notions of "international" order in Thucydides. Decision-making that does not try to encompass the complexity of politics is based on a grave miscalculation leading directly to destruction.

These volumes are the result (and, as we hope, also a starting point) of discussion and debate, a highly interdisciplinary collection, featuring the work of different types of classicists, political scientists, and political theorists. We hope to have encapsulated the special intellectual framework and exceptional atmosphere of the conference that preceded it.

Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* will remain a complicated and mysterious text, and its author offers too many paths for us to assume that it could be reduced to one single perspective. To further excavate the complexities of this book without being overburdened by its authority is just one of the challenges a successful interdisciplinary discourse will have to face.

Notes

1. For a discussion of how Thucydides has become part of the "Great Books Movement" at American universities ever since the 1960s see Liz Sawyer's contribution at a recent conference on Thucydides in Bristol: Sawyer (2013).
2. Harloe and Morley (2012).
3. Ullrich (1846); Niebuhr (1847); Cochrane (1929).
4. Doyle (1990); Forde (2012); Lebow (2012).
5. Ober (2006).
6. Ober (1996); Urbinati (2012).
7. In the aforementioned conference in Bristol, Andreas Stradis discussed the use of Thucydides at military academies: Stradis (2013); see now also Stradis (2015).
8. http://european-convention.eu.int/docs/Treaty/cv00722.en03.pdf (January 26, 2014).
9. Johnson Bagby (1994).
10. See Handke (1998); Handke (2002); Dylan (2004).
11. Deininger (1939); Connor (1984); Lebow (2003).
12. Süßmann (2012).
13. For example, Cornford (1907); Schwartz (1919); Finley (1942); Connor (1977a); Canfora (1990).
14. Wilson (1998).
15. Morgenthau (1967), p. 32.
16. Waltz (1959), p. 159.
17. Lebow (2001).
18. Constituted by intrastate sovereignty and interstate anarchy: Krasner (1999).
19. Thauer (2011).
20. Doyle (1990); Donnelly (2000); Monten (2006).
21. Garst (1989); Lebow (2003); Podoksik (2005).
22. Deininger (1939); Rawlings (1981); Hornblower (1987).
23. Harloe and Morley (2012).
24. For the conference program and participants see http://www.topoi.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/2012-04-22_Thukydides_Flyer.pdf (January 30, 2014).
25. By political order we understand political regimes and institutions, broadly defined as "rules, norms and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge" (Krasner 1982, p. 185).
26. (Mainly German) historians in the nineteenth and early twentieth century routinely referred to the "Thucydidean Question" (thukydideische Frage) in their works. By "Thucydidean Question" they understood asking how the weight of the events of the Peloponnesian War influenced Thucydides as a historian in his views and opinions about the war he described: Ullrich (1846); Schwartz (1919); Canfora (1990). This so-called separatist

tradition, which for quite some time dominated the debate, considered the *History* as a patchwork of different layers representing views of, on the one hand, the young and, on the other, the older Thucydides. According to separatists, the *History* cannot be interpreted in terms of conveying one certain message and meaning. Instead, it is a testimony of how historical events impact on the observer, and change his or her interpretation over time.

27. Gadamer (2004).
28. See the hermeneutics of reading Thucydides Thauer (2013).
29. Skinner (2002); Gadamer (2004, 2008); Figal (2007).
30. This idea was laid out already in Lebow (2003).
31. Baltrusch and Wendt (2011).
32. Harloe and Morley (2012).
33. Gordon (2012).
34. Johnson Bagby (1994).

PART II

Thucydides and the Modern Reader: Methodological Reflections from Different Perspectives

CHAPTER 2

Contextualism and Universalism in Thucydidean Thought

Neville Morley

The aim of this chapter is to develop a framework for understanding the diverse traditions of interpretation and appropriation of Thucydides in the modern world; that is, the ways in which his work has been understood as offering useful and useable knowledge (not readings of the text as an end in themselves), and the ways in which ideas attributed to Thucydides have been deployed to support different intellectual projects.[1]

Even a brief survey of contemporary references and discussions, let alone a longer historical overview, reveals a bewildering range of different accounts of what Thucydides wrote and meant, and thus what his work has to offer the present.[2] Just within historiography, he can appear as the exemplary scientific historian or the archetypal practitioner of rhetoric and art, the thorough-going sceptic or the mythologist, the perfectly objective analyst or a model for an engaged and activist historiography, offering entirely different images of what history essentially is or should be. In political thought, he is cited as both realist and constructivist, democrat and antidemocrat, neoconservative and liberal; in strategic studies, he may be presented as abstract theorist or pragmatist, advocate of flexible sea power or chronicler of its limits, and so forth. Thucydides's text, and the figure of Thucydides himself, do appear to be peculiarly open to a wide range of different interpretations, without this malleability undermining belief in the usefulness of his ideas. That is to say, the idea of Thucydides as some kind of authority is sufficiently powerful, and is

supported—or at least not immediately contradicted—by the experience of reading his work, so that the existence of so many other interpretations of the knowledge he has to impart does not unsettle the conviction of most readers that *their* interpretation is both correct and useful.[3] However, the issue is not only that this authority is evoked to support radically different, if not more or less contradictory, positions and propositions in many different fields of analysis; but it is also that, while Thucydides continues to be widely accepted as an authority whose work still has something important to contribute to present-day understanding, the nature of this authority, and the nature of the knowledge which his work is believed to impart, are also conceived in very different ways.

This diversity of interpretations of Thucydides and his work reflects, at least in part, a diversity of interpretative approaches, different ways of reading the text based on different conceptions of its nature as well as different sets of broader theoretical assumptions about the world, how it should be studied, and to what end. From the perspective of reception theory, with its basic assumption that "meaning is realized at the point of reception," or from that of the history of ideas, this is scarcely a radical proposition. What I want to argue here is not merely the banal point that any text will be understood differently in different contexts (historical, cultural, institutional etc.), even if that is something that the majority of readers of Thucydides seem happy to ignore. Rather, I want to explore two propositions: first, that in the case of Thucydides the debate is not only about what his text means and what it can tell us, but also about what kind of text it is—which then of course carries implications for what it can tell us; second, that beneath the bewildering diversity of interpretations of Thucydides's ideas there is a rather simpler structure to the underlying debate about the nature of his text and of Thucydidean thought. This structure is related above all to the theories, debates, and issues that can loosely be characterized as "contextualism versus universalism": questions about the relationship between past and present, about the nature and significance of historical change and cultural difference, and hence about the interpretation and usefulness of historical texts and historical data, in particular for the development of political understanding.[4]

The most obvious approach to characterizing the underlying debate about the nature of Thucydides's text would be in terms of

a distinction between "history" and "political theory," perhaps with reference to a third tradition of "philological" or "literary" readings. As such, readings of Thucydides can be categorized according to existing academic disciplines; quite naturally, perhaps, as most of the people offering such readings are doing so from within one or other academic disciplinary tradition, generally without reference to any other tradition.[5] It would be relatively easy to construct ideal types of the "historical" and the "political" Thucydides, based on contemporary academic definitions of those disciplines. Certainly this is how the study of the reception of Thucydides has hitherto been carried out, focusing on the way his work has been interpreted in a specific tradition and has contributed to its development—as "the first scientific student of international relations," for example, or as the founder of modern scientific history—or has been read by particular authors who are firmly located by the analyst within a specific tradition.[6] On the relatively rare occasions when someone seeks to reflect on these different traditions of interpretation rather than simply take one of them for granted, this is still carried out in conventional disciplinary terms. Thus Josiah Ober questions whether Thucydides would ever have conceived of himself as a "historian" in anything resembling a modern sense, since that category clearly did not exist in fifth-century Athens—in order to present Thucydides in different but equally anachronistic terms: "his approach amounted to nothing less than the invention of a new discipline, political and social science."[7]

The fact that so many people think in terms of present-day academic disciplines, both in trying to conceptualize the nature of Thucydides's text and in discussing modern readings of it, means that we cannot ignore them altogether, but it is worth keeping in mind that ideal types always emphasize certain aspects of the objects they seek to capture and categorize at the expense of others. Disciplines are never entirely homogeneous, even at a specific moment; within each discipline we can always identify a range of theoretical and national traditions and subdisciplines, with different strategies of reading and interpretation. While it might make sense at one level to contrast "historical" and "political–theoretical" readings of Thucydides, the latter category lumps together IR realists, constructivists, Straussians, and many others, among whom the disagreements over aims, methods, assumptions, and conclusions are at

least as prominent as their shared ideas and assumptions if they are compared *en masse* to "historians." Further, disciplines are not hermetically isolated; there is plenty of cross-pollination and even collaboration, so that there may be significant resemblances or overlaps between certain historical and political readings; see for example the ways that Peter Euben and Ned Lebow have drawn on contemporary historical and philological–literary readings of Thucydides in order to critique dominant political–theoretical interpretations.[8] Most obviously these disciplines are a relatively recent and entirely contingent phenomenon; interpreting not just Thucydides and other ancient writers but Machiavelli, Hobbes, Kant, or any other figure from before the nineteenth century in terms of the disciplinary structure of the modern university is a manifestly anachronistic procedure, producing, deliberately or not, a naive and/or specious teleological history of the discipline as already-established in the works of writers who are retrospectively claimed as founding figures.[9] Thinking about modern readings of Thucydides in these terms is more defensible, since so many of those readings, especially in the last 50 years or so, emerge from within those academic contexts and are addressed primarily to an audience of disciplinary colleagues; however, this still begs the question as to whether readers and their interpretations are primarily shaped by their contingent location within academic institutions.

Attempting to describe the different ways that Thucydides has been read over the last few centuries in a different manner, going beyond conventional disciplinary labels and assumptions, will not necessarily produce a less anachronistic account. It will, however, at the least offer a different perspective, not only on the history and dynamics of the reception of Thucydides but also on broader questions of how past texts are interpreted and appropriated in the present for different purposes, and how knowledge of the past is valued and employed—beyond the familiar distinction between "humanities" and "social science."[10] Nicole Loraux's warning that "Thucydides is not a colleague" was directed toward classicists and ancient historians, but is more generally applicable, and should serve to unsettle our assumptions not only about Thucydides but also about our own taken-for-granted categories.[11] I would suggest that an exploration of the different reading strategies that have been applied to Thucydides offers an opportunity to interrogate the assumptions of history by

means of political theory and those of political theory by means of history, and to consider both in the light of Thucydides and the particular issues of change and continuity, contextualism and universalism that his text continually raises.

The following is a first attempt at identifying the most salient features of "reading strategies" as applied to Thucydides. How far this model may be more widely applicable I am not sure. This approach does tend to highlight particular features of Thucydides's text, or its tradition of reception, which contrast with most of the texts that are usually considered within reception studies. Compared with the other classical figures who remain significant in contemporary debates, most obviously "pure thinkers" like Plato and Aristotle, Thucydides's text does seem to present particular problems—and opportunities—in relation to the theme of contextualism versus universalism, and hence is open to dramatically different readings strategies to a greater degree than the others. Further, I should note that I have almost entirely ignored the literary aspects of the tradition—reading Thucydides in order to learn how to write, to demonstrate techniques of rhetoric, and so forth—not least because the rhetorical and literary aspects appear as a *problem* for most present-centered readings of Thucydides, potentially undermining its usefulness, rather than being something that readers actively seek in the text as they do with Homer or Vergil. In brief, this is not a complete account of all modern readings of Thucydides, but of those (the majority, I would argue) that accept, more or less, Thucydides's own claim for the usefulness of his work and seek to put this into practice. As such, it seeks to establish what sorts of reading strategies are required, based on what assumptions, in order for something apparently useful and relevant to be drawn from (or found in) the text.

I. Intended Outcomes

By this, I mean what a given reader hopes to find in reading Thucydides, and aims to extract from the text. For the purposes of this analysis, I assume that these readers are both simple and rather boring; they have one clear purpose in mind in their reading, and are focused on different sorts of utility. As such, I am discounting motives such as pleasure or psychological neediness as well as the search for literary models, in order to focus on the different kinds of

knowledge that might be obtained from reading Thucydides. I am also ignoring for the moment the possibility that reading Thucydides could in fact be both useful and pleasurable at the same time, or even that a reader might seek different kinds of knowledge simultaneously. Within these artificial parameters, we can first distinguish two broad types of information that can be extracted, with more or less ease, from Thucydides:

D: *Data* The information that Thucydides's narrative supplies about the course of the Peloponnesian War, the operations of Athenian democracy, the career of Pericles, Greek military strategy, ancient plagues and so forth.

T: *Theory* Thucydides's own ideas about the world and the way that it works: his interpretation of political behavior, relations between states, the causes of war, the nature of civil strife, the nature of historiography and so forth.

The dividing line between these two categories may in practice be open to dispute; for example, is Thucydides's description of the stasis at Corcyra to be considered as data or theory in these terms, or some complex combination of the two? However, any given reader of Thucydides will (a) have their own view on this matter, and (b) have one rather than the other in mind as the sort of information that they are seeking in the text. They will therefore tend to read the text in those terms, and understand an episode such as the Corcyrean stasis either as primarily a source of information about the course of events in 427 BCE or as primarily an exposition of Thucydides's theories on the nature of civic society and the sources of internal political conflicts, theories that are partly derived from an analysis of those events, and partly presented through a narrative account of them.

Second, there are the different purposes that this information is intended to serve. Again I would like to propose two broad categories that closely correspond to ideas about what can be found *in* Thucydides:

D_1: *Data* Information about the past: specific, particular, "historical": the sequence of events, the course of development, the nature of past intellectual and cultural life and so forth.

T_1: *Theory* General, more or less abstract and universal ideas about the way the world works: why wars begin, how states make decisions, why social cohesion breaks down and so forth.

Obviously, and to a greater extent than with the previous categories, these ideal types D_1 and T_1 represent a spectrum rather than a polarity. Historical accounts always involve at least a certain measure of generalization, even if historians have traditionally fetishized detail and particularity, while most varieties of political theory have at least some purchase on actuality. However, for the purposes of argument, we can again assume that any given reader will have a particular conception of what they are trying to achieve as a result of reading Thucydides, and for what purpose they will use the information thus gathered. By proposing these two sets of ideas, then, we can distinguish four different intended outcomes from reading Thucydides, which reflect different kinds of intellectual projects.

D – D_1 Information about the past is extracted from Thucydides in order to write a historical account (of the Peloponnesian War, Athenian democracy, ancient warfare, epidemic diseases through history etc.). This approach often emphasizes the particularity of events as an end in itself; it may draw on more general ideas only as a means of interpreting the evidence, in order to produce a modern narrative that replicates the time frame of Thucydides's narrative. Insofar as more general conclusions are drawn from Thucydides's account, they are strictly time-limited and contextualized: for example, the text may be interpreted as a source of information about ancient Greek naval warfare more generally rather than just about naval warfare in the Peloponnesian War. The classic example of this kind of reading is George Grote's *History of Greece*, which takes Thucydides as a virtually unimpeachable source of information about the events that Grote wishes to re-present in his own narrative.

T – D_1 Information about Thucydides's own ideas about the world, politics, the nature of historiography and so forth is used to write a broader historical account of the development of such ideas. Such accounts may be focused on the same historical period that Thucydides describes (the cultural world of fifth-century Athens), or on the longer-term development of classical antiquity (e.g., G. F. Creuzer's *The Historical Art of the Greeks*), or on a still longer time frame (the history of historiography, the development of ideas of citizenship); they may also, in certain cases, focus primarily on modern developments, with Thucydides's ideas presented as a point of origin. This approach again emphasizes the particularity of events (namely that Thucydides had such ideas at this specific period) in

the context of a broader account of historical development and/or a broader characterization of the intellectual/cultural life of Athenian society in this period. To put it another way: Thucydides's account is once again mined for historical data relating to the period when it was written, but this time it is not the events he narrates but the ideas and assumptions that shaped his narration that are of interest to the reader.

D – T_1 Information about the past, derived from Thucydides's account, is used as the basis for developing normative theories with more or less universal applicability about war, politics, interstate relations, and the like, and/or (more commonly) as the basis for testing normative theories derived from abstract principles or other historical contexts. Taking the Corcyrean stasis as an example again, a reader might reflect upon this episode (treating Thucydides's account of it simply as a reliable source of data) in order to identify more general principles of social breakdown and the sources of internal conflict, or might take a modern theory of the origins of faction and see how well it works when applied to this test case. The intended result is a general theory of, say, social order that has been derived from, tested against and/or refined through the data extracted from Thucydides's account.

T – T_1 Thucydides's own theories, identified in and extracted from his account of events, are used to develop, test, and, support normative theories with more or less universal applicability. This approach has the same intended end product as the previous one, but it starts from a different attitude to Thucydides's text, a different idea of what is most important in it. This approach may involve the recognition that Thucydides's narration is shaped by his own theories and rhetorical strategies, rather than being a straightforward objective account from which data can be extracted without worrying about the views of the historian—as such, this is really a default position from D – T_1.[12] More commonly, Thucydides is explicitly recognized as someone whose ideas are of interest and worth engaging with, an authoritative theorist of human affairs; the events he describes are of interest only because they are the basis on which he developed his ideas.

Again, it is important to stress the point that this is a highly simplified schema; as with any set of ideal types, it overemphasizes certain differences and occludes others. Within a single work, for example, a

historian might draw on Thucydides both as a source of information about events and as an exemplary cultural figure, in order to combine both a narrative and a descriptive account of contemporary culture and ideas within a single book on fifth-century Athens (D/T – D_1). Equally, works of theoretical analysis might seek to engage simultaneously with actual events, with Thucydides's account of those events and with the ideas that shaped that account, in order to test and refine a general theory; one classic example is Clifford Orwin's discussion of the Corcyrean stasis and the Athenian plague, which moves backward and forward between the events themselves and the Thucydidean analysis of them, testing each against the other not as an end in itself but in order to develop ideas on social dissolution that have a more general application (D/T – T_1).[13] Further, one might identify accounts that make three rather than two moves from Thucydides: mining it for data to construct a historical narrative with the underlying purpose then of developing or supporting more general principles (e.g., George Grote's and J. S. Mill's use of an account of Athenian history based largely on Thucydides to underpin their revaluation of democracy (D – D_1 – T_2)), or writing a history of political thought incorporating Thucydides's ideas in order to legitimize claims about the proper goals or methodology of political theory in the present (T – D_1 – T_2).[14]

II. Conceptions of the Text

One part of any reading strategy is the intended outcome; the other is the way in which the text is conceived by any given reader, which determines the way in which it will be read in order to yield the desired result. This is at least as important a factor as the different aims of readers in producing the wide variation in modern readings of Thucydides; whereas there is little real dispute among modern readers that Plato wrote philosophy and Livy wrote history (the argument is over how far those simple labels occlude significant differences between ancient and modern), in the case of Thucydides there is a serious dispute about the nature of the text and how best to characterize it. The majority of readers are at least partly conscious of this issue, if not always of its full dimensions; those that explicitly describe the way they are conceiving of Thucydides's text in their reading usually do so in a concessionary form—many

different variants of "despite the appearance of X, this is really Y." Even more than in the previous section, therefore, characterizing any given reading is a matter of plotting a point on a spectrum rather than assigning it to one of two polarized categories. I propose that, at least for the case of Thucydides, textual conceptions can be plotted on two axes.

The first focused on different ideas of authorial intention: what sort of text did Thucydides set out to write? This might be seen in terms of genre, with a spectrum of possibilities between "history" at one end and "political theory" at the other (though clearly this tends to replicate problems with projecting present generic and disciplinary conventions back into the past) or, more abstractly, in terms of whether Thucydides's primary interest is perceived to be factual information or theoretical principles, particular or general knowledge. Did he intend primarily to offer information about specific events or to develop more general ideas about the way that human beings behave? Clearly, not least because of Thucydides's own methods and stated methodological principles at 1.22–23, the answer must be that the text is some sort of combination of the two; indeed, that is precisely why it is open to such contrasting and inconsistent readings. However, I would suggest that the majority of readers, even those who genuinely strive to keep both aspects in balance, end up favoring one over the other. Any given reading can then be characterized as *basically* "historical" (H) or "philosophical" (P) in its tendency, according to whether the reader considers that Thucydides's main purpose was to offer an accurate account of events as an end in itself (albeit one founded on the conviction that the reader will be able to draw more general understanding from it) or to develop normative theories (albeit with a stronger emphasis on the particularity of events than one would usually expect from such a theoretical enterprise).

The second axis is one of familiarity: how far is Thucydides's text conceived to be basically similar in intent, methods, assumptions, and so forth to contemporary examples of the genre to which it has been assigned? The more familiar (F) the work is felt to be, the less it then needs to be contextualized and the more it can be read in a straightforward manner according to the norms of the present-day discipline. The more alien (X) it seems, the more awareness the reader will have of issues of translation (both literal and cultural) and

problems of interpretation in making sense of the text and extracting the desired information from it. This assessment—assuming that it is made consciously and explicitly (there are plenty of examples in both the historical and the philosophical traditions of readers simply taking it for granted that they are dealing with a familiar sort of text)—will rest on assumptions about the defining features of the present form of the genre, since inevitably *some* elements of any historical text will seem unfamiliar. Generally, if not inevitably, readings that treat Thucydides as familiar will prioritize subject matter and methodology over literary form: *despite* the inclusion of speeches, this is critically informed, if not scientific, history; *despite* the emphasis on the narration of events, this is at its heart normative political theory. This approach reflects a general tendency within the humanities and especially the social sciences to discount literary form and rhetorical presentation as being ancillary to content and argument, but it is also a necessary move because the unfamiliar nature of the literary aspects of Thucydides's work, especially the inclusion of speeches, is hardest to overlook when reading.[15] Conversely, characterizing Thucydides as an alien text often involves the argument that form and content are inseparable, so that the unfamiliar rhetorical form means that the work as a whole cannot be treated as a modern historical or political account; such readers often draw upon philological studies of Thucydides's work as a literary artefact, which take its unfamiliar nature for granted. However, it may also derive from a broader insistence on the importance of context in evaluating any historical text, even if this runs the risk of implying that such texts can therefore have no significant bearing on the present, as has been suggested of the approach of the "Cambridge School" within the study of the history of ideas.[16]

III. Reading Strategies

We can then characterize different readings of Thucydides according to the combination of these intentions and conceptions: the way that a given reader understands the text, and the aims of their reading. Clearly some combinations work together much more successfully than others, and are more likely to be encountered; a reader with a certain conception of the text will have a sense of what kinds of useful knowledge they can hope to extract, while one with a clear

sense of the use to which they want to put Thucydides is more likely to conceive of the text in some ways rather than others. We might be tempted to think of this in terms of the text inviting certain readings—for example, through the limited number of explicit instructions Thucydides offers his reader about the nature of his work and how to read it—and resisting others; however, this immediately takes us back to assumptions about authorial intentions, the conviction developed by many readers that they alone are reading Thucydides in the way that he intended.

D – D_1 The project of using Thucydides's history to write a modern history of the same events is clearly best served by conceiving of the text as HF: the more Thucydides's work is understood as different from modern historiography (let alone if it is conceived as a primarily theoretical–philosophical project) the less the "facts" it offers can be taken at face value and the more work the reader has to do in evaluating and criticizing everything Thucydides says. Especially over the last few decades, such projects have more often appeared as D/T – D_1, seeking to identify the ruling ideas of Thucydides's analysis in the hope of correcting for his biases in the presentation of events; they acknowledge the unfamiliar aspects of his historical practice while still insisting on his basic veracity, and at the same time search for alternative sources of evidence for the period, to avoid having to rely solely on Thucydides's account.

D – T_1 Again, the emphasis on gathering reliable data about past events, this time in order to develop and test normative theories against them, means that HF is the most comfortable conception, with HX creating uncertainties about whether Thucydides's account can be trusted. It does seem, however, judging from the actual Thucydidean literature, that understanding the text as PF may also be a possibility here; there is in certain accounts clear recognition of and interest in Thucydides's own theories, and an awareness of the fact that he develops those theories through his account of events, but the historical data in his account are implicitly treated as separate from and uninfluenced by those theories (just as they might be in a reading of a modern theoretical piece), so that the data can be extracted and used to test and support different modern theories.

T – D_1 This is the "history of thought" approach, incorporating Thucydides's ideas into a broader historical account. Such an approach can therefore be based on any conception of the text—this

will simply lead to a different account according to whether the reader sees the text as alien (marked by differences from present practices, hence emphasizing development between past and present) or familiar (either seen to transcend its context, in the way that Thucydides was seen in the nineteenth century as a modern scientific historian *avant la lettre*, or offered as evidence for a timeless essence of historical or political thought). Alternatively, of course, the reader's conception may be shaped by the kind of story they wish to tell. Historians of historiography will in general see Thucydides as a historian, historians of political thought as some kind of political theorist, if only because that is how he appears in the different traditions of thought they are describing—these alternative conceptions certainly date back to the rediscovery of Thucydides in the Renaissance.[17] Presenting Thucydides as more or less familiar represents one kind of legitimation strategy for the tradition, claiming the authority of classical origins; presenting him as alien may be a means of celebrating present understanding over the misconceptions of the past, but it may also serve more polemical ends by presenting an alternative to contemporary assumptions—Thucydides as a challenge to the present state of the discipline and a model for a new approach.[18]

$T - T_1$ This project is again theoretically compatible with almost any conception of the text; it is simply that the outcomes will be radically different depending on which approach is adopted. Attempting to develop normative theory is not an activity generally associated with mainstream history—indeed, it can be seen as a fundamental difference between "humanities" and "social science" approaches—but it does feature in discussions of historical theory orientated toward current disciplinary practices. Here, different readings of Thucydides replicate different versions of the "history of ideas" approach discussed above: HF (seeing Thucydides's ideas about the writing of history as more or less identical to modern ideas) serves to reinforce current understanding of historiography, while HX emphasizes differences between past and present, which either reinforce the superiority of current understanding or, if Thucydides is taken as a positive model, call it into question. Historians naturally see Thucydides as a historian, but some are willing to acknowledge the extent to which his project was at least partly "philosophical" (normally seen as PX rather than PF, precisely because these theories

are presented through a historical narrative rather than developed explicitly). If Thucydides is seen as a special kind of historian, a sort of HX/PX, that too can be put forward as an alternative to current historiographical approaches, a model for a new scientific history.[19]

In contrast, the majority of discussions of Thucydides in political theory and international relations fall into this category: Thucydides is seen as a political theorist of some kind, whether familiar (the first scientific realist) or unfamiliar (a classical realist, a tragedian).[20] The more familiar he seems or is assumed to be, the easier it is to identify and extract his ideas—they may be concealed within a narrative of events, but they are assumed to have the same form as modern normative theories and propositions—and to incorporate them into a conventional discussion, whether to support prevailing contemporary views or to criticize them.[21] For a historicist, this procedure looks like a matter of taking Thucydides out of context and ignoring the many ways in which his work is not modern; the point is rather that, in such a reading, the most important context is assumed to be the tradition of debate around a particular issue, rather than the historical context that historicists invariably privilege. One reason for this is that the more Thucydides is conceived as an alien sort of political theorist, whose approach can be understood only by placing it within its original historical context, the less useful his ideas seem to be for present concerns.[22] Even if his work is in some sense theoretical, its mode of thought and underlying assumptions are simply too anachronistic, too incompatible with present-day approaches in anything but the most general terms, so that Thucydides becomes a name to evoke in passing for rhetorical purposes rather than a thinker with whom one can productively engage.

The chief way in which the unfamiliar aspects of Thucydides's approach to political theory can be acknowledged without this thereby undermining his usefulness for contemporary discussions is to rethink his "alienness," seeing this not in terms of pastness and historical specificity but simply in terms of difference from present-day practices. The resistance of the text to conventional political–theoretical readings (or rather, the assumptions that have to be made and the questions begged in order to read it in that manner) are reconfigured from a problem to an opportunity. Thucydides becomes a model for a different approach to political theory, whether in his intellectual project (the study of recurrent patterns in human

life without falling for the idea that there are fixed laws of history or society, as Williams and Geuss have suggested) or in his rhetorical technique (the use of dramatic narrative to make the issues at stake manifest, making the reader a spectator).[23] Presented in these terms, as a real alternative to current practices and assumptions, the unfamiliar qualities of Thucydides's text become less of a problem. The reader is encouraged to think of how these new ideas and forms could be employed in the present, rather than seeing them simply as a marker of the past; the fact that Thucydides was an analyst of contemporary events rather than a student of the past makes this a little more plausible. That Thucydides had such ideas and presented them in such a way is historically contingent, but the text as a model for political analysis is not thereby historically limited. As such, Thucydides conceived as PX and even as HX can serve as the basis for discussing and developing normative theories as readily as one conceived as PF—perhaps more so, since the obvious objection that his work is manifestly *not* a piece of modern political theory has been anticipated—but at the expense of de-emphasizing the original historical context of the text.

Conclusion

What does this analysis actually offer us? Its primary message is the traditional historians' lament that "it's much more complicated than it looks": a simple contrast between "historical" and "political" readings of Thucydides fails to capture the complexity of the debate, or to explain how, even within individual disciplinary traditions, the interpreters and appropriators of Thucydides are so often arguing past one another on the basis of quite incompatible goals and conceptions of the text. Each position disputes the premises of the others: historical contextualists insist on the fundamentally alien nature of Thucydides's text, hence its unsuitability for anything except writing a history of thought, while others take for granted the possibility of extracting a core of historical data or identifying normative political principles that are not wholly limited to their original context. Every reading involves a set of assumptions about Thucydides's authorial intentions and conception of the world, and has to ignore some aspects of this complex, multilayered text in order to concentrate on others. There is no correct reading, even if some readings

look to me, given my own biases, more partial and problematic than others (Thucydides as a thorough-going modern realist, e.g., or Thucydides's text as an objective account of events, unmediated by its author's own ideas). The clearest divide, it seems to me, is not between different conceptions of the text—the majority of contemporary readings tend, however grudgingly, toward a middle ground that recognizes that it is both historical and philosophical–political, both empirical and theoretical, an unusual hybrid that could be anachronistically labeled a kind of humanistic social science—but between the different purposes for which the text is read. That is a divide not only between those who seek to engage only with the past and those who are focused more on the present, but also, among the latter, between those who engage with the text on its own terms as well as on their own, remaining open to ambiguity and debate, and those who read it solely through preconceived ideas and employ Thucydides simply to decorate their arguments.

Two final thoughts. First, it is striking how far the majority of these readings, especially those that use their reading to develop theories, insist that their interpretation is what Thucydides *really* meant. This returns to his role as an authority figure: it is not just that interesting and productive ideas can be found in or drawn from his work, if it is read in a particular way, but that ideas are perceived as interesting and productive, and often persuasive, *because* and *insofar as* they are attributed to Thucydides. This was true in historiographical debates in the nineteenth century; it remains true today in many areas of political theory, strategic studies, and international relations, especially in the United States.[24] Second, a crucial component of Thucydides's authority for the majority of readers is his "realism," the close relation that is perceived between his ideas and reality; his theories are perceived as drawing strength from the fact that they are not purely abstract or invented, but are derived from and grounded in concrete events and Thucydides's own real-world experience and expertise. Thucydides's ideas are thus always at least partly context-dependent; not in the sense that they are limited to a specific set of historical events, but that they are intimately connected to real events (and the Peloponnesian War thus becomes, if it was not so already, exemplary) in contrast to some pejorative notion of "pure theory" as an inadequate basis for engagement with the real world. This perceived orientation toward reality—one of the strongest effects of the

text on its readers—may well account for Thucydides's neglect in certain fields of political thought (e.g., the British tradition of political philosophy, with the exception of figures like Williams and Geuss who are expressly interested in understanding the truth of experience) and his continuing popularity in others.

Notes

1. This chapter is above all the product of discussions with Christine Lee over the last three years; I have benefitted enormously from the breadth of her knowledge of current debates in political theory and political science, and her willingness to explain it all patiently. I am also very grateful to the organizers of the Berlin workshop for the opportunity to write a chapter on this theme, and for all the helpful points raised in discussion.
2. See for example the survey in Meineke (2003) and the various papers in Harloe and Morley (2012).
3. Clifford Orwin remarked in discussion that he was disappointed by what he found or failed to find in Thucydides on first reading his work; it is striking that he nevertheless persisted in the search for the knowledge that he had been told could be found there.
4. See for example the different arguments developed in Floyd and Stears (2011).
5. This is quite unmistakable in both the organization of Harloe and Morley (2012) and the approaches chosen by most of the contributors.
6. The quote comes from Gilpin (1984), p. 291.
7. Ober (2006).
8. For example, Euben (1990), Lebow (2003).
9. Compare the way that Hobbes's characterization of Thucydides as "the most politic historiographer that ever writ" is often interpreted as if he were calling for interdisciplinary collaboration in a modern context.
10. Morris (2002) remains an excellent sketch of the differences between these branches of human studies.
11. Loraux (1980); English version Loraux (2011).
12. For examples of the way that Thucydides's understanding and representation of events are clearly shaped by his own ideas about politics, see Taylor (2010) and Foster (2010).
13. Orwin (1988).
14. On the latter, see for example the discussion of the "historiographical turn in IR" offered by Bell (2003).
15. On the literary nature of historical and social-scientific writing, see for example, White (1974); McCloskey (1986); Morley (2006).
16. On the "Cambridge School," see for example, Bell (2003), Floyd (2009) and the various contributions to Floyd and Stears (2011), especially those from Kelly and Graham in Part I: "The Challenge of Contextualism."

17. See for example, Hoekstra (2012).
18. This is precisely how he, along with Clausewitz and Morgenthau, is deployed by Lebow (2003), to make the case for "classical realism" against conventional "realist" approaches to international relations.
19. This is essentially the message of Wilhelm Roscher's account, presenting Thucydides as the first scientific historian who at the same time demonstrates the necessity of uniting science and art—although Roscher is also at pains to distinguish him from excessively abstract "philosophical" approaches to the world. See Morley (2012).
20. For example, Gilpin (1984), Lebow (2003), and Bedford and Workman (2001).
21. For an example of the latter, see Ahrensdorf (1997), who reads Thucydides as an essentially modern theorist whose realist analysis reaches very different conclusions from contemporary realism.
22. These are the key concerns discussed in Floyd and Stears (2011), especially the papers by Kelly, Graham, and Hampsher-Monk.
23. Williams (1993), pp. 161–3; Williams (2002), pp. 151–4; Geuss (2005), pp. 227–33.
24. And indeed within the wider culture; see Morley (2013) on Thucydides in the Internet.

CHAPTER 3

It's Time for History! Thucydides in International Relations: Toward a Post-"Westphalian" Reading of a Pre-"Westphalian" Author

Christian R. Thauer

I. Introduction

This chapter reconsiders Thucydides from an International Relations (IR) perspective. This perspective is interested in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* as a "possession for all time" (1.22.4), that is, as a theoretical text with the potential to provide significant insights for our thinking about world politics and IR today. This disciplinary interest needs mentioning. As Neville Morley reminds us in chapter 2, modern disciplinary perspectives on Thucydides are already *foreknowledge*[1] conditioning our interpretations in the sense that they entail expectations with respect to what we hope to find in his text. While my predispositions in this regard are thus herewith made clear, this chapter, however, does not discuss "the" theory of Thucydides—or what we might think it is. Instead, it draws our attention to the processes through which we construct meaning in relation to the Thucydidean text. It thus concerns the act of interpretation itself. How can we, and how should we approach the ancient author from an IR perspective?

Political science in general has turned into a highly methods-driven discipline.[2] The subdiscipline of IR is no exception. Methods, at least in mainstream political science, have the function of

orchestrating a dialogue between, on the one hand, established and abstract (theoretical) knowledge about the state of, and dynamics in the world and, on the other hand, fresh (empirical) observations and experiences made in this world. This dialogue is an inherently critical one in the sense that it favors observations and experiences that are in one way or another in conflict with what we thought was true about the world before.[3] That is to say, we test theoretical claims and arguments by seeking to falsify them; we look for empirical variations that seem "puzzling," by which we understand that they are at odds with our expectations about outcomes of political processes.[4] Methods guide our observations and experiences in this direction and allow us to draw conclusions and inferences from them in relation to theory. Today, almost every step we take in our regular (usually: empirical) research is informed, guided, justified, and then interpreted in light of such methodological considerations. However, when it comes to the reading of texts such as Thucydides, there is, with very few exceptions,[5] a strange lacuna concerning methodological reflections and procedure. This chapter addresses this gap.

There are, of course, several ways in which this chapter could do this. For example, it could address the act of interpretation on the level of philosophy of sciences and discuss, for instance, the potential value of Straussian,[6] postmodern,[7] hermeneutic,[8] or intellectual history[9] approaches to the reading of Thucydides. However, in the context of this book, which consists of a dialogue between different disciplines and subdisciplines, this chapter takes a different route. Following an interdisciplinary eclectic rather than systematic philosophical path, it asks what it is that IR scholars can learn from historians when interpreting the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. To answer this question we, of course, still need some criterion according to which we can decide what qualifies as worth learning in this context. The analysis in this respect applies a "minimum" methodological assumption, which derives directly from the methodological principles of mainstream political science outlined previously (applying this assumption testifies once more to my disciplinary bias, to which I have already admitted.) The assumption concerns the criterion of critical engagement, according to which any observation or experience—and I suggest to take the reading of Thucydides as just that, an experience—should serve the purpose of redefining, creating a conflict with, or undermining what we thought was true

before. Note that this does not imply in any way that interpretations could or should somehow be "objective" and overcome the predispositions, knowledge, and opinions of the interpreter. The goal is instead that the interpreter is in some way challenged by the text, and that this challenge, and the way the interpreter deals with it, is central for the construction of meaning and the resulting interpretation.[10] In what follows, I argue that historians offer us IR scholars an array of challenges to the way we usually read Thucydides and that, therefore, "It's Time for History!" in our dealings with the ancient author.

In developing this argument, the chapter will in a first step briefly review the act of interpretation in relation to Thucydides as we usually find it in IR literature. Thucydides is here heavily utilized in the context of "teleological history" writing (Neville Morley, chapter 2), whereby already-established works of scholars and their position in the "great debates"[11] about IR theory are read backward into the writings of Thucydides, making him retrospectively the founding father of the respective theoretical tradition.[12] Such procedure in relation to Thucydides rests on two interrelated—and rather unchallenging and methodologically dubious—assumptions (*foreknowledge*) with which the text is approached. The first one is a textual and the second a contextual one. The textual presumption is that the Thucydidean text transmits itself easily to the reader. If we wish to understand it, it is enough to know some important snapshots, such as the "Melian Dialogue" (5.85–113) or the "truest cause" (1.23), as these summarize what the ancient author wanted to say. The contextual presumption is that we can relate these text passages directly to the theories of IR and theoretical debates about world politics of today. The second and main part of the chapter discusses these textual and contextual presumptions in light of the historical literature. It is here that I argue that "It's Time for History!" in our dealings with Thucydides. In light of the historical literature, the *History* does not appear as an easily accessible text, but as a highly complex, layered one, which is essentially problematic in its structure and thus in no way easily understood. And concerning the contextual dimension, it seems that historians disagree with our idea that international politics then and now can be understood on the same terms. In the conclusion, I discuss these points and also make suggestions on how the historical literature could be used as a basis and source

of inspiration for future IR readings of Thucydides. Approaching Thucydides in a historically informed and more challenging way means, so I argue, that the text regains relevance and meaning for the post-Westphalian world of politics of today.

II. Interpretations of Thucydides in International Relations Scholarship

If critical engagement is what we are looking for, the traditional way of dealing with Thucydides in IR does not have much to offer to us. Thucydides is a very common reference in theoretical debates between the main schools of thought in IR.[13] However, authors rarely actually engage with his text. Instead, the *History* is superficially mentioned for purposes of "teleological history" writing (Neville Morley, chapter 2), that is, the creation of intellectual lineages.[14] Already in the very beginnings of the discipline after World War II, the first realists quoted the *History of the Peloponnesian War* in this way, as an example of the timeless wisdom of their theories.[15] Hans Morgenthau, for instance, cites Thucydides's *History* in his seminal work, *Politics among Nations*, to summarize the quintessence of his own argument: "'Of the gods we know,' to quote Thucydides, 'and of men we believe, that it is a necessary law of their nature that they rule wherever they can.'"[16] With the advent of neorealism in the 1960s and the second "great debate,"[17] "Thucydidean Realism"[18] became contested. The "new" realists argued against the "old" ones that systemic forces are what drive INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. They also declared that they—not the traditional realists—were the true heirs of Thucydides.[19] Kenneth Waltz, for example, refers to Thucydides in *Man, the State, and War*: "This, the idea of the third image [i.e., of neorealism] . . . is not a new idea. It is not an esoteric idea. Thucydides implied it when he wrote that it was 'the growth of the Athenian power, which terrified the Lacedaemonians and forced them into war.'"[20] Finally, since the late 1980s, constructivists have made the case for an alternative approach to IR to the realist–rationalist one. In this vein, they created their own intellectual lineages also in relation to Thucydides,[21] and thereby invented "Thucydides the Constructivist."[22] This interpretation conceptualizes Thucydides as a critic of realism.

Underlying this way of dealing with the ancient author are two assumptions.[23] First, concerning the text of Thucydides, the *History*

of the Peloponnesian War can be reduced to certain passages of the Melian Dialogue (5.85–113), as in the citation of Morgenthau seen earlier, or to the so-called truest cause (1.23) for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, as done by Waltz and, in his earlier works, by Lebow.[24] Indeed, interpreting Thucydides was for a long time not considered to require deep reflection or a comprehensive and thorough consideration of the text. In an introduction to the intellectual foundations of the discipline, Kauppi and Viotti illustrate this ostensibly "unproblematic" view concerning the working and structure of the Thucydidean text: "Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War is an easily accessible work that does not require the reader to have any background knowledge . . . One can simply enjoy it."[25] Second, and closely related to the first one, concerning the contextual embedding of the alleged meaning of these text passages, the presumption is that these can, without further ado, be directly related to today's theories of IR.

Even in the absence of any knowledge of the historical literature, these presumptions seem rather daring. That a text, which was written in an entirely different epoch and a language that is not alive any more—and of which it is not even clear beyond the point of doubt that it really is one unified text written by one author[26]—will be easily accessible to a modern reader is an expectation that seems unfounded and naïve, if not outright ignorant. The same is true concerning the expectation that the text is directly applicable to today's IR problems. Ontologically, modern IR are based on the idea of Westphalian Sovereignty—which however is constitutive for international order only since 1648 (and thus does not apply before).[27] We should thus rather expect that we have to carefully "translate" events and insights of times before 1648 in some way before they can "speak" to us today in a meaningful way. In what follows, I describe the way historians conceive of the Thucydidean text and context, which may help us to overcome these rather dubious presumptions.

Before I do so, I shall mention however that since the 1990s, approaches to Thucydides in IR developed in ways that deviated from the traditional pattern described previously. These deviating approaches are less "teleological" in that they truly engage with the original text, whereby they allow themselves to be challenged by Thucydides. Most importantly, they assert that the *History* is a complex text, and that its interpretation is inherently

problematic.[28] Power appears to play a key role; although norms, identity, traditions, and moral–ethical considerations also seem important.[29] These newer approaches negotiate with Thucydides different aspects of his text, and often end up somewhat puzzled with respect to his meaning and message. This chapter contributes to these deviating approaches in that it offers a systematic reflection of the challenges we confront when reading Thucydides, and a way of dealing with them.

III. The Historical Challenge

Historians discuss the structure of the *History of the Peloponnesian War* and the historical international relations at the time of Thucydides differently. They neither think that understanding the text of Thucydides is an "unproblematic enterprise"[30] nor do they describe the interstate relations at the time of the *History* in terms compatible with the idea of Westphalian Sovereignty. In what follows, I first discuss the text and then the context of Thucydides as they emerge in view of the historical literature.

1. Challenge 1: A Complex Text

Unlike in IR, historians discuss the interpretation of the *History of the Peloponnesian War* as a problem.[31] From the perspective of the historical literature, the *History* begins with an illustration of the rise of the city of Athens, its greatness, growing power and seemingly unstoppable and inevitable success in the ancient Greek polis world. It ends with Athens's devastating defeat in Sicily. In between is the famous Melian Dialogue (5.85–113), which marks, on the one hand, the climax of Athens's power and, on the other, the turning point in the fate of the city, in which its defeat in Sicily and decline in power begins. The quintessential question for any interpretation is in light of the historical literature whether this dialogue should be read "forward looking," that is, toward the destruction of Athens or "backward looking," that is, in relation to its success, growth, and power. For historians, the *History* is thus in the first place about the greatness and fall of Athens, Thucydides's hometown.[32] This theme suggests itself:[33] Thucydides's narrative begins in the so-called "Archaeology", describing the military, political, and moral superiority of Athens in

ancient Greece at the time the city was led by Pericles. In stark contrast to this appears his narration at the end of the *History*, in which he describes Athens's defeat. "The Rise and Fall of States"[34] was a *leitmotif* among ancient Greek authors. Without having to explicitly state it, Thucydides could thus be sure his readers would understand the question he was concerned with: why did Athens fall?

The Melian Dialogue is the quintessential passage in relation to this question. Historians point out that it stands out in the *History* as the only dialogue in the text.[35] By choosing this form of presentation, Thucydides marks the centrality and importance of this passage. He does so also by creating a mismatch between, on the one hand, the length of the dialogue—which is quite substantial—and on the other hand its negligible importance for the course of events in the Peloponnesian War.[36] That is to say, the Melian Dialogue was irrelevant for the outcome of the war between Athens and Sparta. Melos was a tiny, neutral island and in no way strategically important. The dialogue was in the end also irrelevant for the conflict between Athens and Melos. The Athenians destroy the island and kill the Melians. They could have easily done so without all the talk. But then, what is it that Thucydides wanted to say when he decided to craft the dialogue? The seminal study by Georg Deininger argues that Thucydides marks here the climax and turning point in his description of Athens's rise and fall.[37] On the one hand, the Athenians are in Melos at the height of their power and success. They destroy the Melians in passing, and seem to be on a winning trail in their war against Sparta. From this perspective, Thucydides explicates in the dialogue the causes of the city's previous success. This is what Deininger calls the backward looking[38] interpretation of the Melian Dialogue. This backward looking interpretation resonates in some ways with the realist one in IR (e.g., Morgenthau).

On the other hand, the Melian Dialogue is the prologue to Athens's expedition to Sicily, that is, to the devastating "Krisis"[39] which in the end leads to her fall. Directly after the Melian Dialogue, the *History* continues with: "in the same winter the Athenians resolved to sail again to Sicily . . . and, if possible, to conquer the island; most of them being ignorant of its size and of the number of its inhabitants, Hellenic and barbarian, and of the fact that they were undertaking a war not much inferior to that against the Peloponnesians." (6.1). Thucydides tells us here that the Athenian decision to conquer Sicily

is naïve and ignorant. The irony is that in the Melian Dialogue before, it is Athens that accuses the Melians of being naïve and ignorant. In the dialogue, Athens—aware of her superior military might—demands from tiny and neutral Melos to join her league in the war against Sparta. Otherwise, say the Athenians, they will destroy the island. The Melians respond saying that the Athenian demand is unrightful, and turn it down. The Athenians, in reaction to this rejection, reproach them of "blindness of judgement", and slaughter them. The composition of the text makes clear that the ruthlessness with which the Athenians treat the Melians at the height of their power soon comes back to haunt them in Sicily, where Athens experiences a defeat similar to the one it inflicted on Melos. From this perspective, Thucydides meant to relate the Melian Dialogue to the events that follow, that is, the fall of Athens. This interpretation of the dialogue is therefore also called forward looking.[40] This forward looking reading relates to the constructivist interpretation in IR in that Thucydides emerges here as a critic of (Athens's) realist thinking.[41]

Should the Melian Dialogue be interpreted as backward looking, pointing out why Athens was successful, or forward looking, explaining why Athens failed? Deininger's seminal study first analyzes the dialogue from a backward looking perspective. Thereby, he develops a hypothesis which guides historical research until today: If the crude realism of the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue is meant to be the cause for Athens's success, then we should find in the countless speeches in the narrative before the dialogue a similar radical realist ideology. Deininger thus analyzes the speeches of Athenians in order to compare the thinking they expose with the Athenian realism in the dialogue.[42] His conclusions summarize the historical debate about the relationship of the Melian Dialogue with the speeches in the *History* until today: he remains ambiguous, offering two contradictory interpretations.

First, his analysis searches for ideological similarities and finds that these do in fact exist,[43] which supports the backward looking interpretation. However, then he asks in how far the speeches in the *History* are distinct and unique, and finds that the result is also positive. In this vein, he concludes that the city followed a moderate, restrained ideology in the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. With the continuation of the war, however, Athens's power

politics became more and more radical. This change from moderate, restrained power politics toward unrestrained realism explains the fall of Athens.[44] This, however, would mean that the Melian Dialogue must be interpreted as forward looking, that is, explicating why Athens perished. While Deininger remains undecided between the two readings, most interpretations in the historical literature either suggest forward looking or backward looking interpretations.

The "realist" (i.e., backward looking) interpretations usually see in the Melian Dialogue Thucydides's "intellectual masterpiece"[45] in which he "summarizes what Athens is and is all about throughout the History."[46] Other speeches in the *History* thus reveal "in no way less" Athens "imperialist thinking,"[47] as they are all "proof of the same Athenian ideology of power politics."[48] In line with Deininger, these interpretations also concede that often the Athenian speeches, in order to appeal to their audiences, talk of honor, justice, and morality. However, they do so only for rhetorical reasons, as lip service, which makes these aspects irrelevant. Hence, in the Melian Dialogue, it is Thucydides who speaks through the Athenians; he believes that what they say in the Dialogue is true and that this uncompromising realism explains why they have been so successful before.[49] In light of the ambiguous structure of the *History*, however, this backward looking interpretation must find an answer to the question why, if Thucydides believes in the superior wisdom of the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue, he arranged his work such that Athens immediately after Melos decides to attack Sicily. The answer is according to the backward looking interpretation that "the Melian Dialogue does not reveal a mistake"[50] and "must not" be interpreted in relation to Sicily and Athens's decline.[51] Sicily and the defeat of Athens were instead caused by internal conflicts: "the Sicilian expedition failed because of the fundamental defect of post-Periclean domestic politics."[52] After the congenial Pericles, Athens lacked capable politicians and military leaders. The city was instead ruled by incompetent egoists. The public in Athens failed to elect the right politicians and military generals. As a state, Athens lacked the necessary inner harmony for sound decision-making. This is what brought Athens the defeat from the perspective of the backward looking interpretation—and not realism.

Forward looking interpretations see in Thucydides a critic of the Athenian power politics as exposed in the Melian Dialogue. They

understand the dialogue as a turning point in the fate of Athens—the "moment when political hybris, now at its height, opens the way to the beginning of political nemesis."[53] Following Deininger, forward looking readings compare Athenian speeches in the *History* held at different points in time and conclude that at the beginning of Thucydides's narrative, the Athenians make deeply "normative" arguments in order to justify their foreign policy decisions. This line of interpretation invokes against the backward looking realist interpretation that if we want to understand the *History* in terms of its "internal criteria of truth"[54] we must ask why Thucydides included these "normative" elements,[55] rather than dismiss them as mere lip service. Authors in this line of interpretation acknowledge that in most speeches, Athens shows a profound concern for power. However, they argue that before Melos, the Athenians had an equally strong concern for "moral justification,"[56] so that "might was right, but right was also might."[57] They therefore conclude that Athenians conceptualized power politics in a restrained, moderate, and defensively oriented way. Rengakos, for example, concludes analyzing one of the early speeches: "Athenian power politics, as Thucydides describes it (one third of the speech is dedicated to self-restraint), is to be called modest in its content and form."[58] During the war, however, Athens's foreign policy gradually degenerated and lost its moral constraints. Finley calls this the "transition from the doctrines of generous leadership enunciated in the Funeral Oration [an early speech of the Athenians] to those of naked absolutism exposed in the Melian Dialogue."[59] He thereby defines the core argument of the forward looking readings, according to which it is this degeneration in the thinking of the Athenians that caused the fall of the city.[60]

Looking at the *History* through the eyes of historians thus confronts us with a text we have not come across in IR before. This is a text with a structure independent from its "modern" reader in the sense that it challenges us with questions any interpretation will have to address: Why did Athens go down? How is this related to the Melian Dialogue? Should we read this quintessential text passage as forward or backward looking? What is the role and function of both power politics and normative aspects in the speeches of Thucydides? The answer to any of these challenging questions—irrespective of what the answer will be in substance—will have to negotiate itself through the system of international relations in the context of which

the events Thucydides describes take place. But what was the historical context of Thucydides and his contemporary readers? I now turn to a discussion of this context in terms of the international relations in the ancient Greek polis world in the fifth century BC, as historians describe them.

2. Challenge 2: International Relations without "Westphalian Sovereignty"

For quite some time many historians—implicitly or explicitly—presumed an international system structured by Westphalian Sovereignty in their analyses of interstate politics at the time of Thucydides. Westphalian Sovereignty, apart from referring to the principle of nonintervention, implies that a number of features can be ascribed to the international system.[61] For example, it implies that only one type of entity constitutes the system—namely states ("like units"[62] in Waltzian language). Most importantly, however, Westphalian Sovereignty comes with the idea that the international system is essentially one-dimensional (rather than consisting of multiple layers of overlapping ordering principles) and that it can be adequately described in terms of a central dichotomy. This dichotomy concerns the fundamental distinction between interstate and intrastate politics whereby the former is structured by anarchy and the latter by hierarchy. de Ste. Croix explicitly applies this assumption, which was highly prevalent among classicists in his time, to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War and Thucydides. In his seminal work *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (1972) he writes, "I believe that in practice he [Thucydides] drew a distinction—though he never frames it explicitly—between, on the one hand, the relations of *individuals inside the State*, where there are laws, enforced by sanctions, . . . and on the other, the relations *between States*, where it is the strong who decide . . . and moral judgments are virtually inapplicable."[63] In the past 20 years, however, studies have begun to critically reflect on such anachronistic fallacy.[64] These more recent studies argue that Westphalian Sovereignty—and the fundamental distinction between interstate anarchy and domestic hierarchy—is not a category through which the antique poleis system can be described. Instead, in these works, the antique system of international relations emerges as a highly complex and multidimensionally

structured system, with different types of fundamental relationships governing the relationships between poleis, which often overlapped and forced actors into conflict with each other.[65] Ernst Baltrusch describes the developments and functioning of this order in detail in relation to the so-called truest cause for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (*LoG*, chapter 1). I will thus not replicate his contribution here (his chapter would be a perfect fit here, though). Instead, I concentrate in what follows on a brief discussion of this order in terms of the type of system it constitutes from an IR perspective, and concerning the fundamental difference of this system to the Westphalian system of states.

The most interesting feature of the Hellenic international system at the time of Thucydides, as it emerges in these more recent historical studies, is that it is multidimensional. It is constituted by at least three fundamental relationships, and each of them constitutes a separate, though overlapping, system of governance with its own principles and rules. Traditional, kinship-based ties between poleis coexisted, overlapped, and interacted with "modern"[66] institutional ones (i.e., the *summachia*), which in turn did so with competitive power-based relationships. Concerning traditional, kinship-based relationships, what is important here is that they did not define a contract between equals. Instead, these were generalized relationships, based on the founding of the one through the other, as between mother and daughter cities, with clear roles of leadership and subordination, including the right to intervene in internal affairs and an obligation to militarily support each other in the event of an attack from a third party. That is to say, in the context of this type of relationships, the related entities were defined in relation with each other, and were thus not considered as the same (i.e., they were not "like units"[67]—unlike states in the Westphalian system of states). While establishing a generalized relationship, kinship-based ties were however also limited. Mother and daughter poleis were, beyond their special relationship, which encompassed many vital areas, entitled to their own independent, bilateral contracting with third-party poleis in the context of the modern institution of the *summachia*. *Summachia*-based relationships were from the outset more limited in nature than the kinship-based ones. These limitations imply that in the context of the *summachia*, the contracting poleis were considered in legal terms as equals—irrespective of their power differences (the

third layer of relationships, see below) or kinship-based relationships (the first layer of relationships, see above). The modern *summachia* thus did work on the assumption of states as "like units." Note, however, that this assumption and these limitations that the *summachia* imposed did not preclude the option of powerful poleis to interfere in the domestic politics of smaller states. This could and did happen—which shows how ill-described this order is by the concept of modern sovereignty. The point is rather that this was only considered as legitimate under certain conditions, which were more or less clearly defined. Both relationships, traditional kinship and modern institution-based ones, coexisted and were running into conflict with each other. For example, two cities, tied together through kinship as mother and daughter cities, could still individually enter *summachia* contracts on their own accord. Thus, mother and daughter cities could end up contracting with different partners—one with Athens and the other one with Sparta. In consequence, when these powerful partners saw the need to interfere in the domestic politics of the smaller partner militarily, which they could legitimately do under certain conditions, this forced the kinship partner to also enter this conflict and begin a war against the powerful city. This, in turn, could easily draw the powerful *summachia* partner of the kinship-related city into the conflict as well—so that in the end a minor event could easily turn into a large-scale war between the great powers Athens and Sparta and their *summachoi*. This problem of "accidental" major warfare, in turn, resulted in a transformation of the third layer of relationships that marked the international relations at the time of Thucydides, which consists of competitive and power-based interactions. Originally, these competitive relationships, in particular between Athens and Sparta, were deeply embedded in the dense institutional contract-network between these cities and their respective *summachoi*. That is to say, both cities acted in the context of, and limited by the institutional web of obligations and advantages that were defined by the *summachia*—which made an offensive attack on Sparta on Athens or vice versa highly unlikely. There was no security dilemma between the two antique super-powers, as Ernst Baltrusch shows in his contribution (*LoG*, chapter 1). However, as the mentioned disturbances between the first two layers of the system of international relations in Hellas turned interstate relationships in general more and more conflictive and threatened to

draw both Athens and Sparta involuntarily into major wars—even with each other—Athens switched to a different type of competitive power-based politics. From a certain point on, Athens acted more and more as if the other layers did not exist.

Interestingly, however, this turn toward pure power politics did not result in Athens trying to engage Sparta in a balance of power-type interaction. Instead, Athens became entirely unbound in its use of force and her competitive edge subsequently lacked a clear goal and direction. The result was an excessive military policy that included the annihilation of whole island populations (as in Melos) and the waging of war against "barbarians" (the Persians). This type of unbound power politics restructured the antique state system: the *summachoi* of Athens drifted away from the city as soon as they felt her power crumble, that is, as soon as they no longer had to fear Athens's wrath. They turned to Sparta instead as guarantor of the old order—a development which was, among other factors, key for Athens's defeat.

IV. Conclusion: Why Should International Relations Scholars Still Read Thucydides?

If these were the international relations in the context of which Thucydides analyzed the rise and fall of Athens, it seems obvious that we cannot expect to find any modern theory of IR embedded, referred to, or implied in his text. The type of relations and international system he was confronted with were simply too different. So in a way, from the perspective of the chapter of Neville Morley in this volume (chapter 2), the "political" reading I explored here transformed into a highly "historical" one. While still reading Thucydides in search for its theoretical content (i.e., for its universalism), I suggested in this chapter that, methodologically, we should, in order to understand what the ancient author may have wanted to convey to us when he wrote that he left a "possession for all time," contextualize his text historically.[68] However, one may then very well ask why students of IR should bother reading this text. The Cold War is over, after all, and what is more, Thucydides was not even a theorist of balance of power politics and nuclear deterrence (i.e., of the Cold War), as we now know (and unlike commonly presumed until the 1990s).[69] So, from an IR perspective, what is the value of a critical engagement with his text today?

I believe that the call for a systematic contextualization of Thucydides in this chapter is very timely in this respect. IR are currently in a crisis of ontology. The external dimension of "Westphalian Sovereignty," on which modern theories of IR are based, has long been called an "organized hypocrisy."[70] Powerful states have also after 1648 been quite happy to invade other states (and continue to do so today), despite the norm of nonintervention. In particular since the early 2000s, it has been pointed out that its internal dimension, associated with the idea of "domestic sovereignty"—according to which the state is the sole actor of relevance and control within its territory—is also aloof of reality.[71] Instead of "domestic sovereignty," limited statehood dominates in the world. Apart from states, NGOs, tribal actors, war lords, multinational corporations, international organizations, and other actors govern domestically and transnationally[72]—and thereby fulfill public roles which are theoretically, under the concept of Westphalian Sovereignty, exclusively ascribed to the state. IR scholars are not only increasingly aware of this phenomenon but also understand better every day how and why these other actors fulfill governor-functions. Yet, they are still at a loss when it comes to a reconceptualization of world order in this post-Westphalian world of today, and also as concerns grand strategy for political decision-making. It is clear that the state continues to play a significant role in the twenty-first century, and so does sovereignty, but that overall, the world has become more complex, multidimensional, and layered. Reading Thucydides as a distinctly pre-Westphalian text does in this context (re-)gain relevance. Thucydides is an author who wrote in the face of enormous complexity and a multilayered international system—which was different from the world today, but, in juxtaposition to the Westphalian conceptualization of the world, with regard to these features not unlike the post-Westphalian world we are confronting now. His work is about power politics, but in the right dosage—balanced with and used in the context of historical kinship ties, modern institutions and the interaction of both, and the constant conflicts this interaction causes. It is also about the failure of Athens to govern and balance these different values successfully. Thucydides's "possession for all time" may thus be to give us some hints on how to analyze international relations in such a complex world, structured by these conflicts, and on how the

failure of governance of Athens in light of this complexity can be avoided in the future.

Notes

1. See "Introduction" by Thauer and Wendt (chapter 1) where they refer to Gadamer (2004).
2. Shapiro, Smith, and Masoud (2004); Brady and Collier (2010); King, Keohane, and Verba (1994).
3. Scharpf (1997); Ganghof (2005).
4. Scharpf (1997), p. 18.
5. Namely Lebow (2003), pp. 50–8.
6. See the chapters of Keedus (*LoG*, chapter 4) and Orwin (chapter 6, in this volume).
7. Iser (1978); Lebow (2003).
8. Gadamer (2004); see "Introduction" by Thauer and Wendt (chapter 1).
9. Skinner (2002).
10. In this regard, the approach taken here seems highly compatible with Gadamer (2004) and follows the heuristic laid out in the Introduction by Thauer and Wendt (chapter 1).
11. Wilson (1998).
12. See Thauer (2011) for a criticism of the literature.
13. Johnson Bagby (1994); Welch (2003); Harloe and Morley (2012).
14. See Thauer (2011) for a criticism.
15. Schwarzenberger (1941); Morgenthau (1967); Herz (1974).
16. Morgenthau (1967), p. 32.
17. Wilson (1998).
18. Doyle (1990).
19. Waltz (1959); Gilpin (1984); Johnson Bagby (1994).
20. Waltz (1959), p. 159.
21. Garst (1989); Lebow (1991); George (1994), p. 196.
22. Lebow (2001).
23. See Thauer (2011) for both.
24. Lebow (1991).
25. Kauppi and Viotti (1992), p. 38. Similar Dunne and Schmidt (2001), p. 147.
26. As so-called separatist readings point out, Ullrich (1846); Schwartz (1919); Canfora (1990).
27. Krasner (1999).
28. Lebow (2003); Podoksik (2005); Thauer (2011).
29. Lebow (2003); Podoksik (2005); Thauer (2011); and Alker (1988); Garst (1989); Doyle (1990); Monten (2006).
30. Kauppi and Viotti (1992), p. 38.
31. Ullrich (1846); Meyer (1889); Meister (2011).

32. Orwin (1994), p. 2; Erbse (1989), p. 18; Connor (1984), p. 3; de Romilly (1991), p. 5; Finley (1942), p. 2; Gundert (1968), p. 115.
33. Connor (1984), p. 34.
34. De Romilly (1991).
35. Hudson-Williams (1950); Macleod (1974).
36. Rittelmeyer (1915), p. 120.
37. Deininger (1939).
38. Original: "zurückblickende," Deininger (1939), p. 80.
39. Schadewaldt (1929), p. 59.
40. Original: "vorwärts blickend," Deininger (1939), p. 80.
41. Thauer (2011).
42. Deininger (1939), pp. 52–61.
43. Deininger (1939), pp. 81–98.
44. Deininger (1939), pp. 51–55.
45. Jaeger (1959), p. 502. Original: "ideelle Höchstleistung."
46. Reinhardt (1966), p. 201. Original: "Der Dialog zeichnet ein Bild Athens (. . .), [das das] ganze Werk zusammenschließt."
47. Strasburger (1968), p. 515.
48. Flashar (1969), p. 47. Original: "Zeugnisse der gleichen athenischen Machtideologie."
49. Wassermann (1947), p. 3; Jaeger (1959), p. 48; Reinhardt (1966), p. 19; Woodhead (1970), p. 15; de Ste. Croix (1972), p. 21.
50. Reinhardt (1966), p. 216. Original: "Der Melierdialog deckt keinen Fehler auf."
51. Jaeger 1959, p. 504. Original: "in keinem Falle."
52. Strauss (1964), p. 19; see also Stahl (1966), p. 24.
53. de Romilly (1991), p. 57–8.
54. Hunter (1982), p. 11.
55. Rengakos (1984), p. 34, n. 81.
56. Raubitschek (1973), p. 48.
57. Bayer (1968), p. 201. Original: "Macht ist Recht und Recht ist Macht."
58. Rengakos (1984), p. 37. Original: "Abschließend darf man wohl sagen, daß das athenische Machtdenken, wie es Thukydides in dieser Rede zeichnet, sowohl in ihrem Inhalt als auch in der Art seiner Darstellung (ein Drittel der Rede ist der Mäßigung gewidmet) maßvoll genannt werden kann."
59. Finley (1942), p. 89.
60. Bender (1938), p. 6; Connor (1984), p. 15; de Romilly (1991); Rengakos (1984), p. 3; Rawlings (1981), p. 248.
61. Krasner (1999).
62. Waltz (1979), p. 93.
63. de Ste. Croix (1972), p. 16.
64. Baltrusch (1994); Low (2007); Scheibelreiter (2013); Baltrusch and Wendt (2011).

65. Baltrusch (1994); Low (2007); Scheibelreiter (2013); Baltrusch and Wendt (2011).
66. We can call them "modern" as they transcended previous personal–biological relationship based institutions. In fact, they allowed for the organization of anonymized relationships, which had manifold positive side effects such as an increase in trade and economic prosperity. See Baltrusch (1994).
67. Waltz (1979), p. 93.
68. It is here that I probably deviate from and disagree with Morley's helpful argument, which presumes that contextualization and theoretical interest are inevitably incompatible.
69. Unlike many contributions interpreted him in Lebow and Strauss (1991).
70. Krasner (1999).
71. Risse (2011); Krasner and Risse (2014).
72. Risse (2011); Krasner and Risse (2014); Avant, Finnemore, and Sell (2010); Thauer (2014).

CHAPTER 4

archē in Herodotus and Thucydides

Peter Spahn

The word *archē* first became a political term during the archaic era. In the earliest literature, the epics of Homer and Hesiod, it meant beginning, origin, and cause.[1] Neither in the epics nor in the surviving texts of archaic poetry does *archē* have any political connotations. One indirect record of the word's political usage stems from the late sixth century BC. Remarkably this record is found in Thucydides.

It is difficult to reproduce the original political sense of *archē* in modern languages. The word "rule" does only insufficiently capture its meaning in a strict sense. Unlike *kuriotēs* or *despoteia*, *archē* does not refer to an unrestricted lord or master. Nor is the word synonymous with "domination" in the modern sociological sense of Max Weber.[2] Its most basic meaning alludes instead to *the first, the front position,* neither in a temporal nor in a spatial sense, but denoting power and authority. This aspect of power and authority already exists in the epics as part of the verb *archein* (in the sense of: *being the first* with respect to rank and power).[3] The noun *ho archos* furthermore describes the *leader* in Homer, specifically a military leader or naval commander.[4] However, it is only *archē* that gained additional political meaning in later times (*hē archia* did not become the abstract noun of *archein* and *archos*; in fact it is only used as a composite, such as *mon-archia* or *olig-archia*).

In all likeliness, we can attribute this extended use of *archē* to the historical development of the polis and its offices.[5] The latter were often referred to, mostly in the plural, as *archai*. In certain cases,

as for instance in Athens, they carried the title *archōn* or *archontes*. *Archē* in its political sense, however, did not refer solely to regular and institutionalized power, that is to the legal government of a polis. Instead it also included government and political leadership in general. For some time this could also include tyrants and monarchs among the Greeks—but these rarely established an ancestral monarchy that existed over several generations. Political *archē* was therefore never clearly defined in a legal sense. The spectrum of its meaning spanned instead from the regular annual office in the polis to the dominance of a tyrant—which could also include an office, but more often derived authority from other sources.

Archē could furthermore also signify a territory, such as the realm of a king or even that of a people.[6] The subjects of *archein* and *archē* could be an individual, a group, or a whole populace—as, for example, the Persian king, his satraps, or even the Persians as a people. Accordingly, the Greeks used it in a variant form also for the entirety of the citizenry, particularly in reference to the Attic demos in democratic times. In this case the extended meaning of the term seems obvious, since the people had the leading role. However, also groups reigned over or dominated by a monarch, such as the Lydians, the Medes, or the Persians, were understood to be active subjects of *archē* and *archein*.

To my knowledge, no comprehensive study of the term *archē* exists so far, least of all of its political significance. Moreover, no publication addresses the specific usage of the term *archē* in Thucydides. This lacuna is surprising as *archē* was a key term in the classical era, especially in the work of Thucydides.[7] In this chapter I focus on the political semantics of *archē* in Thucydides and highlight different aspects of the historian's use of this term, without however claiming to present an exhaustive systematic study. In particular I ask: when compared with other authors of the time, is Thucydides's use of the term in any sense idiosyncratic or exceptional? In particular a comparison with Herodotus seems relevant in this respect. Both authors, Herodotus and Thucydides, experienced an increasingly widespread use of the term in the fifth century BC, and its evolution to a term with significant nuances in the way it was used, and concerning the political meaning it referred to. To both Herodotus and Thucydides *archē* was still a relatively new, and certainly evolving term, yet to be defined. Being aware of Herodotus's *History* and of his way of

thought,[8] Thucydides may well have been influenced by his predecessor in his political terminology. Both authors' reflections on *archē*, which represent the fundamental political discussion of the time, can be found in the most important passages of their works.

I. The Political Semantics of *archē* in Herodotus

Prior to Thucydides, most references to the political meaning of *archē* can be found in Herodotus. Herodotus himself however followed a number of earlier authors in the fifth century who already used *archē* as a term with political connotations. Pindar's second *Olympian Ode* contains one of the earliest references to *archē*. Here the realm of Zeus (*Dios archa*) is juxtaposed to that of the underworld.[9] Although the word denotes the divine realm and is thus used metaphorically, it seems that its political meaning is taken for granted and is self-evident. In Aeschylus's *Oresteia* (in 458 BC) the word is explicitly used in a political context. Here there is a reference to *archas polissonomous*—meaning a government or offices that administer the polis.[10] The *archai* are listed in the plural, which suggests that this is the technical term for the offices of the polis. The plural form of the *archai* indicates the contrary of a monarchical government of the polis and implies a variety of administrative areas or functionaries.[11] In any case, the terminology denotes political institutions and procedures, and the combination of *archai, polis* and *nomos* or *nemein* relates the polis to justice and law.

Edmond Lévy,[12] when discussing the use of *archē* in Herodotus, points out that *archē* (in the singular) appears 70 times in Herodotus's work with an especially high frequency in the first and third book. The amount of references is scarcely smaller than in Thucydides, with 114 references in total (according to my own count). About three quarters (58) of the references in Herodotus refer to monarchs, be it kings, tyrants, or satraps. The *archē* is in these cases treated as personal property that one owns, acquires, receives as a gift, or indeed loses. In addition it has an institutional character and denotes in some cases a magistracy assuming command. Aside from monarchs, Herodotus endows certain peoples with an *archē* as well, such as the Lydians and the Persians. Herodotus was thus familiar with the concepts and the languages of *archē*, as obtained by a people and used over other peoples. It is striking,

therefore, that Herodotus does not specifically mention an *archē* of any one Greek citizenry or polis over others.[13] Herodotus had no reason to write about the *archē* of the Athenians since the history of the Delian League is beyond the scope of his *History*. But relations of dominance and hegemony between *poleis* existed outside of Athens before the fifth century. Sparta for example was leading the Peloponnesian League at the end of the sixth century—although her hegemony did not rely on financial contributions from its allies (unlike Athens's *archē* later on).

In his account of non-Greek peoples, Herodotus offers an example of the connection between collective authority and tribute payments. This example concerns the Scythians's rule over Asia.[14] The historicity of these occurrences is of no importance for our purposes. What matters, however, is how Herodotus portrays a non-monarchical rule (a tribal society, not the citizenry of a *polis*) which also exacted tribute. In the narrative of the dinner invitation and the subsequent murder of the Scythians, there is an emphasis on their great number. Herodotus's concept of *archē* was thus not limited to the Scythian chiefs' involvement, but included the mass of the people as well.

The idea of the *archē* of the masses also appears in Herodotus in a completely different context, namely referring to the political order inside a community seen as the opposite to monarchy. More precisely, he mentions it in the context of his juxtaposition of democracy (or isonomy) to *turannis*. This was an important concept in early Greek political theory, as developed in the so-called constitutional debate (3.80 and 3.83), which the historian does not situate among the Greeks, but, quite staggeringly, in Persia. However, there is no doubt that the whole debate and its terminology reflect Greek constitutional thought in the late fifth century, which was substantially influenced by developments in the Athenian democracy. Herodotus uses the concept of *archē* frequently and with much nuance in this particular text passages: Otanes's plea for isonomy alone mentions *archē*, *archein*, and *archesthai* nine times. Here—inasmuch as we can infer from the available sources—the principles of democracy are formulated for the first time. They include:

- the rule (or the government) of the masses (*plēthos archon*);[15]
- the appointment of the offices by lot (*palōi archas archei*);
- the accountability of office holders (*hupeuthunon archēn echei*).

These principles redefine *archē*, as they imply a continual alternation between the act of governing and of being governed (*archein* and *archesthai*). Although this is not formulated explicitly—as for instance later by Aristotle—this idea comes to the fore especially in the statement of the advocate of isonomy. Otanes points out the implications of the decision at the end of the debate after a bare majority voted in favor of monarchy. His speech, again, recurs mostly on the terms *archē, archein,* and *archesthai*: "Fellow partisans, it is plain that one of us must be made king (whether by lot, or entrusted with the office by the choice of the Persians, or in some other way), but I shall not compete with you; I desire neither to rule (*archein*) nor to be ruled (*archesthai*); but if I waive my claim to be king (*archē*),[16] I make this condition, that neither I nor any of my descendants shall be subject (*arxomai*) to any one of you." And Herodotus hastens to comment: "and to this day his house (and no other in Persia) remains free, and is ruled (*archetai*) only so far as it is willing to be, so long as it does not transgress Persian law" (3.83.2–3). This passage shows how the meaning of the term *archē* depends on its context, or rather, on the respective position of the speaker and on the political constitution more generally. The specific meaning of the term shifts from "office," which is limited in terms of time and by particular procedures (such as the lot and accountability), to "rule." Otanes's acceptance of the monarchy of Darius hinges on the condition that he and his descendants will not be made subjects to Persian rule. Therefore, Otanes says he neither aims at "ruling" (*archein*) or "being ruled" (*archesthai*). Instead he retains for himself and his descendants the privilege to lead the only "free house" (*oikiē eleutherē*) among the Persians. He subsequently withdraws from the circles of those bearing power and stands outside, no longer at the center.[17]

Therefore, equality and liberty is compatible with *archē* only in a limited way; at best through the institutional restrictions of power in an isonomy. Without them, however, its damaging and dangerous elements rise to the surface. *Archē*—in itself a desirable position—frequently acquires a negative meaning; it becomes absolute rule that produces servitude. This perspective—being critical of *archē*, or at least skeptical—as embodied by Otanes, can also be found in Herodotus's final chapter (9.122), in which he renders Cyrus's warning of the expansion and dominance over wealthy countries. The frequent use (five times) of *archein* and its derivations is remarkable in

this chapter as well. An advocate of Persian expansion begins: "There are many such lands on our borders, and many further distant. If we take one of these, we will all have more reasons for renown. It is only reasonable that a ruling people (*andras archontas*) should act in this way, for when will we have a better opportunity than now, when we are lords (*archomen*) of so many men and of all Asia?" (9.122.2). Cyrus responds to this suggestion in an ironical way, saying that they should act upon it by all means but then should also be prepared to turn from lords (*arxontas*) to servants (*arxomenous).* "Soft lands breed soft men," as Herodotus goes on (9.122.3). This warning convinced the Persians. They chose "rather to be rulers (*archein*) on a barren mountain side than dwelling in tilled valleys to be slaves (*douleuein*) to others" (9.122.4). This juxtaposition of rule and servitude is thus the subject of the final scene in Herodotus's *History*—and the rejection of *douleuein* the historian's final word. Just as Otanes takes a stand for isonomy and insists on his freedom in the constitutional debate, the founder of the Persian Empire takes on a position here that is usually attributed to the Greeks. Cyrus's warning makes sense in that it can serve as an explanation for Xerxes's defeat and for the Persians' subjugation. What is more, this warning can also be understood as a general warning against unrestrained *archē*—given that the historian thereby also addresses his Greek and especially Athenian audience.[18]

Otanes and Cyrus explain two different aspects of *archē* in their speeches: the domestic/constitutional, and the foreign policy/international one (to put it in a rather modern way). What holds true for either aspect, according to both speakers, is that *archē* entails terrible consequences if left unbalanced. Honorable leadership will then turn into harmful dominance and enslavement. Cyrus also reminds us that limitless outwardly *archē* is not only disastrous for the subjugated, but it also corrupts the conquerors and rulers, eventually leading to their own defeat. We thus see here that Herodotus, by lending authority and foresight to Cyrus, relates the domestic aspect to the external aspect of *archē*. By putting these deep reflections about *archē* and its various dimensions into the mouths of two prominent Persians, he reveals his typical finesse and irony. This way, he managed to perforate widespread prejudices in his Greek audience—many of which would not believe that a constitutional debate of such sophistication could really take place in Persia.[19] It

must have come as quite a surprise to many Greeks that the great Cyrus, who powerfully expanded the Persian Empire, is presented here as advocate for a restrained *archē*. Thucydides will probably have taken notice of this, and so we shall now turn to a consideration of *archē* in the context of his work.

II. The Concept of *archē* in Thucydides

1. The Spectrum of Meaning: The Subjects of archē

At first sight, the semantic range of *archē* in Thucydides appears not to be fundamentally different than in his predecessor's work. However, Thucydides deals mostly with other subjects of *archē*. This will have to do with the specific content of his historical work in addition to the changed conditions in domestic and foreign policy. It is therefore not surprising that 49 of 114 references to *archē* refer to the Athenians. Of these 49 most of them (40) occur in speeches: in the speech of the Corcyraeans (1.35.4, 1.67.4);[20] the Athenians' at Sparta (1.75.1, 1.76.2, 1.77.3, 1.77.5); in Pericles's first speech (1.144.1); in the *epitaphios* (2.36.2); in Pericles's last speech (2.62.1, 2.63.1 + 2); in the Mytileneans's speech (3.11.3); in Cleon's (3.37.1 + 3, 3.39.2, 3.40.2 + 4); in Diodotus's (3.47.5); in Hermocrates's (4.60.2); the Mantineans's (5.69.1); in the Melian dialogue (5.91.1 + 2, 5.99.1, 5.100.1); in the speeches of Nicias (6.10.5, 6.11.3, 6.20.2) and Alcibiades (6.17.7, 6.18.2); in the speeches of the Athenian envoy (6.82.2, 6.83.4, 6.85.1); in the last speech of Nicias (7.63.3 + 4); and in that of Gylippus (7.66.2). The majority of these passages refer to *hoi Athēnaioi* as the subject of *archē*—even if not mentioned specifically. Only two places refer to the polis as the subject of *archē*: the known auctorial comment by Thucydides, where he speaks with regard to Athens and the Sicilian expedition about the mistakes that can occur on account of "this being a great city and one in possession of an *archē*."[21] The historian makes a general statement here: in principle, this could happen to any great and leading polis, not only to Athens.

The other reference (6.85.1) entails a generalizing statement as well while underscoring the basic face-to-face conception of the state. Similarly to the prominent orators who repeatedly speak before an Athenian audience,[22] an Athenian envoy in Kamarina compares the *archē* of a polis to that of a tyrant. His argument here is that

such behavior is not limited to any one single citizenry, such as the Athenians, but that any people in a comparable situation could act in a similar way. For this reason, he postulates that the polis is the bearer of authority (*polei archēn echousēi*). Serving as an analogy—almost by necessity—is the *archē* of a monarch, or more precisely that of a tyrant.[23] In Thucydides, *archē* in a political sense is not conceived of as an abstract or structural entity, but thought of as in connection with persons. The basic model continues to be—similar to Herodotus—the monarchical or the personal *archē*. Accordingly, the word can take on the meaning of "authority" or even "domination." A citizenry, in its entirety, thus acts like an individual ruler. In Thucydides's time, this would not have been a regular king for the Greeks, but a tyrant who had to fight in order to gain his leading position, or acquire it in some other way. It is also for this reason that the analogy between the ruling polis and a tyrant, in contrast to a traditional monarchy, is rather more fitting.

The idea of a citizenry as the bearer of *archē* in Thucydides does not only concern Athens and its relation to the Delian League. This form of aspiration is—although with an Athenian perspective, namely that of an Athenian speaker—ascribed to the Spartans (6.82.3) and the Syracusans (6.85.3). With no discernable political tendencies, two references (5.69.1, 5.81.1) mention the Mantineans as bearing *archē* over their neighboring cities. According to the Mantinean *stratēgos*, the imminent battle is a fight for the fatherland entailing either rule or slavery.[24] Occasionally, *archē* is related to *hēgemonia*, as is the case here.[25] Those references, where *archē* in Thucydides does not refer to the dominating and leading position of Athens are the exception. Conversely, Sparta fashions itself as a polis that does not aspire to *archē*; its sole purpose is to end the Athenian *archē* and empower the cities of the Delian League with *autonomia*. This is how the Spartan military commander Brasidas argues before the general assembly of Akanthos on Chalcidice urging them to defect from Athens.[26] He rejects any suggestion that he is taking sides for a minority and meddling with internal conflicts while showing a disregard for the inherited constitution (*to patrion*); that would be even harsher an imposition than "foreign rule."[27]

As far as I can see, in Thucydides there is no equivalent to the idea that the masses of the people within the polis execute *archē*, as expressed by Otanes in the constitutional debate. This may have to

do with the fact that democracy for so many had become a matter of course in the meantime. An original political theory now had to differentiate between mere nominal democracy on the one hand and real authority on the other, as in the case of *hupo tou prōtou andros archē* (2.65.9). The problematic nature of this reference is discussed in due course. But first, we shall look at other usages of *archē* in Thucydides. Next to the citizenries—the Athenian and a few others here and there—it is, just as in Herodotus, individual rulers and leaders to whom an *archē* is ascribed.

There are 12 references to *archē* among non-Greek peoples: for example, the Thracian king Sitalces (2.96.3) or the Macedonian kings Philippus (2.100.3) and Perdiccas (4.78.6); there is also mention of *archē* in reference to the Persian satraps' sphere of dominance. Like Herodotus, Thucydides occasionally mentions the *archē* of non-Greek peoples, such as the Odrysians (2.97.1) and the Medes (8.43.3). He also describes individual Greeks as the bearers of *archē*. One may differentiate here between a regular political or high-ranking military leadership (about 25 references[28]) on the one hand and on the other hand references to *archē* as an informal, albeit monarchical position—if not the downright rule of a tyrant. In Thucydides there are only very few references for the second category. But these are especially interesting, because they deal with well-known authorities whose positions were politically controversial and who ended up coming into conflict with the constitution of their polis. This comes to the fore in a certain sense in the description of the public office of Themistocles (1.93.3: *epi tēs ekeinou archēs hēs kat' eniauton Athēnaiois ērxe*). The formulation will hardly refer to Themistocles's time as archon, which was after all limited to one year. It must denote a leading position that he occupied for longer than a year, similar to Pericles's later office as *stratēgos*. Thucydides's description of Pausanias is even more peculiar. First it is mentioned that he was dismissed from his *archē* at the Hellespont and immediately afterward sought the *Hellēnikē archē* (1.128.3 + 4). In the former case, as Thucydides explains, he had a public mandate (*dēmosia*), thus holding an office, but he then acted in a private capacity (*idia*), in the style of a tyrant or a Persian satrap. Therefore, there is a conflict of principle concerning the constitutional basis of the polis. One could perhaps expect that Thucydides would differentiate between the office of the polis and the position of the tyrant in terminological

terms, especially since he stresses its distinction. But although the position designated *dēmosia* and the one called *idia* were completely different in terms of their legal quality and aim, they are referred to in the same context with the same word *archē*. This demonstrates the wide span in meaning and the legal indifference of this term, as could be seen already in Herodotus.[29] In Thucydides, too, *archē* could equally refer to a regular authority or to a *turannis*.

2. The Two Poles of the Meaning of archē in the Peisistratid Excursus

The same findings are even more prevalent in the Peisistratid excursus (6.54–9) where the diversity of meanings is even more visible. Thucydides states:[30]

> In fact, he was in general not oppressive in his exercise of power toward the people at large but managed his authority (*tēn allēn archēn*)[31] without arousing resentment; and compared to other tyrants they set the highest standards of behavior and good sense . . . the city remained free to observe all the laws previously in place, except in so far as the tyrants took care to ensure that one of their people always held office (*en tais archais*). Among those who held the annual post of archon at Athens (*ērxan tēn eniausion Athēnaiois archēn*) was Peisistratus, son of the Hippias who became tyrant and named after his grandfather, and when he was archon (*archōn*) he dedicated the Altar of the Twelve Gods in the agora and the Altar of Apollo in the Pythian sanctuary. Later on . . . the inscription there was obliterated, but the faint lettering on the one in the Pythian sanctuary is still legible and reads as follows:
>
> THIS MEMORIAL OF HIS ARCHONSHIP (*archēs*) PEISISTRATUS SON OF HIPPIAS SET UP IN THE PRECINCT OF PYTHIAN APOLLO
>
> That it was Hippias who ruled (*ērxen*) as eldest son I can confirm from reported information I have which is more accurate than that available to others. (6.54.5–55.1)

At first glance there is a rather confusing mix of meanings of *archē* (oscillating between the rule of office and that of a tyrant). There is, however, a certain structure to be detected. The report commences with the death of the old Peisistratus "still ruling as tyrant" (*en tēi turannidi*) and he was succeeded "not by Hipparchus, as is commonly supposed, but by his elder brother Hippias" (*esche tēn*

archēn).[32] In this sentence and context there is no doubt that *archē* refers to the rule of a tyrant and not an office whose authority is curtailed in temporary or substantial terms. Upon this it is said that Aristogeiton—fearing the power (*dunamis*) and violence (*bia*) of Hipparchus—made plans to "overthrow tyranny" (*katalusin tēi turannidi*) (6.54.3).[33] In actual fact, Hipparchus was apparently not violent (*biaios*), but wanted to covertly humiliate Harmodius who had shunned him. This sentence is followed by the aforementioned passage: *oude gar tēn allēn archēn epachthēs en es tous pollous* and so forth. This part of the sentence concerns Hipparchus. Thus, he had to do with the tyrannical *archē*—by which Thucydides relativizes to some degree his own initial hypothesis that Hippias had possessed the *archē*.[34] The next sentence points in the same direction: *kai epetēdeusan epi pleiston de turannoi houtoi aretēn kai xunesin*. Here, there is explicit mention of tyrants in the plural, hence of the Peisistratids, who are generally deemed to have governed in a capable and rational manner. The significance of *archē* thus shifts in the following toward the power of legal authority: a moderate rise in taxes for the general benefit, adherence to the existing laws, "except in so far as the tyrants took care to ensure that one of their people always held office."[35] Thucydides illustrates this with the example of the archonship of Peisistratus the Younger[36] and underlines it by literally quoting the inscription on the altar of the Pythian Apollo: *mnēma tod' hēs archēs Peisistratos Hippiou huios* and so forth. The word *archē* here refers to the way he performed in his office (and the erection of the altar serves as a reminder), but it is important to read it in the context of a monumental act of representation, featuring not only a family-member of the Peisistratids but also carrying the name of the founder of their *turannis*. The inscription thus expresses in an exemplary fashion the two main meanings of the political term *archē*: on the one hand, it signifies a prime and leading position by occupying a leading office, and, on the other hand, the same based on *turannis*.

Now that the official aspect referring to the institutions of the polis has been dealt with, Thucydides, accordingly, returns to the tyrannical *archē* in the next sentence: *hoti de presbutatos ōn Hippias ērxen* (6.55.1). He thus goes back to his initial hypothesis, that it was not Hipparchus but Hippias the Elder, who had the authority, expressed now with the verb *archein*. Thucydides underlines this

statement as his very own research and underscores it in the following with further arguments, again deriving from inscriptions. He uses the word *archē* twice again in this chapter (6.55) to express his hypothesis that it was in actual fact Hippias who was the tyrant and ruler: "Nor indeed could Hippias in my view have easily taken over the tyranny on the spot if Hipparchus had been in power (*en tē archē ōn)* when he died and if Hippias had tried to assume the position that very day." Also, Hippias would have been quite helpless in this critical situation right after the assassination, "being at a loss as a younger brother would have been who had not been continuously exposed to the demands of office (*hōmilēkei tēi archēi*)" (6.55.3). In this context, *archē* clearly takes on the sense of "power." In this passage *archē* is not about an office and not solely about the power of command either, as for instance over mercenaries. This is just one of many elements constituting the power of a tyrant. Another one, as Thucydides mentions, was "the habit of fear he had instilled into the citizenry (*to proteron xunēthes tois men politais phoberon*, 6.55.3)." For this reason, *archē* here expresses more than mere rule. It goes beyond the category of command and obedience; it comprises a bundle of factors that enable the tyrant to assert power (*Macht*), as in the Weberian sense: "a position to carry out his own will despite resistance."[37]

The excursus on the Peisistratids harbors the greatest variety of aspects and meanings of *archē* with regard to domestic policy and is thus comparable with Herodotus's constitutional debate as described previously. Both passages are concerned with two central meanings of the term, both decisive categories for the inner affairs of the polis: office and domination. They therefore touch upon the most fundamental problems of political order between monarchy and a civilian constitution. The frequency and versatile use of *archē* in both authors suggests that neither one found the term problematic. Its meaning cannot be pinpointed. The word could mean either a leading position on account of a legal office or that of a single ruler—aside from its nonpolitical meaning of origin or first place.[38] And even in the context of tyranny *archē* has no pejorative connotations—they appear only when the act of violence (*bia*) is added. The sense of the word is in fact connoted quite positively and a term of high esteem, which becomes especially clear in case of the inscription on the altar, quoted by Thucydides.

As far as we know, this inscription is the earliest reference to the political sense of *archē*. It supports the hypothesis that its political use derives from the terminology of the highest office. The context of the excursus reveals a fundamental principle of Thucydides's methodology and shows how he carried out his research. His explicit dismissal of the dominating view in Athens that Harmodius and Aristogeiton had committed "tyrannicide" had already served him, in the so-called chapter on methodology, for the main aim of his work, that is, "to search out the truth" (*hē zētēsis tēs alētheias*, 1.20.3). His counter-thesis, that Hippias was the governing tyrant is partly based on his use and interpretation of old inscriptions. There are four in his excursus: in addition to the inscription on the Altar of Apollo, he also mentions the Altar of the Twelve Gods, which is no longer visible because of a building extension carried out by the Athenians.[39] In addition, "the stele set up on the Athenian acropolis to commemorate the crimes of the tyrants" (6.55.1), which he cites only indirectly yet interprets in detail; and finally, an inscription of four lines on a tomb from Lampsacus, which he quotes verbatim (6.59.3).

Irrespective of Thucydides, the inscription on the altar which Peisistratus dedicated to Apollo Pythios has been a much discussed issue in archeological and epigraphical research. Already in the nineteenth century many parts of the original inscription had been found in Athens.[40] It was only recently, in 2009, that Greek archeologists had found an additional small fragment of this very inscription during an emergency dig—one that had been overlooked during the excavations of 1877.[41] There is no need to delve on the archeological and epigraphical problems that emerge from this inscription, especially since the main question concerning the dating seems to have been resolved. Also, the apparent contradiction between Thucydides's reference about the "faint lettering" (6.54.7: *amudrois grammasi*) and the relatively well conserved and readable inscription—which is also true for the recently found fragment—has found a plausible explanation: the original coloring of the letters had already faded during the time of the historian. As far as I can see, however, no one has hitherto noticed that this inscription harbors the first reference to *archē* in its political sense. This bears certain significance though: not only for the history of its own transmission and body of source material, but also for the history of the polis. Surely it is a question of

coincidence that this inscription has been transmitted in two ways, literarily and epigraphically. But it is certainly no coincidence that Thucydides had come across this inscription in his search for the few written sources that deal with the *turannis*. It is such an important piece of evidence for his hypothesis that he reproduces it verbatim. Twice he presents his view of the Athenian *turannis* and his demythologization of the ones thought to have committed "tyrannicide" (in the introduction and excursus), and with great emphasis and pride. He backs up his account with a detailed description of the situation, condition, and content of the relevant inscriptions. Apparently, he deemed them to be valuable source materials of his own finding. In all likelihood there were hardly any other additional sources available from the sixth century on which one could have based the history of the Athenian *turannis* and the contemporary political situation and institutions.

This assessment of the source material of the archaic period—and even more so for the time before—accords with Thucydides's view in his introduction and the chapter on methodology (1.1.2 and 1.20.1). He stresses the difficulty, even impossibility, of exploring the early ancient times in detail. Thucydides was no ancient historian. Moreover, he was quite skeptical of what from his perspective would have been "Ancient History." He was thus the more driven to find early and original sources. An inscription that would bear the names of historical persons and, in addition, contained the word *archē*, was sure to pique his interest. Such inscriptions with political contents from the sixth century were rare items. As for the few that existed, they are to be explained by the drive for self-representation of the families of the tyrants. There are hardly any inscriptions from the time prior to the mid-fifth century with references pertaining to *archē*, *archōn*, or *archein*.[42] Apparently, there was no need or no possibility for ordinary *archontes* to present their public activities or their foundations in such a fixed written way. The Athenian polis of the archaic age did not hand down many laws or other writings in stone from which one could attain information on political institutions, or even find a list of the authorities in charge for one year.[43] This changed drastically in the second half of the fifth century with the development of democracy in Athens. The *archē* of the tyrants was at least two generations old at this stage. The term referred mostly to political offices or leading military positions

in democratic Athens and in other cities. And Thucydides uses the word in a similar way when he describes the domestic political situation and institutions in Athens or in other *poleis*. But in Athens it no longer referred to the office of the archon but to the office of the *stratēgos*, which in principle included the military commanders as well. In Thucydides, examples for such a use can be found above all in books VI and VIII.[44] Other references refer to Sparta, Argos, and Syracuse.[45] *Archē* also figures as a general term for office or department. The same is true for the plural form *hai archai* as the technical term for offices. This sense of the word has to do with regular and recognized institutions of the polis and is therefore neither problematic nor contested. The word is most commonly used in this quotidian and rather technical meaning. The clustering of the term in the excursus dealing with the Peisistratids and the tension, as it is expressed there, between tyrannical rule and political office, point to a specific problem and to a conscientious problematization of the historian. It is part of the discourse on *archē* that reveals itself also in other places of Thucydides's work, concerning different political areas and philosophical questions.

3. Specific Problems of the Concept of **archē** *in Thucydides*

Foreign and domestic policy as well as ethical and anthropological problems are related to *archē* in Thucydides. The latter can be detected especially in certain passages of the speeches and in the auctorial comments of the historian, which have been much cited and dealt with in research.[46] The speeches, especially those of Pericles, Cleon, Diodotus, Nicias, and Alcibiades, as well as the envoys in the Melian dialogue, contain a large amount of arguments and aspects that cannot be analyzed here in detail. We shall only touch upon a few passages in which problems and ambivalences of the term *archē* become especially vivid. The well-known passage in which Thucydides, in his own words, is the most explicit in his moral denouncement of *archē*, can be found in the so-called Pathology of War (3.82.8). There, the following is said about the civil war: "The root of all this was the desire for power, based on personal greed and ambition."[47] The pejorative significance here comes from a closer determination of *archē* through *pleonexia* and *philotimia*. It is thus no statement about *archē* generally, but about its negative and extreme

characteristic. *Philotimia*, as such, has no negative significance as the composite noun refers to "love of honor," which is normally associated with a high social value in a whole array of contexts.[48] But, in this case, it is clearly coined in a negative way as it is preceded by *pleonexia*. And these two negativities, as well as the overall context, give *archē* its negative sense.

When looking at the overall semantics of the term in Thucydides, such a negative assessment of *archē* remains the exception. It can only be understood in the framework of a pointed emphasis; for the significance of the word aims at a position which is held in high esteem and considered desirable. Even so, leadership or authority is frequently contested, endangered, and often connected to the abuse of power—at times heavily and with catastrophic consequences. It is this extreme stage that is described here, which is the subject of analysis. But there is no reason to interpret this particular use of *archē* in terms of a general anthropological generalization.[49] For Thucydides there are other generators that belong to the human *phusis*, as well as social factors and certain historical situations that only in their entirety affect the respective modality of *archē*. The combination of the three factors (from 3.82.8) reminds us of similar sequences that appear in preceding speeches in the context of *archē*. The Athenians justify the expansion of their *archē* with the argument that they had been forced do so on account of fear (*deos*), honor (*timē*), and finally self-interest (*ōphelia*).[50] Honor and material use or self-interest are listed as legitimate justifications for the authority in question also in other passages. Fear—be it for reasons of vengeance of the subjugated or fear for one's own slavery—comes up in other speeches closely connected to *archē*.[51] Also, in view of these speeches of justification, in which *archē* is not drawn upon as a negative motif, the formulation in the "Pathology" appears exceptional. Aside from this extreme case of unlimited civil war—which Thucydides, to set an example, declares to be the norm—the term appears to be problematic especially in two contexts: in foreign policy (the Athenian *archē* over her allies as a supposed *turannis*) and in domestic terms (the characterization of Pericles's position as a *hupo tou prōtou andros archē*). How are these passages to be understood that illuminate the contested term of *archē* from various perspectives and on various political levels?

First, we turn to the speeches that, more or less, equate Athens's *archē* with *turannis*. Thucydides ascribes this view to speakers who

usually represent contrary positions and interests: Athenian and Corinthian envoys to the Spartans.[52] Within Athens, contrary exponents of democracy: the aristocrat Pericles and the plebeian demagogue Cleon. Although Thucydides does include certain fine differences—by relativizing Pericles's comparison between the *arché* of the Athenians and a *turannis* by inserting a qualifying *hōs*,[53] while Cleon simply equates the two[54]—he evokes the overall impression as though all political parties were familiar with the formula *polis turannos* and that it was quite an ordinary concept, in lieu of the fact that such a position must have been regarded as quite an offensive doctrine in democratic Athens. This impression may be the result of a conscientious stylization, however, for the comparison between *archē* and a *turannis* is a relatively rare occurrence in the literature of the fourth and fifth centuries.[55] Such a comparison points to a certain view of *archē* which is invoked in Thucydides by means of repetition and ascribed to prominent speakers. The *turannis* metaphor for Athens's rule over the Delian League does appear scattered in contemporary comedy[56] but this does not mean that it was very popular or widely disseminated in democratic Athens. For many—at least in Athens—this must have sounded disconcerting or offensive. That different speakers in Thucydides, just as the chorus in the *Knights* of Aristophanes, used this metaphor can be explained by the tendency of both authors to pinpoint contested political themes by means of literary stylization and rhetorical intensification. It is an intellectual radicalism which also comes to the fore in Pseudo-Xenophon's writing. He does not resort to the *turannis* metaphor, but he describes the *archē* of the Attic demos over the allies in a similar way. One can read in the *Constitution of Athens* on the relations between the Athenian demos and the allies' upper-classes that the masses persecute them with false allegations and hatred, "as they realize that the ruler is necessarily hated by the ruled."[57] Pseudo-Xenophon states that as a result of the individual measures taken, especially the excise of tributes and forced proceedings, "the allies have become instead the slaves of the Athenian people."[58]

In the speeches in Thucydides, as well, the image of the *polis turannos* is just one element of the overarching discourse about *archē*. The Athenians argue that they had acquired *archē* without exerting any force (*bia*) (1.75). They had merely adapted to circumstance and followed human nature. Moreover, they claim that they had acted with

much more justice than what their power (*dunamis*) could potentially have allowed them to do. The allies are accustomed to be dealt with as equals and their reaction to even the slightest injustice would prove far worse than to acts of coercion and violence. This explains their fury (*orgē*) with the Athenians that Thucydides ascribes to most Greeks: with the desire to either rid themselves of the *archē* or out of fear to be subjugated by it (2.8.5). Pericles defends the *archē*, but warns of expanding it during the war (1.144.1). The Athenian polis is honored for its empire, but given the amount of unreleased hatred, there is great danger should she lose it (2.63). Cleon, in turn, accuses the people of three characteristics in the Mytilene-debate that would bear negatively on Athens's *archē*: compassion, the joys of debate, and the willingness to concede. He believes democracy incapable of *archē* (3.37–40) for its proclivity to make concessions. Diodotus wants to stabilize it but suggests other means. For he believes this debate as having to do with an existential fight for a greater purpose: freedom or domination of others (3.37–40).

The Melian dialogue (5.85–113) plays a crucial role for the discourse on *archē* in the Thucydidean speeches, even if we cannot go into detail here. It contains the sum of all the individual arguments and problems of the preceding speeches, especially of the books I–III, about the Athenian and international *archē*. The dispute is his summing up in concentrated form, with pro and contra, each from the point of view of the stronger and weaker party; the former interested in expanding its power, the latter in the conservation of its freedom. It is roughly the following categories that are dealt with in an abstracted form:

- Material factors and motives: advantage and usefulness (5.90, 106–7), geographical and strategic positions (97, 99, 108);
- Ideological factors, motives, and powers: law and justice (89, 97, 107), honor (101, 105, 111), freedom (92, 100), Gods and fate (104–5), coercion of nature (105);
- Political criteria and motives: saving of the polis (87–8, 91, 111), power (97), security (97), neutrality (94, 112), friendship and hostility (100), ethnic ties (108), risk assessment (107), interests (98), alliances (98), contracts (112);
- Psychological factors and motives: fear (90, 111), courage and cowardice (100), hatred (95), hope (103), rationality (111);
- Historical argument (112).

It would be possible to trace all these individual motives in the other speeches and speech-pairs and also in the "Archaeology" and in the authorial passages, and to place its respective uses and argumentative value in relation to the Melian dialogue. The main subject around which the discourse could be reconstructed would be the problem of *archē*. The dialogue in Thucydides's work has the obvious function to sum up. And this has to do with its exemplary significance, which is to be understood irrespectively of the concrete occurrences in the relatively small polis of Melos. The Melians are trying to hang on to their neutrality and autonomy, but due to Athens's attack they now face the existential decision: to either fight for their freedom or to subjugate themselves to the *archē* of the Athenians, which they interpret as servitude. The bitter irony of history lets the fight for Melos conclude with the execution of the men and the enslavement of the women and children.

The alternative between domination and servitude shows the same polar opposition which Herodotus mentions in Otanes's argumentation and in his final chapter. It seems as though *archē*, at least in international relations, always ended up as domination and was thus perceived by those affected as servitude, bondage, and slavery. In the domestic realm, this effect could be balanced out through the changing of *archein* and *archesthai* on a regular basis. *Archē* thus acquired the sense of office or government. It appears as if beyond the polis there were no procedures or institutions which could have transformed an *archē* into a balanced *summachia* or even into a federal order. None of the speakers in Thucydides or the historian himself refer to any. None of the Athenian speakers question the *archē* over their allies or its legitimacy. It is solely Diodotus, who shows certain consideration when he pleads for prudent moderation, so as not to drive the allies over the brink. The longer the war lasts there is no more neutrality and autonomy for the smaller powers.

Next to foreign policy and international relations, as well as ethical and anthropological problems, *archē* raises additional questions, especially in the well-known passage about Pericles (2.65.9).[59] This passage is not only of great interest because it encapsulates Thucydides's personal opinion of Pericles, but it also connects—taken from within its context—the external and domestic significance of *archē*. Furthermore, it indicates its connection to the problem of *turannis*. It begins with the formulation *hupo tou prōtou*

andros archē. The translation "domination of the first man" is imprecise for several reasons: linguistically, because it does not reflect *hupo*, and, in terms of content, because it does not do justice to the context and to the political stance of Thucydides with regard to Pericles. One can infer from the context that, especially in the preceding speech of Pericles,[60] but also in his following valuation by Thucydides (2.65.7 + 11), he repeatedly and always speaks of the *archē* of the Athenians or that of the polis toward the outside. This is echoed in my view also in the passage where *archē* is connected to Pericles. Therefore, I have suggested the translation "a government under the first man," that is the democratic government of Athens led by Pericles, which at the same time exerts authority externally.[61] One should thus understand that both aspects of *archē*, external and internal authority, are personified by Pericles.

It seems necessary to me to take into account the context of the passage, with its strong emphasis on Athens's external *archē*. But one must ask whether Thucydides, with his nuanced formulations, wanted to avoid any suggestion that the nominally democratic government had in fact taken on monarchical traits. As this opinion was widely disseminated among the contemporaries—alluded to especially in Old Comedy which positions Pericles dangerously close to the *turannis*[62]—it seems obvious to me that Thucydides, given his admiration for Pericles, did not want to reinforce such suspicions. But in view of his presentation and evaluation of Athenian tyranny, as it appears especially in the Peisistratid excursus, such an explanation ceases to be necessary. Moreover, he even shows certain sympathy for the Peisistratids in this context, which runs counter to any tabooing of the tyranny.[63] It seems that while playing with the many meanings of *archē* in the excursus, he did not aim to avoid similar associations in regard to Pericles. One could maintain that in the passage 2.59–65 (Pericles's last speech and the subsequent evaluation of his leadership by Thucydides) the whole spectrum of the various meanings of the word is in evidence: the external *archē* in the Delian League, the *archē* within Athens, and here particularly the *archē* of the Periclean government, holding regular office and wielding formidable authority at the same time. Thucydides does not explicitly mention at this point whether such a position is just and desirable. But we may assume that the historian understood and valued Pericles's position in a similar way as Aristotle did

later in book VII of his *Politics* with regard to the best way of life and best constitution. According to Aristotle, the beautiful and just for equals (*homoioi*) resides in the change (of government): "Hence in case there is another person who is our superior in virtue and in practical capacity (*dunamis*) for the highest functions, him it is noble to follow and him it is just to obey" (*Pol.* 7.3.1325b). Such a view is partly anticipated by Thucydides in 2.65, where he presents Pericles as an exceptional politician, who is superior to all others in terms of virtue and authority, while his successors are "being more on a level with each other" (*isoi*) and thus incapable of good politics. Moreover, they expose politics to the caprices of the demos.[64] We may thus note: Thucydides in this passage—Pericles's so-called consolation speech and subsequent valuation—connects both sides of the Athenian *archē*, the inner and outer, in a very odd manner. He explicitly associates the latter, the *archē* of the Athenians over their allies, with tyranny (perhaps even adopted unjustly), while ascribing the former to a "first man" who bears the mark of a perfect regent under a democratic banner.

III. The Discourse on *archē* among the First Historians

It appears as though an explicit discourse on *archē*, which would have manifested itself in works titled *Peri archēs* or the like, did not exist in Classical Greece. In any case, there are no surviving writings of the kind. However, Herodotus and Thucydides write about the political aspects of this term in such a prominent way in their historical works that we may rightly impute and recognize a conscientious reflection of the various problems of *archē*. Such thoughts and arguments have so far only been traced along the lines of the noun *archē*. To gain a fuller image, one would have to include the verb *archein* and the wider terminological field (*kratos*, *dunamis* etc.). The contemporary debates about problems of government, authority, and power manifested themselves not least in the classical tragedies: early on in Aeschylus, especially in the *Persians*, the *Suppliant Women*, the *Oresteia*, and in *Prometheus Bound*. The problem of *anarchia* is also dealt with in several plays.[65] What can be observed is that even before the mid-fifth century in Athens, there was a wide and public discourse concerned with these questions. The first historians thus joined a political and intellectual debate which remained pressing

and current, especially for the decades of the expansion of democracy and the transformation of the Delian League.

In Herodotus it is above all the passage of the constitutional debate and the final chapter of the work that center on the principle problems of *archē*. These passages stand out in terms of generic conventions and literary composition: they are speeches given to prominent Persians, even placed at the end of the work. Despite Herodotus's protestations and his insistence on the historicity of the speeches, they are primarily fictitious narrations with generally valid statements, which almost remind us of certain passages in the tragedies. Of course, references to specific political institutions or historical figures and to political developments or events are more easily and more concretely detected in historiography than in tragedy. For present purposes, it is especially important that Herodotus connected the domestic and the external or interstate aspects of *archē*. It is this nexus that is developed by Thucydides in a different way by using Pericles's persona and speeches. *Archē*, there and in other passages, is the overarching term covering various meanings and functions: from regular office to informal, even tyrannical authority, within *and* outside of the polis. The lack of inherent distinction makes this term so very useful for literature and rhetoric. Its significance for constitutional and international law remains vague and undefined, much in contrast to its Latin equivalent *imperium*.

Besides the connection between domestic and foreign policy, an important aspect for both historians is the antagonism between domination and servitude in the discourse on *archē*. For the individual in the domestic realm just as for the entire society and its international relations, *archē* often appears as a source of bondage and slavery. The association of *archē* with *turannis* and *douleia* is more than a literary metaphor or rhetorical figure. The social reality and widespread presence of slavery in the Greek communities makes this nexus very plausible and realistic for everyone to see. The concept of *archē*, and the alternatives of *archein* and *archesthai*, deals not only with political and collective freedom or bondage, but also with the personal status of the individual citizen. Especially in democracy, the entitlement rendered to *archē* was never questioned among the Athenians. And even for the moderate Diodotus, among the highest goods ranked "freedom and the rule over others."[66]

Notes

1. See Classen (1996) on the earliest references for the term in Homer and Hesiod. Already in epic literature, the term not only had a temporal meaning but also denoted a "cause." According to Classen, in Homer *archē* meant not only the "first point in the distant past," but also in several instances "the first link of a chain, the first step which is followed by others and has consequences as foundation or as a determining factor" (p. 24). It is remarkable, too, that the word doesn't occur in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (cf. Classen 1996, p. 21).
2. In English translation (Weber 1978, 53): "'Domination' (*Herrschaft*) is the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons." (In the German original: "Herrschaft soll heißen die Chance, für einen Befehl bestimmten Inhalts bei angebbaren Personen Gehorsam zu finden").
3. There is much evidence for this, for example, Hom. *Il.* 2.805, 13.690, 16.552; *Od.* 14.230, 14.471; in the last reference *archein* alternates with *hēgeisthai*; both verbs often mean "to lead," especially in terms of war.
4. Military leader: for example, Hom. *Il.* 2.234. Naval Commander: Hom. *Il.* 1.144, 2.493 and 2.685; *Od.* 8.162: *archos nautaōn, hoi te prēktēres easi*, here refers to a captain of mariners on a merchant ship.
5. See for the entire terminology Meier (1982), pp. 821–2.
6. The German word "Reich" and its equivalents in other Germanic and related languages (all the way to its Indo-Germanic origin *reg(s)* for "ruler"—cf. Kluge (1967, pp. 591–2) cover only a part of the semantics of *archē*, for they don't contain its basic meaning "beginning, origin, cause."
7. The commentaries of Gomme and Hornblower pay no attention to *archē* and comment only on a very few references that do not fully grasp the range of meaning. For an exception see Drexler (1976), pp. 14–16.
8. On the connections between these two historians see the volume by Foster and Lateiner (2012), especially Stadter (2012) and Scardino (2012).
9. Pind. *Ol.* 2.58: *ta d' en taide Dios archai / alitra kata gas* (the ode for the tyrant Theron of Agragas can be dated to 476).
10. Aesch. *Cho.* 864: *daiōn archas te polissonomous / paterōn th' hexei megan olbon*. On the rare adjective *polissonomos* see the other reference in Aesch. *Pers.* 853*: polissonomou biotas*, literally "a polis-administering way of life."
11. In Sophocles' *Antigone* (744), Creon ironically uses the term in the plural mode when he speaks of *tas emas archas sebōn*. Cf. also Soph. *OT* 736–7: *chthonos archēn*.
12. Lévy (2006).
13. This is in any case valid for the use of the substantive *archē*. Herodotus uses the verb *archein* to signify the rule of the Greeks over other Greeks, for instance in 8.73.3; the subject here are the relations between the tribes (*ethnea*) on the Peloponnesus. Edmond Lévy (2006) pays no heed to the fact that Herodotus uses *archē* in an external and collective sense only

when referring to Barbarians and not for Greeks—even though he in turn emphasizes at the beginning of his article this sense of the term with regard to Athens ("chez Thucydide où le mot évoque la domination exercée par Athènes sur ses alliés," p. 89).

14. Hdt. 1.106: "The Scythians, then, ruled (*ērchon*) Asia for twenty-eight years: and the whole land was ruined because of their violence and their pride, for, besides exacting from each the tribute (*phoros*) which was assessed, they rode about the land carrying off everyone's possessions. Most of them were entertained and made drunk and then slain by Cyaxares and the Medes: so thus the Medes took back their empire (*tēn archēn*) and all that they had formerly possessed (*epekrateon*)."
15. Hdt. 3.80.6. In use here is the participle of *archein* (neuter) and therefore there is an Omicron at the end of the word. The word resembles the term for the office of *archōn* (with Omega—also the participle of *archein*, but here in the masculine form). The formula sounds as though the popular masses occupy the office of the archonts, the traditional senior office.
16. I would translate *archē* rather with "office of the ruler" here in this context.
17. Hdt. 3.83.3 uses the expression *ek tou mesou katēsto*; cf. Murray and Moreno (2007), p. 476. For the nexus between political "centre," *archē*, and the transition from monarchy and *turannis* to *isonomia* Hdt. 3.142 is of interest, where following Polycrates' fall his successor Maiandrius tells the citizens of Samos: *egō de es meson tēn archēn titheis isonomiēn humin prosagoreuō*.
18. This message between the lines is methodically similar to the contemporary Attic tragedy, for instance in Sophocles' *Antigone*, where in Creon not only the tyrant, but also the tyrannical side of the polis comes to the fore. See Raaflaub (1985), p. 243 n. 134; he only makes a short remark as to the significance of the final chapter.
19. See Hdt. 3.80.1 and esp. 6.43.3: "for the wonder of those Greeks who will not believe Otanes to have declared his opinion among the Seven that democracy was best for Persia."
20. In 1.67.4 and in 1.139.2, *archē* is used as a technical term with regard to the Megarian Decree.
21. Thuc. 2.65.11: *hōs en megalēi polei kai archēn echousēi*.
22. 2.63.2: Pericles; 3.37.3: Cleon.
23. Thuc. 6.85.1: *andri de tyrannōi ē polei archēn echousēi ouden alogon hoti xympheron oud' oikeion hoti mē piston*.
24. Thuc. 5.69.1: *hyper te patridos hē machē estai kai hyper archēs hama kai douleias*.
25. For example, Thuc. 6.82.3, in a speech of an envoy regarding the situation after the victory over the Persians: that the Athenians had freed themselves from the *archē* and *hēgemonia* of the Lacedaemonians and had become *hēgemones* themselves over the former subjects of the Persians. On

the relation between *hēgemoniē* and *archē* in Herodotus see the passages in Lévy (2006), pp. 95–6, who speaks of a "hiérarchie thukydidienne entre hégémonie < archê < tyrannie." The abovementioned passages do not confirm such an order of hierarchy.

26. Thuc. 4.87.5: *oud' au archēs ephiemetha, pausai de mallon heterous speudontes tous pleious an adikoimen, ei xumpasan autonomian epipherontes humas tous enantioumenous periidoimen*.
27. Thuc. 4.86.5: *chalepōtera gar an tēs allophulou archēs*. This is the only evidence for the emphasis on tribal differences in the context of *archē*. See *allophulos* in Thuc. 1.102.3, 4.65.4, 4.92.3.
28. Thuc. 1.93.3, 1.96.2, 2.37.3, 4.28.3+4, 4.53.2, 5.27.2, 5.37.2, 6.12.2 (6.16.1 and also in other places: *archein* in the sense of "executing an office") 6.23.3, 6.54.6+7, 6.74.1, 6.96.3, 6.103.4, 7.16.1, 8.1.3, 8.54.3, 8.64.2, 8.67.3, 8.70.1, 8.97.2. In addition, there are about 12 passages where *archē* is used in the plural (*archai*) as the term for offices or administration (e.g., 1.90.5, 2.15.2, 4.74.4, 5.28.1, 5.34.2, 5.47.9, 5.84.3, 6.54.6, 6.95.2, 8.53.3, 8.54.4, 8.89.2) and many instances of the forms of the participle *archōn*.
29. See above note 17 on Hdt. 3.83.
30. Translation by Mynott, adapted.
31. The *allēn* acquires a clearer sense in the English translation by Hobbes: "For neither was the government *otherwise* heavy till then" (the quotation is from the edition London: Bohn, 1843, as seen in the Perseus Digital Library).
32. Thuc. 6.54.2. In two influential German translations, *archē* in this case is rendered either as *rule* ("Herrschaft," G. P. Landmann) or as *government* ("Regierung," A. Horneffer), as did Hobbes much earlier: "succeeded in the government."
33. The allegation of *dunamis* and *bia* on the part of Hipparchus suggest a typical tyrannical behavior and renders it clear—against Thucydides' thesis—that one perceived him as a tyrant. One should note that the historian himself makes the point here that the attack aimed at ousting tyranny and not only at the removal of Hipparchus.
34. Perhaps the not so clear phrasing *allēn archēn* expresses this problem.
35. Thuc. 6.54.6: *plēn kath' hoson aiei tina epemelonto sphōn autōn en tais archais einai*. Thucydides uses here the plural form *archai*, which could refer to all year-offices. The context suggests that only the office of the archon is meant here though.
36. Which is dated to the year 522/21 B.C. on account of a fragment of the archon list. The relevant line of the inscription is in the edition of Meiggs and Lewis (1975), p. 10 no. 6, fr. c, l. 6. The reconstruction of the name and the subsequent dating is accepted in research.
37. Weber (1978), p. 53 (in the German original: "den eigenen Willen auch gegen Widerstreben durchzusetzen").

38. In this sense, the word emerges twice in the Peisistratid excursus: 6.56.1 and 59.1.
39. Thuc. 6.54.7: *kai tōi men en tē agorai prosoikodomēsas hysteron ho dēmos Athēnaiōn*... The reference aimed at the *dēmos* suggests that the democracy wanted to make disappear the inscription of the family of tyrants in the agora, the political center of the city.
40. On the text, his publications, and important epigraphical research, see Meiggs and Lewis (1975), pp. 19–20 no. 11 (8). The epigraphical discussion is above all about the dating since the "elegance and comparative maturity of the letters" (Meiggs and Lewis 1975, p. 20) is quite unusual for the late sixth century. One may assume that the Peisistratids would have commissioned first-class masons in terms of quality and style, that is, the lettering.
41. For the report and photographs of the small fragment (only about 4 x 12 x 6 cm in size), see www.greekepigraphicsociety.org.gr/newsletter_05-2011.aspx. The form of the letters, especially the characteristic Theta (an equilateral cross enclosed in a perfect circle) and the unusual exactness is what rendered a swift identification possible. In the meantime it has been inserted into the monument in the Epigraphical Museum in Athens.
42. One of the oldest Attic sources that contain *archē* is a stele from Eleusis of 449/47; edition, translation, and commentary in Koerner (1993), no. 7, 31 (pp. 17–18). In the earliest inscribed document of this kind, the law concerning the cleruchs from Athens for Salamis of ca 510/500, the text is badly damaged and unverified (in Koerner 1993, no. 1, 7: *(t)on archont(a ta hopla krin)*).
43. Most of these inscriptions come from Crete and from the Peloponnesus (see Koerner 1993, nos. 87 ff. and 22 ff.); in addition, cf. also the often discussed law from Chios (Koerner 1993, no. 61).
44. For example, 6.12.2, 6.74.1: Alcibiades; 6.103.4: Nicias; in 8.54.3, the people release Phrynichus of his *archē*, and also *ton xunarchonta Skirōnidēn*, denoting his colleague in the "office" of *stratēgos*.
45. For example, 4.53.2: a special department for Cythera; 5.37.2: two men of the highest department in Argos; 6.96.3: office and command for Hermocrates and the other *stratēgoi* in Syracuse.
46. It is hardly possible, and beyond our scope here, to capture the extensive literature on this theme, some of which has come out under the entry "Polis Turannos." Cf. Tuplin (1985) and the literature discussed there, especially Connor, Raaflaub, and Schuller. They take the *turannis* metaphor as their point of departure and hardly touch upon the term *archē*. On the function of this metaphor see also Morrison (2006b), esp. pp. 133 ff.
47. Thuc. 3.82.8: *pantōn d' autōn aition archē hē dia pleonexian kai philotimian*. Hobbes translates: "The cause of all this is desire of rule out of avarice and ambition."
48. See for this with numerous references from the fourth and some of the fifth century: Dover (1974), pp. 229–34. Early on, *philotimia* acquired an ambivalent or even negative significance, for example, in Pindar, fr. 198

(*chalepōtatoi / agan philotimian mnōmenoi / en polesi andres*) and Herodotus (3.54.4: *hē philotimia ktēma skaion*). In Thucydides (2.65.7), the negativity is made vivid with according attributes: *kata tas idias philotimias kai idia kerdē*.

49. Cf. the "classification of passions" that Immanuel Kant carries out in his *Anthropology* (Kant 2006, p. 167): "The passions are divided into passions of *natural* (innate) inclination and passions of inclination that result from human *culture* (acquired)." The latter includes: "the *manias for honor*, *dominance*, and *possession*" (in German: "Ehrsucht, Herrschsucht und Habsucht") (Kant 2006, p. 167). It would be interesting to analyze the genealogy of this set of passions. Thucydides possibly constitutes the earliest (surviving) source. In how far Kant's classification possibly relies on Thucydides 3.82.8 (directly or indirectly via Hobbes?) remains to be studied.
50. Thuc. 1.75.3. These three factors are repeated (in a slightly varied order) and highlighted in 1.76.2: *hypo tōn megistōn nikēthentes timēs kai deous kai ōphelias*. On usefulness as an argument in Classical Greece, see Spahn (1986), and now Anastasiadis (2013).
51. Pericles, for instance, turns around the argument in his first speech (1.140.5 and 141.1): they should risk war, so as "not to be afraid to hold on to what we have acquired." In the Melian dialogue, as well, the intricate relations between authority, subjugation, and fear play a central role.
52. In the speech of the Corinthians (1.122.3), the expression *turannos polis* is mentioned first, and used as a reproach. Later then the analogy between tyrant and polis is explained in detail by the Athenian envoy Euphemus in Sicily: *andri de turannōi ē polei archēn echousēi* (6.85.1).
53. Thuc. 2.63.2: *hōs turannida gar ēdē echete autēn* (i.e., *archēn*).
54. Thuc. 3.37.2: *hoti turannida echete tēn archēn*.
55. This is emphasized by Tuplin (1985), pp. 366–7 and 373.
56. Ar. *Eq.* 1111–12 is the only explicit reference.
57. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.14: *gignōskontes hoti miseisthai men anankē ton archonta hupo tou archomenou*.
58. [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1.18: *dia touto oun hoi summachoi douloi tou dēmou tōn Athēnaiōn kathestasi mallon*.
59. Cf. for this Spahn (2005), Morrison (2006b), pp. 148–9.
60. *Archē* and *archein* are mentioned nine times here: 2.62.1, 2.62.2, 2.63.1 (three times), 2.63.1 (*hōs turannida . . . echete autēn*, i.e., *archēn*), 2.63.3, 2.64.3, 2.64.5.
61. See Spahn (2005), p. 104.
62. The evidence in Berve (1967), vol. II, pp. 627–8.
63. On tyranny in Thucydides, see Martin Dreher's contribution to the present volume.
64. Thuc. 2.65.10: *hoi de husteron isoi . . . kath' hēdonas tōi dēmōi kai ta pragmata endidonai*.
65. E.g., Aesch. *Supp.* 907; *Eum.* 525–6, 696.
66. Thuc. 3.45.6: *hosōi peri tōn megistōn te, eleutherias ē allōn archēs*.

CHAPTER 5

Turannis in the Work of Thucydides

Martin Dreher

Tyranny (*turannis*) is clearly not central to the work of Thucydides because this form of government had no immediate significance in the Peloponnesian War, the subject of his work. That is why our historian, in line with modern academic research, justifiably made stronger reference to the forms of government that played a far more important role in the contemporary conflict between the Athenian and Spartan camps: oligarchy or aristocracy, and democracy.[1] Yet it is striking that the abundant modern research on Thucydides has frequently and in various ways addressed the issue of tyranny in the historian's work, which indeed deals with it on several occasions. We even find studies specifically on the issue of Thucydides's treatment of tyranny, such as *Thucydides and Tyranny* (1987) by Thomas F. Scanlon, or *Thukydides und die Tyrannis* (1990), by Pedro Barceló.[2] It is difficult to say whether the interest in the subject is somewhat related to contemporary developments and experiences, whether, for instance, it increases with the fall of potentates who are held to be modern tyrants, such as Hitler or Stalin. This would have to be examined in separate studies. This chapter is instead interested in the concept of tyranny itself, as it emerges in the *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

Most of the recent literature on Thucydides deals with the subject in a compartmentalized way: it usually focuses on only one specific aspect of tyranny in the work of Thucydides. It should be mentioned that his work lends itself to this approach. Thucydides speaks of tyranny—or tyrants—in three different contexts in the *History of the Peloponnesian War*. First, there are the early Greek tyrants (1.13–20)

that he mentions, second the Peisistratid rule in Athens (6.53.3–60.1), and third the so-called tyrannical rule of Athens over its allies (1.122.3, 1.124.3, 2.63.2, 3.37.2). In addition, at times he also deals in passing with tyrannical rule—a fact that is often ignored in academic research, but which is taken into consideration in this chapter.

This chapter makes two contributions. First, it provides an overview of existing literature and research on the topic of *turannis* in Thucydides. Second, it goes beyond the literature in that it makes a plea for a de-compartmentalization of our consideration of *turannis* in relation to Thucydides. Rather than dividing our treatment of the subject into subtopics, or limiting it to the discussion of certain text passages, we focus on how it emerges when we consider it as a general concept. The chapter is divided into seven sections or theses.

1. Thucydides Had No Systematic Interest in Tyranny as a Form of Government or Constitution—At Least, He Does Not Show Any Such Interest in His Work

In contrast to the philosophers of the fourth century BC, Thucydides was primarily focused on historical description rather than political theory.[3] Tyrants are mentioned in his text. Some of them appear in his narrative incidentally, while others are dealt with at greater length—but primarily as historical figures. At no occasion is thereby tyranny specified in general, or explicitly characterized as a form of government in its own right. This should not surprise us. In all passages mentioned above, tyranny is not the author's actual historical subject. Instead, his subject is either (a) a historical detail in the background description of early ancient Greek history or (b) a comparative retrospection in order to better assess the Athenian situation in the year 415 or, finally (c) a term to characterize the Athenian dominance of the Delian League. With respect to tyrants, that is, Hartmut Leppin's general observation remains valid that Thucydides follows to a high degree a personalized approach.[4] It is therefore a futile question how the author defines, theoretically identifies and situates Greek *turannis*.[5] There are no explicit answers to such questions, only (at the most) implicit hints that I return to at the end of this chapter.

Thucydides made no effort to specify whether or not tyranny was to be strictly and literally understood as the rule of one man alone.

He seems to presume this when he emphasizes in his passage about the Peisistratids that it was not Hipparchus, as many had assumed,[6] but rather (only) Hippias from Athens who had become the tyrant of Athens (6.54.2) and had ruled as such (55.3). That is what the historian had claimed in the very beginning of his work: The Athenians did not know "that Hippias was the ruler as the eldest of the sons of Peisistratus, with Hipparchus and Thessalus his younger brothers" (1.20.1).[7] However, just before the quoted passage in book VI there is talk of the tyranny of Peisistratus and his sons (in the plural: *tēn Peisistratou kai tōn paidōn turannida*, 6.53.3), which stands in contradiction to the claim that Hippias alone was the tyrant of Athens—something that is not often considered in academic research.[8] This contradiction could only be resolved if we were to understand the term *archē* in 54.2 (*ouch Hipparchos . . . all' Hippias presbutatos ōn esche tēn archēn*, "it was not Hipparchus . . . but Hippias, the eldest son, who succeeded to the *archē*"), and also in 55.3 (and in the case of *ērxen* in 55.1) not as denoting a personal autocracy but a type of dominance within a kind of family rule instead.[9] Such an interpretation, however, would not be very convincing: Hippias, the head of the family, would then have been the actual tyrant, with his brother Hipparchus a subordinate coruler. The rule of tyrants in the fifth century Sicilian cities is sometimes considered in terms of such a family or tribal rule (in older German publications also called "Samtherrschaft").[10] However, this specific understanding of *turannis* is nowhere explicitly defined as such in any of the sources.[11] In the best-known case, that of the tyranny of the Deinomenids over Gela and Syracuse, Gelo is mostly regarded as *the* tyrant, but his brother Hieron, to whom Gelo gave their native city Gela after Gelo had moved to Syracuse, seems to have been in a subordinate position to him.[12] After the death of Gelo (478 BC), when Hieron became the topmost tyrant, the third brother, Polyzalos, acquired a similar position over Gela, just like the one Hieron had held before. The "constitutional" relation between the two brothers[13] cannot be exactly determined. So it has been justifiably doubted that the dependency thereby created was such that the rulers in Gela could be regarded as the "vice tyrants" of the rulers of Syracuse.[14]

Other sources consider the reign of the sons of Peisistratus in Athens, Hippias, and Hipparchus, as such a type of family rule. This interpretation, which most likely traces back to Atthidographers, and

which was generally widespread among aristocrats, is manifest in the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia*.[15] There it is stated even more clearly than in the work of Thucydides: "When Peisistratus was dead, his sons held the government (*kateichon hoi huieis tēn archēn*), carrying on affairs in the same way" (17.3); and similarly: "Affairs were now under the authority (*ēsan kurioi tōn pragmatōn*) of Hipparchus and Hippias, owing to their station and their ages" (18.1). But a qualifying remark is added after the last quote: "but the government was controlled (*epestatai tēs archēs*) by Hippias, who was the elder and was statesmanlike and wise by nature" (18.1). Apparently the author basically sees both brothers as heirs to Peisistratos's *turannis* and thus as the successors in his reign.[16] Since Hipparchus had devoted himself to the pleasures and the arts (18.1) and the other brothers were still too young, and furthermore the sons of a foreigner,[17] he assigns the role of the one actually ruling to Hippias.[18] This is similar to Thucydides's view, but whereas Thucydides stresses the individual reign of Hippias, the Aristotelian wording implies a dominance of the older brother within collective rule. This portrayal has been deemed the attempt to find a compromise between Thucydides's conception and the opinion he criticized.[19] And yet the predicate *epestatai* is confusing here as referring to a tyrannical double reign. In a formal legal sense, *epistatai* held the chair in various councils of the Athenian democracy—among them also the general assembly. However, this function of chair never included the ability to make independent decisions.

It seems to me that a convincing reconciliation of the Thucydidean statements is not possible. It is also not necessary. Antonis Tsakmakis correctly points out that the ambivalence mentioned is not only found in the historical writings, but also existed in historical reality itself, where tyrants held no formally defined positions: even if Hippias was the actual executor of state control, his relatives, particularly Hipparchus, did possess an undefined amount of power.[20] In this sense, I think it reasonable to assume that Thucydides's formulation, calling the tyranny that "of Peisistratus and his sons" (6.53.3), is most likely the adoption of a common expression[21] that the author, in contrast to his usual practice, does not criticize.[22] He is, as mentioned already before, not so much concerned with a legally correct definition, but rather with the proof that follows as to *which* of the two brothers in reality executed power as a tyrant and therefore should be seen as the *actual* tyrant.[23]

What was said before also applies to the end of his Peisistratid excursus. Returning to his main account, Thucydides reports here that the people of Athens remembered what they knew from hearsay about the end of the Peisistratid tyranny, and that they were rigorous in proceeding against those suspected of sacrileges against the mysteries because they "thought that it was all part of some oligarchic or tyrannical conspiracy (*epi xunōmosiai oligarchikē kai turannikēi*, 6.60.1)." Also here Thucydides is not concerned with a precise definition of tyranny as a form of government. The Greek word *kai* in this passage is generally translated "or," so that a clear differentiation between oligarchy and tyranny is made. At the same time, however, interpreters emphasize that this differentiation is not significant here because both ambitions were aiming at toppling the ruling Athenian democracy (*katalusis tou dēmou*).[24] Thucydides possibly strengthens here his criticism of the unjustified fear that the Athenian people had of Alcibiades, thus imputing this quite undifferentiated assessment of the alleged conspiracy to them.[25]

2. For Thucydides, Tyranny Is a Historical Condition and *One* of Many Forms of Government

Thucydides does not push tyranny aside morally, unlike later political theoreticians did, nor does he consider it as a perversion of monarchical order or as a necessary *metabolē* ("transformation").[26] As all other Greek authors who wrote on this point did, Thucydides imagined that the Greek cities were originally ruled by kings. This idea, which was widely believed until very recently, was a misapprehension, as we know today.[27] However, for Thucydides, tyranny was part of a historical phase that did not necessarily immediately follow the rule of the kings. Thus the remark *proteron de ēsan epi rhētois gerasi patrikai basileiai* ("previously there were hereditary kingships with established rights," 1.13.1) refers to, as Drews has shown,[28] the historical time *before* the Trojan War, and the tyrants appeared only quite a while *after* that big event. Since that time there had been several migrations and new foundations, as we know from 1.12. Tyranny therefore developed not chronologically, and also not as an immanent succession to the royal reign. Instead it developed, as stated in the "Archaeology," from new conditions that had arisen, specifically *tōn prosodōn meizonōn gignomenōn* (1.13.1), "while revenues increased."[29]

Tyranny is therefore separated both chronologically and systematically from kingship. It is considered as its own form of government, like *basileia*. Thucydides places both on the same level. In contrasting both forms of government, whereby he only describes kingship in detail—maybe because it belonged to a more distant past that no one was familiar with—Thucydides assumes that his readers had an idea of what tyranny was, since it was historically more recent. Implicitly he tells us here that tyranny was not a form of government being passed down through time (*patrikos).* It was instead a new phenomenon that was, since it had no established rights like the kings, not generally accepted in the city, but possibly forced on it.

Thucydides has a rather unrealistic idea of the frequency of tyranny in Greek city-states when he says that "the reign of tyranny had emerged *in most cities*" (1.13.1).[30] Even if the author knew about tyrants that have been lost in our historical tradition, he was nonetheless far away from a comprehensive overview of the history of all Greek city-states in the archaic period. And we can in no way assume that all those city-states whose ancient history we know nothing about today were occasionally ruled by tyrants. It is instead more likely that tyrannies tended to be recorded and passed down as unusual occurrences. Thus, they are more likely to be remembered than the "normal" constitutional life in an aristocratically ruled city-state. That is why we should not, unlike Thucydides, regard the relatively small number of archaic tyrants as the visible tip of a large iceberg. Tyranny was rather a phenomenon that affected only a small proportion of the city-states. In contrast, Thucydides's statement that Sparta was "never subject to tyrants" (*aturanneutos*) is undisputed (1.18.1). Also in this context, it should be pointed out, Thucydides treats tyranny as a "normal" constitutional form of the Greek city-state.

3. Thucydides Does Not Mention Many Tyrants by Name

Since there is, to my knowledge, no complete compilation of tyrants, following is a list of all tyrants and their family members that are named:

- From Athens: Cylon (1.126); Peisistratus the Elder (1.20; 3.104; 6.53–4); Hippias (1.20; 6.54–9); Hipparchus (1.20, 6.54–5; 6.57);

Thessalus (1.20, 6.55); Peisistratus the Younger (son of Hippias 6.54); Archedice (daughter of Hippias, 6.59).

- From Samos: Polycrates (1.13; 3.104).
- From Lampsacus: Hippoclus (6.59); Aeantides (6.59).
- From Astacus: Euarchus (2.30; 2.33).
- From Rhegium: Anaxilas (6.4).
- From Gela: Hippocrates (6.5); Gelo (6.4–5; 6.94.1).
- From Syracuse: Gelo (see Gela).

Nine tyrants are thus named; in total, 15 persons are mentioned in their context, that is, if we count in their family members and the aspiring tyrant Cylon; one of them is a woman.[31]

It is understandable that all of the known members of the Peisistratid tyrant family of Athens are mentioned. Since the city of Syracuse held an important place within the work, it is easy to explain that at least two of the existing tyrants there are named, including the "predecessor tyrant" to Gelo in Gela, while the successor to Gelo, the not lesser known Hiero of Syracuse, is "missing." Beyond that, it is especially striking that the tyrants from Corinth, a significant city during the Peloponnesian War, are not mentioned anywhere, specifically Cypselus and his son Periander who was referred to as one of the seven wise men by many antique authors. Here one can see again that Thucydides sticks strictly to the subject he has chosen and does not succumb to the temptation to tell stories for the stories' sake nor to drop names.

4. Of All the Tyrants Named, the Author Passes Specific Judgment Only on the Athenian Peisistratids[32]

The central passage that is referred to repeatedly reads: "And indeed violence against the people was foreign to the overall character of the tyrant's regime, and he established his rule without creating any bitterness (*oude gar tēn allēn archēn epachthēs ēn es tous pollous, all' anepiphthonōs katestēsato*). Of all tyrants these evinced the strongest traits of decency and intelligence (*aretēn kai xunesin*). They taxed the Athenians at only five per cent of their produce" (6.54.5).

According to the context of the preserved text, Hipparchus should still be the subject of the first sentence quoted.[33] But since Thucydides had just denied him the ruling power, most scholars

rightfully deem this to be impossible. Hence they assume that the text is here corrupted, and several corrections have been proposed for it. Yet I do not believe that the exact wording can be reconstructed. We are not dealing here with single letters that were miswritten. In my opinion, an entire part of a sentence and perhaps even whole passages of the text must be missing. Already the first sentence must be referring to Peisistratus because only he, the founder of Athenian *turannis*, had reigned long enough to justify such a general statement and the comparison with other tyrants.[34] The second sentence can only be referring (with *houtoi* as plural) to Peisistratus and his son Hippias.[35]

The preponderant opinion of scholarly research claiming that Thucydides portrayed and judged the Peisistratids's tyranny positively[36] is primarily based on these assertions, and it is often extended to all tyrant rules. Tsakmakis's wording is in any case excessive: "*Hippias und Hipparchos werden im politischen Bereich positiv dargestellt. In 54, 5–7 bietet Thukydides ein umfangreiches Bild ihres Regiments dar, woraus eindeutig hervorgeht, daß die beiden Peisistratiden Athen eine segensreiche Epoche bescherten*" (Hippias and Hipparchos are positively described with regard to their politics. In 54.5–7 Thucydides analyzes their rule in detail and clearly concludes that Athens flourished during the time of the two Peisistratids).[37] Only few approaches exist that make different suggestions,[38] which I wish here to take up and to strengthen.[39] First, the supposed positive statements of Thucydides must be examined more closely: Peisistratus set up a reign that was not oppressive to the masses, but ruled in a way that he would not be hated. Already this first statement, featuring a negation, draws on a comparison with other tyrants, who Thucydides assumes were oppressive and evoked hatred among the people. The comparison to other tyrants is then explicitly made in the next sentence: The Peisistratids acted with "the strongest traits of decency and intelligence," far more than other tyrants had. "Although they taxed the Athenians at only five per cent of their produce, they still beautified the city, supported wars through to the end, and maintained sacrificial offerings in the temples"—as such, for all activities that were necessary and reasonable for the entire city-state. "In most respects the city was left free to enjoy its previous constitution, except to the extent that the tyrants always ensured high office for one of their own people" (54.5–6). The laws

that for the most part dated back to Solon therefore continued to be applied. At this early stage of the development of the city-state, however, there were only few and not particularly detailed laws concerning the political area. It was therefore not difficult for the tyrant family to see to it—through the presence of a family member in the offices, probably one of the three highest *archontes*—that the entire political life was subject to its will, or at least that nothing would happen against this will. Again, Thucydides tells us here that in marked contrast to the Peisistratids, most other tyrants acted egotistically and indiscriminately.

Thucydides therefore says about the Peisistratids that *in comparison with* other tyrants, they ruled *relatively* mildly and in the interest of the city-state. He does not, however, in any way remove them from the line of tyrants. If we were to take an analogous judgment from modern times for comparison, we could use as an example the common opinion that Mussolini was less brutal and inhuman than Hitler because he did not actively promote the extermination of the Jews. His dictatorship is therefore judged to be *relatively* milder without denying him the character of dictatorship. In Thucydides's eyes the Peisistratids were, first of all, an *exception* among the tyrants. Second, he makes clear that this exceptional instance of relative benignity lasted only a limited period of time during their rule. According to Thucydides, it was based on the fact that the Athenian tyrants felt secure at first; still at the time of Peisistratus's death, his successor Hippias was able to take over power uncontested due to the fact that the citizens had long lived in fear and that he was able to rely on his mercenary soldiers (6.55.3). What is implied here is that the early relatively benign rule of the Peisistratids was already based on force and intimidation of the citizens.[40] But as soon as his brother Hipparchus became the victim of an assassination, the ruling tyrant Hippias abandoned the previous benignity, "the tyranny now entered a more oppressive (*chalepōtera*) stage, as Hippias was increasingly fearful for his security" and therefore "executed a good number of citizens" (6.59.2). In the final three years of his reign, the rule of Hippias adopted the normal condition of tyranny again, so to speak, and therefore the character of despotism.

The author emphasizes the fact that this normal condition had already existed, even if only to a smaller degree, before the turning point at the time of the assassination; and he emphasizes the fact

that the temporal benignity of the tyrants' rule was only relative with the following proof: In order to show that Hippias had actually reigned as the first-born son of Peisistratus, Thucydides mentions a stele "commemorating the criminality of the tyrants" on the Acropolis (6.55.1) and whose inscription he probably read there himself.[41] Without further comment, the author quotes the official and public condemnation of the Athenian tyranny as unjust rule, and this condemnation alludes to (both) the Athenian tyrants altogether, and not just to the last years of Hippias's reign.

Thus on the one hand, Thucydides takes the common Greek and also the official Athenian version of the self-serving, indiscriminate, and brutal tyrant as a fact. Yet on the other hand he contrasts the longest period of the Peisistratid reign by emphasizing that it was relatively benign and that it corresponded to that usual image only to a small extent. This qualification may partly be the author's usual criticism of the historical perceptions of his contemporaries, in this case their image of tyrants, and it can be read as a plea for a differentiated way of looking at tyrants, in which not all tyrants by nature ruled equally violently, lawlessly, and cruelly.[42] Thucydides hereby picks up on a tradition that puts at least the person Peisistratus as the founder of tyranny in a positive light, which culminates in the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia* (thus in the Atthidographical tradition), where it is said that the tyranny of Peisistratus has often been called "the (Golden) Age of Cronos" (16.7).

5. As Far as It Can Be Generalized, Thucydides's Opinion of Tyranny Is Negative

Thucydides did not explicitly condemn Athenian tyranny. Instead he condemned it implicitly, and in the same manner also condemned the early Greek tyrants who are dealt with in a rather sweeping way in the "Archaeology." In an initial, nonjudgmental remark, he refers to the rise of the tyrants and correlates it with the increase of power and affluence (1.13; also noted previously here in section 2). Since the tyrants are presented not as initiators of this progress but rather as a part, albeit undoubtedly an active part, of the general development of Greece, which had caused their rise to power, there is no evidence here of any positive valuation of

the tyrants as, say, dynamic sponsors of the economic and social change at that time.[43] In his sole statement that includes a value judgment about early Greek tyranny, there is no change to the picture of a basically negatively connoted rule:[44] "As for the tyrants in the Greek cities, whose only concern was for themselves, for their own physical safety and the aggrandizement of their house, security was as far as possible their greatest political aim, and nothing notable was done by any of them except at best against their respective neighbours" (1.17).

Thucydides, it is well known, describes the Peloponnesian War as the biggest and most significant event in the history of mankind. It is noteworthy that in this vein he assigns to the tyrants only a very modest place in history. He possibly mentions them only as a preemptive response to his contemporaries, who may have regarded the tyrants as predestined to commit great deeds because of their extraordinary economic and military power. Thucydides also refers to this power in 1.13, and in particular the naval military force that resulted from it. However, in this context he only mentions Polycrates from Samos (1.13.6), who subjugated a few islands, as an example of a tyrant with a significantly powerful fleet.[45] In light of the later general statement quoted earlier about Greek tyrants (1.17) we must however categorize Polycrates's expansion as a lesser undertaking, directed only against the neighboring islands.[46]

6. Thucydides Judges Tyranny in Foreign Affairs Differently than He Judges Tyranny within a Polis

With his criticism of the archaic tyrants for not having committed any great deeds, Thucydides enters the sphere of foreign policy and discloses a fundamental contradiction. As a dictator and usurper of power in domestic politics, the typical tyrant could arbitrarily violate the values and rules of the polis and subordinate them to his personal advantage—and therewith be condemned also in Thucydides's eyes. At the same time, the tyrant could, also from Thucydides's viewpoint, achieve great significance and recognition in foreign policy, where these values and rules were not valid, without becoming unjust. While none of the historical tyrants actually ever achieved this, this was achieved by a polis, namely Athens, through its domination of its allies.

Athens was referred to twice in the war speeches of the Corinthians as a tyrannical city-state, as a *polis turannos*, using the word as an adjective (1.122.3, 1.124.3). The thought is put in the mouths of the main opponents of Athens, who pushed for war on the Peloponnesian side, and was thus part of the war propaganda and, in this context, made clear accusations against Athens.[47] Without joining forces against Athens, so the Corinthians warned, the Peloponnesian city-states were in danger of being subjugated to Athens, which would be the equivalent of "downright slavery" (*antikrus douleia* 1.122.2) and come close to the subjugation of the Greeks in Asia Minor by the Persians.[48] The following explicit parallel between the Athenian rule and that of tyrants, who set themselves up as rulers within a polis, was supposed to contribute to a heightened willingness of the Peloponnesian League to go to war against Athens. It would be a contradiction to want to overthrow the autocrats[49] in the *poleis* on the one hand, but on the other hand to do nothing against the *turannis* of Athens: "we are not even securing our own freedom: while we make it a principle to despose absolute rulers in any individual city, we are allowing a tyrant city to be established over us all" (1.122.3).[50]

Surprisingly this propaganda is picked up on the Athenian side. Twice, Pericles and Cleon speak of the tyrannical rule (*turannis*) of Athens in their speeches, using the noun. For Pericles, also for Athens freedom or slavery are at stake here.[51] But in addition, it is a latent threat for Athens to lose her power. This thought is described here and many times in relation to *archē* or the verb *archein* (2.63.1).[52] Since the Athenians were hated because of their rule (63.1), they were no longer free to give it up (63.2). The following comparison with tyranny repeats and justifies the thought in a more specific and pointed way: "The empire you possess is by now like a tyranny" (*hōs turannida gar ēdē echete autēn* [sc. *archēn*], 2.63.2). Thucydides asserts explicitly, that Cleon, successor to Pericles after his death, as well as the so-called demagogues that followed abandoned all of Pericles's caution and reserve,[53] but it also becomes evident because Pericles's formulation is no longer echoed as a metaphor in Cleon's words, but returns rather as the actual reality: " . . . that you hold your rule as a tyranny" (*hoti turannida echete tēn archēn*, 3.37.2).[54] The Athenian ambassador Euphemus repeatedly equates Athenian power with tyranny in his speeches in the winter of 415/4 in Camarina:

"For a tyrant or an imperial city nothing advantageous is unreasonable" (6.85.1).[55]

The common point of reference between the *archē* of Athens in the Athenian League and the power of a tyrant over a polis is undoubtedly the nature of the use of force,[56] for it was with military power that Athens forced its allies to stay in the League, as Thucydides writes on the occasion of the revolt of Naxos (1.98.4). In the context of the preceding remarks of Pericles (2.63.1) as well as the quoted speech of the Corinthians (1.122.2–3), he also implies that tyrannical force restricted the *freedom* of the allied poleis.[57] According to Pericles, the foundation of such a regime, which necessarily involves at a minimum elements of servitude,[58] can be deemed unjust; it is "perhaps unjust to acquire it, but certainly dangerous to let it go" (*hēn labein men adikon dokei einai, apheinai de epikindunon*, 2.63.2).[59]

Although the author indicates with this double indirect criticism somewhat of a distancing (also of Pericles's), he leaves the question open as to exactly wherein the possible injustice might lie. There is a possible equivalent in an earlier remark of the author, that Naxos "was the first allied state to get subjugated something quite *contrary to established norms*" (*prōte de hautē polis xummachis para to kathestēkos edoulōthē*, 1.98.4). The wording *para to kathestēkos* is not to be understood in formal legal sense as a violation of the original Delian League agreement and is therefore not to be understood to be "against the statutes";[60] the dominant opinion of scholars rather holds that it meant it was "against the conventional inter-state law," "against Greek international law of the time."[61] If the statement about the punishment of Naxos includes a certain criticism of the severity of the punishment (still unknown to us),[62] this is not what the author is concerned about in Pericles's speech. In contrast to the quoted Corinthians, Thucydides does not want to pass moral judgment on Athenian politics. Instead, his aim is to explain the development of Athenian power and rule. This explanation is however not entirely value-free itself.[63] In many passages of the Periclean speeches as well as in other areas, Thucydides points not without admiration to the extent of the Athenian rule, the expansion of this polis' power as well as the administration of its rule by the revered Pericles, while he criticizes at the most exaggerations, an unbridled and therefore incautious greed of power. For the admirer of power that Thucydides

was, a dominant position of power that has reached a critical size, as in the case of Athens, and that has handled its position reasonably of its own accord, is legitimate because of its historical size and significance and therefore can and should not be voluntarily relinquished.[64] Thucydides is not predominantly interested in asking which type of constitution may enable a polis to expand its power. However, it is clear to him that every form of government must be measured by its foreign policy successes.

7. As a Concept, Tyranny Is Used Uniformly by Thucydides. His Judgment of Actual Tyrannies Is at the Same Time Passed in a Highly Differentiated Way

In conclusion, I would like to highlight an important point, which is however denied[65] or ignored in most academic contributions. As mentioned, the literature primarily deals with the subject of tyranny in Thucydides in a compartmentalized way or with the positive aspect of the picture of the Peisistratids. However, Thucydides uses a uniform concept of tyranny in all of his remarks about it, explicitly or implicitly:[66] Tyranny is a rule by force. A tyrant, whether an individual or the city of Athens, comes to power through the use of force and retains it also with force.[67] Those subjected by tyrants are—irrespective of whether they are the citizens in poleis that are ruled by tyrants or the poleis themselves as the allies in the Athenian League—deprived of their freedom and autonomy. It seems safe to assume that this notion of *turannis*, as we find it in Thucydides, reflects what was also the general opinion about it among the Greeks. However, in contrast to theoreticians of the state, to moralistic admonishers and to political activists, Thucydides is not interested in an exact definition. He does neither engage in a listing of the specific qualities of the "tyrannical" form of government, nor in any form of typology-building in this respect. It remains to be said that he was also not primarily interested in passing a final judgment, in particular not a moralistic one. To the extent that tyranny and specific tyrants are relevant to his work, they are analyzed matter-of-factly, and often only mentioned as those acting, without dwelling on them in any further detail. Still, we can, as this chapter has shown, identify Thucydides's own position toward *turannis*. I summarize

this position here again as the main conclusion of the chapter. It can be best divided into two parts:[68]

In the realm of domestic politics, Thucydides rejects tyranny as a form of government.[69] The historian shares Pericles's ideal of a polis organized by laws that are observed by all. The citizens should identify with such a polis and, on the one hand, enjoy their individual freedom but, on the other hand, contribute what they can to the common good.[70] Such a regime is inevitably corrupted by tyrannical rule. The tyrant observes only his own interest, and not that of the commons, and relies primarily on mercenaries in sustaining his power—rather than on the support of the citizens.[71] Not every tyrant exercised a gruesome arbitrary regime, as Thucydides himself emphasized in the case of Peisistratus and the beginning period of Hippias. However, the reign of Hippias became more severe and gruesome after his brother was murdered. Thucydides's description shows in this respect that the relative benignity of a tyrant is the exception rather than the rule; it remains precarious and depends entirely on the personal character of the ruler and exceptional circumstances. Thucydides would probably judge tyranny more positively if the tyrants had pursued glorious foreign policies, oriented toward grand deeds, in the context of which the citizens would had received their own share of wealth and of the glory. But he largely denies the historical tyrants such successes (1.17).

In the realm of foreign policy, however, a regime which at least appears as tyranny or can be called a tyranny is evaluated differently. For Thucydides, conventions of some form of "international law" exist that should not be broken as done by Athens upon the defection of Athenian League city-states (1.98.4) and probably also in the subjugation of Melos: subservient *poleis* should not sink into complete servitude, their freedom and their autonomy should not be taken from them. But these criteria remain vague and are only hinted at by Thucydides. They do not have the same binding character as the constitution of a polis. If a state expands its power and sets up a hegemony that brings about dominance over other poleis, then it earns the admiration of the historian. And this is not only so when a state attained leading position legitimately—for example through diplomatic persuasion and economic and military incentives, as one can imagine, but he also expresses admiration when violent measures

were applied, even when they were contested in their legitimacy, as when Athens used force against its allies that had revolted. In the eyes of the historian, the success of the Athenian League justified some excessive means. Thucydides also thought—concurring with Pericles's words—that once Athens achieved a certain level of development, she could not give up her position without taking significant risks.[72]

Notes

1. Thus both constitutions have a chapter in Brill's *Companion* (Rengakos and Tsakmakis 2006); tyranny, by contrast, does not. Cf. also Leppin (1999), pp. 63, 80.
2. An informative overview of existing scholarship can be found in Meyer (2008), pp. 13–15.
3. See for instance Leppin (1999), pp. 15, 69; Spahn (2011), esp. p. 41.
4. Leppin (1999), p. 113 ("in einem hohem Maße einen personalisierenden Zugriff").
5. In contrast, Barceló (1990), p. 401 thinks that the three groups of statements about tyranny mentioned previously "bilden die Ansatzpunkte, an denen Thukydides die Tyrannisfrage aufrollt" and he thus imputes this theory to Thucydides and incorporates it in his work. In my opinion, the resulting questions that Barceló formulates do not serve as a guiding principle for understanding Thucydides's concept of tyranny, as the author claims, since they basically do not resonate in the work of Thucydides. On page 408, he even proclaims that the "Tyrannisfrage" is "nicht apodiktisch, sondern nuanciert und differenziert gewürdigt (?)" by Thucydides.
6. In this passage, Thucydides does not write a polemic against Herodotus, who describes Hipparchus as "brother of the tyrant Hippias" (5.55). It is generally assumed that the polemic is directed against Hellanicus; see Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 321.
7. All longer English quotations from Thucydides (unless noted otherwise) are taken from Martin Hammond's translation with adaptions by the author.
8. In my opinion, commentators pass too fast over this contradiction, which they mention only in passing. Cf. Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, 318: "It is not important that he refers to *tōn paidōn* (not *tou paidos*), for it goes without saying that a tyrant's brothers, so long as they are on good terms with him, enjoy great power." This is said to apply also to the use of "Peisistratids" in Herodotus 6.123.6 (p. 320). See also Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. III, p. 434 with reference to D. Lewis. Tsakmakis (1995) (but see below n. 20) and Rhodes (2006), p. 528 do not take 53.3 into account.

9. This understanding of the terminology is justifiably repudiated by Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 319. Diesner (1959), p. 17 sees "eine Art Samtherrschaft der Peisistratiden" indicated at 6.54.5 that stands in contradiction to 54.1.
10. Cf. for Athens for example, Berve (1967), vol. I, p. 64: that "eine Art von Samtherrschaft bestand, ist der Überlieferung mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit zu entnehmen." For the sources and earlier literature cf. Berve (1967), vol. II, p. 554.
11. The colonies that were edified by Cypselus from Corinth, in which he installed his sons as rulers, most likely became independent *apoikiai*, see for example, de Libero (1996), pp. 153ff. with further literature.
12. Cf. Hdt. 7.156.1; Dreher (2008), p. 28.
13. A similar problem appears for the dynasty of the Emmenides, in which Theron of Acragas installed his son Trasydaius as (sub?-) ruler of Himera, Diod. Sic. 11.48.6.
14. Berve (1967), vol. I, p. 141 assumes a kind of "Samtherrschaft" also for Gela and Syracuse. de Libero (1996), pp. 409ff. names five examples of "Samtherrschaft". Luraghi (1994), pp. 331–2 is skeptical in the case of Syracuse.
15. According to Jacoby (1949), pp. 158 ff., this version was primarily represented by Hellanicus. This correlation must however remain unsure, see for example, Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. III, p. 439.
16. Rhodes (2006), p. 528 regards "the joint rule" as historically correct in [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17.3 (and similarly in Diod. Sic. 10.17.1), whereas Thucydides misunderstands "the nature of a family tyranny" in his eyes.
17. In Thucydides's work (6.55.1), Thettalus (or Thessalus) appears as a third legitimate brother, of whom no further notice is taken. In [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 17.3 he is identified with Hegesistratus, but most modern scholars do not accept this. Hegesistratus and the fourth son of Peisistratus, Iophon, were children of the Argive wife Timonassa (*Ath. Pol.* 17.3) and were therefore excluded from the succession.
18. Similarly Chambers (1990), p. 215 *ad* 18.1.
19. Cf. Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 320.
20. Tsakmakis (1995), p. 201.
21. This is indicated also by the way Thucydides opens the sentence: "the people knew from hearsay . . . "
22. Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 318 is right in this. In contrast, Chambers (1990), p. 212 *ad* 17.3 does not recognize the intention of the criticism when he claims: "Die Meinung, daß die Söhne die Macht übernommen hätten, wird von Thukydides VI 54–59 ausführlich kritisiert." It may be added that the (collective) rule of the sons is mentioned only in passing and does not represent the real assertion of the view quoted by Thucydides. This consists rather in the fact that tyranny became oppressive toward the end and was overthrown not by the

Spartans, but by the people. The author agrees with both statements, cf. 59.2 (the rule becomes more oppressive) and 59.4 (fall of Hippias by the Spartans and the Alcmeonids). Cf. for example Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. III, pp. 432, 441.

23. Again, Chambers (1990), p. 212 *ad* 17.3, arrives at the opposite conclusion ("Thukydides untersucht die Frage [sc. whether Hippias had ruled alone]) wohl zu genau"), and accuses the historian of treating tyranny like a well-respected office. Yet even Chambers notes the discrepancy in Thucydides's text: " . . . bei seinem Hinweis auf die Tyrannenherrschaft (VI 53.1 [does Chambers perhaps mean 53.3? M.D.] gibt er beinahe das zu, was er verleugnen will: Die Brüder eines Tyrannen haben wahrscheinlich doch Einfluß." The formulation "to have influence" would however be too weak to mean participation in ruling.
24. Cf. Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 337: After a century of democracy "the Athenians regarded oligarchy and tyranny indifferently (?) as the antithesis of democracy." Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. III, p. 453, translates: "some conspiracy aiming at oligarchy or (lit. 'and') tyranny." Subsequently, however, Hornblower tries to eliminate all differences between the two terms, they were a "hendiadys" meaning an "undesirable oligarchy". Placido (1989), p. 161 n. 20 points out that for Thucydides the form of government called *dunasteia* is also very similar to tyranny, cf. 3.62.3–4, 3.38.3 (cf. also below n. 43). Scanlon (1987), p. 294 brings Thuc. 8.64.4 to mind, where the oligarchy of 411 is equated with the tyranny of the Peisistratids as a destroyer of freedom, cf. Raaflaub (2006), p. 215. Except for a vague hint in Scanlon (1987), p. 294, there has, as far as I can see, been no mention yet made of the possibility that Thucydides could have had the rule of the Thirty in mind at this point in the text. Their rule was, strictly speaking, an oligarchy, but because of its violent character it was described already by contemporaries as a *turannis*. Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.11ff.
25. Tsakmakis (1995), p. 205 adheres to the literal understanding of an oligarchical *and* tyrannical conspiracy. This testifies for the "verschwommenen Bild, das der Demos von den historischen und politischen Verhältnissen hat." He seems to accept, however, that Thucydides reports on the actual existing perceptions only as a neutral observer when he adds that in the consciousness of the people, the historical regime of the Peisistratids mixed with the current oligarchical system of the Spartans.
26. Cf. Schuller (1978), p. 13.
27. Dreher (1983); Drews (1983); Ulf (1990).
28. Drews (1983), p. 8.
29. The distinctions made by Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 42; "the revenues appear to be those of the tyrants (rather than the cities)") and Barceló (1990), p. 403, who translates "Staatseinkünfte", seem exaggerated to me. The increase of revenue should be understood as a *precondition* of

the rise of the tyrants because they relied primarily on the mercenary soldiers. But Thucydides presumably also thinks that the tyrants contributed actively to the general economic development in Greece; cf. for this view Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. I, p. 121, followed by Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 42. The translations, however, usually opt only for *one* cause-effect-relationship: either tyranny is seen as a result (Hammond, Landmann, Vretska, and Rinner) or as a cause of the growing revenues (Said 2011, p. 65).

30. Cf. Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 42.
31. Cf. Dreher (2014).
32. On Thucydides's treatment of the Peisistratids, see also Peter Spahn in this volume.
33. Tsakmakis (1995), pp. 201–2 with n. 64 presumes this without discussing the problem.
34. Similar positive statements that refer directly to the person of Peisistratus can be found in the parallel tradition, cf. [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 16, where this tendency culminates in the reported equation of the tyranny of Peisistratus with the Golden Age of Cronos (16.7). Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 319 and others believe, however, that at the beginning of 6.54.5 Thucydides refers to the reign of Hippias.
35. See Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 319.
36. Cf. for example Dover in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. IV, p. 323, who shows that Thucydides hereby writes against the then widespread hatred of tyranny, Palmer (1982), pp. 107ff.; Barceló (1990), p. 408: the character of the Peisistratids's rule is "alles andere als negativ."
37. Tsakmakis (1995), p. 195, cf. p. 201. On the inclusion of Hipparchus see n. 23. Tsakmakis (1995), p. 195, n. 44 refers, as do other scholars, to the terms *aretē* and *xunesis*, which Thucydides assigned to only a few figures, namely Brasidas, Nicias, Antipho, Hermocrates and Theseus. But Thucydides certainly could have made graduations also within these categories. In Palmer's (1980, pp. 125–32, 177) view Thucydides portrays the Peisistratids in a very positive way and Hunter (1973), p. 120 even speaks of a kind of constitutional monarchy.
38. Cf. Diesner (1959), pp. 16 ff. Kallet (2006), pp. 341–2, with further literature. Leppin (1999), p. 67 states that Thucydides's judgment of the tyrants in the narrative passages is differentiated and restrained, whereas in the speeches, the metaphors are consistently negatively accentuated.
39. I will not go further into the opinions of scholarship on the reasons behind Thucydides's positive presentation of the Peisistratids (e.g., his supposed preference for a moderate tyranny of Alcibiades, Palmer 1980, pp. 132, 178; 1982, pp. 115, 121; this is convincingly repudiated by Leppin 1999, p. 167; see also n. 42).

40. This security could also have been achieved by the fact that the Peisistratids's reign was not in danger from the outside. As far as we know, there were no wars waged under the Peisistratids. Thucydides's reference to wars for which the Peisistratids levied taxes (54.5) must have been aimed at *possible* wars if one wants to establish coherency here.
41. Further details in Smarczyk (2006), p. 508. Meyer (2008), p. 24 relates the accusation of the inscription without foundation only to the time after the murder of Hipparchus.
42. If a reference to Alcibiades is to be seen herein, it must be seen rather as a warning of an autocracy than, as Palmer believes (see n. 39), as a plea for his moderate tyranny. Modern scholarship is generally blind to this distinction because it aims at constructing a positive position of Thucydides towards Athenian tyranny (Kallet 2006, pp. 341–2 is a notable exception). One could ask whether this distinction does not contradict Thucydides's own thesis (often emphasized by him) according to which human nature always stays the same, cf. 1.22.4, 1.76–7, 5.105.2.
43. But see Barceló (1990), p. 403, although he translated the passage 13.1 himself: "...Tyrannenherrschaften..., eine Folge der höheren Staatseinkünfte."
44. Cf. Diesner (1959), p. 16. Although Athenagoras's presentation of the "tyrannies and other unjust cliques in power" (*turannidas de estin hote kai dunasteias adikous*, 6.38.3) in Syracuse as a big danger for the city may be seen as a one-sided remark in a speech, it remains undisputed.
45. I cannot share Palmer's view (1980, pp. 132, 173ff; cf. 1982, p. 108) that Thucydides's remark about Polycrates's pious act of dedicating the island of Rheneia to Apollo amounts to a positive valuation of the tyrant. It is, on the contrary, a simple and neutral historical explanation how this island came to be dedicated to Apollo. On Polycrates's maritime supremacy, cf. also Thuc. 3.104.2.
46. An attempt has been made, however, to maintain a contradiction between both statements. According to this view, the claim in 1.17 is only to be related to the Ionian tyrants because in the preceding sentences only this region was mentioned (cf. for example Barceló (1990), p. 405 with n. 20, who in my opinion also overrates Thucydides's statement about Polycrates). The restriction to Ionians does not correspond with the text that clearly speaks of the "Hellenic" tyrants.
47. Tuplin (1985), pp. 352ff. assumes in his careful commentary on all four passages that the connection between tyranny and empire was established already before the creation of Thucydides's *History*. *Contra* Sancho Rocher (1994), p. 70.
48. Cf. Scanlon (1987), pp. 286–7, 290. The Persian King was regarded by the Greeks as the epitome of a tyrant, not only in his attitude towards the Ionian *poleis*, but also towards all of the subordinates in his realm.
49. Thucydides's use of the term *monarchoi* may be primarily due to stylistic variation. The Corinthians bring to mind the Spartan claim of

taking action against tyranny everywhere. As is generally known, modern research has unmasked this as almost completely ideological, cf. Bernhardt (1987).

50. As already noted, *turannon* is used as an adjective here but is translated as a noun in order to accentuate the following contrast more clearly.
51. *Douleia* (2.63.1) or *douleuein* (2.63.3).
52. On this term as distinguished from *hēgemonia*, cf. for example Sancho Rocher (1994), p. 61.
53. Cf. especially Thuc. 2.65.5–10, 3.36.6; cf. also [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 28.1–3. Cf. Scanlon (1987), pp. 288–9 for the differences between the two speeches.
54. This significant difference between both passages is singled out by Gomme in Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–1981), vol. I, pp. 175–6; Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 337; Fantasia (2003), pp. 473–4. Most interpreters also refer to the parallels in Ar. *Eq.* 1111–14. Some publishers and translators even want to erase the *hōs*.
55. The accusation was also made within Athens, cf. the list of references in Schuller (1978), p. 11, as well as the comment by Tuplin (1985), pp. 357ff. A further, indirect qualification of the Athenian people as at least potential tyrants is indicated (in the complex reconstruction of Smith 2009 by way of characterizing Alcibiades as a Sicilian tyrant and by equating him with the entire Athenian people.
56. Cf. Schuller (1978), pp. 12–13, who sees even more structural similarities, which I, however, do not deem specific to tyranny. The various parallels mentioned in scholarship, in particular naval supremacy, raising tributes and the control over previously autonomous *poleis* (see, e.g., Morrison 2006a, p. 271), do not seem conclusive to me, or at least only to a small measure, as in the case of the building of fleets. Tuplin (1985), pp. 362ff., who defines "illegitimacy, lawlessness, unrestrained power, dependence on force and arrogance" (366) as the essential characteristics of the tyrant, is also skeptical in this regard. Scanlon (1987), pp. 299ff., too, emphasizes the violent character of tyranny in Thucydides, but ties it too much to the developing character of the acting persons. According to Meyer (2008), pp. 23–4, Athens becomes a tyrant not so much because of the force exerted against her allies, but because of the force against her own citizens after 415; this is however not reflected in Thucydides's terminology.
57. Cf. Schuller (1978), p. 11; Raaflaub (2004), pp. 129–30. In other passages the loss of *autonomia* is mentioned: 3.10.5, 3.11.1, 3.11.3, 3.36.2, 3.46.5, 6.85.2.
58. Pericles would certainly deny the Corinthian accusation of "downright slavery" (*antikrus douleia*, 1.122.2), but he implicitly concedes a certain graduation in slavery.
59. Whether further dangers beyond those of impending slavery are meant, remains open. For contemporary statements about the possibility of "resigning" from a tyranny, cf. Tuplin (1985), p. 354.

60. „Gegen die Satzungen" in German translations, for instance in that of Landmann or Vretska / Rinner.
61. This has been demonstrated convincingly by Scheibelreiter (2013), pp. 315–19, with references to preceding literature. Cf. also the shorter reference in Scheibelreiter (2011), pp. 156–7. On "international law" in Thucydides, cf. also Wendt (2011), on the scholarly tradition Thauer (2011).
62. Scheibelreiter (2013), p. 319: "Thukydides sieht in der Härte der Strafen, nicht aber in der Sanktion an sich ein Unrecht". On the negative connotations of the term *douleia*, cf. Raaflaub (2004), p. 129.
63. Despite some opposing views (e.g., Connor 1977b, p. 104), this basic attitude of Thucydides has been demonstrated often and convincingly, see Rengakos (1984), Morrison (2006a), p. 271, and especially Nicolai (1996) with an overview of earlier scholarship (pp. 278–9). This assessment holds true even when one considers the justified remarks by Leppin (1999), pp. 15–16 on the need of distinguishing between the speeches composed by Thucydides and the narrative passages in his work (cf. n. 38).
64. The conclusion of Meister (2011), p. 271 that Thucydides is not in favor of a policy of unlimited conquest but rather seeks only to describe the historical reality I find too cautious.
65. Explicitly for instance in Sancho Rocher (1994), p. 75.
66. Since Thucydides mentions various tyrants in the context of his portrayal only briefly, we are not in a position to assess his "opinion" on their rule for this reason alone.
67. See also the frequent mention of the body guards or mercenary soldiers in the Peisistratid excursus. An implicit parallel between the domestic and external aspect of tyrannical rule consists in the fact that the character of force becomes more evident when the rule is threatened, as in the case of Hippias after the assassination of Hipparchus (6.59.2), or the Athenian League after the first renunciation of the island of Naxos (1.98.4), see Schuller (1978), p. 13; Scanlon (1987), p. 293. Hunter (1973), p. 124 notes this parallel, but locates the transition of Athenian rule only in the wake of Cleon's success at Sphacteria, thus much too late, similar Connor (1977b), p. 108.
68. Scanlon (1987), p. 301, on the other hand, pleads for a uniform assessment of Thucydides in which the negative traits of tyranny arise only through the irrational behavior of the rulers and the ruled. But in contrast, it is exactly the cruelty of the tyrannical rule that appears as calculated, rational behavior in Thucydides's work.
69. See for example, Diesner (1980), p. 11. But see Barceló (1990), p. 424 (with regard to the archaic tyrants and the Peisistratids): "Die positiven Bezüge . . . überwiegen in der Gesamtbilanz."

70. See 1.18.1, 2.35–46, esp. 37, 2.42–3. This ideal is basically independent from the specific, oligarchic or democratic form of government of a polis and can thus be claimed by both, Athens as well as Sparta.
71. See 1.17, 1.18.1 (admiration for Sparta that was never subject to tyranny).
72. From a modern-day point of view, one may of course question this reasoning.

PART III

Representations of Order in Thucydides

CHAPTER 6

Beneath Politics: Thucydides on the Body as the Ground and Limit of the Political Regime

Clifford Orwin

It is an honor and a pleasure to contribute to this distinguished collection, not least because its general approach is so congenial to me. My own reading of Thucydides has always been shaped by my preoccupations as a scholar of the history of political thought. I see him not as a pre-Socratic but as a proto-Socratic—given his contemporaneity with Socrates might I say a co-Socratic?—who has already found his way to the guiding question of Socratic politics. That is the question of this volume, that of the political regime.[1] Two such regimes, Athens and Sparta, are the principal actors in his work. I say two regimes, rather than two cities, because Thucydides already grasps the fundamental insight so brilliantly displayed in Book Three of Aristotle's *Politics*, that wherever a city claims to act, there lurks in fact only a regime, a part masquerading as the whole.

Ordinary politics, we may say, takes this imposture for granted. The democrats of Plataeae, for example, firmly in charge of their little city, impersonate it without much fear of contradiction. Thucydides offers no indication that the small oligarchic party in the city even rears its head; probably the democracy is so well-entrenched that the oligarchs can expect no hearing. Only with the approach of the war do they stir, not within the framework of the established regime, but by calling in the hated Theban neighbor (2.2–6)—better: the valiant Theban friend, determined to restore Plataeae to its rightful

oligarchic regime. In turbulent times this imposture of regimes wears thin: each stands exposed for the fraction that it is, the authority of which is as debatable as it is precarious. Whether democracy will retain or oligarchy regain the right to act the part of "Plataeae" turns on the outcome of a single violent rainswept night.

My topic in this essay is not the regime in its own right, but its interaction with another constant of the city, the body. What we might call the political participation of the body follows a pattern parallel to that just noted of the regime. As in normal times the question of the regime remains on the sidelines of politics, so too (if we take times of peace to be normal) the body remains, politically speaking, out of sight and out of mind. It lurks inconspicuously beneath the purview of politics, observing a routine of its own. It is "subpolitical," neither oligarchic nor democratic, but obliging and acquiescent. It is equally hungry and thirsty under the one regime and the other, equally preoccupied with health and warmth, equally free of the ambition to rule.

War, however, exposes the body to new stresses which at their worst become unbearable for it. For reasons of its own, which as such are not political reasons, the body may then emerge as a threat to the political regime, as the Roman citizens declare in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (I.1). The stability of even the best entrenched regime is hostage to that of the body, and as bodies are by nature highly unstable, regimes may prove as brittle as glass.

Two such cases in Thucydides's work are well-known: the plague of Athens (2.47–55) and the *stasis* of which Corcyra offered but the first instance (3.69–85). The link between the plague and the body is manifest, while that between it and *stasis* emerges only from Thucydides's attestation. The two situations are quite different, but neither can be fully grasped except in juxtaposition with the other.

Plague

Thucydides records the events of the war season by season, so it is not due simply to his contrivance that the plague makes its appearance in his text so soon after Pericles has delivered his famous Funeral Oration (2.34–46). Still, Thucydides presents this sequence not only so as to maximize its impact, but also to further reflection on its significance. Oration and plague make up the first great dramatic

diptych of the work. The oration stands as the greatest affirmation of the Athenian regime, the rhetorical expression of its highest aspirations. One way to frame these is in terms of an ambition to transcend the body. The plague, as if to respond to the oration, cruelly deflates this ambition.

At the date of the celebrated oration, the plague is as yet undreamed of. Nor have the other evils of the war compared with those to follow. Yes, the Attic countryside had been invaded by the Spartan enemy to whom Pericles's war policy has conceded it, which is especially painful to the wealthy who own considerable property there. The policy has also provoked a large influx of refugees, who lead a grim life in cramped quarters. Yet within the walls of the great city and its fortified port life continues more or less as before.

While the nominal purpose of Pericles's oration is to commemorate those Athenians who have died in the first year of the war, these appear to have numbered no more than half a dozen (cf. 2.22.2).[2] The city has not been plunged into deep mourning. Pericles seizes the occasion both to flatter the citizens and to exhort them.[3] He paints them as better than they are, while exhorting them to become better still. He dares to summon them to a new and nobler notion of happiness. He calls on all Athenians, male and female, old and young, to distance themselves from the private goods that most people live for most of the time—the solid if prosaic ones of life, family, and property.[4] These goods center on the body: its safety, its comfort, the kinship relationships that spring from it. From the beginning of his speech until the end Pericles keeps up a drumbeat of criticism of this range of goods. The Athens of the speech is not one of ordinary people dominated by these ordinary concerns. It is a city of extraordinary people, extraordinary above all in their indifference to their bodies. What the Corinthians speaking at Sparta had earlier alleged of the Athenians in underscoring the menace they posed to Sparta—that "they deploy their bodies in the service of the city as if they belonged to other men entirely" (1.70.6) thus finds its affirmation in Pericles's speech. While it had suited the Athenian envoys who undertook to respond to the Corinthians on that occasion to minimize the difference between Athens and Sparta, even they had stressed the unequaled daring and zeal of their city—albeit not in the service of its own interests but of repulsing the Persian invader. It now suits Pericles to exaggerate the differences between the cities.

By the indifference to their bodies that Pericles ascribes to the Athenians I mean first of all their relative unconcern with private goods associated with the body, such as wealth and kindred already mentioned. This indifference culminates, however, in their readiness to lay down their lives for their city. Pericles eulogizes the fallen as follows, the culmination of what has preceded and the rhetorical peak of his oration:

> For by making a contribution of their bodies in common, they received as individuals the praise that never grows old and the most remarkable of tombs, not just that in which they are laid, but that in which their renown is deposited, forever recalled on every opportunity whether of speech or deed, forever remembered. For celebrated men have the whole earth for their tomb, and not only in their own land, where the column with its inscription indicates the spot, but even in those foreign to them an unwritten memorial, preserved not on monuments but in the mind, persists in everyone. (2.43.2–3)

This extraordinary passage implies an emphatic deprecation of the significance of the body. The Athenians are to see their embodied existence as less their own than their disembodied one; their embodied selves as less themselves than the noble images they will leave behind them. Pericles conveys this by an unusual locution, when he says of the fallen that for an offering of their bodies in common (*koinēi*) each has received as an individual or privately (*idiai*) fame that will never grow old. The implication is that the body is less completely one's own than the reputation that comes from sacrificing it.

So too Pericles dissociates the memory of the fallen from the entombment of their bodies. In ancient Athens as in our own societies, the departed were commemorated most of all by and at their tombs, which perpetuated the memory of the deceased by preserving and marking the remains of their bodies. Pericles, however, belittles the solemn ceremony of entombment to which his oration is merely an adjunct. As one particular place located in their native Athens and frequented only by their fellow Athenians, the tomb is unequal to the task of perpetuating so egregious a memory as Pericles ascribes to the Athenian fallen. Bursting the spatial bounds of Attica and even Hellas, the memory of each of the fallen must penetrate everywhere. It will transcend all limits of time and space as their particular

bodies (or their particular tombs, as the receptacles of their bodies) could not have done. To which we may add that by the practice long established for the ceremony of which the oration is the most novel feature, those fallen for the city were buried in a common tomb which thereby perpetuated their memories only in common.[5] They were, as it were, the cohort of 431 BC, the cohort of 430 BC, and so forth. Pericles requires an imagined tomb or rather an imagined epitaph subsiding independently of any tomb to assure the fallen even in death the individuality he has promised them. In Gerald M. Mara's fine phrase, "What motivates Athens is the pursuit of reputation or distinction that defeats death."[6]

By his bold attempt thus to resolve the problem of the particular and the common (or, as we would say, of "the individual and society") Pericles implies a radical revision of everyday notions of the self. Those notions are complicated, of course: we both do and do not understand our body as our self or what is most our own. While recognizing the body as the tangible core of our individuality, we resist the notion that our individuality is reducible to it. We aspire to more than mere body permits. Pericles cuts the Gordian knot by severing the self from the body. Thus and thus alone may the Athenians achieve the deathless beauty so impossible for a body. What is most themselves is not their bodies but the glorious memory that awaits them for their readiness to lay down those bodies for their city. And it is only as thus disembodied in their conception of themselves that they can rise far above the divisions implicit in our possession of separate bodies to achieve true community in the *polis*.[7]

The vision of Athens that Pericles promotes thus cultivates distance from the body. The body stands exposed as our false self, a snare and a barrier to our ascent to the true one. Conversely, Pericles's approach implies an extraordinary elevation of the city. Not, as one might suppose, as the common as opposed to the particular, but as the vehicle common to all citizens for realizing their respective particularities. It is by dedication to the city that each is to rise to endless glory for himself. It is only on the basis of his claim that the city confers eternity, presumed the deepest longing of each individually, that Pericles can proceed to his celebrated exhortation to the citizens to be seized by *eros* for it (2.43.1).[8] It is only the city that thus provides the consummation of all longing that can be worthy of the most consummate longing.[9]

The paradox of Pericles's strategy is obvious. Our particularity, of which the separateness of our bodies is the source and core, persists, but the body has been purged from it. The modern reader will be tempted to compare Periclean piety with the Christian version and its very different promise of the deathlessness of the particular. More useful, however, for grasping Pericles's radicalism is to contrast his position with the reigning "religion" (so to speak) of his day, the Hellenic understanding grounded in Homer. Pericles agrees with Homer and common sense in conceiving the peak for human beings as the full actualization of their particularity (rather than, as in Plato for example, in a transcendence of it). He further follows Homer in presenting our particularity in the fullest sense as distinct from that of our body, for Homer too had depicted the human self or soul as somehow surviving its separation from the body.

Yet Pericles decisively breaks with Homer in presenting the soldier's death as a posthumous coming into his own. Homer had presented death however glorious as the decisive *going out from* one's own. The soul bewails its separation from the body, which it experiences as a painful expulsion and from which it will never recover. It is not just that the Homeric soul requires a home, of which there can be none now that the body is lost to it. It is also that this soul is little more than the body's simulacrum. Centuries later Ennius, the founder of Latin epic and a Pythagorean, could adduce Homer as a co-sectarian. Speaking as himself a shade in Hades, Ennius's Homer distinguishes between the shade and the soul: the soul has transmigrated, the shades below are much less than souls.[10] Better to say, I think, that the Homeric soul survives the body only as a shadow of its former (embodied) self. The vacancy of the souls in Hades, their aimless fluttering and gibbering, attests to the primacy of the body.

By abstracting from the body Pericles thus abstracts as well from its negation, Hades. In place of that all-engulfing darkness, Pericles promises the eternal sunlight of universal glory. It is only on the premise of this glory and its alleged correspondence with the Athenians' unsurpassable virtue that Pericles can declare that the Athenians have no need of a Homer. In fact we can hardly avoid the conclusion that he casts himself as the new Homer, the bard of a new and more civic beauty dependent on his skills as an embellisher. We have already hinted at one aspect of that embellishment, Pericles's hyperbolic praise of the virtue of the citizens. He also attempts a

certain beautification of death, by way of anesthetization. I use this word advisedly: Pericles's only explicit mention of death (*thanatos*) couples it with the adjective "unfelt" (*anaisthetos*). Death in battle is implicitly superior to other deaths because being caught unawares by it one hardly experiences it as death. In fact of course *anaisthetos* implies that one does not experience it as death at all. Pericles calls upon the Athenians not so much to look death in the eye as to avert their glance from it. It is only this abstraction from death together with his assurance of perpetual glory that permits his otherwise (and still) astonishing silence concerning the gods.[11]

The plague will soon remind the Athenians of death, as well as their dependence on the doubtful providence of the gods. Pericles has asserted that having risen above their attachment to their bodies they excel all others in virtue. The unbearable suffering of their disordered bodies will strip them of that virtue.[12]

Thucydides provides us with a detailed account of the stages of the ailment, which he is the better able to do having observed them in himself. He spares us none of the symptoms, nor any of the many ways of dying that the disease so generously offered. He immerses us in the dreadful physicality of a sick and suffering body, which we can so little rise above that it becomes our obsession. There is no escape, no distraction from the body when it has thus betrayed us. Thucydides notes that there was neither constitution strong enough nor any weak enough to survive the disease. It is as if the plague had been crafted to underscore the weakness of the body as such.

Careful as is Thucydides's description of the physical symptoms of the plague, he is no less concerned with its moral effects.

> And the most terrible feature of the whole affliction was the dejection (*athumia*) when anyone felt himself sickening, for immediately judging their situation hopeless they were much more likely to give themselves up as lost than to resist. (2.51.4)

Not all Athenians succumbed to this listlessness, however. There were some there "with pretensions to virtue, who were ashamed to spare themselves from visiting [their ailing] friends" (2.51.5). To these the plague proved especially fatal. This is not the only respect in which Thucydides presents the world as discriminating against the best among us.

Thucydides proceeds to discuss the confusion of the burial practices—that crucial element of Hellenic piety—as the number of deaths overwhelmed the possibility of giving them a decent burial, and the wretched survivors fought over the available funeral pyres (2.52.4). Corpses flew about as those survivors who lacked pyres sought to preempt those who had them. We think back to the dignified burial ceremony that preceded the Funeral Oration (2.34) and weep for the Athenians.

> And it was the plague that also in other respects incited greater lawlessness in the city. For people now readily dared what before they done covertly rather than as they pleased, seeing the sudden changes and how, some rich man dying suddenly, another who before had nothing in the way of possessions all at once owned those of the first man. And so they determined to spend quickly and for the sake of enjoyment, holding their bodies and their wealth alike to be but things of a day. No one was keen to persevere in what had been reputed honorable, holding it uncertain whether he would achieve it before his dissolution. Instead the pleasant and whatsoever was gainful to obtaining it were established as both honorable and useful. (2.53.1–3)

Athens suffered grievously from what we might call the decline of appearances. Most of the citizens, Thucydides suggests, had always acted with an eye to their own pleasure or advantage, but had done so only covertly. They pursued their pleasures in a respectable and to that extent responsible manner. But this presumed a certain time frame: time enough to succeed in obtaining their wishes surreptitiously, time remaining to them on earth. Their self-restraint had depended on their presumption of a tomorrow. The plague rebutted that presumption.

Especially poignant in all this is the fate of the noble or honorable (*to kalon*). Pericles has described the Athenians as living for the sake of posthumous reputation. By taking the longest view they would achieve the most lasting renown. He asked them to imagine looking back on their lives from the viewpoint of the most distant posterity, and to guide themselves accordingly. The plague discloses this vision as illusory. Most Athenians persevered in their quest for honor only for so long as they expected to reap its benefits in their lifetime. As long as life stretched before them indefinitely, that sufficed to support a commitment to honor. The plague, by attacking

this prospect, overturned everything. Not only did honor cease to restrain the Athenians from indulgence in present pleasures, but also actually came to support such indulgence. "The pleasant and whatever procured it were established as both honorable and useful." Honor dies hard: even the plague did not so much abolish it as invert it. Men despised what they had before honored, and honored what they had before despised.

> Fear of gods and law of man deterred no one, for as to the first, people judged it all the same whether they performed their devotions [to the gods] or not, seeing that all perished regardless, and as for crimes none expected to live to come to trial or pay the penalty, holding that a much heavier sentence had been pronounced and hung over them, and that before it fell it was only fair [or reasonable, *eikos*] to enjoy life a little. (2.53.4)

It may have been only an illusion that the gods took better care of some men than of others. Under normal circumstances, however, at least some of the pious flourished, so all of the pious could hope. The plague dashed all such hopes. The Athenians may have wondered where the gods were now that they needed them. They thereby confirmed, however, that their former piety had depended on their not needing them. When society is stable the gods' neglect of us is neither so obvious nor so grievous.

Turning now to the laws of men, their fate proved parallel to that of honor. Again, the crucial consideration was time frame. As people no longer hoped to survive to reap the benefits of a good reputation, neither did they fear to live long enough to pay for their crimes. This was a passage of Thucydides from which Hobbes might have learned much: no power however great can hope to overawe men unless they remain free to fear it. Yet just as the plague transformed the notion of honor rather than abolishing it, so its prospective victims also maintained their attachment to justice. The irony was just that this very attachment now supported their erstwhile crime sprees. They felt it only fair that they should devote themselves to illicit pleasures. This was because they experienced the plague as a punishment pronounced against them: the Greek phrase used (*katepsēphismenēn*) implies a verdict reached by a jury. The penalty having already been pronounced, who could begrudge them the crime?

This may seem to make no sense. There was no jury, illness not being an unjust verdict or indeed a verdict of any kind. There is no

mind or will behind it, nothing therefore to warrant indignation. Justice has nothing to do with it. Yet Thucydides here exposes a profound truth. Irrational though it may be, we feel we have a right to our body and its life. When they are threatened, we respond with anger as if to injustice. This sense of justice founded in the body is independent of the regime and poses a latent threat to it. If other aspects of Thucydides's narrative disclose the shortcomings of this or that regime, the passages on the plague and *stasis* expose the limitations of the regime as such.[13]

Stasis

While the plague was largely confined to Athens (at least among Hellenic places), *stasis* would spread throughout the Hellenic world. This is why Thucydides follows his account of the first major irruption of it (that at Corcyra in the fourth year of the war) with a lengthy description of the phenomenon in general. This passage remains Thucydides's longest comment in his own name on any aspect of his narrative.[14] Yet if the body thus once again strides to the forefront of his narrative, Thucydides's explicit mention of it is terse.

> In peace and prosperity both cities and individuals have better thoughts for not being subject to disagreeable necessities. War, however, is a violent teacher, which by canceling the easy provision of life's daily needs[15] lays most men's tempers level with their circumstances. (3.82.2)[16]

Thucydides leaves it at that; his lengthy exposition of *stasis* makes no further mention of the body. As the horrors of his description pile up we could easily forget the body, the more so in that the partisans, consumed by their lust for victory and vengeance, appear to have forgotten it themselves. Yet this sentence remains the pivot on which his analysis of *stasis* turns. If the plague fostered a baneful indifference to considerations of the regime, *stasis* arose from the body's very dependence on these.

If in better times most people had "better thoughts" than to introduce armed foreigners into their midst it was because these thoughts were seconded by the comfort of their bodies. They would not have endangered the certain and necessary (the continued care and feeding of those bodies) for the sake of the doubtful and superfluous (upsetting the reigning balance of power between them and

their regime antagonists). Thucydides would be the last to deny that we naturally harbor an ambition to rule. He suggests however that in times of ease we hesitate to run risks to this end. We restrain ourselves, not because our souls are moderate but because there is an applecart not to be upset. When seconded by the body, most people can be counted on to lead decent lives, for as long as it can be counted on to second them.

Stasis ensues when the body, previously the great drag on political innovation, shifts its decisive weight in its favor. Perceiving the comfort of our bodies as threatened we abandon caution as too risky. The madness of *stasis* arises from timidity by way of the exigencies of war. It is only from well-founded fears of our safety that we embark upon that course of mindless daring (*tolma . . . alogiston*) apparently so inimical to it. This last phrase proves provisional; in fact under conditions of *stasis* mindless daring defines the prudent course of action. We plunge into the general frenzy not because we are mad or bad but because we are rational actors. Such safety as the situation affords depends on violence so excessive as to overmatch opposing violence no matter how excessive, on treachery so cunning as to outfox opposing treachery no matter how cunning. We cannot afford to remain above the fray, better than those around us, better than the lot imposed on us through no fault of our own.

As for any attempt to practice outworn virtue—above all any form of moderation—it is a snare and a delusion. Because we cannot separate our notions of virtue from happiness, and therefore—speaking concretely—from result, these notions could not help shifting as radically as circumstance had shifted. This, it seems to me, is how we must understand the two most celebrated features of the passage on *stasis*. These are the metaphor of war as a "violent teacher which . . . lays most men's tempers level with their circumstances" and the extended statement on how "words changed their meaning."[17] Both underline the extreme dependency of seeming virtue on circumstance.

Thucydides's terrifying chapters on *stasis* are often read as denunciatory. They are not. They are, as our political scientists like to say, descriptive rather than prescriptive. Thucydides does not criticize the partisan frenzy as a moralist would. (Chapter 84 of our text confirms this by its very spuriousness. So keenly did some ancient reader feel the lack of such a homily that he decided to supply it himself.)

Rather, the passage shows why things could not have been otherwise, why "such things happened as have happened and will happen (with variations according to circumstance) for as long as human nature remains the same." Only if human nature were different would these outcomes have been so. There was no escape from the horrors of *stasis* because there is none from our nature.

For all their differences, there is a crucial kinship between the accounts of plague and *stasis*.[18] Both unmask the dependency of the everyday virtue of any society on the acquiescence of an untroubled body. They thus imply an uncomplacent notion of ordinary prosperity and order. If someplace like Toronto is nice, it is not really (or at any rate primarily) because Torontonians are such nice people. Rather they are such nice people because it is such a nice place, where the exigencies of daily life support the mutual civility of most.

Every decent society thus practices a certain smugness. Thucydides neither denounces nor exhorts. He bids us take what we can get, be grateful for having gotten it, and do what we can to maintain those circumstances that support even *ersatz* moderation. Above all, he teaches us to grasp the fragility of the seemingly solid.[19] While a truly exceptional regime can produce citizens who are more masters of their bodies than most, that regime is not Athens but Sparta. And in the end, even the moderation of Sparta depended on the citizens' unstated perception of the ongoing danger posed by their helots. Thucydides' thought anticipates Plato and Aristotle not least in its sobriety.

Notes

1. In a thoughtful meditation on the character of Thucydides's work, Spahn (2011) implies that Thucydides is a political theorist inasmuch as his concern isthe general or human nature, and an historian insofar as his concern is *Umstand,* circumstance or the particular (here expounding 3.82.2). To which one might reply that a crucial element of the particular in every political situation is precisely the regime, and that the regime is the distinctive concern of the political theorist. Leppin (2011), by contrast, in his chapter in the same volume, places the question of the regime (and that of democracy in particular), at the center of Thucydides's concerns.
2. Cf. Bosworth (2000), pp. 4–6, who after an exhaustive survey of possible casualties pronounces the very dearth of them an embarrassment to Pericles.

3. On the overall rhetorical strategy of Pericles's speech and for a fuller interpretation of it and a bibliography of earlier scholarship, see Orwin (2011), pp. 15–29. Recent noteworthy treatments include Saxonhouse (1996), pp. 61–71; Crane (1998), pp. 312–22; Monoson and Loriaux (1998); Ober (2001a), pp. 84–9; Balot (2001b); Flanagan (2007), pp. 149–212; Foster (2010), pp. 190–8; Taylor (2010), pp. 64–74; Balot (2014), ch. 2; Burns (forthcoming). We may say very generally that all these authors represent progress in a crucial respect over the previously predominant interpretive paradigm: they recognize that notwithstanding Thucydides's (tempered) praise of Pericles at 2.65.5–13 his presentation as a whole implies serious misgivings about Pericles's vision of Athens. Diehards for the older view of a pro-Periclean Thucydides include Cawkwell (1997) and Kagan (2009). Will (2003) radicalizes this view by contending that Pericles is a privileged character in the work, a construct deliberately created to vindicate Thucydides's own outlook. As will appear, we hold with those who discern vast differences between the outlooks of Thucydides the author and Pericles one of his characters.
4. Cf. Balot (2001b), p. 515: "Pericles's . . . vision requires in particular that the Athenians give up their attachment to their private wealth."
5. Although we know that the Athenians erected some monuments memorializing the names of those who had died in specific battles, those monuments would not have been tombs. As Thucydides makes clear (2.34) the bones of all who had died in a given year of the war were collected and interred only in the common tomb in the course of the common ceremony. If the names of the fallen were recorded on or around the tomb, Thucydides suppresses that fact. Crane (1998), pp. 314–16 argues that "this extraordinarily dense passage builds upon and extends the ideologically charged imagery of aristocratic burial" by offering to every Athenian citizen a finer tomb than those lavish ones erected by aristocratic families to commemorate those of their own who had fallen. But of course Pericles goes much further, in offering each of the fallen a personal immortality in memory equal or greater than that enjoyed by those *über* -aristocrats, the Homeric heroes. This then represents the zenith of the oration's project of extending to all Athenians citizens the prerogatives previously enjoyed only by the aristocratic elite. Cf. Loraux (1986), pp. 15–76.
6. Mara (2008), p. 114. He writes this not of the Funeral Oration but of Pericles's final speech (2.60–4), of which he continues as follows: "Pericles [here] extends the funeral speech's recognition of the boundless fame awaiting those conspicuous men who have the whole earth as their tomb or monument to the city itself. In one sense, this repoliticizes an individual love of reputation that might otherwise treat the city's well-being as instrumental to selfish achievements. Yet it also treats Athens as if it were the conspicuous man writ large, mapping the priorities of the daring individual in love with fame onto the community as a whole." Mara correctly

grasps that what Pericles means by being "in love with the city" is precisely being "in love with fame."

7. On this see the excellent discussion in Saxonhouse (1996), pp. 61–71.
8. As Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, comm. *ad loc.* has noted, it is possible to construe the sentence such that not the city but its power is the object of the citizen's *eros.* While the usual reading remains the more likely one, this ambiguity serves to underline the city's power as the feature that evokes the citizen's *eros* by virtue of its conferring of immortality on him.
9. On this passage see Monoson (1994); Crane (1998), pp. 318–21, which canvasses the other occurrences of this metaphor in the extant literature; and Balot (2001b), pp. 510–12. Balot argues that "it is rational and prudent for the Athenians to become lovers of their polis since their polis and its democratic ethos guarantee the citizens' freedom and thus their individual *eudaimonia*" (512). I would argue, however, that since it is precisely this *eudaimonia* that the citizen is called upon to risk for the city, what is to evoke his *eros* is a higher register of *eudaimonia* entirely, the immortality conferred by the city and its power. The link, therefore, between Pericles's approach to *eros* and that of Plato for whom the undying forms are its ultimate objects is closer than Balot acknowledges (cf. Balot 2001b, p. 510). For a thoughtful discussion of Thucydides's treatment of *eros* against the background of both the poetic and philosophic traditions see Ludwig (2002), pp. 121–69.
10. Lucr. 1.106–116.
11. On the godlessness of the Funeral Oration (which contrasts markedly with the other such extant Athenian orations) see Flashar (1989), p. 459. On Thucydides's critique of Homer see Orwin (1989).
12. For recent treatments of the relationship between the Funeral Oration and the plague see Monoson and Loriaux (1998), pp. 288–90; Shanske (2007), pp. 50–2; Foster (2010), pp. 202–10; Rechenauer (2011). Foster argues as I do that Thucydides's account of the plague is central to his critique of the adequacy of the Periclean vision, but she understands that critique somewhat differently than I do. My position is closer to that of Monoson and Loriaux, although their affirmation of "moral and customary norms" here and throughout their article overlooks Thucydides's critique of these: Thucydides is not a "Spartan" (let alone a "Melian").
13. In his contribution to this volume, Ryan K. Balot notes that the plague was not accompanied by an eruption of political scapegoating such as has accompanied other such outbreaks of which we have record. The Athenians suspected the Spartans (of having poisoned the wells in the Peiraeus; 2.48.2) and they suspected the gods, the Delphic Oracle having declared Apollo's adherence to the Spartans (2.54) (cf. of course the famous plague at the beginning of the *Iliad*). The closest the Athenians came to domestic discord was to blame (and briefly chastise) Pericles for their many troubles (including the plague, but not confined to it; cf. 2.59.1–2 and 2.63.2 and

Pericles's remark in his defense at 2.64.1 that the plague was an evil that could not have been foreseen). I agree with Balot that this lack of dissension in the face of the plague attested to the high level of civil trust in the city at this early stage of the war. At the same time, it is of a piece with Thucydides's presentation of the plague as depoliticizing.

14. On this extraordinarily rich, complex, and difficult passage, see most recently Euben (1990), pp. 187–94; Price (2001); Balot (2001a), pp. 137–42; Shanske (2007), pp. 76–80. For an argument linking Periclean daring with *stasis* see Monoson and Loriaux (1998), pp. 290–2.
15. Reading, with the Scholiast and Krüger, *biou* after *to kath' hēmeran*.
16. On this difficult sentence see Price (2001), pp. 26–7. He argues forcefully (although not violently) for rendering *biaios didaskalos* as "teacher of violence." Perhaps we should regard this phrase as deliberately ambiguous, both renderings being both possible and appropriate.
17. This last is not quite the right translation, in my view, but we will let it stand for reasons of familiarity.
18. Orwin (2011), pp. 173–84.
19. For a recent treatment stressing this last dimension, see Foster (2010).

CHAPTER 7

The "Rule of the Sea": Thucydidean Concept or Periclean Utopia?*

Hans Kopp

I. Introduction

The special interest in Thucydides among academics in various disciplines as well as among military practitioners and politicians around the world results from the thought that embedded in his *History of the Peloponnesian War* is an element of "universalism" (as Neville Morley calls it in chapter 2). Readers hope to find guidelines, draw lessons for military strategy, or extract theoretical content from his text that can be meaningfully applied beyond the historical context of the late fifth century BC. In Thucydides's own words, his *History* is "a possession for all time" (*ktēma es aiei*, 1.22.4), which suggests that he was not only interested in the analysis and description of a single concrete historical situation, but also in modeling more general lessons. The postulated "usefulness" of his *History* implies that this may in fact be the approach intended by the author himself.[1] This chapter discusses a particular kind of "lesson" and "theory" ascribed to Thucydides, which relates to the issues of sea power and naval mastery. Such an approach, however, as already Robert Connor pointed out with regard to the readings prevalent in the 1940s and 1950s, brings about its own inherent difficulties:

> In the same way the prevalent assumptions about the text made it easy for political philosophers and political scientists to extract from the work a series of propositions about his political views on the empire, democracy, Realpolitik, and the like . . . it was at least a convenient approach, one

> that made it possible to treat Thucydides as a thinker and to extract some useful messages from his work: that peace and freedom required power and preparedness; that great powers had to be tough and constantly alert, that sea powers ought, if properly directed, to have a great strategic advantage over continental powers. These and other inferences could be debated, of course, and none was explicitly stated by Thucydides, but it seemed fully appropriate to view his text as containing propositions that could be explicated and brought into a coherent system identified as "Thucydides' Political Philosophy," or even as a series of laws about the science of politics.[2]

Among these "useful" but debatable messages provided by Thucydides is his apparently strong interest in the phenomena of sea power and naval mastery. Was Thucydides a theorist of sea power? Do we even find the idea of a particular spatial order at sea in Thucydides? The tradition of viewing Thucydides as a prophet of naval strategy and the overall importance of the sea for imperial ambitions is as old as the modern reception of Thucydides itself. In late-sixteenth-century England, advisors to the Royal Court argued, in order to convince the Court of the desirability of having a naval force, that already Thucydides knew "[o]f What importance it is, To be Lords of the Seas."[3] Thucydides remained an authority with respect to naval power in the time to come. Centuries later, Sir Cyprian Bridge—a British Royal Navy officer and at the time commander in chief of the Australian Squadron—explained in an article written in 1899 for the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that in his view the British Empire could have been saved much trouble had its leaders only followed more closely Thucydides's advice. After all, the Athenian historian seemed to him to have invented the very term "sea power" centuries before modern naval theorists "reinvented" it:

> There is something more than mere literary interest in the fact that the term in another language was used more than two thousand years ago. Before Mahan no historian—not even one of those who specially devoted themselves to the narration of naval occurrences—had evinced a more correct appreciation of the general principles of naval warfare than Thucydides. He alludes several times to the importance of getting command of the sea. This country would have been saved some disasters and been less often in peril had British writers—taken as guides by the public—possessed the same grasp of the true principles of defence as Thucydides exhibited. One passage in his history is worth quoting. Brief

> as it is, it shows that on the subject of sea-power he was a predecessor of Mahan.[4]

The short passage that followed in Bridge's article is Pericles's famous remark in Thucydides (1.143.5): *mega gar to tēs thalassēs kratos*, "great is the power of the sea," which still today adorns the emblem of the modern Greek naval forces.

Today, this view, that Thucydides is a—if not *the*—ancient authority in matters related to naval thinking, has attained an almost taken-for-granted quality. Especially in the Naval Academies in Anglo-Saxon countries, such as the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island, Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* is read as "that great foundation of strategic studies."[5] Since the early 1970s the *History* is an essential part of the reading list at the Naval War College.[6] In general it seems that according to a common understanding the modern history of naval strategy begins with Thucydides.[7] Classicists and ancient historians agree with this assertion as well. Jacqueline de Romilly, the undisputed *grande dame* of Thucydidean scholarship in the twentieth century, affirms this view with all her authority while analyzing Pericles's first great speech, where he develops his plan for war: "All modern ideas about navy, and also with time about airforce and missiles, are based on exactly the same idea. Thucydides could be the very first theoretician of modern strategy and armaments."[8] In her view, Thucydides offers modern readers no less than "a genuine theory as to the possibilities offered by the Athenian rule over the sea." What is more, she goes as far as to claim that "the whole theory attributed to Pericles" about navy and power forms "the basis of Thucydides' own analysis."[9]

There are, at least at first sight, some strong textual foundations for this view held by so many, although some modern scholars such as Chester G. Starr have warned vehemently about attributing to Thucydides a fully developed and coherent idea of sea power and its importance.[10] But the fact remains that sea power *is* an important factor in Thucydides's narrative. Not only is a certain amount of his battle narrative dedicated to the depiction of naval encounters and of some brilliant tactical maneuvers, but also his sketch of the early history of Greece, the so-called "Archaeology" seems, at least on the surface, to show a succession of so-called thalassocracies.[11] What is more, Pericles, through whom Thucydides is often considered to be

speaking, famously reflects on the advantages, aims, and long-term possibilities of naval power twice in the narrative.[12] Not only de Romilly found these speeches highly convincing and universal—to an extent that they are considered as laying out the "theory of sea power"[13] of Thucydides (and not just of Pericles). This is why Thucydides has become known as the "very first theoretician of modern strategy" and the "predecessor of Mahan," the most important and influential naval theorist of modern times, whose name has become almost synonymous with naval imperialism and the quest for sea-based world domination.

This chapter challenges these assumptions. It does so raising a crucial question, by which almost any interpretation of Thucydides is challenged: Should certain text passages of the *History*, such as the mentioned two Periclean speeches, be taken as positive formulations of abstract principles and as containing what Thucydides wished to convey to his readers as *his* message? Or should they be "tested" against the narrative and the way events unfold according to it-which would mean that their true meaning reveals itself only when considered as embedded in the text? My approach regarding these questions is inspired by the ones suggested by Connor and Stahl in their seminal works.[14] I believe that the factual events of Thucydides's war narrative serve the same purpose as choral passages often do in Greek tragedy: they challenge the assumptions of the protagonists and offer possible alternate views. Sometimes, in Thucydides, this creates an almost ironic tension between the speeches and the way reality unfolds in the narrative.[15]

This dialectic viewpoint in Thucydides is best shown in the direct confrontation of Pericles's glorification of Athenian democracy in the Funeral Oration and the description of the devastating effects of the plague on mind and body, which immediately follows it (though, as the differing views of Clifford Orwin and Ryan Balot in the present volume show, even this interpretation can be challenged). My (not novel) conviction is that only in contrasting *erga* and *logoi* in this way one can get closer to the true "lessons" of Thucydides.[16] Moreover, by applying this method to the speeches of Pericles with particular emphasis on sea power, I try to show that what Pericles has to say in these passages cannot be taken at face value as Thucydides's own theory or some abstract reflection of these phenomena. On the contrary, the historian himself, through his account of the deeds,

presents the exuberant and highly sophisticated Periclean rhetoric about naval invincibility as a utopia that led Pericles, but at least the other Athenians, to believe that they had become complete masters of the seas. This conviction is revealed by later events to be highly illusionary, even dangerous. It is only by examining these contradictions that the *function* of sea power for Thucydides's *History* and its lessons can be made intelligible to the reader.

II. Sea Power in the Periclean Speeches and Thucydides's Narrative

At first glance, Pericles's first and last speech reveal what Thucydides's "theory" of sea power is in substance. In the first speech, Pericles lays out to the Athenians his views about the eminent strategic advantages their maritime strength yields them in the struggle with the Spartans (1.140–4). In the final speech, held at the nadir of Athenian morale following the outbreak of the plague, he evokes with emphatic words a glorious future for Athens, built on the Athenians' ability to sacrifice their material possessions and on their undisputable control of the sea (2.60–4). In the following, I concentrate not so much on the first but on the third and also the second speech of Pericles, the famous Funeral Oration. Both speeches share one aspect crucial to the argument in this chapter: their strong emphasis on the limitless extension of Athenian power and the promise of an Athenian naval power superior not only to all possible competitors, but also, arguably, even to the might of nature itself.

The invocation of unlimited naval expansionism first appears, almost in passing, in the *epitaphios logos*, the Funeral Oration. Pericles explains here that Athens's special power or ability (*dunamis*) had become manifest, inter alia, in the fact that the Athenians had "forced their way into every sea and land through their daring" (*pasan men thalassan kai gēn esbaton tēi hemeterai tolmēi katanankasantes*, 2.41.4). It is most likely due to the preeminence of the other famous passages of the Funeral Oration that this passage is rarely recognized as an obvious exaggeration.[17] In Pericles's argumentation, one may add, sea and land are not equally important. This he makes clear before in the first speech, where he identified the ability of unlimited movement on the sea as relevant preconditions of the Athenian *archē*. Possessions and settlement on land had there

been declared a mere addendum, which the "ruler of the sea" could choose at his will (1.143.4).[18] But above all it is the rhetorical use of the adjective *pas* that must be emphasized: Pericles does not after all say that the Athenians had forced their way into some concrete spot on land via the sea but instead claims with some ambiguity that it was the entity of *all* the water and the land that had been made open and accessible. Thucydides's Greek accentuates this by the lack of the definite article, thereby producing an intended vagueness and ambiguity, which seems always to be present in the phrase *thalassa kai gē*, "sea and land."[19] Consequently, Pericles goes on, there were also the memorials of the Athenians' influence, in a positive or negative way, to be found "everywhere" (*pantachou*), one of the signs of their greatness. Again without the article, he adds that "every land" (*pasa gē*) had become the grave of outstanding Athenians (2.43.3). All this is not only a résumé of former achievements but also—and perhaps even in the first place—a stimulus or goad for future Athenian "daring."

What had only briefly been appealed to in the *epitaphios logos* becomes in Pericles's final speech a more extensive and also more generalizing piece of rhetoric about maritime power. It is here detached from the specific situation the speech is delivered in, appearing to stand almost by itself.[20] This speech is intended to serve as Pericles's self-justification in the face of Athenians who were demoralized by the plague, discontent with his conduct of the war, and war-weary (2.59). In order to ease their "pain about the war" (*ponos kata ton polemon*) but also to encourage their perseverance he wants to disclose to them the hidden secret of all their power, the very foundation of their empire:

> But I shall make this further point—an inherent advantage in the pure extent of our empire (*archē*) which I think has never been fully realized by you nor stressed in my previous speeches. It may seem quite an extravagant claim, and I would not mention it now if I did not see you discouraged without reason. You think of empire solely in terms of rule over our allies (*tōn xummachōn monon archein*), but I can tell you that of the two elements open to man's exploitation, the land and the sea, you are the absolute masters of the whole of one of them (*duo merōn tōn es chrēsin phanerōn, gēs kai thalassēs, tou heterou humas pantos kuriōtatous ontas*), both in the present extent of your control and as far further as you wish to take it (*eph' hoson te nun nemesthe kai ēn epi pleon boulethēte*):

> with the naval resources you have at your disposal, no one, neither the king of Persia nor any other nation now on earth, can prevent you from sailing where you will. (2.62.1–2)[21]

Jacqueline de Romilly saw in these words of Pericles not only a "theory" of naval power as in his first speech, but even an analysis "of the very notion on which this theory is based."[22] It is not only *what* Pericles is declaring here that makes the whole passage so extraordinary and singular, but also the *way* in which he communicates it, particularly his extraordinary language:[23] he describes Athenian naval mastery in "quasi-mystical terms"[24] as if it were some mystery only fully intelligible to him, which he now, in this moment of pressing danger, finally must try to make intelligible to the Athenians. It has even been thought that this "distinct and more sonorous and solemn formula than any of the foregoing" might in fact be "reproducing a phrase actually used by Pericles" on the occasion.[25]

Pericles seems to refute rather popular views on the true nature and "essence" of the Athenian empire here: we can find traces of them in Aristophanes's *Knights* (from 424 BC) where Athens is said to rule over her allies with Poseidon's trident in hand (839). In Thucydides, the Mytileneans, when seeking help from the Spartans at Olympia, argue in the same vein: the Athenian empire in essence consists of the city's rule over her allies and her whole strength derives from it (3.13.5). Against this view, Pericles stresses that the League itself is not a precondition but only a mere consequence of the true driving force behind Athens's *archē*, namely her unrivaled and *limitless* power at sea.[26] In these lines, we can identify a chain of causality, according to which the visible result of Athenian *dunamis*, her power over her allies (including the constant flow of revenue from them), is the result of the invisible and mysterious power over the sea. Pericles alludes here to what he had laid out before in his first speech: the sea is all important, land and material possessions are only accessories and the "rule of the sea" therefore something of greatest importance (1.143.5: *mega gar to tēs thalassēs kratos*). And again here, as in the first speech, it is the *whole* sea that is said to be subject to the Athenian *kuriōtatoi*. If viewed from the perspective of power politics, this Periclean claim can and must have grave consequences that are, in my view, crucial for an understanding not only of the role assigned to sea power, but also of Thucydides's *History* as a whole.

If the whole sea lies open to a "ruler of the sea," and if the use of brutal power to force entry into every part of the sea was nothing condemnable (as the Funeral Oration suggests at 2.41.4), then the status of "ruler of the sea" implicitly leads to further expansion, even demands it. At least this is true if the underlying "ethics" of politics conform to the doctrines formulated by the Athenians in the Melian dialogue, and include, according to Hermann Strasburger, "a claim to domination according to the right of the stronger" and that one "knows no limits other than those of one's own power."[27]

This interpretation of the role of naval mastery has consequences for the interpretation of Thucydides's judgment of Periclean policy and offers support to those scholars who paint a more negative and critical picture of the "great" statesman than the "glorification" of Pericles in 2.65 might at first glance suggest.[28] But it is not the personal qualities of Pericles that are to be judged nor is it the irritating tension between the seemingly obvious praise of the statesman in 2.65 and the outcome of the war. My only aim here is to show the way in which the political and military promises and guidelines expounded by Pericles—in his third speech, primarily—have a structurally important function for the rest of Thucydides's war narrative. These *ideas* about sea power represent a larger analytical pattern about the motivations of actions, including political miscalculation and carelessness, and run from the "Archaeology" well onto the final stages of the war. It is Thucydides's construction of Pericles as the "complete representative of Athenian imperialism" and the "'ideal' incarnation of a conception of power" which is of interest here.[29]

Pericles's short remark that the Athenians could even sail much further than their empire's present extent if they wished to do so (2.62.2) is crucial for our understanding of the proposed link between imperialistic politics and sea power. Jacqueline de Romilly stressed the pure nautical side of the Periclean argument, but later she admitted that simply "sailing further" and subsequent conquering are not really that far apart as she had perhaps originally thought.[30] Pericles's formulation "and as far further as you wish to take it" (*kai ēn epi pleon boulethēte*) is the description of a latent power and a future capability, the possibility of unlimited and unrivaled expansion by sea, and this future capability is contrasted with the *status quo* of the empire in the summer 430 BC. Thucydides highlights this tension between the current status of the Athenian

archē and its future possible extension through the use of several temporal indicators (*nun*, *huparchousē paraskeuē*, *tōi paronti*). Of course, Pericles had—according to Thucydides—quite vehemently warned the Athenians about extending their empire (*archē*) during wartime (1.144.1, 2.65.7).[31] The question, then, must be how such diverting views and interpretations can be combined, if at all. However, it is made clear by the opening sentence of the passage quoted above, and by the emphasis that Thucydides's construction of the sentence puts on the word *archē*, that it is Athens's *archē* which is discussed here.[32] Edmund Bloedow calls this "a major contradiction" in Thucydides's characterization of the Athenian *stratēgos* and although I am not proposing a complete solution here, I wish to suggest that a great part of the solution may be found considering Pericles's argument as consisting of several chronological layers.[33] As has often been noted, expansion is only "prohibited" during wartime, just as in a similar vein the other promises of 2.62 primarily point to the glittering future and not to the present, which is rather uncomfortable considering the plague, Athenian territory devastated by the Spartans, and the generally low morale. Pericles's speech may be situated firmly in its immediate context, but its whole argument points toward Athens's future glory and even god-like eternity in the memory of mankind, transcending the limits of time and space and everything that is material.[34]

In a way, Pericles is here acting like a parent prohibiting his or her obese child from eating any more chocolate, but, at the same time, promising the child as much sweets as it can eat in the future, when its weight problems are a matter of the past. This educational method may very well work, but only under the condition that the child is sensible and farsighted. The Athenians, as Thucydides presents them, are no children of this sort. To quote just the most obvious examples, they voted out of "passion" for the extinction of a whole city one day (Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, 3.36.2) and conscious of their guilt voted for the opposite the next (3.49.1); and in the debate with the helplessly inferior Melians (5.85–113) they showed a behavior indefensible by any "moral" standpoint but in their view fully legitimized by a right of the stronger based on their extremely distinct "consciousness of ability." This kind of controversial Athenian behavior and reasoning, as Hermann Strasburger has already argued, is not a novel development of a supposedly more radical post-Periclean time,

but instead an inherent element of Athenian ideology and self-justification from the first pages of Thucydides's narrative to the last.[35] And it was not the least Pericles himself who, according to the historian, not only knew well about these "national" characteristics of his fellow countrymen, but also deployed them for his own purposes. When the Athenians were becoming increasingly war-weary and had sent embassies to make peace with Sparta (the occasion on which the third Periclean speech was delivered) Pericles, Thucydides says, tried to soften their anger against him and finally succeeded in doing so. Once again, the Athenians anew and more than ever "concentrated their energy on the war" (2.65.1–2; cf. 1.127.3). Pericles had even justified the "defensive" war plan laid out in his first speech by deploying the very same argument: the Athenians were too hot headed to "live through" (a somewhat odd expression in Greek) the coming war in any other way than becoming in a way *less* Athenian (1.144.1).[36]

One linguistic detail illuminates the connection between Periclean rhetoric and the post-Periclean policy still further. Pericles promises the Athenians the capability of unlimited maritime expansion if they desired to go even further. This "even further" is in Greek *epi pleon*, literally "towards more," and *pleon* ("more"), or rather the *greed* for always more (often called in modern accounts *pleonexia*) has long been recognized as one of the leading explanatory motifs in ancient historiography for excessive imperial ambition, not only in Thucydides but also in Herodotus, particularly his description of Persian imperial aggression.[37] In Thucydides's *History*, the effects of *pleonexia* are an accelerating momentum of Athenian politics at crucial points of the narrative: when in 425 the Spartan legation to Athens pleads for the release of the hoplites held on Sphacteria they remind the Athenians not to be swept away by their "hope for more" (*tou pleonos elpis*, 4.17.4) in view of their momentary success. A few sentences later Thucydides makes clear in obviously parallel phrasing that the Athenians didn't really adhere to this advice when they finally declined the Spartan peace proposal, stimulated to do so, crucially, by Cleon, one of Pericles successors: "they had longed for more" (*tou pleonos ōregonto*, 4.21.2).[38] But not only where there are verbal echoes, the "longing for more" is one of the key motifs in Thucydidean analysis from the beginning of his work to the end, above all in describing and analyzing Athenian behavior: the

impressive panorama of Athenian "national" characteristics introduced by the Corinthians in Book 1, the rhetoric of Pericles, the reasoning behind the Athenians' arguments in the Melian dialogue, and behind the Sicilian expedition might be interpreted in this respect as reflections of the lessons to be drawn from the "Archaeology."

These opening chapters of Thucydides's *History*, commonly referred to as the "Archaeology," are with regard to content and analytical motifs the germ cell of the whole work and a display of the basic impetus of almost all human behavior. Already in the prehistoric times described in the "Archaeology" the constant ambition for gaining "more" had stimulated all human (or better: Greek) achievement; the humans of the earliest times, the early pirates, then the kings, Minos of Crete, and Agamemnon of Mycenae, later on *poleis* like Corinth—they were all motivated by the desire to obtain still "more." In the *History*, *pleonexia* is one of the great motors of political life. Some of these early actors, like the pirates, simply kept on robbing each other, while other, more advanced societies and rulers used their maritime supremacy to secure their "empire" by driving out the pirates, establishing rule over some islands, fortifying their cities (1.4, 7). By doing all of this, they gained immense power and wealth, yet but not for some altruistic higher goal but in the first place for their own benefit, as Thucydides says explicitly with regard to Minos's expulsion of the pirates, which he did in order "to protect his own increasing revenues" (1.4).

Now the "Archaeology" is not only (and perhaps not even in the first place) a story of constant technical, military, and civilizing progress, and also not only—as is sometimes claimed—a clearly analyzed and conceptualized "succession of thalassocracies," but also the history of an unlimited and unquestioned search for power.[39] It is not the changing military and financial developments that lie at the core of Thucydides's lessons in these opening chapters, but instead the persistence of the human drive for power.[40] Minos, Agamemnon, and later on both Sparta and Athens all act like the human beings of prehistoric times and as the pirates had done: they rob each other, a fact that Thucydides on one occasion makes more than evident.[41] About the pirates, who in some way represent *the* obstacle to early growth in the "Archaeology," he says that they always "plundered one another" (*epheron allēlous*, 1.7, cf. 1.5.2). Later on, when he describes in some short sentences the mutual relation of the two Greek superpowers

during the 50-years-peace after the end of the Persian wars, Thucydides summarizes their conduct in the following simple statement: "The defensive alliance held for a short while, but then differences broke out and the Spartans and the Athenians, together with their allies, were at war with each other (*epolemēsan . . . pros allēlous*). So from the Persian War to the present conflict there were alternating periods of truce and war, either against each other (*allēlois*) or caused by revolts among their allies" (1.18.3). The suggestive word here is the adjective *allēlon*, "each other," often used by Thucydides in these opening chapters to mark out the behavior of the protagonists driven only by pure self-interest and thereby hindering any common progress against its opposite phenomenon, the action taken on "together" (*koinēi*) for a common higher goal. This was achieved only once when the Hellenic League established itself in view of the Persian threat (1.18.2). Even the great campaign against Troy was in the end hampered by a lack of cohesion among the Greek forces (1.11).

In the end, then, it is only the technical means and the range of the effects of war and plundering that are becoming bigger and so "progressing" over time, but not, crucially, the results of the human actions themselves. Every major occurrence of sea power in the "Archaeology" marked such an enlargement of the range of its effects, whether positive or negative: Minos's "rule of the sea" brought the Cyclades under his control and for the first time established something of an "empire" in the Greek world; amateurish piracy was thus replaced by "regulated piracy on a grand scale."[42] Under this condition powerful cities like Mycenae could grow and Agamemnon could exercise his "rule over the islands," which gave him power and wealth so vast that it enabled him to go on the campaign against Troy, which ultimately led to strife and discord in the Greek world itself. Also by the help of sea power it had suddenly become almost the whole of Greece that was in some way affected by the turmoil after the fall of Troy.[43] The Peloponnesian War will have even wider-ranging effects, as by then the entire Greek world (with some minor exceptions) had attached itself to one of the two leagues (1.18.2); for the first time, now, the "game" of plundering each other was played at almost everyone's expense.[44]

So far it has been maintained that Thucydides presents the Periclean promise of unlimited maritime expansion as a highly dangerous ambition not only for Athens, but also for the whole Greek

world, especially if put into practice by a political entity as potentially unstable as ancient Athens and her empire. But what about Pericles's often so-called theory of sea power articulated in his first speech and the so-called defensive strategy of Pericles? Does it not after all propagate a coherent system of principles of naval policy that could still be taken as a guideline and might have secured victory for Athens had the Athenians in *practice* been capable of maintaining this sound policy? In this chapter, I argue instead that even this Periclean "theory" is deconstructed by Thucydides in the course of his war narrative and in the end shown to be not immune to failures, despite his comments on Pericles's foresight at 2.65. At two points in his narrative Thucydides explicitly hints at the possibility that the net laid out by the "rulers of the sea" might not be as impenetrable as they think it is after all (3.32.3 and 5.109–10), a fact that reflects the obvious technical and tactic limitations of naval warfare in antiquity, above all the short operating range of the trireme itself. It is perhaps no coincidence that it is of all the peoples the Melians who have to call the Athenians' attention to this particular flaw in their "consciousness of ability" (5.110): the Athenians' limitless naval confidence seems from this perspective as vain and, in the end, utopian as the Melians's own hope for Spartan support.[45] There are other passages that show the potential limits of naval mastery in Thucydides's *History*, too, and at one point Thucydides has even Pericles himself declare his promise of naval mastery a kind grandiloquent boasting (2.62.2, cf. 5.68.2 for Thucydides's own statement about the incredulity of such assertions as a common human phenomenon).

This apparent overconfidence and its effects on the Athenians' self-conception is perhaps best illuminated by Thucydides's account of the reactions after the fourth naval battle in the harbor of Syracuse during the Sicilian expedition, which resulted in a "brilliant victory" (*nikē lampra*) by the Syracusans, seemingly already anticipating on a smaller scale Thucydides's final verdict about the Syracusans's complete victory over the Athenian troops in 7.87.5 (*ergon . . . tois kratēsasi lamprotaton*). Here, sometime before this final defeat, Thucydides shows clearly how *any* defeat at sea was contrary to everything the Athenians had ever thought possible:

> With the Syracusans now the decisive victors at sea also . . . , the Athenians were in complete despair (*en panti athymias*). The reversal was

> a great shock (*paralogos megas*) to them: yet greater still was their regret that they had ever launched the expedition . . . They were failing in most respects, and now this unimaginable (*ouk an ōionto*) defeat at sea took an already low morale to much greater depths. (7.55.1–2)

To be beaten at sea was for the Athenians "against reason itself" (*paralogos*), a complete reversal of all they had thought possible.[46] One can see in this Athenian puzzlement a distant effect of Pericles's inflated promises of unlimited naval supremacy (and even Nicias's shortly before, 7.48.2). In Sicily, the hope of regaining their "strength with ships" was all that was left to the Athenians before their final defeat in the harbor of Syracuse (*naukratein*, 7.60.2), the city which—contrary to everything Pericles had proudly predicted—kept them from sailing wherever they wanted. In way, then, the narrative of the naval defeats in the harbor of Syracuse serves the same purpose as does the narration of the plague for the vision of an ideal democratic society laid out in the Funeral Oration: it demonstrates how a carefully developed utopia collapses, thereby disclosing its basically illusory, unachievable, and overambitious nature.[47] It can even be argued that at first glance Thucydides draws an inconspicuous but nevertheless illuminating parallel between the narrative of the plague and the passage quoted above by highlighting the very same word in both instances. The worst of the many devastating results of the plague had been, so says Thucydides, that every one of those afflicted had lost all their spirit (*athumia*, 2.51.4). The same word and idea, *athumia*, the complete absence of spirit and initiative (even reinforced by *en panti*, "in *complete* dejection," as to highlight the all-encompassing nature of the effect), is singled out by him also as a result of the unexpected naval defeat in Sicily (7.55.1)—in my view no coincidence, but a deliberative juxtaposition stressing the functionally similar tendency of both episodes for Thucydides's argument. Why should the idea of complete naval superiority not be prone to the same throwbacks as the Periclean vision of an ideal and perfect society laid out in the Funeral Oration?

Can this be "proven" for Pericles's war plan, too, which is often labeled a theory of the benefits of sea power and maritime empire? In a recent article, Richard N. Lebow argued—with regard to Athens's prewar policy—that "Pericles miscalculated every step of his elaborate scenario."[48] This can, in my view, be shown also as far

as Pericles's/Thucydides's supposed "theory of sea power" is concerned, by testing it against the future developments of the war narrative itself. On almost every point Pericles's predictions fall short of reality, if only by a small but decisive measure: after all, Athens was no island, despite her Long Walls which gave them the illusion of a maritime island-city, and therefore not invulnerable to enemy action by land (the Spartans's *epiteichismos* of the last stage of the war);[49] contrary to what Pericles had predicted, the Spartans and their confederates were ultimately able to learn the *nautikē technē*, not quite on the Athenians' level, sure, but it did the job well enough.[50] In the end, the Spartans won the war with the aid of Persian subsidiaries which helped them overcome the financial shortcomings propounded by Pericles, whereas Athens's supposedly immense capital surplus began to shrink already in the third year of the war, just because her *nautikē dunamis* was so enormous and therefore expensive to maintain (3.17, 19). And finally it was not a strong and united Athens that had numerous new hometowns at her free disposal for she "ruled the sea," but—at least in their indirectly reported speeches—the naval renegades at Samos in 411 who declared that wherever *they* are, there's the *real* Athens (8.76). In a way the Athenians on Samos, whose fate represents the ultimate dissolution of Athenian society during the war, were only putting into practice Pericles's argument that the land and houses of Attica don't really matter for the "rulers of the sea" (1.143.4–5, cf. 2.62.3). In the end, one can say that the Periclean promise of unlimited *kratos* at sea (1.143.5) disregards in a fatal way one of the key motifs and perhaps also key lessons of Thucydides's *History* as a whole, that—roughly speaking—things often end up differently than one thinks, even if they are carefully planned.[51] Significantly, the only one of Pericles's predictions that really turns out to be absolutely true is his caveat about the empire's inherent instability and fragility: "if we fail we shall lose our allies too: they are the source of our strength, but they will not acquiesce in our control if we are short of the means to enforce it" (1.143.5). The crucial point is not that Athens's power was insufficient to *win* the war but that Pericles had promised it to be the guarantee for *not losing it* under almost all circumstances. But neither ships nor money were any guarantee for success in the moment of internal strife and dissolution; Thucydides's war narrative makes this more than clear.

As he usually does, then, Thucydides "blows up" the great schemes of his protagonists like a balloon and then the events of the war burst them; the bigger the balloon, the more devastating and illustrative is the effect of the explosion.[52] Pericles's supposed theory was a "miscalculation" not insofar as it was not able to stand the test of the further course of the war, but because it was an overly utopian view of Athenian capabilities and "national" identity, based on the promise and the assurance of unlimited and unrivaled mastery of the sea.[53] In some sense, his whole plan may even be viewed as a kind of sophistic pastime, trying to prove that under given and *ideal* circumstances it was possible to "impose the will of one city on whatever happened throughout Greece over a fairly long period."[54] A city as Pericles had imagined might perhaps have achieved this ambitious aim and indeed even won the war, but this is a rather pointless observation to make, because such a city never could have existed at all. And finally, I think, Pericles's basic failure or miscalculation lies not in wrong or inappropriate tactical guidelines for the actual conduct of war, but in the effect his vision of a maritime utopia had on the Athenian's decision to risk war in the first place. The belief in maritime invincibility, offered by Pericles in his first and third speeches and finally accepted by the Athenians, was not so much the actual basis for waging war, but for starting and then for continuing the war. In this respect there is also no real contradiction between the analysis offered in this chapter and Thucydides's statements in the eulogy for Pericles of 2.65, as it is only Pericles's concrete policy for the conduct of the war that is at stake there, not his overall policy or his political beliefs.

III. Conclusion: Thucydides's Lessons of Sea Power

What "lesson," then, can Thucydides teach us about sea power? Certainly, he does not teach us how to use it best in order to become as rich and powerful as possible, and to exploit everyone else. After all, he's describing the ultimate failure of this "concept." But what, then, is his "possession for all time" in relation to it? I think a possible answer to this question may lie at the systemic or structural level of his analysis of interstate behavior. In a famous memorandum of 1907, written at the time of growing tensions between the two maritime powers Germany and Great Britain, the English diplomat

Eyre Crowe called attention to the risk of keeping the "empire of the sea" in view of the combined hatred that its worldwide influence would inevitably generate:

> Against such a combination no single nation could in the long run stand, least of all a small island kingdom not possessed of the military strength of a people trained to arms, and dependent for its food supply on oversea commerce. The danger can in practice only be averted—and history shows that it has been so averted—on condition that the national policy of the insular and naval State is so directed as to harmonize with the general desires and ideals common to all mankind, and more particularly that it is closely identified with the primary and vital interests of a majority, or as many as possible, of the other nations.[55]

Pericles had warned his Athenians in a similar vein about the hatred their "tyrannical" rule would cause in the allied cities (2.63). However, he did not suggest a solution either. The *exemplum historiae* Crowe mentions did surely not refer to Pericles's and Thucydides's Greek world. What they—the one (Thucydides) as writer, the other (Pericles) as character in the writer's book—stand for is the collapse of a rhetorically polished utopia. This utopia promised the establishment of rule over hundreds of political entities and a universal maritime power. An order at sea, however, or the appropriate methods for building and *maintaining* a stable maritime "empire" are not among the lessons extractable from Thucydides's depictions of the events.

But what *is* the role assigned to sea power in Thucydides? This is not the place to pass a final verdict on the ultimate purpose of Thucydides's *History*. But if it is true, as can in my view be convincingly argued, that its main lesson lies in pointing out the inadequacies of the "international system" of the fifth century BC. and especially of its mechanisms for resolving conflict,[56] the impact sea power had on international politics in Thucydides's view was that of an accelerating and potentially dangerous factor. The small-scale warfare on land, as it had been practiced everywhere in the Greek world between neighboring states for centuries, had never had the same destabilizing influence on the system as a whole. However, given the geopolitical conditions of the Aegean and its many islands and coastal city-states, the large-scale naval warfare and empire-building, as practiced by Athens, had further reaching consequences. Whereas in former times a conflict between two *poleis*

had only effects on these two (and perhaps one or two confederates in the vicinity), now, under the condition of two opposed leagues, a revolt on an island in the very north of the Aegean Sea might potentially force Athens and Sparta to wage war against each other together with their allies. Events as early as the revolt at Thasos in 465/4 BC had made this danger all too obvious, as Thucydides asserts, for the Spartans were already then on the brink of marching into Attic territory at the Thasians's request, only prevented from doing so by a big earthquake in Laconia and a following revolt of the Helots which demanded their attention (1.100–1; cf. 1.40.5 on the Samian revolt).[57]

Sea power and what some figures in the *History* call the "rule of the sea" certainly was an important factor for such escalation: Athens's primarily maritime imperialism, which it practiced after the Persian Wars, had made it possible to build an empire of individual cities around the Aegean that spanned a larger area than the Spartan land-based empire ever could.[58] One of the Greek superpowers, Athens, was constantly struggling for its influence at the various scattered hot spots of its fragile empire, whereas the other, Sparta, had to keep up a firm grip on the Peloponnese and also had to take the interests of her maritime allies—above all Corinth—into account. The inadequacy of the Greek system of "international relations" had probably existed before. But the new possibilities of naval warfare and naval imperialism Athens developed in the course of the fifth century brought these deficiencies in a new way to the fore. Sea power can be said to have made this "defect" in the system acute because it accelerated a development the system finally was not able to handle any longer. The Peloponnesian War was not the first symptom of this defect but only the last in a long series of incidents that began with the first revolting allies of Athens in the mid fifth-century. Recognizing this correlation is arguably the only insight that might be called a Thucydidean theory of sea power.

Notes

* I am most grateful to Seth N. Jaffe, both for his comments on the argument of this chapter and for his tireless support in transforming convoluted sentences into something roughly resembling English. For all remaining mistakes and stylistic flaws I bear all the blame.

1. On the "usefulness" of Thucydides' *History*, see Raaflaub (2013).
2. Connor (1984), p. 5.
3. The quotation is from John Dee's *The Perfect Arte of Navigation* (London 1577; reprint Amsterdam: Da Capo Press, 1968), p. 38. Cf. Armitage (2000), p. 106; Hoekstra (2012), p. 28.
4. Bridge (2013), pp. 4–5. Cf. Modelski and Thompson (1988), p. 8 for a short assessment of Thucydides' influence over British naval theory and thought well into the twentieth century.
5. The quotation is from Rowlands (2012), p. 91.
6. On Thucydides at the Naval War College, cf. Swartz (1998), pp. 273–4; Stradis (2015).
7. Heuser (2010), pp. 201, 207, 222. On Thucydides and sea power in strategic studies, cf. also the introductory remarks by Neville Morley in his contribution to this volume.
8. de Romilly (1991), p. 26.
9. de Romilly (1963), pp. 37, 118–19.
10. See esp. Starr (1978), p. 346.
11. For this view, cf. among many de Romilly (1963), pp. 67–8; Constantakopoulou (2007), p. 92.
12. Modelski and Thompson (1988), p. 5 even assume in their overview of the historical development the concept of sea power that in its Greek origin, the term "thalassocracy," it has "a link with the career of Pericles," and they regard this term as "a central part" of Thucydides' *History*.
13. Pericles' speeches as military, especially naval theory (although with some reservation in form of quotation marks): Raaflaub (2001), pp. 315–18; Thucydides' insight into this theory as the guiding structural element of his historical analysis: Schulz (2011), pp. 84–5.
14. Stahl (2003); Connor (1984).
15. Flashar (1989), p. 457. Cf. also among others Connor (1984), pp. 57–8 and Stahl (2003), Ch. 5, who puts it this way: "Thucydides forces the reader to compare plan with execution, to measure the perspectives of planning against those of the course of events" (p. 80).
16. See Morrison (2006a) on the relation between speech and narrative in Thucydides. Cf. also the remarks by Yunis (2003), pp. 198–204 on "open-ended interpretation" in Thucydides.
17. But see for example, Forde (1989), pp. 19, 56 and n. 52; Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 309; Balot (2001a), p. 174. Cf. Momigliano (1942) and Hardie (1986), p. 309 on the further career of the phrase *thalassa kai gē* (Lat. *terra marique*) in Hellenistic times; Hardie (1986), pp. 302–10 on the literary relevance of the motif since Homer.
18. Cf. de Romilly (1963), p. 141 with n. 5.
19. So Hardie (1986), p. 310: "'Victorious by land and sea' may refer either to a set of victories in discrete parts of the two world-divisions, or it may imply a claim to the total mastery of Land and Sea; the history of the political use

of such phrases indicates how easily the distinction can be glossed over." Cf. also Hornblower (1996), p. 1375 on the implicit imperialistic meaning of the phrase *thalassa kai gē*: "a way of describing indefinite empire."

20. Cf. de Romilly (1963), p. 37; Rengakos (1984), pp. 37, 44; Bloedow (2000), pp. 298, 302.
21. All longer quotations from Thucydides in Martin Hammond's translation.
22. de Romilly (1963), p. 124.
23. Cf. de Romilly (1963), pp. 123–4 on this passage; on the characteristics of Periclean speech in Thucydides in general, cf. Tompkins (2013).
24. Ober (2001), p. 286.
25. Gardiner (1969), p. 20.
26. Foster (2010), p. 187, n. 7 remarks: "Note the lack of the article in the Greek. The reference is not to any particular earth and sea, but to the earth and sea as a conceptual entity."
27. Strasburger (2009), p. 205. On the "consciousness of ability" as a characteristic of later fifth-century Athens see Meier (1990b), Ch. 8.
28. For example, Strasburger (2009) (originally published in German in 1958); Monoson and Loriaux (1998); Bloedow (2000); Foster (2010). For an (almost) up-to-date overview of scholarship see Nicolai (1996). See also Flashar (1969), Connor (1984), p. 63, n. 30 and pp. 72–5, and Orwin (2000), p. 362 on the ambiguities of 2.65 and their relevance. The problem is well subsumed by Monoson and Loriaux (1998), p. 286: "Nevertheless, we detect in the *History* as a whole a subtle interrogation of this explicit, glowing appraisal. While showing leadership, Pericles panders to the population; while extolling Athenian virtues, he undermines the norms of social cohesion; while advocating a prudent course of action, he engages Athens in an adventure that produces momentous turns of fortune." See also Clifford Orwin's note 3 (p. 125) in this volume.
29. The quotations are from Strasburger (2009), p. 218.
30. de Romilly (1963), p. 123; de Romilly (1991), p. 27.
31. On the meaning of *archē* in Thucydides see the contribution of Peter Spahn in the present volume.
32. See de Romilly (1963), p. 123, n. 1.
33. Bloedow (2000). Cf. also Orwin (1994), p. 28: "His poetic vision is at some odds with his prosaic policy."
34. Cf. Rengakos (1984), pp. 50–2; Balot (2001a), pp. 174–6. On this aspect, see also the contribution by Clifford Orwin in the present volume.
35. Strasburger (2009).
36. Cf. Connor (1984), p. 73; Bloedow (2000), p. 308 on the problematic Athenian "national" characteristics in relation to Pericles's plan.
37. On Thucydides and greed cf. Balot (2001a), Ch. 5, esp. pp. 174–6 on Pericles; on Herodotus, cf. Raaflaub (2002). For the possibility that beneath this remark by Pericles lies a hint at the coming Sicilian expedition, see

Hornblower (1983), p. 136; Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 336 *ad loc.*; Bloedow (2000), pp. 303–4; Schulz (2005), pp. 120–1; Foster (2010), p. 188.

38. Cf. Rood (1998), pp. 39–40.
39. Foster (2010), Ch. 1.
40. Cf. Connor (1984), p. 26.
41. Cf. Said (2011), pp. 68–9.
42. Said (2011), p. 69.
43. Cf. Connor (1984), p. 31; Foster (2010), p. 42.
44. Cf. Foster (2010), p. 43: "The Archaeology in fact shows that each successive phase of Greek history wrecks itself on warfare and the attempt to exploit others and showcases the psychologies (the love of gain and glory, the desire to be free of labor, the fear of domination) that motivate the continuous appearance of the imperialistic drive."
45. On the Melian dialogue as an anticipation of the later Athenian defeat, cf. Liebeschuetz (1968), esp. p. 76; Macleod (1974), pp. 391–3; Morrison (2000), pp. 137–8.
46. Cf. 2.85.2 on the Spartans' recourse to *paralagos* as an excuse for their "unexpected" defeat at sea in the first battle at Naupactus, related by Thucydides in almost parallel phrasing (*polus ho paralogos . . . ou tosoutōi ōionto*). The Chians' failed revolt in the summer of 412 (including the destruction of the city by the hands of the Athenians) according to Thucydides resulted too from the unexpected developments inherent in all human affairs (*anthropeios paralogos*, 8.24.5). On *paralogos* in Thucydides, cf. now generally Pothou (2011).
47. See Clifford Orwin's contribution in the present volume.
48. Lebow (2007), p. 186. Cf. also Kagan (1994), p. 54: "Pericles' strategy was a form of wishful thinking that failed."
49. Cf. Connor (1984), p. 51.
50. Cf. Lazenby (2004), pp. 10–11.
51. On this theme, cf. Stahl (2003), esp. Chs. 5 and 10.
52. Cf. Connor (1991), p. 58: Thucydides's text achieves "its literary effects by subverting assumptions and expectations it has itself already established."
53. On utopian elements in Pericles' plan, cf. Connor (1984), pp. 50–1; Meier (1993), pp. 530–3; Morrison (2006a), p. 269; Foster (2010), p. 149.
54. Meier (1990b), p. 212.
55. Crowe (1928), pp. 402–3.
56. Cf. Raaflaub (2011); Wendt (2011).
57. See Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, pp. 156–7 on the controversies about this episode.
58. On the insufficiency of Greek international law to cope with an empire of the Athenian kind, see Baltrusch (1994), p. 198. Meier (1990a), pp. 602–4 on the novel naval conduct of war in the fifth century and its wide range of effects.

CHAPTER 8

Civic Trust in Thucydides's *History*

Ryan Balot

In his recent book *A History of Trust in Ancient Greece*, Steven Johnstone emphasizes the ancient Greeks' public, political effort to create trust in impersonal institutions. Although Johnstone confesses to being "enticed" to study trust by Robert Putnam's investigations of personal networks of trust in civil associations—the famous "bowling alone" idea—he chooses to focus instead on the regime-level production of impersonal trust through systems of standardized coinage, impartial law, and structures of institutional accountability (such as audits).[1] Johnstone applies the sociological frameworks of Luhmann, Giddens, and others to the ancient polis, with a view to demonstrating that ancient (not only modern) institutions can render personal trust unnecessary or moot; impersonal trust is therefore not a specifically modern phenomenon.[2] In keeping with his social–scientific approach, Johnstone eschews sustained inquiry into the notion of trust as such; equally characteristic is that he understands systems of trust in a non-psychological way, as "sets of practices—what people did as opposed to their psychological dispositions."[3]

Johnstone's approach to trust grows out of a distinctively modern framework in which institutions take precedence over citizenship. Within this framework, older, premodern conceptions of personal trust between leaders and citizens, or among citizens themselves, tend to be dismissed as irrelevant, denigrated as quaint or old-fashioned, or rejected as a positively harmful ideal. I briefly consider the landscape of trust in modernity, in order to illuminate its early-modern roots, and in order to contrast the existing theories with the

richer conceptions of social trust found in ancient political thought. Exploring trust in the company of the ancient Greeks and Romans is both possible and desirable, because our vision is currently obscured by liberal modernity's neglect of citizenship and the associated relations of trust, shared judgment, and civic friendship. In this chapter, I focus on Thucydides's *History*, which provides a searching investigation of precisely these relations, because Thucydides took pains to understand leadership, citizenship, and social trust in both their most successful and their most corrupt forms.

Trust has always posed special difficulties for social theory in European modernity, chiefly because of liberalism's controlling influence on its institutions.[4] As Mark Warren and others have argued, liberal thought originated in a profound mistrust of traditional authorities, whether secular or clerical.[5] Such mistrust underlies the evolution of the modern state, which was presided over by the political thought of Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Rousseau, and other progenitors of the liberal–democratic philosophical tradition. Roughly speaking, these thinkers abandoned what is now called "vertical" trust (i.e., the trust between political leaders and citizens) through increasingly artful institutional contrivances. From the seventeenth century onward, liberal–democratic constitution-makers have focused their efforts on developing institutional structures of surveillance and oversight. Their chief aim was to establish limitations to political authority. At its most extreme, indeed, their strategy involved conducting politics entirely without trust. James Madison conveyed this idea in a striking way in *The Federalist* 51:

> 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.

If "ambition must be made to counteract ambition," in Madison's words, then trust is not only unnecessary, but also undesirable. The reason is that all political agents are at bottom selfish and antisocial—especially democratic leaders, whose ambitions, Madison supposed, gave rise to particular threats to the stability and well-being of democratic republics.

The Madisonian outlook on the "vertical" relations of citizens and leaders corresponds to a novel vision of the "horizontal" relations of trust (as they are now known) among citizens themselves. Impersonal trust renders moot or negligible the psychological connections implicit in traditional relationships of trust. Trust has reentered our discussions, in contemporary work, only as an element of "collective action," or social coordination designed to yield efficiency and productivity. To simplify greatly, one can say that this constellation of ideas originated in the familiar early-modern efforts to create peace and material prosperity despite the intrinsic defects of human nature—such as Hobbes's "three principal causes of quarrel. First, Competition; Secondly, Diffidence [i.e., distrust]; Thirdly, Glory" (*Leviathan* 13) or Kant's "crooked wood" of humanity (*Idea for a University History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, Sixth Proposition). In light of human ambitions and materialistic greed, it made sense for thinkers such as Machiavelli to decry as foolish or quixotic any effort to build healthy politics on social trust, that is, *fides* (*The Prince*, Chapter 18); the ruler had to be both a deceptive fox and a forceful lion, as necessary.[6] Building on these ideas, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and their successors taught that the best regime was one in which citizens, or subjects, were rendered intelligible and reliable through fear. Politics itself could be governed by knowable, predictable, and even scientific laws focused on mastering the uncertainties of human behavior. The "liberalism of fear," rooted in the overwhelming power of the modern state, has no room for either vertical or horizontal trust; as Machiavelli and Hobbes agreed, trust would be harmful were it not dispensable.[7]

The contemporary literature on trust is built upon a rejection of the ancient approaches to citizenship, leadership, and direct political engagement. Evaluating ancient Athenian trust through this prism, with Johnstone for example, might have constituted a harmless and even useful anachronism, akin to scholarly inquiries into the "ancient economy" or class structure.[8] My own view, though, is that this particular anachronism is not harmless. It elides, and thereby encourages us to ignore, the meaningful relationships of personal trust that tied together citizens of the ancient Greek polis. Our recovery of classical antiquity need not be used to validate the superiority or essential truth of modern social science. Instead, it might help us to challenge contemporary perspectives or to point out blind spots, by

showing that any strict exclusion of such psychological factors will distort our grasp of political life altogether.

There is undoubtedly a cleavage between ancient and modern self-interpretation. For now, however, we must set aside the question of whether this cleavage corresponds to a deep contrast between ancient and modern politics as such. Either way, it is educational to reexamine a more archaic framework, within which trust is neither a scientific strategy nor a rational calculation; within which trust is not based on mere confidence in others' predictability; within which trust is not surreptitiously replaced by dominating others or controlling the future.[9]

Like other ancient thinkers, Thucydides employed a "pre-scientific" idea of trust, one drawn from the direct experience of politics characteristic of Greco-Roman antiquity.[10] To Thucydides and other ancient thinkers, roughly speaking, trust embodied faith in the reliability of others despite their freedom, despite the uncertainties of the future and the limits of our knowledge, and in particular cases despite others' power over us (e.g., the power of public office). The word "despite" appears many times in that sentence, for a particular reason. At the center of trust is not knowledge of others' predictability, but rather a self-conscious acceptance of others' unpredictability, combined, even if paradoxically, with a confident willingness to surrender power to them, or to rely on them in action. The word "faith" appears in this description because, without necessarily being religious, trust implies a leap into the unknown, a surrender of our own control with a view to making possible novel forms of agency, including collective agency on a large, political scale.

An examination of Thucydides and other ancient thinkers reveals that trust is a central constituent of ancient civic relations, even of "civic friendship"—an ideal that is predictably and purposefully absent from modern European and North American political thought. Aristotle closely associated civic friendship with like-mindedness (*homonoia*) and shared ethical and political purposes (*Eth. Nic.* 1167a–b). Achieving social harmony and executing common purposes essentially required trust, because ancient Greek citizens and leaders, notably Athenians, were inclined to choose self-interest (*to idion*) over the public interest (*to koinon*).[11] The "bad citizen," not to mention the self-aggrandizing leader, was a well-known figure in the Athenian courts and on the Athenian stage, precisely because the

Athenian democracy made possible previously unthinkable forms of personal freedom, privacy, and individualism.[12]

Thucydides's *History* helps to enlarge our understanding of vertical and horizontal trust, and of their interrelations. A work famously intended as a "possession for all time" (1.22.4), the *History* investigates trust and leadership not only as features of politics as usual, but also as causal forces of politics in crisis; and it shows not only how the two differ, but also how they are interconnected. In order to pinpoint these connections, Thucydides teaches his readers through providing analytically specific case studies in parallel with one another. I consider two such case studies, with a view, above all, to drawing attention to Thucydides's emphasis on the development and consequences of vertical and horizontal trust. Scholars have mostly neglected trust in the *History*; those who notice it typically limit their investigation to specific episodes, when in fact the theme of trust connects, and thereby illuminates, apparently diverse episodes throughout the work.[13]

In order to explore vertical trust, let us consider Pericles and Alcibiades—the two most memorable and (apart from Nicias) the most elaborately characterized of all figures in the *History*. The Athenians had confidence in the political and strategic abilities of both leaders; they voted for the proposals of both leaders; but they did not trust Alcibiades, whereas they trusted Pericles. What explains the difference? Of Alcibiades, Thucydides says that the demos feared his lack of convention, his transgressions, and his excessive ambitions (6.15.4). Yet non-Thucydidean sources indicate that the Athenians also worried about Pericles's own tyrannical aspirations. Comic poets such as Cratinus in his play *Cheirons* accused Pericles as follows: "Stasis and old Saturn had sex with one another and gave birth to the greatest tyrant, whom the gods call the 'head-collector,'" in reference to the unusual shape or size of Pericles's head (quoted in Plutarch's *Pericles*, 3.3).[14] But Thucydides himself, though undoubtedly aware of these accusations, did not draw attention to them; his presentation sharpened the contrast between these two leaders.

In fashioning his speeches and narrative in order to awaken a deeper understanding of politics among his readers, Thucydides contrived to show each character, respectively, addressing the most familiar cause of anxiety concerning public figures—that is, money.[15] These leaders symbolically communicated their aspirations, self-image,

and character to the people in remarkably different ways. During the Sicilian Debate, Alcibiades destroyed his "trust fund," so to speak, by bluntly and offensively conflating his own victories at Olympia with a traditional act of public munificence. Alcibiades entered seven Olympic chariots in a single contest at Olympia in 416 BC and won three prizes, publicly boasting that he had earned his victories and arranged everything else "worthily" (6.16). He argued that his expenditures conferred glory on his family and also helped Athens by impressing the other Greeks with a display of power. Alcibiades called to mind the conventional ethics of benefaction (*euergesia*) and reciprocity (*charis*), but he did so in a way that directly contradicted the traditional spirit of these ideas.[16] His boastful attention to himself revealed a disturbing lack of interest in the city's welfare and a striking lack of respect for his fellow citizens.

The context of Alcibiades's argument is significant. Immediately prior to his speech, Nicias had charged him with seeking the Sicilian command in order to make gains for himself, "looking out only for his own interests" (6.12). Alcibiades would therefore be expected to take special pains to show that his expenditures directly benefited the city. This is what wealthy, high-status speakers normally did when speaking before the Athenian demos,[17] even when they were free of the pressure resulting from specific attacks on their character. In the event, however, Alcibiades did little to defuse Nicias's charge, with the result that his argument bordered on illogicality. Why would Alcibiades's personal display of wealth magnify the city's power, unless the spectators understood clearly that he viewed himself as subordinate to the city, as acting for the city's welfare?

At Olympia, meanwhile, Alcibiades had conveyed a decisively different impression of his relationship with the Athenian demos. Like his fellow citizens, he knew that his own personal glory was paramount in the minds of the Olympic audience.[18] In his *Life of Alcibiades* (11), Plutarch quoted a Euripidean ode written to celebrate the occasion:

> Son of Cleinias, yours is the name I sing.
> Victory shines like a star, but yours eclipses all victories:
> What man or hero in all the lands of Greece
> Ever triumphed first, second, and third in the chariot race,
> Stepped from the course unwearied and crowned with the olive of Zeus,

> And heard his name three times acclaimed in the herald's cry? (tr. Scott-Kilvert 1960)[19]

Plutarch then proceeded to describe Alcibiades as a celebrity after his victories: already at Olympia, diverse Greek cities competed to provide him with honors and other gifts, such as animal sacrifices and wine (Plut. *Alc.* 12). Given the frequently tyrannical aspirations of Olympic victors, such as the Athenian Cylon, it was not so far-fetched for the Athenians to associate Alcibiades with tyranny (Thuc. 6.15). It is nearly impossible to accept Alcibiades's arguments that his behavior exemplified his special concern for the common good of Athens.

Alcibiades's attitudes became even more transparent when he addressed his fellow-citizens' egalitarian ethos and their envy of him (6.16). Alcibiades happily tolerates the Athenians' envy, he says, because their response is only natural in the face of his extraordinary achievements. Because of his accomplishments, he argues, inequality between himself and his fellow citizens in not unjust; to the contrary, a specious political equality would be unjust, precisely because of his superiority. Once again, high-status speakers typically worked hard to defuse envy;[20] they hardly considered envy a badge of honor or rank. In asserting his superiority, though, Alcibiades confrontationally reproached the Athenians for feeling uncomfortable with his ambitions. His reproachful attitude was the key to eroding the demos' trust in him, because with his reproaches he trivialized the demos' desire to take political responsibility for the city. His actions and his speech communicated to the demos that he considered their ideal of equality to be trivial, if not absurd. He dismissed their envy and resentment on the grounds that the city would eventually claim Alcibiades as its brightest and most accomplished citizen. In this way Alcibiades declared that he knew the Athenians better than they knew themselves. He understood, as they did not, that the Athenian commitment to equality was shallow and even self-contradictory.

Alcibiades may not have been completely wrong to take this view.[21] But he could hardly expect to win the Athenians' trust by publicly confronting them with the ambiguities of their ideology—even with their hypocrisy. In 399 BC, Alcibiades's former teacher found out that such an approach might have far worse results than mistrust; unlike Socrates, who agreed to stand trial, refused to flee

Athens, and accepted execution, Alcibiades himself narrowly escaped trial and took refuge in the Peloponnese (6.60–1; cf. 6.88–93). Philosophically, though, Alcibiades's question was legitimate: how did the Athenians square their commitment to democratic equality with their admiration for traditional aristocratic excellence? No doubt one can interpret equality so as to make it compatible with individual excellence, but Alcibiades's purpose in raising this question was hardly ameliorative or Socratic: it was bluntly antidemocratic.

By contrast, Pericles took pains to avoid suspicion both on these grounds and on others. In his Funeral Oration he skimmed over the different roles played by leaders and ordinary citizens in the democracy, arguing that even if certain individuals formulate policy best, all will at least make prudent judgments (2.40). Democracy was power exercised "for" the demos, if not rule "by" the demos (2.37, 2.65); all citizens are entitled serve in office, but there is a natural aristocracy of ability (2.37).[22] Pericles intentionally covered up inequalities of ability—that is, a natural hierarchy, even a natural aristocracy of political power—by offering his audience a reassuringly egalitarian vision of democratic practice.

More importantly, in direct contrast to Alcibiades, Pericles made a grand symbolic gesture with his own property, by proposing to make his own estates public if the Spartans should decline to ravage them (2.13). This promise was especially meaningful, because it was Pericles's own "island strategy" that would not only cause unprecedented suffering within the city of Athens (2.52), but also inflame the anger of those, such as the Acharnians, whose prized estates most fell victim to Spartan ravaging (2.59, 2.65). Pericles's symbolic gesture might seem unsubtle or too obviously strategic—and on one level it was both.

Yet Pericles knew enough to address his fellow citizens' mistrust openly, and even to validate the demos' anxiety, fear, and suspicion to a certain extent. Pericles would not blame the demos for keeping a watchful eye on his political ambitions; the demos' surveillance of its leaders, in fact, implied that ordinary citizens took personal responsibility for their city's political life. Making his estates public therefore symbolized his respect for the demos' intelligence and political awareness; Pericles's behavior signaled that he found the demos' concerns to have at least a *prima facie* legitimacy. Even if paradoxically, Pericles's respect for the demos in just this sense showed

that that he was incorruptible, loyal to the city, and highly prudent in his judgments (2.60). The vertical trust between Pericles and the Athenian demos depended on Pericles's acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the demos' mistrust of its leaders. It is not only trust, but also a certain limited distrust, that enables democracies to function effectively.

Pericles's own willingness to sacrifice his lands embodied an acknowledgment of this fundamental principle. His gesture also lent credibility to his exhortations to his fellow citizens to think of their own land as trivial in importance by comparison with the power of the city (2.62). Pericles took the demos and its concerns seriously and made meaningful sacrifices commensurate with those he expected of his followers. To the extent that the demos had concerns about Pericles's political ambitions, Pericles validated those concerns rather than trivializing them. Hence, instead of confronting the Athenian demos with the questions raised by its qualified and ambiguous commitments to equality, Periclean leadership settled any possible anxieties about privilege or hierarchy or merit. By socializing heroism, by transforming the Athenian demos as a collectivity into a heroic actor (2.41), Pericles banished doubts about the potential for contradiction between democratic equality and excellent achievement. In Pericles, Alcibiades, and Socrates, then, we see three different approaches to the politics of trust, only one of which proved effective in democratic Athens.

These observations about Alcibiades and Pericles give rise to a related question. Do democratic leaders create trust by showing like-mindedness with the people? Aristotle agreed with common opinion that civic friendship (*politikē philia*) was closely related to like-mindedness (*homonoia*), and he linked them both to active political agency and the possession of common ideals (*Eth. Nic.* 1167a–b). Yet, as formulated, the question is excessively vague, not only because the demos itself was diverse, but also because each member of the demos presumably had desires, aspirations, and commitments that failed to be perfectly harmonious. One should ask, then, in what respect, or with whom, or at which times one is speaking of the leader's like-mindedness with the people, or of the people's sympathetic identification with their leader. Or, to sharpen the question, one might inquire into the limits of disagreeing openly with the demos. To what extent can a democratic leader disagree with his followers while

still maintaining vertical trust? To make the point in a more philosophical register, how can a democratic leader coherently disagree with the very people whose will he is presumptively enacting?

On Thucydides's showing, at least, Pericles criticized the demos frankly whenever he found that its emotions or desires were excessive or imprudent. In general this meant that he counteracted the demos' immoderate or self-aggrandizing urges (2.65, 2.60, 2.13–17). His willingness to do so has two implications. First, Pericles must have held that the demos' will was not necessarily embodied in any particular (and perhaps wrongheaded) decision—for example, the decision to seek peace with Sparta after the Peloponnesians' second invasion (2.59). Instead, like both Socrates and Rousseau, Pericles distinguished between what was genuinely good for the city and its people, on the one hand, and what merely seemed to be good to the demos at any particular moment, on the other. Second, Pericles must have believed that the demos could be educated to recognize and acknowledge its own mistakes, by changing its mind when those mistakes came to light. The Athenian people were capable of seeing that their own inclinations were occasionally untrustworthy and that their immediate and unreconstructed dispositions did not always adequately track the common good.

But how could Pericles confront the people with its own mistakes, without falling into the same suspicion that Alcibiades incurred when he confronted the people with its ambiguous (not to say hypocritical) commitments to both equality and excellence? The answer, I think, is that Pericles did not expose the demos' fundamental democratic beliefs to questioning or to doubt. He confined himself only to particular decisions. In this respect he differed from both Alcibiades and Socrates. In his third speech in the *History*, Pericles confronted his audience with the self-contradictions involved in its initial commitment to the war with Sparta, on the one hand, and its present failure of nerve, on the other. In this speech, he continually emphasized the Athenians' previous resolutions (2.60, 2.61, 2.64)—that is, their agreement to his own plan for the war. He contrasted these presumably admirable resolutions with the demos' tendency to blame its leaders, Pericles himself above all, and to care more for their parochial or private interests than the city's welfare (2.60). How did Pericles help the Athenians to resolve this quandary of conflicting positions?

He certainly had no magic to offer; he had to work within the existing framework of democratic ideology. But his rhetorical presentation of the issues showed that this ideology was more fertile and productive than anyone had previously considered. Just as he had earlier redefined courage so that it corresponded closely to Athenian ideals of thoughtful deliberation (2.40),[23] so now did he transform the Athenians' conception of courage into a virtue of psychological steadfastness, which would enable them to face misfortune with a steady resolve (2.61, 2.64). He exhorted his audience to be courageous—in this novel and, he argued, truer sense. He showed that conflict existed within the demos itself, rather than between the demos and its preeminent leader. As its preeminent leader, Pericles provided the demos with an interpretation of courage that made sense of the difficulties and showed the way forward. He contradicted the demos by teaching the Athenians to be true to themselves and their own ideals; this approach made him all the more trustworthy as a democratic leader.[24] He successfully communicated to the citizens that his leadership was oriented solely toward enabling the demos to exercise its will in a way that would benefit the city and themselves.

A healthy democratic citizenry knows itself well enough to see that its particular decisions do not always conform to the public interest, properly construed. This feature of democratic self-knowledge explains why vertical trust demanded that a leader occasionally counteract the demos' inclinations. In Alcibiades, the Athenian demos found not limits, structure, and order, but rather a limitless, and therefore frightening and destructive, extension of desire. By contrast with Pericles, Alcibiades was a visionary leader who carried the Athenians' ethos of *pleonexia* to its logical completion; in his own person, Alcibiades exemplified that ethos to the highest degree.[25] An aristocrat with tyrannical leanings, Alcibiades symbolized democratic desire in its most tyrannical forms. As a result, the Athenians recognized themselves in Alcibiades and had qualms about what they saw. In later changing track and putting their trust in Nicias as commander of the Sicilian expedition, they again chose a leader who counteracted their unreconstructed desires.

It is notable, though, that later in the *History* Thucydides praised Alcibiades for doing a great service to Athens by opposing the angry Athenian sailors at Samos, who wanted to sail back to Athens and destroy the oligarchy of the 400 (Thuc. 8.86). The Athenians were

initially confused on this point, but not for long: through their experiences of democratic politics, they had come to see a need for leaders who would challenge their immediate passions and call them back to themselves. The comparison and contrast between Pericles and Alcibiades on this front complicates any simplistic idea that vertical trust is created through sympathetic identification between demos and leaders. The truth is that healthy politics demands that leaders express the essential or aspirational, not merely the existential or empirical, will of the demos. This requires both symbolic gestures of like-mindedness along with a prudent willingness to resist the demos' tendency toward immediate self-gratification.

Leadership also played a critical role in our next case study, the civil war in Corcyra, which invites comparison to the Athenian plague and to Athens's own civil war of 411 BC. Scholars have not often noticed how much emphasis Thucydides places on trust and distrust in these episodes. Why was Athens able to recover from these convulsions relatively painlessly, while the Corcyraean civil war ended only when the island's democrats butchered the oligarchs? Of Corcyra, Thucydides says that the civil war ended only because one side had been all but completely eliminated (4.48). Classical historians have offered a variety of explanations for this difference that go beyond the text of Thucydides. My chief concern is to explore Thucydides's own way of constructing the parallelism and distinguishing between the two cases.

First, though, why choose cities in the midst of violent conflict as the focal point for an investigation of civic trust? To make this choice is to assert that extraordinary politics or politics at the extreme reveals more about ordinary politics than ordinary politics reveals about itself. In Thucydides's hands, these revolutions proved to be epistemological limit cases—episodes that, as Peter Euben has said, highlight the internal dynamics of politics as such by dramatizing its failures. For Euben, "Because Corcyra is the absolute negation of civilization, it also reveals the most about what civilization requires."[26] To say that, however, is by no means to subscribe to Giorgio Agamben's fashionable belief that all politics can be likened to a state of emergency, a power-grab advanced by leaders capitalizing on their citizens' desperation or bewilderment.[27] However pessimistic his opinions of human nature, Thucydides contended neither that politics can be reduced to a single and simple template nor that

leadership and civic agency are impossible. To make the point differently, Thucydides is neither so reductive nor so pessimistic as theorists such as Agamben.

Between Athens and Corcyra, one difference is obvious: even if Persia had become increasingly important by 411 BC, Athens did not feel the weight of yet another Athens fighting out even bigger wars in the same international neighborhood. Yet it was possible, even if difficult, for cities to react to the larger powers in a spirit of solidarity rather than competition. The Corcyraeans failed to approach their crisis in a spirit of unity. At Corcyra, Thucydides says, individuals were driven by *pleonexia* and *philotimia*, the manifestations of raw human nature, to abandon even their family ties in favor of holding power and winning the city for themselves (3.82.6, 3.82.8).[28] All Corcyraeans—and especially their factional leaders—failed to consider whether their city was worth possessing if they had won it as a prize of war. At all events, the drive for power and victory was essential to Thucydides's conception of human nature, yet this drive became particularly virulent in Corcyra and other cities, and not in Sparta or Athens. Why was that? To put the question this way suggests that, despite Thucydides's emphasis on the causal importance of the desire for power, this essential human characteristic was specially unleashed at Corcyra for still other reasons.

My suggestion is that distrust was, via the "desire for more," both a cause and a symptom of Corcyra's civic conflict. The theme of distrust is in fact a leitmotif of Thucydides's account of Corcyra from the time when the Corcyraean prisoners, captured in naval fighting off Epidamnus, returned to Corcyra (3.70.1). Although I cannot now trace the workings of trust in every manifestation at Corcyra, it is fair to say that the breakdown of trust began in earnest when the Corcyraean democrats persuaded the rival oligarchs, who had taken up suppliant positions in the Temple of Hera, to rise and move to an island near the temple (3.75.5). When they did so, the democrats fulfilled their promises and even sent provisions to the oligarchs on their new island. Later, however, after moving the suppliants back to the temple of Hera, the democrats treacherously persuaded them to submit to a trial, in which they condemned every one of them to death (3.79.1, 3.81.2).

During the civil war, proper political life became impossible because of distrust and perversions of trust. "Anyone violent,"

Thucydides says, "was trustworthy (*pistos*)"; anyone opposed to violent means was for that reason rendered suspicious (*hupoptos*) (3.82.5). Corcyra's present existence was therefore the condition of its own future impossibility. "Political groups," which he calls *pisteis*, were united not by religious norms but rather by their shared lawlessness (3.82.6). If oaths were made, then they lasted very briefly; whenever the opportunity arose, those who took their enemies by surprise enjoyed their successes all the more because of the trust that had existed (*dia tēn pistin*, 3.82.7). In general, Thucydides reports, the city was divided into two conflicting groups that viewed each other with distrust (*apistōs*, 3.83.1). Everyone stopped looking for a solution to the trouble and, since they could not trust each other (*pisteusai*, 3.83.2), they took care only to defend themselves.

These revolutions in trust led to a shrinkage in the temporal horizons of the Corcyraeans, a limitation of shared agency caused by bodily neediness. According to Thucydides, "In times of peace and prosperity cities and individuals alike follow higher standards, because they are not forced into a situation where they have to do what they do not want to do. But war is a teacher of violence. In depriving them of the power of easily satisfying their daily wants, it brings most people's minds down the level of their present circumstances." (3.82, tr. Warner 1972). The time-span of the Corcyraeans' political agency was thus reduced; the Corcyraeans could hardly imagine a common future, because, as Thucydides says, "their one standard was the pleasure of the moment" (3.82.8, tr. Warner 1972, adapted). Although this hedonistic standard made the Corcyraeans intelligible to one another, it could never promote the trust necessary for collective political agency.

To imagine a future together, instead, a political community needs a certain kind of civic friendship—one elicited, specifically, by a shared set of ethical reference points, rather than the diverse pursuit of materialistic gratifications. The Corcyraean civil war destroyed these shared standards. In order to emphasize this point, Thucydides famously detailed certain wide-ranging transformations in the Corcyraeans' ethical and political vocabulary. Having lost their shared ethical standards and political ideals, the Corcyraeans had no basis for traditional relationships of horizontal trust. Paradoxically, these changes created a new form of trust: those who initiated conflicts were held to be trustworthy, whereas those

opposed to conflict were suspect (3.82). Under stress of civic catastrophe, the Corcyraeans' ethical and political vocabulary failed to unite fellow citizens in the effort to realize the common good or to advance collective projects.[29]

In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates argues that democracy as such is typically prey to such linguistic instability, since democrats invert traditional ethical standards and tend to think, for example, that moderation is equivalent to unmanliness, and so on (560c–e). On Thucydides's showing, this criticism did apply to the Corcyraean democracy; but what of the Athenian democracy? Speakers such as Cleon might well be guilty as charged by Socrates, since he argued that any moderate response to the Mytilenaean "rebels" was weak and unmanly (e.g., 3.37). Thucydides also contends that Pericles's successors, driven by narrow self-interest, created an atmosphere of distrust in Athens (2.65). Cleon's rival Diodotus is a case in point: he declared with regret that prudent speakers at Athens could become trustworthy (*pistos*) to the demos only by spreading lies (3.43.2). Like the Corcyraeans, ultimately, the Athenians suffered not only from perversions of trust, but also, in the end, from rampant distrust of one another, which fueled the revolution of 411 BC. As Thucydides puts it, "There were some revolutionaries whom no one would ever have thought would turn to oligarchy. These most of all created distrust (*to apiston*) among the many and helped keep the few safe, by firmly establishing distrust (*apistia*) among the members of the demos toward themselves." (8.66.5).

Even if the Athenians continued to fight Sparta for years afterward, the revolution of 411 BC was marked by bloodshed, by a change of regime, and by the city's near-capitulation to its enemy. It was an event that rivaled in significance the stasis in Corcyra. This comparison is called forth by, among other things, Thucydides's persistent emphasis on the theme of trust. Athens's civil war was foreshadowed by Thucydides's description of the plague (2.47–54), which is both verbally linked to the Corcyraean stasis and closely juxtaposed with Pericles's Funeral Oration. How should we interpret the plague in light of Thucydidean trust? Do we find that Thucydides emphasizes a breakdown of trust during the Athenian plague, one similar to the erosion of trust at Corcyra?

Scholars have often seen special, even tragic, significance in Thucydides's juxtaposition of the plague with Pericles's Funeral

Oration. In Connor's view, for example, "Two radically different images of Athens are presented in adjoining episodes: in the one a city ordered by and deriving much of its strength from generally accepted civic customs and procedures; in the other a place of increasing self-gratification and anomie."[30] For Orwin, on the other hand, "The Funeral Oration . . . consistently abstracts from death and the body. The plague, by contrast, brings home both the primacy and frailty of the body—as well as its centrality to actual political life in Athens as elsewhere."[31] Woodman argues that Thucydides has specifically constructed a drama in book II, which is intended to heighten the reader's sense of pathos: "Thus the plague in Act Three dramatically and ironically overturns everything of which Thucydides made Pericles boast in the funeral speech in Act Two."[32]

At the same time, scholars have linked the plague directly to the Corcyraean civil war.[33] Connor, for example, emphasizes the weakness of logos and "the inability of any of the conventional restraints to control the powerful drives of nature."[34] They have also built on the lurid elements of Thucydides's description to suggest that, like the stasis at Corcyra, the plague at Athens was an unmitigated disaster. Rusten speaks of the "concentrated horror" of the plague,[35] while Hornblower points out that "the rhetorically-minded Th. of i.23.3 was prepared to range the Great Plague along with eclipses of the sun, earthquakes and so on, as portentous things which 'accompanied' the war."[36] It appears incontestable, in fact, that Thucydides likened the plague at Athens to the Corcyraean civil war, in representing both episodes as characterized by thoughtless pleasure seeking and lawlessness, and by the ineffectiveness of both divine and human law (2.53).

I would venture a more optimistic interpretation, however, based on the observation that the Athenians of Pericles's time were able to maintain unusually robust forms of vertical and horizontal trust even despite the convulsion of the plague. In focusing on the apparently shocking moments of civic breakdown, readers tend to forget that the plague was not a single, discrete episode.[37] During its first onset, the plague lasted for two years; later, in 427 BC, the plague struck Athens again and lasted for one year, killing in total, Thucydides reported, 4,400 hoplites, 300 cavalry, and many others (3.87). Throughout this period of suffering, the

Athenians carried on with the activities of politics and warfare that were appropriate to the city at war: they attended assemblies and agreed to Pericles's proposal that they continue to fight without sending additional ambassadors to Sparta (2.65). They sent ships around the Peloponnese (2.69), they settled colonists in Potidaea after winning the city by siege (2.70), they won an important naval victory (2.92), they turned Brasidas away from Salamis (2.93–4), and they successfully handled the revolt of Lesbos (3.2–50), among other things. Given the shocking events at Corcyra, readers should be impressed, I think, not only by the convulsions experienced at Athens, but also by the continuation of politics as usual at Athens.[38] Even if Thucydides proclaimed that transitory pleasure had become the new standard of nobility (2.53), the Athenians did not form factions or destroy the ordinary language of virtue and vice, of praise and condemnation. Rather, they continued to act as a cohesive civic body, capable of addressing extraordinary military challenges with steadfastness, flexibility, and success. Hence, although Thucydides mentions the city's lawlessness during this period, he does not represent the Athenians as having drawn themselves up into opposed battle-lines where they viewed each other with irrevocable distrust.

If we examine the details of the plague narrative itself, then this unexpectedly positive interpretation is confirmed. The first part of Thucydides's description records the disease's ravaging of the body and mind: from headache and bleeding throat, to vomiting bile, to stomach pains, diarrhea, amnesia, occasional blindness, irresistible hopelessness, and usually death (2.49–51). After describing these distressing symptoms, Thucydides records that caretakers, too, began to die, unless they had somehow overcome the disease and struggled back to health (2.51). Athens was full of dead bodies, Thucydides says, even the temples, because the plague overpowered everyone (*huperbiazomenou tou kakou*) and people began to confound the distinction between sacred and profane (2.52). Burial laws fell into abeyance. Because of the limited resources for funeral pyres, people were forced to act disgracefully, as families stole space on the pyres from one another (2.52). "Lawlessness" (*anomia*) spread throughout the city, and Athenians pursued immediate pleasures, held back neither by religious scruples nor by the city's laws (2.53). Many people died; they vainly recalled oracles that seemed to presage their misery (2.54).

Yet, during the plague, the Athenians did not butcher one another or set up their fellow citizens as scapegoats.[39] Especially because of our ignorance of the plague outside the pages of Thucydides, Powell is right to examine descriptions of the plague in other times and places in order to evaluate Thucydides's account—in particular, the outbreak of plague in London in 1665. Powell writes: "On a decline in general morality, Pepys wrote of the plague 'making us cruel as dogs one to another.'"[40] This description is appropriate to the harshness and infighting witnessed at Corcyra, to be sure, but does it compare closely to Thucydides's description of the plague at Athens? At Athens, the worst that happened was that many people were driven, Thucydides says, to take disgraceful measures for burying their dead (2.52), now and again stealing a funeral pyre or adding one body atop another. Then, certain rich people "suddenly died" and "men previously worth nothing took over their estates" (2.52). Is it not a telling detail that these newly wealthy individuals, who are not otherwise familiar from the historical record, did not form themselves into groups of thugs ready to murder and steal—like the gangs known not only from bloody Corcyra or New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, but also from Athens itself in 411 and 404 BC?

Thucydides's emphasis was on physical and psychic suffering, on bodies in pain, not on fellow citizens butchering one another. Thucydides shows the Athenians continuing to conduct politics as they had done previously and continuing to fight the war effectively; correspondingly, he does not mention any erosion of trust during the plague at Athens.[41] Might we not speculate, then, that the plague illustrates less the breakdown of the Periclean ideal, as scholars often say, than the strength of that ideal? Why doesn't the juxtaposition of plague with Funeral Oration illustrate the democracy's capacity to cope with stress that seemingly defies human nature? Thucydides's description showed plague-ridden Athens to be far different from, and superior to, both bloody Corcyra and New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. By contrast with the Corcyraeans, the Athenians avoided turning the plague into an occasion for revolution. The real questions raised by Thucydides's account are how and why the Athenians could be so resilient in the face of their suffering.

The reason is that the Athenian demos had developed a long-standing and well-grounded basis for both vertical and horizontal trust. Through their long history of democratic discourse—what I have elsewhere called their "public conversations about the city"—they had carefully cultivated the shared and relatively stable ethical reference points that the Corcyraeans lacked. Those reference points consisted in their shared conception of the democratic virtues.[42] Based in part on his trustworthiness as a leader, for example, Pericles had offered in his Funeral Oration a convincing account of the democratic virtues that distinguished Athens from Sparta—courage, generosity, openness, flexibility, and civic friendship (2.40). Appropriately enough for a time of war, Pericles focused on the role of courage in the Athenian democracy. He argued that democratic courage involved thinking about the long-term frameworks that made courage meaningful in one's life as a whole (2.40).[43] By contrast with the Corcyraeans, who confused reckless audacity with courage (3.82), the Athenians did not allow their own understanding of courage to become unstable during the plague.

In fact, Pericles could appeal to a modified version of this ideal even in the midst of the crisis, as when, during his last speech, he said, "Those who grieve the least in their minds when confronted with misfortunes and most of all hold out against them in action—those are the most powerful cities and individuals" (2.64.6). This made sense to the Athenians, I think, because Pericles had just previously urged his fellow citizens to look to the flourishing lives that they could expect in the future within their city (2.64). His conception of courage and the other virtues made sense within the framework of the good life that the democratic city made possible, altogether. At Athens, therefore, courage did not become an excuse for "manly" immoderation, much less for butchery of one's fellow citizens. This is why Pericles was successful when he "tried to rid the Athenians of their anger toward him, and to lead their minds away from their present difficulties" (*tōn parontōn deinōn*, 2.65.1). It was in this way that Periclean leadership and horizontal trust came together, as the Athenians were able, through their reference to a stable, coherent, and more fully adequate conception of courage and other virtues, to imagine a shared life together, and to carry on doing

politics together even during the plague, and then once the plague was over.

It may be, after all, that Thucydides linked together Pericles's Funeral Oration, the plague, Pericles's final speech, and the excursus on Corcyra for dramatic, rhetorical, and theoretical reasons that scholars have thus far failed to appreciate. As Clifford Orwin argues in this volume, Thucydides may have used the plague to illustrate the limits of Pericles's capacity to abstract from the Athenians' bodies or to master the city's future through *gnōmē*. Yet, even as Thucydides raises our awareness of Athens's vulnerability in these respects, he also illustrates the city's surprising resilience, its unexpected capacity to endure profound setbacks, and to carry on with life in the democratic polis. Thucydides set himself the task of explaining both why Athens was not altogether invincible and how Athens could recover from serious challenges and difficulties. The plague narrative helped to show that the seeds of Corcyraean mistrust and conflict were present in Athens, even if those seeds blossomed only at the end of Thucydides's text, in his account of the revolution of 411 BC. All the same, Thucydides's account also explained why the plague did not cripple Athens or unleash the distrust, cruelty, and violence that were seen in other, less healthy political cultures.

Ultimately, then, the Athenians of the plague narrative—and of the three years during which Athens suffered from the plague—put into practice the forms of trust and resilience that Pericles had ascribed to the fallen soldiers of the war's first year: "The uncertainty of success they entrusted to hope; but for that which was before their eyes they decided to rely on themselves in action. They believed that this choice entailed resistance and suffering, rather than surrender and safety; they ran away from the word of shame, and stood up in action at risk of their lives" (2.42, tr. Woodruff 1993). If Pericles's Funeral Oration was intended to educate its audience, then the Athenians of the plague years showed that they had internalized his ideals of trusting in themselves and, by extension, of trusting in one another, because of their unwavering commitment to the ideals embodied by the democratic city.

Notes

1. See Johnstone (2012) (at p. 4 on being "enticed" by Putnam's work), Putnam (2000).
2. See Luhmann (1979); Giddens (1990).

3. Johnstone (2012), p. 2.
4. Dunn (2000), nonetheless, offers a persuasive Lockean analysis of the need to reinstate trust as a central category of modern political theory.
5. Warren (1999), p. 1.
6. The animalistic images were derived, of course, from Cicero, who urged that both deception and force were contrary to the flourishing of humanity's natural sociability (*On Obligations*, 1.41).
7. On the "liberalism of fear," see Shklar (1989).
8. On the ancient economy, see, for example, the overview provided by Morris (1994); on "class structure," the classic work is that of de Ste. Croix (1981); cf. the elaboration of de Ste. Croix's studies in Rose (2012).
9. On these characteristic features of modern life and thought, see now Newell (2013).
10. On the distinction between direct and indirect modes of government and experiences of politics, see Mansfield (1971) and Nadon (2009), esp. p. 534.
11. Christ (2006), esp. Ch. 1.
12. On the "bad citizen" in general, see Christ (2006); on the explanation for the bad citizen's prominence within Athens, see Balot (2014); on personal freedoms and individualism in Athens, see Raaflaub (2004), Hansen (1991), and Balot (2014).
13. See, for example, Orwin (1994), pp. 178–80; on the basic idea of comparing and contrasting episodes within the unified structure of the *History*, see Rawlings (1981).
14. Translations of ancient texts are my own, unless otherwise indicated.
15. On the theme of bribery, see, for example, Strauss (1985).
16. On benefaction and reciprocity, see Ober (1989), pp. 226–33.
17. For example, Is. 5.41–2, 6.60–1, with Ober (1989), pp. 226–7.
18. This is why, as Kurke (1991) has argued, Pindar's odes celebrating the victories of international athletes were designed to reintegrate those victors into their cities, so that their eminence would not threaten or disrupt their cities' political life.
19. On the question of the precise number of Alcibiades's victories, and the order of his placement at the finish-line, see Gomme, Andrewes, and Dover (1945–81), vol. IV, comm. *ad loc*.
20. Is. 6.61, Lys. 21.15, with Ober (1989), pp. 226–7.
21. On the ambiguities involved in the Athenian dedication to equality, see especially Raaflaub (1996) and Balot (2014).
22. Loraux (1986) remains the most important treatment of these ambiguities in the "democratic" presentation of the city in the Funeral Orations.
23. Balot (2001b, 2014).
24. On Pericles's didactic approach to the Athenian demos, see Yunis (1996), pp. 57–86.
25. Balot (2001a).

26. Euben (1990), p. 186.
27. Agamben (1998).
28. Balot (2001a).
29. On the corruption of language in this excursus, see White (1984), pp. 59–92, with Connor (1984), pp. 96–102.
30. Connor (1984), p. 64.
31. Orwin (1994), p. 182.
32. Woodman (1988), p. 35.
33. See, for example, Rusten (1989), p. 190; Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, pp. 317, 326; Connor (1984), pp. 99–103.
34. Connor (1984), p. 100.
35. Rusten (1989), p. 179.
36. Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 317. Hornblower (1991–2008), vol. I, p. 326 is right to point out that the verb *ērxe* in 2.53.1 is "ambiguous: the disorders about to be listed *began* with the plague in the chronological sense; but did the plague directly cause them all?" (emphasis original).
37. Woodman (1988), pp. 35–6 argues that Thucydides designed the text in order to give precisely the impression of a "single shattering blow in the summer of 430," but at the same time he also enables his readers to move beyond this initial impression, by showing that Athens carried on with the political and military activities that were typical of the city at war.
38. Woodman (1988), p. 39 legitimately raises questions about the accuracy of Thucydides's account: "Despite the impression created by Thucydides of an unprecedented and major disaster, the plague has (perhaps surprisingly) left no trace at all on any independent piece of evidence or inscription. Is this the result of mere chance? Or has Thucydides magnified the plague out of all proportion to its real significance?" The answer is that Thucydides magnifies the plague's importance, at least initially, and then proceeds to illustrate Athens's civic strength and resilience in responding to this seemingly unmitigated disaster.
39. It is just possible to view Pericles as a kind of scapegoat, in that the people became angry at him and fined him shortly thereafter, because of their suffering, Thucydides says, and, above all, because they were fighting a war rather than enjoying the benefits of peace (2.65). But they quickly withdrew their anger and elected Pericles general again, "because their pain over their private domestic losses was dulled now" (2.65, tr. Woodruff 1993). It is striking that in his summary evaluation of these events Thucydides does not refer to the plague, to distrust, or to lawlessness; instead, he stresses that the people suffered because of the war and that, nevertheless, they recovered their good judgment and chose to follow Pericles's advice as long as he lived.
40. Powell (1988), pp. 158–9.

41. To repeat: the one exception is the momentary lapse in which the people lost confidence in Pericles; but they quickly regained this confidence and began to conduct their politics as before (2.65). See the previous note for a fuller discussion of this point.
42. See Balot (2009, 2014).
43. See Balot (2001b, 2014).

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