



Université d'Ottawa - University of Ottawa



*The Homeric ἦθος, Cimonian-Periclean Rivalry and  
The Speeches of Pericles in Thucydides'  
Account of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War*

Mark Alexander Lypeckyj  
Thesis Supervisor: E.F. Bloedow



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Warum mußte der griechische Bildhauer immer wieder Krieg und Kämpfe in zahllosen Wiederholungen ausprägen, ausgereckte Menschenleiber, deren Sehnen vom Hasse gespannt sind oder vom Übermuthe des Triumphes, sich krümmende Verwundete, ausröchelnde Sterbende? Warum jauchzte die ganze griechische Welt bei den Kampfbildern der Ilias? Ich fürchte daß wir diese nicht „griechisch“ genug verstehen, ja daß wir schaudern würden, wenn wir sie einmal griechisch verstünden.

Nietzsche, *Homer's Wettkampf*

## **Abstract**

The speeches in Thucydides have long been a source of lively historical controversy. Many scholars have discounted their historical veracity in differing degrees. This has been true even of the speeches of Pericles, particularly his famous Funeral Oration, although scholarly objections to the content and tone of the Periclean speeches have largely been of a purely subjective nature. However, an examination of how the Homeric ἦθος, with its stringent demand for the studied cultivation and possession of τιμή and ἀρετή, functions within the speeches of Pericles as a key motivating force for the steadfast pursuance of a highly aggressive foreign policy, sheds an interesting light on the question of the historical nature of the speeches and the outbreak of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War. In conjunction with this "Homeric reading" to the speeches, a further consideration of the more realistic analyses of modern manifestations of *Realpolitik* in the sphere of international politics and diplomacy, adduces additional support for the acceptance of the speeches of Pericles as important forms of historical evidence for the basic workings of *Machtpolitik*.

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### Abbreviations

Aesch.	Aeschylus
Arist.	Aristotle
Diod.	Diodorus.
Eur.	Euripides
Hom.	Homer
Thuc.	Thucydides
Pl.	Plato
Plut.	Plutarch
Soph.	Sophocles
Xen.	Xenophon

Bétant	E.A. Bétant, <i>Lexicon Thucydideum</i> , 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1963, repr. 1843 ed.)
CT	Simon Hornblower, <i>A Commentary on Thucydides</i> , 3 vols. (Oxford, 1991-).
Ebeling	H. Ebeling, <i>Lexicon Homericum</i> , 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1963).
HCT	A.W. Gomme, A. Andrewes & K.J. Dover, <i>A Historical Commentary on Thucydides</i> , 5 vols. (Oxford, 1945-1981).
<i>Iliad</i>	G.S. Kirk, B. Hainsworth, R. Janko, M.W. Edwards & N. Richardson, <i>The Iliad: A Commentary</i> , 6 vols. (Cambridge, 1985-1993).
LSJ <sup>9</sup>	H.G. Liddell & R. Scott, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9 <sup>th</sup> ed., revised by H. Stuart Jones (Oxford, 1925-1940).
OCD <sup>2</sup>	N.G.L. Hammond & H.H. Scullard (eds.), <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford, 1970).
Rusten	J.S. Rusten, <i>Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book II</i> (Cambridge, 1989).
Ste. Croix, OCW	G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, <i>The Origins of the Peloponnesian War</i> (Ithaca, 1972).
Stadter, <i>Pericles</i>	P.A. Stadter, <i>A Commentary on Pericles</i> (Chapel Hill & London, 1989).

<i>AHB</i>	<i>Ancient History Bulletin</i>
<i>CB</i>	<i>Classical Bulletin</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>C&amp;M</i>	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>G&amp;R</i>	<i>Greece &amp; Rome</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman &amp; Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>ICS</i>	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>PBA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
<i>PCPhS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
<i>RÉG</i>	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
<i>SCO</i>	<i>Studi Classici e Orientali</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Society</i>
<i>YCS</i>	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>

## Introduction

"L'Honneur, c'est la pudeur virile."  
 Alfred de Vigny, *Servitude  
 et Grandeur militaire*

### *Introduction*

The study of the Athenian Thucydides, an author "terriblement lucide et sévère",<sup>1</sup> whose account of the war waged between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians has actively engaged the attention of statesmen, military men, and numerous scholars for well over two millennia, would scarcely seem to be in need of any justification. And indeed, despite the more recently developed fashion of regarding Thucydides as more of a powerful and evocative "dramatist" intent upon championing one particular partisan view over another, rather than as an "objective historian" concerned with producing an impartial and accurate account of a prolonged and highly destructive war, it has still been maintained in saner quarters that Thucydides has written one of the "greatest books ever about war...[in] its enormous range,"<sup>2</sup> and that his delineation of contemporary events as they unfolded before him still serves as a very reliable guide which is "consistent, penetrating, and very satisfying."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. de. Romilly, "L'optimisme de Thucydide et le jugement de l'historien sur Périclès, (Thuc., II. 65)" *RÉG* 78 (1965), 557.

<sup>2</sup> Williamson Murray, "War, Theory, Clausewitz, and Thucydides: The Game May Change But the Rules Remain," *Marine Corps Gazette* 81 (1997), 65.

<sup>3</sup> "I believe that we can trust Thucydides to a very high degree for the events of his own day, and that if we study his narrative carefully and attend to what he says rather than what modern scholars assume he said (often two very different things), we shall find his account consistent, penetrating, and very satisfying." (Ste. Croix, *OCW*, 3); cf. also the warning of Gilbert Murray on the danger of historical misjudgement based upon "the tendency to read the events of the past too exclusively in the light of the present" (Gilbert Murray, *Aristophanes and the War Party: A Study in the Contemporary Criticism of the Peloponnesian War* [London, 1918], 5). Bengtson's remarks on Thucydides remain

What is more, it was incisively observed by the American Secretary of State shortly after the Second World War that it remains highly doubtful "whether a man can think with full wisdom and with deep convictions regarding certain of the basic international issues today who has not at least reviewed in his mind the period of the Peloponnesian War and the Fall of Athens."<sup>4</sup> Viewed in this way, accordingly, Thucydides' account of the war may be regarded not only as reliable guide to understanding the past, but also as an invaluable aid to understanding "with full wisdom" current (and future) political and military transactions. Indeed, Thucydides' account is none other than what he himself said it would be, namely, a possession for all time (I.22.4):

κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα  
ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται.

Yet despite the enormous amount of time and energy which has been expended over the years on the part of scholars and others to comprehend fully, and to articulate clearly, the meaning of Thucydides' formidable work, no great unanimity can be said to exist on a wide range of important questions within the broad field of Thucydidean studies.

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valid, namely, that Thucydides "was an *objective* observer, with the greatest acuteness, of the great struggle in world history....[he] is not only the creator of the historical monograph, but is at the same time also the founder of historiography as a *science*, by reason of the fact that he was the first to differentiate between more fundamental causes and external reasons" (H. Bengtson, *History of Greece*, tr. E.F. Bloedow [Ottawa, 1988], 466, 467).

<sup>4</sup> American Secretary of State George Marshall in an address given in 1947 quoted in W. Robert Connor (ed.), *Thucydides. History of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1993), xi.



Perhaps nowhere else than in the area of the speeches recorded by Thucydides, and found at key points in his narrative, has scholarly controversy been so pronounced. Sharp differences of opinion exist concerning: 1) the relation of the speeches to the narrative; 2) the relation of the speeches to one another; 3) the degree to which the speeches may, or may not, correspond to reality. Unfortunately, the immediate prospect of any sort of scholarly unanimity developing with respect to the speeches in Thucydides certainly does seem to be a rather remote one. No less a figure than Momigliano was able to state that it is still "a notoriously open question whether Thucydides meant to convey the real utterances of the orators or whether his speeches represented their hidden thoughts rather than their actual orations."<sup>5</sup> Yet, the doubts which have been raised about the historical nature of the speeches and the specific objections which have been lodged against their basic tone and content have essentially been of a subjective nature, and, in the end, not at all convincing.

Clearly, a proper understanding of the speeches is indispensable to a basic understanding of the events leading up to the Athenian-

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<sup>5</sup> Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990), 42. The text is based upon the 1961-1962 Sather Classical Lectures at the University of California. Momigliano's statement applies chiefly to how one might choose to interpret Thucydides' famous chapter on method (I. 22), but it is to be noted that he does seek in the course of his discussion of the speeches a middle ground of sorts, and he further contends that the "truth must lie somewhere in between the two opposite interpretations of Thucydides' speeches" (*ibid.*, 42). However, Momigliano does manage to concede that "there is no *a priori* reason to doubt that at least in Athens men with a sophisticated education could speak in the way in which Thucydides makes them speak" (*ibid.*, 42).

Peloponnesian War, and the subsequent course of the war, inasmuch as speeches naturally played a crucial role in influencing the actions of the participants. It remains then to see how one might possibly enter into the "spirit of the age", as it were, and to consider in what manner the speeches of Pericles, for instance, may be found to be historical. Plutarch, in an interesting passage on political oratory, explains some of the key elements which generally comprise speeches in this particular category and how these elements can prove to be highly effective devices in bringing about persuasion:

δέχεται δ' ὁ πολιτικὸς λόγος δικανικοῦ μᾶλλον καὶ  
γνωμολογίας καὶ ἱστορίας καὶ μύθους καὶ μεταφοράς,  
αἷς μάλιστα κινουῦσιν οἱ χρώμενοι μετρίως καὶ κατὰ  
καιρόν.<sup>6</sup>

While these particular elements (maxims, historical and mythical stories, and metaphors) are not in any way to be minimized or overlooked, it is worth considering further whether or not there are any additional elements which one might reasonably expect to find in the course of examining various specimens of political oratory, and what their possible influence may likewise be upon an audience. One must ask further what their ultimate source might be.

In light of the immense importance of Homer, the supreme poet of Hellas, on ancient Greek thought, history, and literature, it would only

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<sup>6</sup> Plut., *Mor.* 803A. Plutarch goes on to give a number of examples, one of which is Pericles' well-known remark to the Athenians about the necessary removal of Aegina, "the eyesore of the Peiraeus" (*ibid.*, 803B, cf. *Per.* VIII.5).

seem natural to investigate thoroughly the extent of the influence of Homer upon the writing of Thucydides throughout his narrative, and to identify the possible occurrence of Homeric elements within the speeches themselves. For the basic import of Homeric ideas and expressions would scarcely seem to be capable of being overestimated, at least to the minds and hearts of 5<sup>th</sup> century Greeks.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, one would expect the use of Homer at "great crises" to be particularly effective at swaying an audience.

While a few recent studies on Homeric influence on the narrative of Thucydides have shed some interesting light on the literary techniques of Thucydides, particularly in his account of the "tragic" dimensions of the Sicilian expedition,<sup>8</sup> insufficient attention has been paid hitherto to how Homeric influences may have directly affected the thought and conduct

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<sup>7</sup> As Smith observed a hundred years ago in a much-neglected study, "In many of the speeches and in descriptive passages in great crises Thucydides displays his peculiar power, rising in style to suit the occasion, having a more majestic rhythm than ordinary, appropriating words and constructions from the poets, especially from Homer and the Drama....He uses poetical terms, because poetry alone can adequately express deep human passion and pathos, and because such words have been, in a measure, sacred to his readers from their earliest use of the great national text-book in poetry [Homer], or are associated in their minds with all that has so moved and thrilled and purified them in their own great drama. The effect was like borrowing great biblical words, which everybody knows and which are consecrated by association, to describe some event of unusual moment" (C.F. Smith, "Traces of Epic Usage in Thucydides," *TAPA* 31 [1900], 69). One might, therefore, regard Homer in relation to subsequent Greek literature somewhat in the same manner as Frye regarded the Bible in relation to English literature: the Great Code to its understanding (Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* [Toronto, 1990], *passim*). Respecting Smith's remarks, however, it should be noted that if one were to regard the speeches in Thucydides as representing the thoughts of the individual speaker giving the speech, then the choice of "consecrated" words and ideas, as it were, must be attributed not solely to Thucydides, but rather to the speakers in question.

<sup>8</sup> C.J. Mackie, "Homer and Thucydides: Corcyra and Sicily," *CQ* 46 (1996), 103-113; J.W. Allison, "Homeric Allusions at the Close of Thucydides' Sicilian Narrative," *AJP* 118 (1997), 499-516.

of the participants of the war, particularly through the agency of the political speeches which were given during it at the time of any number of "great crises."

This thesis, then, will examine the manner in which the key element of what one may term the Homeric ἦθος, namely, a fundamental and overriding concern with the cultivation and possession of τιμή and ἀρετή, was utilized by Pericles during a number of such "great crises", both before and during the Athenian-Peloponnesian War, in order to gain the much-needed support for his highly questionable foreign policy. Indeed, the manner in which Pericles may be seen to appeal to the "consecrated" Homeric ἦθος stands out as being in many ways quite unique, and Pericles may be justly regarded as altogether singular in his purpose in determinedly seeking to gain assent for a highly aggressive foreign policy *vis-a-vis* the Peloponnesians, a policy which, as will be seen, was by no means entirely rational.

Needless to say, a careful examination of the way in which Pericles managed to succeed in implementing his policy through the art of political oratory forms an important part of an overall attempt to understand the reasons for outbreak of the war itself, and the possible ways in which the war *could* have been averted.<sup>9</sup> Despite Pericles'

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<sup>9</sup> While it may seem that the Athenian-Peloponnesian War was inevitable, particularly since it did actually happen, one would do well to remember that things could, as so often in history, have taken a different course altogether. As Aron has noted more generally,

"On oublie que l'issue contraire aurait peut-être comporté une explication aussi

reputation for being a consistent exponent of a "moderate" foreign policy, and for even being regarded as a "paragon of emotional stability,"<sup>10</sup> it will become clear through an examination of the available evidence that Pericles was not completely immune to that ever-present temptation to excess which can overcome even those men committed to a "moderate" course of action. As Weil remarked in her profound study of the *Iliad*:

Un usage modéré de la force, qui seul permettrait d'échapper à l'engrenage, demanderait une vertu plus qu'humaine, aussi rare qu'une constante dignité dans la faiblesse. D'ailleurs, la modération non plus n'est pas toujours sans péril; car le prestige, qui constitue la force plus qu'aux trois quarts, est fait avant tout de la superbe indifférence du fort pour les faibles, indifférence si contagieuse qu'elle se communique à ceux qui en sont l'objet. Mais ce n'est pas d'ordinaire une pensée politique qui conseille l'excès. C'est la tentation de l'excès qui est presque irrésistible.<sup>11</sup>

Burn, in an insightful remark about why Pericles chose to adopt a policy which would not allow for any concessions to be made to the

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satisfaisante. En d'autres termes, la rétrospection crée une *illusion de fatalité* qui contredit l'impression contemporaine de contingence." Raymond Aron, *Introduction à la philosophie de l'histoire. Essai sur les limites de l'objectivité historique* (Paris, 1967), 224. Of course, this "illusion de fatalité" has manifested itself in many different contexts, ancient or modern, but, as Boritt has observed, it is an illusion which must be resisted. For, as he has judiciously observed in the context of his discussion about the origins of the American Civil War, the "'illusion of fatality' is specially difficult to accept in the face of a great tragedy such as the American Civil War. If in our time war had broken out between the Soviet Union and the United States, scholars, and others too, would surely have argued that such conflict grew unavoidable in 1917 or 1945 or at the same moment of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 - or whenever. So in the American antebellum, some hope for peace, and with it moral responsibility for the coming of the war, remained until the fire erupted at Sumter" (Gabor S. Boritt, "'And the War Came'? Abraham Lincoln and the Question of Individual Responsibility," in *idem* [ed.], *Why the Civil War Came* [New York and Oxford, 1996], 6-7).

<sup>10</sup> J.R. Wilson, "Sophrosyne in Thucydides," *AHB* 4 (1990), 52.

<sup>11</sup> Simone Weil, "*L'Iliade* ou le Poème de la Force (II)," *Les Cahiers du Sud* 231 (1941), 21. The two-part installment of articles was published during the Second World War under the pseudonym of Emile Novis. For the indifference of the deliberative orator, for example, to the enslavement of neighbouring peoples, see Arist., *Rh.* 1358b6-1359a7.

Peloponnesians, identified the central reason behind Pericles' action: "If, then, there was to be a war - one more war, to confirm Athens' new order- it had better be soon, while he, Pericles, already over sixty, was there to lead it. Pericles, the Alkmeonid was a politician and a *lover of power*, in spite of the Parthenon."<sup>12</sup> In order to understand, however, exactly how this "lover of power" operated and succeeded to impose his will upon the Athenians, it is necessary that one adopt a very simple, yet extremely demanding, methodology, namely, that one take Homer and Thucydides seriously.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> A.R. Burn, *Pericles and Athens* (New York, 1966; rpt. of 1948 ed.), 168-169.

<sup>13</sup> "Greek writers knew Homer better and were more influenced by him than has been the case even with great English writers with respect to the Bible, and *one may feel Homer in Thucydides when proof of epic reminiscence is not easily demonstrable*" (Smith [*supra* n.7], 70).

Chapter One:  
Thucydides, Pericles and Homer Reconsidered

μετὰ κυβερνήσεως γίνεται πόλεμος,  
βοήθεια δὲ μετὰ καρδίας βουλευτικῆς.

*Prov.*, xxiv.6 (LXX)

### I.1 Overview: *Thucydides & Pericles*

Thucydides, son of Olorus, in his written account of the "greatest movement" (κίνησις μεγίστη) which took place amongst the Hellenes, i.e., the Athenian-Peloponnesian War,<sup>1</sup> demonstrates in a memorable passage

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<sup>1</sup> Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων ὡς ἐπολέμησαν πρὸς ἀλλήλους....κίνησις γὰρ αὕτη δὴ μεγίστη τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ἐγένε καὶ μέρει τινὶ τῶν βαρβαρῶν, ὡς δὲ εἰπεῖν καὶ ἐπὶ πλεῖτον ἀνθρώπων (Thuc. I.1.1-2; cf. II.1.1). As de Ste. Croix has noted in his study on the outbreak of this "greatest of movements" in the Greek world, Thucydides himself did *not* refer to the war which he wrote about as the "Peloponnesian War" (Ste. Croix, *OCW*, 3), but, rather that he varied his exact expression at times in accordance with the attendant circumstances (*ibid.*, 294-195): from the Athenian perspective it was, ὁ πρὸς Πελοποννησίου πόλεμος (I.44.2); from the Peloponnesian perspective it was, τὸν πόλεμον τὸν πρὸς Ἀθηναίους (VIII.18.2); on the basis of certain geographical and tactical considerations, it could be referred to at times as πρὸς τὸν ἐκ τῆς Δεκελείας πόλεμον (VII.27.2), or even as πρὸς τὸν Μαντινικὸν καὶ Ἐπιδαύριον πόλεμον [V.26.2]; and from the standpoint of duration of time a portion of it could be referred to as τὸν δεκέτη πόλεμον [V.25.1]. Thucydides, of course, viewed the war of 431-404 B.C. as one continuous whole, regardless of any intervening "truce" (the so-called "Peace of Nicias"), and believed that those who differed in this respect would not judge the matter rightly (V.26.2): καὶ τὴν διὰ μέσου ξύμβασιν εἴ τις μὴ ἀξιῶσει πόλεμον νομίζειν, οὐκ ὀρθῶς δικαιῶσει.

The actual expression "Peloponnesian War" (ὁ Πελοποννησιακὸς πόλεμος), which can be traced to the works of Diodorus [XII.37.2] and Strabo [XIII.1.39, p. 600], reflects, as Gomme has noted, "the Athenian standpoint" (*HCT*, II, 1; cf. Ste. Croix, *OCW*, 294), and it is this particular expression which has, of course, gained virtually complete acceptance amongst modern scholars (Toynbee being a rare exception); a distinction, though, has been generally maintained between "The First Peloponnesian War" (460-446/445 B.C.), and the "Second (or Great) Peloponnesian War" (431-404 B.C.). Gomme goes so far even as to describe the commonly accepted usage as somehow "inevitable after Thucydides" (*HCT*, II, 1), but he does not offer any compelling reasons as to why this should be so.

However, in light of the fact that Thucydides himself, despite being an Athenian, principally refers to the war more generally as the "war between the Peloponnesians *and* the Athenians" (I.1.1) or as the "war between the Athenians *and* the Peloponnesians" (II.1; cf. I.23.4), it would seem best to forego the commonly accepted usage insofar as it might seem to imply that the Peloponnesians were primarily responsible for the war, and rather employ the more cumbersome, but certainly more accurate expression, the Athenian-Peloponnesian War. Gomme readily concedes that Thucydides' own usage in this particular respect was "quite *neutral*" (*HCT*, II, 1); cf. Hornblower's acknowledgement that Thucydides' opening expression was "an *impartial* formulation" (*CT*, I, 5). For the sake of a certain consistency, then, and in order to avoid any undue



that the smallness in size of Mycenae, or any other seemingly insignificant city of his time, ought not to be considered as a reliable form of "proof" (σημεῖον) in support of the view that the expedition against Troy was not as great as the poets had said, and tradition had

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confusion -to say nothing about seeking to attain at least some semblance of "impartiality"- the earlier war of 460-446/445 B.C. will be referred to in this thesis as the First Athenian-Peloponnesian War, while the later war of 431-404 B.C. will be referred to as the Athenian-Peloponnesian War (when clarification is needed), but more simply throughout as just *the war*.

Incidentally, Ste. Croix, who is unable to accept the view that "Athens was the aggressor in the Peloponnesian War, and that she forced war on a reluctant Sparta" (Ste. Croix, 290), retains the current scholarly convention of referring to the war as the "Peloponnesian War" throughout his study. However, unlike Thucydides, he sees the First Peloponnesian War and the Second Peloponnesian War as "essentially the same war", albeit interrupted for nearly fifteen years by the Thirty Years' Peace in 446/445 (*ibid.*, 3, 50-51). Curiously enough, though, he has seen fit to avoid most studiously what he calls the "inappropriate designation" of the Ten Years War (431-421B.C.) as the "Archidamian War" (*ibid.*, 295), and, as a result follows Thucydides in calling it the Ten Years War.

Clearly, the manner in which a war is named and referred to is not devoid of significance, even with respect to modern wars and modern historiographical studies. Hence, the importance of clarity and impartiality in this regard. The so-called "American Civil War" (1861-1865), for example, has been described in numerous ways, all of which carry distinctly different shades of meaning: The War Between the States; The War of the Rebellion; The War of Secession; and The War for Southern Independence (George C. Kohn, *Dictionary of Wars* [New York, 1986], 113). See more generally, Noam Chomsky, "Language in the Service of Propaganda," *Chronicles of Dissent* (Vancouver, 1992), 1-17. It is telling that the U.S. War Department was renamed the Department of Defense in 1947, precisely when it attained a position of dominance (*ibid.*, 1-2).

Without a doubt, the recent war waged in 1999 against Serbian Kosovo in the sovereign nation of Yugoslavia by the United States and the joint members of the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) -ostensibly a "defensive alliance"- in support of the self-proclaimed "Kosovo Liberation Army" (KLA) -a renegade band of cutthroats- demanded much in the way of ingenuity from the array of "spin doctors" within the member nations of NATO for the task of portraying the bombing -called by NATO members "Operation Allied Force"- and subsequent military occupation of Serbian Kosovo as "humanitarian intervention," "the prevention of genocide," and the like. Indeed, the sycophantic President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel, even went so far as to describe the assault on Serbian Kosovo as the "first moral war" in all of history, in spite of the fact that the United States State Department had in previous years designated the KLA to be a "terrorist organization" whose criminal activities (heroin trafficking, prostitution, etc.) and unprovoked attacks on Serbians, law-abiding Albanians, and others in Kosovo have been more than well-documented. See, for instance, the collection of articles by Benjamin Works, "Articles on KLA-Kosovo-Drugs-Mafia and Fundraising," 26 July 1999. [http://www.siri-us.com/backgrounders/Archives\\_Kosovo/KLA-Drugs.html](http://www.siri-us.com/backgrounders/Archives_Kosovo/KLA-Drugs.html) (30 November 1999); "Albanian Mafia & KLA Crime & Terror," 1 July 1999. [http://www.siri-us.com/backgrounders/Archives\\_Kosovo/Albania-KLA-Crime.html](http://www.siri-us.com/backgrounders/Archives_Kosovo/Albania-KLA-Crime.html) (30 November 1999).

maintained, right up until his own day (I.10.1).<sup>2</sup> He does so by strikingly contrasting the old, village style construction of Lacedaemon with the glory and splendour of the temples and other structures of Athens and, in so doing, contends that if posterity were, after both cities had been duly abandoned, able to behold each one of the two cities, it would indeed be incredulous that the power (δύναμις) of Lacedaemon was in fact as great as its renown (κλέος) had been, yet, at the same time, in beholding Athens would be inclined to regard her power as having been *twice* that of what it really was:

Λακεδαιμονίων μὲν γὰρ εἴ ἢ πόλις ἐρημωθεῖη, λειφθεῖη δὲ τὰ  
 τε ἱερὰ καὶ τῆς κατασκευῆς τὰ ἐδάφη, πολλὴν ἂν οἶμαι ἀπιστίαν  
 τῆς δυνάμεως προελθόντος πολλοῦ χρόνου τοῖς ἔπειτα πρὸς  
 τὸ κλέος αὐτῶν εἶναι.... Ἀθηναίων δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦτο παθόντων  
 διπλασίαν ἂν τὴν δύναμιν εἰκαζεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς φανεραῆς ὄψεως  
 τῆς πόλεως ἢ ἔστιν (Thuc. I.10.2).<sup>3</sup>

It is not terribly difficult, of course, to see how such a decidedly different perception on the part of posterity might arise concerning the actual

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<sup>2</sup> Despite some uncertainty as to the exact date for the destruction of Argos by Mycenae (sometime in the 460's B.C. ), it is clear, as Gomme has commented, that "the evidence of Mycenae's old wealth and splendour dug up in modern times was *then* hidden [to Thucydides]. Hence his warning against a contempt of the centres of the older civilization by his contemporaries; he *prefers to rely on Homer*" (HCT, I, 112). The epoch-making archaeological discoveries of Schliemann in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and carried out by succeeding archaeologists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, have lent much credibility to Homer's poetic depiction of Mycenae as a major center of power. According to Nilsson, Mycenae was the "mightiest and wealthiest city in Mycenaean Greece" and "Homer's description of the power of Agamemnon as an overlord ruling many islands and all Greece corresponds to the actual state of things in the Mycenaean Age" (M. P. Nilsson, *Homer & Mycenae* [Philadelphia, 1972; reprint of 1933 ed.], 49, 217-218); cf. Hom., *Il.*, I.569-580, IV.52, 376, VII.180, IX.44, XI.46; *Od.*, III, 305, XXI, 108. For the current dating of the "core of the Homeric poems" to Late Helladic IIIc, see now S. Hood, "The Bronze Age Context of Homer," *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*, ed. J.B. Carter & S.P. Morris (Austin, 1995), 25-32.

<sup>3</sup> Thucydides, of course, used the present tense to indicate that the δύναμις of both cities still existed when he wrote this passage; cf. Gomme (HCT, I, 113).

state of things in either Lacedaemon or Athens. For in looking upon the existing remains of the temple of Athena *Parthenos* alone - just one part of the enormous building programme of Pericles, son of Xanthippus, situated as it is on the Acropolis of Athens, many observers even now cannot but be stirred to no inconsiderable degree by its grandeur and harmony of form, and, as a consequence, be set to wondering as to just what sort and how great a city it was that produced such a remarkable temple, which, had it not been for a stray Venetian shell (and the predations of the Turk), would most probably still be in an extraordinarily well-preserved, and all the more impressive, condition even today.<sup>4</sup>

The basic difference in perception, though, which Thucydides believed would be shared by posterity serves to underscore in yet another way

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<sup>4</sup> Contrarily, the remains of Lacedaemon are not of the sort typically to inspire awe and amazement on the part of most observers. Although many ancient art historians and classical archaeologists today are far less inclined to extol with unbridled enthusiasm the products of "High Classicism," particularly at the expense of earlier and later periods in Greek art, assessments of the temple of Athena *Parthenos* continue to be, and understandably so, of a highly favourable nature: "In the Parthenon the Doric Order is seen at its *most perfect* in proportions and in refined details....The Athenians employed their artistic and financial resources to the full in the Parthenon, and made it a symbol of their *piety* and *strength*" (*OCD* <sup>2</sup>, s.v. Parthenon); "[The] fusion of Doric and Ionic forms in the Parthenon was undoubtedly intended to express one of the qualities of Athens.... on an *idealistic* level it was Pericles' conviction, enunciated in the Funeral Oration, that Athens had managed to 'cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without softness.' The Ionic order called to mind the luxury, refinement, and intellectualism of Ionia; the Doric was associated with the somber, stolid simplicity of the descendants of Herakles in the Peloponnesos" (J.J. Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece* [Cambridge, 1984; reprint of the 1972 ed.], 79). Plutarch said of the building programme as a whole: ὅθεν καὶ μᾶλλον θαυμάζεται τὰ Περικλέους ἔργα πρὸς πολὺν χρόνον ἐν ὀλίγῳ γενόμενα. κάλλει μὲν γὰρ ἕκαστον εὐθύς ἦν τότε ἀρχαῖον, ἀκμῇ δὲ μέγροι νῦν πρόσφατόν ἐστικαὶ νεουργιόν· οὕτως ἐπανθεῖ καινότης αἰεὶ τις ἀθικτον ὑπὸ τοῦ χιπόνου διατηροῦσα τὴν ὄψιν ὥσπερ αἰθαλὲς πνεῦμα καὶ ψυχὴν ἀγήρω καταμεμιγμένην τῶν ἔργων ἔχόντων (Plut., *Per.* XIII.3); cf. Plutarch's additional remarks on the δύναμις and the ὄλβος to which these works attested (*ibid.*, XII. 1).

very early in his narrative the basic difficulty of arriving successfully, for those at least who seek to find it, at an accurate understanding of things as they really were or are.<sup>5</sup> This basic difficulty, which is by no means exclusive to Thucydides and his age,<sup>6</sup> is given fuller expression in his account of the manner in which the Athenians and other Hellenes had formed mistaken views about happenings in their own country because of a propensity on both of their parts to accept whatever reports were

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<sup>5</sup> Hornblower considers Thucydides' assessment to be "surprising" insofar as modern scholars *do* generally find the remains of Mycenae (the Lion's Gate, etc.) to be *impressive* (Hornblower, *CT*, I, 51); Gomme, of course, astutely noted that the assessment should serve us as a "word of *warning*...when we make confident statements about the Bronze Age" (Gomme, *HCT*, I, 113). The warning applies similarly to other judgements which scholars, who are at a far remove indeed from antiquity, are apt to make with undue haste.

<sup>6</sup> Despite the tremendous advances in the "information technologies" in recent years and the "empowerment" which these technologies are said to have brought to individual members of the citizenry, it is not without good reason that Chomsky, among others, has warned, on account of the great effectiveness of the current "media system," that citizens in the modern industrialized democracies "should undertake a course of intellectual self-defense to protect themselves from manipulation and control" (N. Chomsky, *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies* [Montréal, 1989], vii); cf. also Chomsky's interviews "Language in the Service of Propaganda," in *Chronicles of Dissent* (Vancouver, 1992), 1-17, and "Historical Engineering" (*ibid.*), 56-65. For decisive arguments against the "limited effects" theory of the media, see H. Schiller, *Culture, Inc.: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* (New York and Oxford, 1989), 106-110, 136-156.

It is not so surprising, of course, that despite the fact that a majority of Americans were not even able to identify Kosovo on a world map -to say nothing of understanding the real issues involved- shortly before the U.S/NATO bombing of Serbian Kosovo commenced, within a period of a few short days, a clear majority of Americans supported the bombing campaign and, in time, actually came to support an invasion by ground, largely on the basis of false reports generated by Mohammedan Albanians either in the KLA, or sympathetic to it, which in turn were widely disseminated in the Western media.

The Athenians, by way of comparison, despite not knowing much of anything about the situation and size of Sicily, nonetheless *eagerly* undertook an expedition to subdue the place: ἀπειροὶ οἱ πολλοὶ ὄντες τοῦ μεγέθους τῆς νήσου καὶ τῶν ἐνοικούντων τοῦ πλήθους καὶ Ἑλλήνων καὶ βαρβάρων, καὶ ὅτι οὐ πολλῶν τινὶ ὑποδεέστερον πόλεμον ἀνηροῦντο ἢ τὸν πρὸς Πελοποννησίς (Thuc. VI.1.1); cf. the *false* reports of the Eggestaeans and their *decisive* influence on Athenian action in this very respect (VI.6.2, VI.8.2, VI.19.1).

ready at hand *without examination* (ἀβασανίστως).<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, in perhaps the most controversial chapter of his entire work, the so-called "chapter on method" (Thuc. I.22), Thucydides makes it clear that it was difficult (χαλεπόν),<sup>8</sup> both for him and for others, to remember the words

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<sup>7</sup> Thuc. I.20.1-3. The Athenians, for instance, erred in thinking that Hipparchus, instead of Hippias, was in power as τυραννίς when he was killed by Harmodius and Aristogeiton. In this same chapter, Thucydides goes on to make a more general statement about how many men are averse to taking the trouble to search for the truth: οὕτως ἀταλαίπωρος τοῖς πολλοῖς ἡ ζήτησις τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἐτοῖμα μᾶλλον τρέπονται (I.20.3). The word ἀληθεία, it is to be noted, recurs in quick succession in this portion of his account again at I.21.1 and I.23.6; cf. I.23.4 (ἀληθῶς). Later, in connection with his description of the recall of Alcibiades, son of Clinias, from Sicily, Thucydides discusses at much greater length (VI. 54-59) the "boldness through passion" which animated Harmodius and Aristogeiton in their attempt to overthrow the tyranny, once again stressing the mistaken understanding which the Athenians have of their own past (just like other men): τὸ γὰρ Ἀριστογείτονος καὶ Ἀρμοδίου τόλμημα δ' ἐρωτικὴν ξυντυχίαν ἐπεχειρήθη, ἦν ἐγὼ ἐπὶ πλέον διηγησάμενος ἀποφανῶ οὔτε τοὺς ἄλλους οὔτε αὐτοὺς Ἀθηναίους περὶ τῶν σφετέρων τυράννων οὐδὲ περὶ τοῦ γενομένου ἀκριβῆς οὐδὲν λέγοντας (Thuc. VI.54.1).

<sup>8</sup> Thuc. I.22.1-3. It will be sufficient to observe here, as Garrity has recently reiterated, that the word χαλεπόν must not be taken to mean "impossible" as has been done by, among others, Classen-Steup, Grosskinsky, and Tasolambros. For such a meaning of the word has not been recognized by Bétant or *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> (T.F. Garrity, "Thucydides 1.22.1: Content and Form," *AJP* 119 [1998], 368, n. 15). Such a forced interpretation for χαλεπόν to mean impossible does serve all too well, however, as a most definite "register of the dissatisfaction over the programmatic statement [of Thucydides] and also a measure of the lengths to which scholars have been willing to go to arrive at a better understanding of the sentence" (*ibid.*, 369, n. 15). Other instances in which the construction χαλεπόν...ἔστι is taken to mean *difficile est* (Bétant, II, 501-502; cf. *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> [s.v. χαλεπαίνω III.2 "hard, difficult to do"]) are: I.142.3 - Pericles on the potential difficulty of the Peloponnesians in building a fort in Attica (but something which *was* done later in the war); II.35.2 - Pericles on the difficulty of speaking μετρίως about the dead; II.44.2 - Pericles on the difficulty of convincing others at the time (of bereavement) of the good fortune of a most glorious death; V.74.3 - Thucydides on the difficulty of learning how many Lacedaemonians fell at Mantinea; VI.23.3 - Nicias on the difficulty for the success of the Sicilian expedition; VI.34.4 - Hermocrates on the difficulty of the Athenians maintaining order on their voyage; VI.38.4 - Athenagoras on the difficulty of detecting revolutionaries; VII.87.4 - Thucydides on the difficulty of determining the number (with ἀκριβεία) of Athenian prisoners taken in Sicily; VIII.68.4 - Thucydides on the difficulty of the Athenian democracy being overthrown. Of course, Thucydides did not hesitate to use the word ἀδύνατος when speaking about *quod fieri nequit* (Bétant, I, 15; cf. *LSJ*<sup>9</sup> [s.v. ἀδύνατος, -ον II "impossible"]); I.1.2; I.125.2; I.138.4; II. 72.2; II.74.1; II.97.6; III.43.3; III.45.7; III.88.1; III.102.3; IV.1.3; IV.15.2; IV.27.1; V.14.4; VI.39.2; VI.78.3; VII. 43.3.2; VII.44.4; VIII.60.1; VIII.66.4.

Since Thucydides does introduce "key themes and words" in his early chapters (Hornblower, *CT*, I, 3), it is of the utmost importance to pay the closest attention

spoken in the various speeches (λόγοι), both shortly before the outbreak of the war and during the course of it, with exactness or precision (ἀκριβεία). Likewise, it was necessary for him to work laboriously (ἐπιπόνως) in discovering and determining the occurrences of the war (τὰ δ' ἔργα τῶν πραχθέντων ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ) as they actually happened since the many eye-witnesses who furnished reports did not always report the same thing owing to the fact of their being particularly well-disposed or well-minded (εὐνοία) to one side or the other,<sup>9</sup> or, as the case may have been, owing to the peculiarities of their individual memory (μνήμη).<sup>10</sup>

This latter difficulty of remembering (with ἀκριβεία),<sup>11</sup> however, must be understood in its proper historical context, that is to say, in a decidedly more oral-based society than our own whose individual members, presumably, would have possessed a greater capacity for

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possible to the meanings of just these very words, χαλεπός and ἀδύνατος, among certain others.

<sup>9</sup> Plutarch also was not unmindful of the serious difficulties presented by envy or ill-will, qualities which are, no doubt, by no means restricted solely to ancient writers: οὕτως ἔοικε πάντῃ χαλεπὸν εἶναι καὶ δυσθήρατον ἱστορία τάληθές, ὅταν οἱ μὲν ὕστερον γεγονότες τὸν χρόνον ἔχωσιν ἐπιπροσθοῦντα τῇ γνώσει τῶν πραγμάτων, ἢ δὲ τῶν πράξεων καὶ τῶν βίων ἡλικιωτὶς ἱστορία τὰ μὲν φθόνοις καὶ δυσμενείαις, τὰ δὲ χαριζομένη καὶ κολακεύουσα λυμαίνηται καὶ διαστρέφη τὴν ἀλήθειαν (Plut., *Per.* XIII.12).

<sup>10</sup> As an indication of interest in the workings of memory at roughly the same time, Socrates relates to Phaedrus how the Egyptian Thamus (Ammon) expressed concern to Theuth about the potentially damaging effects on memory which the introduction of writing would necessarily bring (Pl., *Phaedr.* 274c-275d); cf. Postman's remarks on the damaging effect of television in our own era upon memory, patterns of speech, and discursive and sequential thought (N. Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* [New York, 1985]), esp. 44-63.

<sup>11</sup> As Garrity has further pointed out, the force of the preposition διὰ in διαμνημονεῦσαι intensifies the meaning of the verb so that we might take it to mean "to remember in complete detail." Thus, the prefix διὰ in conjunction with ἀκριβεία should be understood "as an expression of the level of accuracy and precision to which Thucydides aspires but which he may not attain because of the inherent nature of the task (Garrity

remembering speeches either because of innate ability or habituation (or perhaps a combination of both reasons), a phenomenon of considerable consequence which should serve as a warning to those who are much too quick in dismissing the possibility of the speeches having been remembered well enough to enable Thucydides himself, or the others who furnished him with reports, with enough of the "general sense" or "essential content" (ἡ ξυμπάση γνώμη) of what had been said in any given speech at any given time.<sup>12</sup> Plutarch in a rather remarkable passage on the saving power of Euripides' verses after the failed Sicilian Expedition, recorded the following poignant story:

ἔνιοι [Athenians] δὲ καὶ δι' Εὐριπίδην ἐσώθησαν. Μάλιστα γάρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τῶν ἐκτὸς Ἑλλήνων ἐπόθησαν αὐτοῦ τὴν μουσάν οἱ περὶ Σικελίαν· καὶ μικρὰ τῶν ἀφικνουμένων ἐκάστοτε δείγματα καὶ γεύματα κομιζόντων ἐκμανθάνοντες ἀγαπητῶς μετεδίδοσαν ἀλλήλοις. Τότε γοῦν φασὶ τῶν σωθέντων οἴκαδε συχνούς ἀσπάσασθαι τὸν Εὐριπίδην φιλοφόνως, καὶ δινγεῖσθαι τοὺς μὲν ὅτι δουλεύοντες ἀφείθησαν ἐκδιδάξαντες ὅσα τῶν ἐκείνου ποιημάτων ἐμέμνηντο, τοὺς δ' ὅτι πλανώμενοι μετὰ τὴν μάχην τροφῆς καὶ ὕδατος μετέλαβον τῶν μελῶν ᾄσαντες.<sup>13</sup>

Two things in particular from this passage are especially deserving of notice: 1) the fact that ordinary Athenians were able to remember and relate (or even sing) some of the verses of Euripides, even after some time

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[*supra* n. 8], 369, n. 15). The critical thing to be noted, of course, is the high degree of precision and exactness which Thucydides actually sought to attain.

<sup>12</sup> Badian argues with some measure of cogency against the widely established rendering of ξυμπάση γνώμη as "general sense" and suggests "entire intention" as a more accurate and viable alternative (E. Badian, "Thucydides on Rendering Speeches," *Athenaeum* 80 [1992], 187-190, esp. 189); cf. Develin's rendering of ξυμπάση γνώμη as the "overall thrust" (R. Develin, "Thucydides on Speeches," *AHB* 4 [1990], 58-60.

<sup>13</sup> Plut., *Nic.*, XXIX.2-4; cf. the additional incident involving the Caunians who were only allowed entry into Syracuse after they had admitted to knowing some of the songs (ᾄσματα) of Euripides (*ibid.*, XXIX. 5).

had elapsed since they could have last heard a performance of any of his plays; 2) that the Sicilians most of all (but the Hellenes in general), *yearned* for the poems and songs of Euripides, a tragedian whose works are permeated with the "generalising" which is so characteristic of the thought and literature of the time, and which is such a distinct and irreducible feature of a large portion of the speeches in Thucydides.<sup>14</sup>

It is only with due cognizance of the very difficulties which Thucydides has emphasized and an awareness of the high degree of precision that Thucydides sought to attain in detailing the nature of the war and the major personalities who participated in it, that one can undertake a study of Thucydides' account of the war and seek to understand clearly what course that war followed. Naturally, differences of opinion have always existed with regard to the interpretation of many passages in Thucydides, and on a great many matters scholarly opinion remains sharply divided. But while such differences are natural enough in some respects, an alarming number of the major disputes and differences which do exist have stemmed from an inattentive reading of Thucydides,

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<sup>14</sup> That many common ideas and forms of expression exist between the speeches in Thucydides and the contemporary works of tragedy by Euripides was impressively and amply demonstrated by Finley in his pioneering study (J.H. Finley, Jr., "Euripides and Thucydides," *Three Essays on Thucydides* [Cambridge, 1967], 1-54. Most notable instances are: aspects of Pericles' defense of democracy; aspects of Archidamus' defense of Oligarchy; and the types of arguments employed by Cleon and Diodotus in the Mytilenean debate (*ibid.*, 14-24, 29-33, 49-52). Finley's work, alas, is still not sufficiently appreciated to this day, at least with respect to the historical veracity of the speeches. Cf. Garrity (*supra* n. 8), 377, n.26. In addition, it is worth remembering also that despite the 'modern' element to Euripides' plays, many heroic elements predominate. See, for instance, E.B. Bongie, "Heroic Elements in the *Medea* of Euripides," *TAPA* 107 (1977), 26-27-56.



resulting in the false attribution to Thucydides of diametrically opposed political sympathies or casts of mind,<sup>15</sup> despite the fact that there are so few "authorial statements" in Thucydides,<sup>16</sup> and that attempts to reconstruct an "intellectual biography" of Thucydides have foundered.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, the rash imposition of modern preconceptions on Thucydides' thought continues unabated lacking neither in frequency nor in determined dogmatism; indeed, these very kinds of preconceptions, as Berve noted with respect to a more general approach

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<sup>15</sup> Thus we have seen Thucydides variously categorized as a "moralist", "amoralist" (or even an outright "atheist"), "democrat" (both "radical" and "moderate"), "oligarch", "dramatist" (as opposed to a "scientific historian"), "activist journalist", "postmodernist", and other such designations *ad infinitum*. Indeed, the "post-modernist" Thucydides is now seen as nothing less than "a writer of intense and complex emotions and a determination to transmit those emotions to his readers, even if their expression involves the shattering of conventional forms of thought, language and literature." (W.R. Connor, "A Post Modernist Thucydides?" *CJ* 72 [1977], 291).

<sup>16</sup> "It cannot be emphasized enough that the few authorial comments by Thucydides, and only such comments, are the evidence from which we can hope to reconstruct Thucydides' opinions" (S. Hornblower, *Thucydides* [London, 1987], 163. To his credit, Hornblower is not unmindful of the fact that one can potentially gain a further understanding of Thucydides' own thought from what one might call "implicit" judgements contained in his account (*ibid.*, 164). This, however, is a perilous enterprise and one must needs proceed with caution. Hobbes long ago recognized that "the narration [of Thucydides] itself doth *secretly* instruct the reader, and more effectually than can possibly be done by precept" (T. Hobbes, "On the Life and History of Thucydides," in *The Peloponnesian War. The Complete Hobbes Translation*, ed. D. Grene [Chicago and London, 1989], 577). But it was Nietzsche, perhaps more than anyone else, who was particularly mindful of the "hidden thoughts" in Thucydides and the inherent difficulties involved (for mere modern men) in understanding Thucydides: "Von der jämmerlichen Schönfärberei der Griechen ins Ideal, die der »klassisch gebildete« Jüngling als Lohn für seine Gymnasial-Dressur ins Leben davonträgt, kuriert nichts so gründlich als Thukydidēs. Man muß ihn Zeile für Zeile umwenden und seine Hintergedanken so deutlich ablesen wie seine Worte: es gibt wenige so hintergedankenreiche Denker....Die griechische Philosophie als die *décadence* des griechischen Instikts; Thukydidēs als die große Summe, die letzte Offenbarung jener starken, strengen, harten Tatsächlichkeit, die dem älteren Hellenen im Instinkte lag. Der *Mut* vor der Realität unterscheidet zuletzt solche Naturen wie Thukydidēs und Plato: Plato ist ein Feigling vor der Realität - *folglich* flüchtet er ins Ideal; Thukydidēs hat *sich* in der Gewalt - *folglich* behält er auch die Dinge in der Gewalt" (F.W. Nietzsche, "Was Ich den Alten Verdanke," in *Götzen-Dämmerung, Nietzsche Werke*, Band II, ed. K. Schlechta [Darmstadt, 1982], 1029).

<sup>17</sup> W.B. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton, 1984), 4-5, 12.

to the study of the ancient Greeks, even if held unconsciously are still held "with all the more unshakeable confidence".<sup>18</sup> The more recent trend in scholarship during the past few decades has been in far too many instances to overreact -often times under the dizzying influence of modern literary theory- to the idea of Thucydides as a "model historian", and, in turn, to portray Thucydides doggedly as a man of overwhelming passion who was concerned chiefly with either achieving a dramatic effect (at the expense of historical accuracy) or simply "forcing" or "imposing" his own (far from impartial) view of events upon the reader.<sup>19</sup> Some scholars, such as Badian,<sup>20</sup> have even gone so far as to accuse Thucydides of actual distortion and malicious suppression of the facts.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Berve quoted in H. Bengtson, *History of Greece from the Beginnings to the Byzantine Era*, tr. E.F. Bloedow (Ottawa, 1988), 359.

<sup>19</sup> Connor provides a valuable summary of the more pronounced characteristics of the recently emerging trends in Thucydidean studies (Connor [*supra* n. 15], 289-298. Connor himself at least seems to think, however, that it may yet be possible for a new generation of scholars "to behold in Thucydides the fusion of *an historian of integrity* with an artist of profound intensity" (*ibid.*, 298). For a more recent summary which includes a consideration of the contributions of "narratology", see now Hornblower's assessment (*CT*, II, 15-19) given in connection with his remarks on some of the perceived limitations of *HCT*. Hornblower, incidentally dates the shift in Thucydidean studies (a shift from an "analyst" to "unitarian" approach) to 1960 (*CT*, II, 15). Connor is a little less specific, but still dates the emergence of the "new Thucydides" to the early 1960's (*ibid.*, 289). Doubtless, the major cultural and societal changes, which have taken place since the early 1960's in the world at large, have been a major factor in the emergence of the "new Thucydides". For a sound critique of the inadequacies of "postmodernism" as a whole, though, and its characteristically "weak thinking" see T.L. Pangle, *The Ennobling of Democracy: The Challenge of the Postmodern Age* (Baltimore and London, 1993), esp. 19-68; cf. also the sound study of Ernest Gellner, *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* (London and New York, 1992), *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> E. Badian, *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentecontaetia* [Baltimore and London, 1993], esp. 125-162.

<sup>21</sup> It is striking that military men and men of action generally (as opposed to armchair academics) have largely proven to be impervious to the more recent trends in scholarship and have managed to retain their sanity and sensibility in continuing to regard Thucydides as a "model historian" and as a man who attained a remarkable degree of impartiality. See, for instance, W. Murray, "War, Theory, Clausewitz, and Thucydides: The Game May Change But the Rules Remain," *Marine Corps Gazette* 81

Thus, it is with good reason that it has been said that now is nothing less than a "defensive time" for Thucydides and Greek historians generally.<sup>22</sup> But is such a current state of affairs desirable or really at all justified? In the case of Badian, for instance, no real *evidence* has been offered by him, as Rhodes has soberly stressed, to *disprove* Thucydides; indeed, Badian's whole approach in his recent series of studies on the *Pentecontaetia* and on Thucydides has consisted in simply reading Thucydides "in an exceptionally suspicious frame of mind."<sup>23</sup> An

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(1997), 62-69; cf. the entry (s.v. Thucydides) in *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, ed. T. Dupuy, C. Johnson & D.L. Bongard (New York, 1992). In the U.S. Marine Corps, Thucydides is still highly regarded as a reliable and conscientious historian and is practically required reading for Marines (Lt. Col. K.W. Estes, *Handbook for Marine NCOs* <sup>4</sup> [Annapolis, 1996], 308-311, esp. 310); cf. *ibid.*, *The Marine Officers Guide* <sup>6</sup> (Annapolis, 1996), 463-466, esp. 465.

<sup>22</sup> P.J. Rhodes, "In Defence of the Greek Historians," *G&R* 41 (1994), 156. Although Rhodes does not consider Thucydides to have been wholly impartial (*ibid.*, 163; cf. 164, 167), and while he justly affirms that Thucydides was by no means infallible (162-163), he at least recognizes that Thucydides should be understood as having made a sincere and concerted effort to arrive at the truth (165). Rhodes certainly does err, though, in supposing that impartiality is somehow closely related to one's receiving professional training as a historian at a modern university (*ibid.*, 166).

<sup>23</sup> Rhodes (*ibid.*), 165-166. But Rhodes surely understates the case because Badian is much more than merely "suspicious" in his reading of Thucydides. What Badian has essentially put forth is an elaborate and extreme theory according to which Thucydides' "main aim" was to show that the war "was started by Sparta in a spirit of ruthless *Realpolitik*, and that this was the culmination of a long series of attempt [*sic*], unscrupulous and at times treacherous, to repress Athenian power, on several occasions when opportunity seemed to offer, between the withdrawal of the Persians and the final vote for war" (Badian [*supra* n. 20]., 118).

This highly idiosyncratic theory is not without its own grave difficulties as Badian himself seems to realize (to some small degree at least). This is because Thucydides does make it quite clear in his narrative that growing Athenian power (which was strongly encouraged by Pericles) was the truest cause of the war (Thuc. I.23.6; cf. I.88) and that Pericles was instrumental in not allowing any concessions to be made to the Peloponnesians (I.127.3, I.140.1; cf. II.13.2.). Badian seeks to avoid this serious problem to his theory by downplaying Thucydides' emphasis on Pericles' role in this respect by conceding only to a "general" acknowledgement on Thucydides' part to Pericles' opposition to any concessions as opposed to any particular acknowledgement of it, and, of course, by dramatically (and perhaps fanatically) having recourse again and again to assertions of untrammelled and unconscionable "activist journalism" by Thucydides (*ibid.*, 158-162, esp. 160-161). For, according to Badian "it [specific acknowledgement] is obscured in detail *wherever possible*" (*ibid.*, 160); cf., though, the

*specific* mention and encouragement for continued *opposition to the Megarian Decree* in Pericles' first speech for war (Thuc. I.140.3-5). But aside from Badian's own earlier admission that Thucydides himself "*stresses*" Pericles' role in bringing about the war (*ibid.*, 153-154), Badian involves himself in further insuperable difficulties by virtue of his additional misguided theory about the speeches of Thucydides being in essence "plausible fiction," albeit with some elements of "authenticity" scattered about here and there (of course, it remains for Badian alone to divine which is which -a very convenient arrangement for him naturally in the various speeches, especially when it comes to using certain statements within them by differing speakers to support the main points of his theory for "suppressed" Athenian actions and the obsessive magnification and "distortion" of Spartan duplicity and oath-breaking). This is particularly evident in his use of the speeches by the Corinthians and Corcyraeans by which he seeks to demonstrate Thucydides' alleged treatment of Sparta's "eagerness for war with Athens," an apparent leitmotif which should be seen as abounding in Thucydides 'the musical theorist' (*ibid.*, 129-130). One cannot ever be certain, though, what Badian really thinks about any given speech in Thucydides since the speech of Sthenalaidas, for instance, is variously described as simply "*fictitious*" (*ibid.*, 147), and as "one of the *most authentic* speeches we have" (*ibid.*, ix). Perhaps it is with good reason, then, that Badian should believe that "objectivity" is not possible for a practicing modern-day historian (*ibid.*, 126). For "objectivity" is the one quality that is conspicuously absent from Badian's entire reading of Thucydides.

Of course, as Gomme noted long ago, those most dogmatic about the speeches in Thucydides being "free inventions" (or "fictitious") have been left with a theory without any real or lasting substance. As he put it: "There is this apparent advantage in the dogmatic announcement that Thucydides' speeches are free invention, that it saves further thought...those historians who have been most dogmatic in announcing that the speeches are inventions, *have yet made full use of them*...we are therefore left with a theory in the air, devoid of application and therefore of meaning" (A.W. Gomme, "The Speeches in Thucydides," *Essays in Greek History and Literature* [Salem, 1988; rpt. of 1937 ed.], 156).

As for Badian's theory about Thucydides' alleged aim to champion Spartan duplicity and oath-breaking as the real cause of the war, it is well worth remembering the frankness with which Thucydides records throughout his narrative the many and repeated instances of, among other things, Athenian misjudgment, errors in policy, and acts of brutality. So much so does he do this as a conscientious recorder of the facts, that it is very hard to fathom why exactly Badian (and others of his ilk) can be so obsessed with such fanciful theories about an attempted vindication of the Athenians (through spin-doctoring) by Thucydides. Rightly did Hobbes say of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who, on the other hand was scandalized by Thucydides' highly *critical* representation of the *Athenians* (especially for their being depicted as *primarily responsible* for the war), that "there was never written so much absurdity in so few lines. He is contrary to the opinion of all men that ever spake of this subject besides himself, and to *common sense*" (Hobbes [*supra* n.16], 581). Unfortunately, Badian is not so sparing and few with his lines.

For a critique of some of the major problems involved in Badian's reconstruction of the chronology of the *pentecontaetia* and his accusation of Athenian spin-doctoring on the part of Thucydides in connection with his account of the dismissal of the Athenian contingent from Ithome, see now E.F. Bloedow, "Why did Sparta rebuff the Athenians at Ithome in 462 BC?" (forthcoming); cf. the judicious remarks of Podlecki on the "daredevil" tactics of Badian (A.J. Podlecki, *Perikles and His Circle* [London and New York, 1998], 134-135. Hornblower, wisely regarded it "as a *capital* error to mistake the abuse of Sparta, which Thucydides puts into the mouths of certain of his speakers, for Thucydides' *own* views" (Hornblower [*supra* n.16], 163).

approach which, perhaps, may win the adulation of adoring sycophants and those intent on being current with the latest fashions in literary theories, but it is one which will not gain the assent of those given to sober scholarship.

An instance of the overzealous attribution of certain sentiments to Thucydides is particularly evident in discussions surrounding his famous assessment of Pericles and his political and military policy (Thuc. II.65.1-13). This assessment, or biographical sketch, has served as the basis for the notion, widely accepted amongst modern scholars, that Thucydides was an unabashed admirer of Pericles *and* Athenian ἀρχή as Pericles understood it and sought to maintain (and expand) it. The principal, and perhaps most representative, exponent of this view has been de Romilly, and it is a view that has not been lacking in adherents.<sup>24</sup> But while it is true that Thucydides' assessment of Pericles is not unfavorable to Pericles, at the same time it is not nearly as commendatory and eulogistic as some would believe.

In a recent study, however, Rasmussen has drawn attention to the highly specialized vocabulary which Thucydides employs in making his

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<sup>24</sup> J. de Romilly, 'L'optimisme de Thucydide et le jugement de l' historien sur Périclès,' *REG* 78 (1965), 557-575; *ibid.*, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*, tr. P. Thody (Salem, 1988; rpt. of 1963 ed.), 110-155; cf. Hornblower, *CT*, I, 340-348; G. Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War* [London and New York, 1997], 2-7, 56). Thus, even Starr, for instance, who does not hold a very favorable view of Pericles at all, a man whom he considered in fact to be "of all ancient figures....the most devastating influence on his state" (C.G. Starr, *The Birth of Athenian Democracy: The Assembly in the Fifth Century B.C.*, [New York and Oxford, 1990], 30), still believes that Thucydides, at any rate, was a "great admirer" of Pericles and that for him Pericles was none other than a "hero" (*ibid.*, 29); cf. C.G. Starr, "Athens and its Empire," *CJ* 83 (1988), 122. For

political assessments and in describing political *μανευ*ring,<sup>25</sup> drawing comparison with the other instances in Thucydides of the use of *πρόνοια*.<sup>26</sup> As Rasmussen shows, it is a term which must not be regarded as attributing to Pericles any special or "unique powers of prophesy." Moreover, a further comparison with the ability of being *μέτριος*,<sup>27</sup> an ability or quality by no means restricted to Pericles in the able administration of political and military matters, helps to provide some much needed perspective: both words, in fact, are best understood in application to Pericles in Thucydides' biographical sketch as precise descriptions and *neutral* "technical labels" and *not* as "ideological declarations" at all.<sup>28</sup> After all, Thucydides' allegedly high regard for Periclean democracy must always be balanced by consideration of his own explicit pronouncement on the Rule of the Five Thousand (VIII.97.2):

καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα δὴ τὸν πρῶτον χρόνον ἐπὶ γε ἐμοῦ  
 Ἀθηναῖοι φαίνονται εὖ πολιτεύσαντες· μετρία γὰρ ἦ  
 τε ἐς τοὺς ὀλίγους καὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς ξύγκρασις  
 ἐγένετο.

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an opposing view, see H. Strasburger, "Thukydides und die politische Selbstdarstellung der Athener," *Hermes* 86 (1958), 17-40, esp. 29 n.5.

<sup>25</sup> A.H. Rasmussen, "Thucydides on Pericles (Thuc. 2.65)," *C&M* 46 (1995), 25-46.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Thuc. II.89.9, IV.108.4, VI.13.1, VIII.57.2, VIII.95.4.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Thuc., I.6.4, I.77.2, II.35.2, III.36.4, IV.19.2, IV.19.4, IV.20.2, IV.22.3, IV.30.4, IV.81.2, IV.105.2, IV.108.2, V.111.4 (two times), VI.88.1, VI.89.5, VII.24.6, VIII.84.5, VIII.97.2. Rasmussen (*supra* n.25), 31-33.

<sup>28</sup> Rasmussen [*supra* n.25], 45. If one were to insist upon making any sort of "ideological declarations" at all, then it would seem that Thucydides, if anything, thought much more highly of the "moderate" nature of Brasidas, whose moderate actions he repeatedly emphasizes (Thuc. IV.81.2, IV.105.2, IV.108.2), something which he does not do in the case of Pericles.

Additionally, it cannot be stressed enough that *πρόνοια* ought not be regarded as a complete guarantor against any and all mistakes in judgement or action. Even the most intelligent are capable of making mistakes; cf. the wise pronouncement of Tiresias: ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστι τοῦ ξαμαρτάνειν (Soph., *Ant.* 1023-1024).

Even more noteworthy than this, though, is that Thucydides has another highly specialized vocabulary for what Syme calls the "supreme virtue": ξύνεισις ("intelligence").<sup>29</sup> Being, therefore, the 'supreme virtue' that it is, ξύνεισις is a quality and capacity of the mind which is rarely imputed to men by Thucydides (or others), so much so, in fact that it is restricted by Thucydides to only a few select men; men who have been admitted into what Bloedow has aptly called "the inner circle of the intelligent."<sup>30</sup> Syme's catalog consists of the following: Archidamus (I.79.2),<sup>31</sup> Themistocles (I.138.2-3)<sup>32</sup>; Theseus (II.15.2); Brasidas (IV.81.2); Hermocrates (VI.72.2); the Peisistratids (VI.54.5); the Athenian oligarchs as a class (VIII.68.4); and Phrynichus (VIII.27.5).<sup>33</sup>

Syme regards the fact that Pericles "comes in by indirect allusion" of no real consequence since for Thucydides (according to Syme at least) it

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<sup>29</sup> R. Syme, "Thucydides (Lecture on a Master Mind)," *PBA* 48 (1960), 56.

<sup>30</sup> E.F. Bloedow, "Alcibiades 'brilliant' or 'intelligent?'" *Historia* 41 (1992), 140; *ibid.*, "An Alexander in the wrong place: Alcibiades 'the ablest of all the sons of the Athens?'" *SCO* 41 (1991), 198.

<sup>31</sup> Thucydides does not *directly* accord the supreme virtue to Archidamus but refers to the view held of Archidamus: ἀνὴρ καὶ ξυνετὸς δοκῶν εἶναι καὶ σώφρων (Thuc. I.79.2). It is worthy of note that Thucydides does not ever refer to Pericles as being σώφρων. Indeed, as Badian has pointed out, Archidamus is the only man described in Thucydides as being σώφρων (Badian [*supra* n.20], 230 n.40). True to his theory, though, Badian regards the description of Archidamus as σώφρων as possibly ironical (*ibid.*, 140).

<sup>32</sup> It is noteworthy that Themistocles is further characterized as being able to predict happenings in the very distant future (I.138.3). Thucydides is not nearly so specific and generous when speaking about Pericles' πρόνοια. Moreover, as Rasmussen stresses, Thucydides' assessment of Pericles' strategy is that of one which was designed to enable Athens to περιῆναι/περιγίγνεσθαι ("hold out", "survive", "endure") over the *short* term, not a war lasting upwards of 27 years (Rasmussen [*supra* n.25], 40-41). The positive valuation of the policy, if there be any, is strictly limited to a specific form of "victory".

<sup>33</sup> Syme (*supra* n.29), 55. Hornblower would have us add the Scythians (Thuc. II.97.6) to the catalog, but this is questionable (Hornblower, *CT*, I, 125).

was "idle and superfluous thus to specify that paramount talent."<sup>34</sup> But, if anything, Thucydides was a *very* careful writer who wrote with great precision and so Syme's tantalizing, but in the end questionable solution to the restriction is hardly worthy of acceptance. It is far more advantageous to consider first whether or not Thucydides may have had some special reason for not admitting Pericles into the "inner circle" *directly*. Hornblower, in emphasizing the insight of Zahn, concurs that ξύνεσις is *not* without its "attendant risks" and that "when Thucydides wishes to confer *the* supreme accolade on a true leader he joins ξυνετός to some other quality which will exclude the risks, often a quality with 'Spartan' associations, like σώφρων."<sup>35</sup> Might it be the case that

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<sup>34</sup> Pericles is granted the 'supreme virtue' *indirectly* (as is Archidamus) in that the Athenians chose to have Pericles give the Funeral Oration since Pericles was a man regarded by *them* as being μη άξύνετος (Thuc. II.34.6).

<sup>35</sup> Hornblower, *CT*, I, 125. Thus Brasidas is described as displaying άρετή και ξύνεσις (IV.81.2) as are the Peisistratids (VI.54.5). Cf. the sound assessment of Rasmussen: "But how does Pericles fare in a comparison with Themistocles and Brasidas? In my opinion he fades into the background. Apart from the *rhetorically supreme speeches* which Thucydides puts into his mouth, he does not make anything like so brilliant an impression as Themistocles or Brasidas; and these examples can be expanded to include Hermocrates, the Peisistratidae, etc." (Rasmussen [*supra* n. 25], 45). The highly persuasive speeches of Pericles have over time mastered much more than merely the Athenian δῆμος. There is, however, an additional point worth scrutinizing which seems to have escaped the notice of Rasmussen, namely, the interesting fact that only one person in the entire work of Thucydides is described as being ώσπερ άθλητής: Brasidas (IV.121.1).

Grote noted with respect to this peculiar usage and its general significance that the "sympathy and admiration felt in Greece towards a victorious athlete was not merely an intense sentiment in the Grecian mind, but was, perhaps of all others, the most widespread and Pan-hellenic. It was connected with the religion, the taste, and the love of recreation, common to the whole nation -while politics tended to disunite the separate cities: it was farther a sentiment at once familiar and exclusively personal. Of its exaggerated intensity throughout Greece the philosophers often complained, not without good reason. But Thucydides cannot convey a more lively idea of the enthusiasm and unanimity with which Brasidas was welcomed at Skione just after the desperate resolutions taken by the citizens, than by using this simile" (George Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. 6 [London, 1851], 601). Pericles is nowhere described as anything



Pericles was lacking significantly in such a quality with 'Spartan' associations as σώφρων ?

Cairns, on the other hand, in seeking to advance a reason why verbal "echoes" of Pericles have been found in the speech of Cleon, has offered as a solution that a Homeric literary model is at the basis of the echoes, suggesting that Pericles represents Achilles, while Cleon represents Thersites, ruling out, in turn, that the echoes are either meaningless or accidental.<sup>36</sup> While this suggestion by Cairns is quite intriguing, and while it is more plausible than other suggestions which would render the echoes meaningless, it is one which makes some unwarranted assumptions.

To begin with, as Hornblower has noted, one need not assume historical artifice on the part of Thucydides when one detects such echoes since it is entirely feasible that later political leaders may "echo"

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like an ἀθλητής by Thucydides, but Plutarch may, in fact, have had this very passage concerning Brasidas in mind in the course of his description of the rousing Athenian reception of Pericles after Pericles had returned from the successful reduction of Samos and delivered a funeral oration in honour of those who had died in the war (*Per.*, XXVIII.3-4); cf. *HCT*, IV, 610.

<sup>36</sup> F. Cairns, "Cleon and Pericles: A Suggestion," *JHS* 102 (1982), 203-204. "Thucydides intended his readers to keep Thersites in mind when evaluating Cleon and wanted to associate Pericles with Achilles" (*ibid.*, 204). One of the so-called 'echoes', though, would seem to argue for something much more than a mere 'echo' in that it points to a very close connection between the understanding of Athenian rule as an outright τυραννίς by Cleon, and the policy which should follow from this understanding (Thuc. III.37.2), and the understanding of Athenian rule as something like a tyranny (ὡς τυραννίς) by Pericles (Thuc. II.63.2). The slight qualification of Pericles, however, need not be taken as grounds for seeing a significant type of difference in the view of Athenian rule by either Cleon or Pericles. Indeed, the qualification on the part of Pericles may very well have been motivated by a genuine fear of calling to mind too freely any previous τύραννοι, especially since he was keenly aware of his own resemblance to the tyrant Peisistratus, a resemblance which made him very cautious towards the *demos* as a young man: Ὁ δὲ Περικλῆς νέος μὲν ὦν σφόδρα τὸν δῆμον εὐλαβεῖτο (Plut., *Per.* VII.1).

an earlier one, such as, he suggests, former President Reagan or former Prime Minister Thatcher may have echoed Sir Winston Churchill in a speech from time to time.<sup>37</sup>

As for Pericles, it may well be that if we are to view him as another Achilles, it is not because Thucydides himself "intended" this merely as a form of some kind of "rhetorical manipulation" (with the added purpose of encouraging what one may consider a thesitical view of Cleon). On the contrary, it may well be that as a conscientious recorder of the speeches of Pericles and Cleon, Thucydides wished merely to record the fact that in some way or another Pericles *himself* encouraged the Athenians to regard him as a type of new Achilles, and conversely, that Cleon made a calculated conscious (or perhaps a completely unconscious) effort in real life to imitate this "new Achilles", as it were. But if this be the case, we must not overlook the further implication of all of this, as Cairns himself has duly admitted in advancing his theory of a literary model, namely, that Achilles was a "notoriously *flawed* character."<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps, then, it was awareness of just such a flaw in Pericles' character which prevented Thucydides from directly placing Pericles in the "inner circle of the intelligent" or, as the case may be, the further 'inner circle' within "the inner circle" of those men who are ξυνέτοι. For a possible answer to this problem, we must needs turn to Homer.

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<sup>37</sup> Hornblower (*supra* n.16), 59.

τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαίδευκεν οὗτος ὁ ποιητής [Ἵμῆρος],  
καὶ πρὸς διοίκησιν τε καὶ παιδείαν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων  
πραγμάτων ἄξιος ἀναλαμβάνει μανθάνειν τε καὶ κατὰ  
τοῦτον τὸν ποιητὴν πάντα τὸν αὐτοῦ βίον κατασκευ-  
ασάμενον ζῆν.

Pl., *Rep.* 606E.

## I.2 Aim and Method: Homer & Pericles

The examination of an area of Thucydidean studies which has played a relatively small part hitherto, namely, the role and influence of Homer in the narrative of Thucydides and the speeches contained therein is an area which holds considerable promise.<sup>39</sup> Building upon the recent studies of Mackie and Allison in particular, both of whom have been principally concerned with showing the extent of Homeric influences in the narrative of the Sicilian expedition and the specific manner in which distinctly Homeric expressions can be shown to heighten the tragic dimensions of the suffering which the Athenians were forced to endure in

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<sup>38</sup> Cairns (*supra* n.36), 102.

<sup>39</sup> The various problems surrounding the "Homeric Question" and the debate which still rages about who Homer was, whether or not Homer is in fact the author of both *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, and the exact date of composition for both epics, are problems which have no great bearing on this examination. It will be sufficient to observe here that for the ancient Greeks (including Thucydides), Homer was *the* poet and regarded as the master mind of both epics: ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα μάλιστα ποιητὴς Ἵμῆρος ἦν... οὕτως καὶ τὰ τῆς κωμωδίας σχήματα πρῶτος ὑπέδειξε οὐ ψόγον ἀλλὰ τὸ γελοῖον δραματοποιήσας· ὁ γὰρ Μαργίτης ἀνάλογον ἔχει, ὥσπερ Ἰλιάς καὶ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια πρὸς τὰς τραγωδίας, οὕτω καὶ οὗτος πρὸς τὰς κωμωδίας (Arist., *Poet.* 1448b12; cf. 1458a5 for Aristotle's remarks on Homer being θεσπέσιος "divinely inspired"). Of course, Aristotle was not unusual in attributing to Homer more works than just the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Thus Thucydides considered even the *Hymn to Apollo* as a work of Homer and as clear evidence for the type of ancient festival at Delos containing an ἀγών... καὶ γυμνικὸς καὶ μουσικὸς (Thuc. III.104.4-6). Cf. the general remarks on the Greek understanding of Homer in *OCD* <sup>2</sup> (s.v. Homer). Material for our purposes from Homer, however, will be restricted to the two epic poems.

Sicily,<sup>40</sup> and reconsidering further the much neglected work of Smith on epic usages in Thucydides as a whole,<sup>41</sup> we shall endeavour to see how the application of a more Homeric reading of the speeches of the tragically flawed Pericles in particular can enrich our understanding of the speeches themselves, and, what is more, enable us to understand more fully the policy and conduct of Pericles in relation to: 1) his greatest rival, Cimon, son of Miltiades; 2) the outbreak of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War; 3) his decision to encourage and maintain Athenian 'resolve' (γνώμη) in the war against the Peloponnesians.

Naturally, this will necessitate regarding the speeches as reasonably accurate historical evidence for what was actually said by any given speaker, for our purposes chiefly Pericles, whose speeches Thucydides most likely would have heard himself when still in Athens. Unfortunately, the only real consensus that can be said to exist concerning the speeches in Thucydides is that there is *no* consensus, with not a few scholars seeing an "unresolved contradiction" in Thucydides' programmatic statement on his use of speeches in his account (I.22.1).<sup>42</sup> However, objections to the speeches, either with

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<sup>40</sup> C.J. Mackie, "Homer and Thucydides: Corcyra and Sicily," *CQ* 46 (1996), 103-113; June W. Allison, "Homeric Allusions at the Close of Thucydides' Sicilian Narrative," *AJP* 118 (1997), 499-516. Cf. also the recent comparative study of Nicias and Agamemnon (A.V. Zadorojnyi, "Thucydides' Nicias and Homer's Agamemnon," *CQ* 48 [1998], 298-303).

<sup>41</sup> C.F. Smith, "Traces of Epic Usage in Thucydides," *TAPA* 31 (1900), 69-81. This study was an outgrowth of an earlier analysis of tragic usages in Thucydides, idem, "Traces of Tragic Usage in Thucydides," *TAPA* 22 (1891), xvi-xxi.

<sup>42</sup> Most notable in this regard is Hornblower (*supra* n. 16), 65; cf. *CT*, I, 59-60. Develin, though, is probably right in saying that to some degree at least modern scholars have

regard to their tone or content,<sup>43</sup> as Garrity has duly stressed, have largely been *subjective* and based on the feeling that the speeches simply could not have been delivered as recorded by Thucydides.<sup>44</sup>

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"over-complicated what is essentially a straightforward statement" (Develin [*supra* n.12], 58; cf. Garrity (*supra* n.8), 361-363.

<sup>43</sup> The two-fold nature of the objection to the speeches has been pointed out by Dover, who is not incorrect in believing that "skepticism about the tone is probably *misplaced*" and that "skepticism about the content is often *subjective*" (K.J. Dover, *Thucydides* [Oxford, 1973], 24). Concerning the former, Grant has called attention to the tone of Greek diplomacy which was anything but marked by cordiality and niceties (G.M. Grant, "A Note on the Tone of Greek Diplomacy," *CQ* n.s. 15 [1965], 261-266; cf. Connor [*supra* n.17], 13 n.22). The strong and vivid words of Rab-shakeh serve well as a moving reminder of the harshness which was often given full expression in the ancient world: καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς Ραφακῆς Μὴ ἐπι τὸν κύριόν σου καὶ πρὸς σέ ἀπέστειλεν με ὁ κύριος μου λαλῆσαι τοὺς λόγους τούτους; οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας τοὺς καθημένους ἐπὶ τοῦ τείχους τοῦ φαγεῖν τὴν κόπρον αὐτῶν καὶ πιεῖν τὸ οὔρον αὐτῶν μεθ' ὑμῶν ἅμα; (4 Kt., XVIII.27 [LXX]).

Concerning the objections to content, such objections seem largely to stem from a very naïve and highly sanitized view of modern political relations and the content of diplomatic exchanges as they are more widely represented in the mass media. However, a closer consideration of the internal workings of contemporary *Realpolitik* proves to be illuminating. In the top secret (at the time) *Policy Planning Study #23* written in 1948, G. Kennan, the head of the U.S. State Department planning staff, was moved to write the following: "In this situation [of disparate wealth and power in relation to the rest of the world], we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships, which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity....To do so we will have to *dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming*....We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world benefaction...We should cease to talk about vague and -for the Far East- unreal standards and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in *straight power concepts*. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better" (N. Chomsky, *Turning the Tide: The U.S. and Latin America* <sup>2</sup> [Montreal & New York, 1987], 48). Kennan, incidentally, did not remain at his post for very long after the penning of *PPS #23* because it was felt that he was not sufficiently "hawkish" (*ibid.*, 48); cf. the collection of documents in T.H. Etzold & J.L. Gaddis (ed.), *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950* [New York, 1978], *passim*). More recently, it was widely reported that the Serbians were unwilling to negotiate in good faith and to accept the 'reasonable' proposals of the Western Powers at Rambouillet. However, it has subsequently been revealed that the terms offered by NATO were set at such a high level (e.g., 'independence' for Serbian Kosovo, a condition which was *dropped* after the bombing campaign), particularly at the instigation of U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (who harbors an intense hatred of Orthodox Serbs, despite the fact that her life was *twice* saved by them), so as to give the Serbians little choice but to reject the proposed agreement. It has also been revealed that the setting of terms at such a high level *vis-a-vis* the Serbs provided an occasion for much *boasting and gloating* by Mme. Albright. For detailed files on the basic propensities of Mme. Albright and her key role in the war, see now B. Works, "Mme Albright and Kosovo," 10 April 1999. [http://www.sirius.com/backgrounders/Archives\\_Kosovo/Albright-Kosovo.html](http://www.sirius.com/backgrounders/Archives_Kosovo/Albright-Kosovo.html) (27 November 1999).

A typical instance of such an objection may be found with respect to Pericles' statement in his final speech that all things are subject to decay and growth (II.64.3): πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι. This general and rather melancholic expression by Pericles has been taken as a purportedly clear indication of late composition by Thucydides and an expression of his own feelings (in reaction to criticism at the time) on the nature of Athenian ἀρχή and its disintegration after the war. Andrewes, following de Romilly,<sup>45</sup> thinks that it is "improbable" that Pericles would have himself given expression to such a sentiment in a speech while, at the same time, attempting to increase morale. Andrewes concludes from this apparent improbability that Thucydides has "escaped into the abstract again, to try conclusions with the problem which haunted him

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Of course, the boasting and highly provocative words of the Athenians in the speech given at Sparta before the outbreak of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War (Thuc. I.73-78) has led some scholars to think that Thucydides has invented much in the speech. Such scholars would do well to think anew upon the matter, even if the boastings of Mme. Albright have not been widely reported on the Cable News Network (CNN) which apparently takes its viewers "around the world in 30 minutes"; cf. the judicious remarks of Hornblower on the Athenian embassy and the plausibility of regarding the Athenian speech as a faithful record of the actual speech given (CT, I, 117; *ibid.*, [*supra* n.16], 55).

<sup>44</sup> "Often, arguments against the historicity of the speeches have been based, ultimately, on an appeal to the sensibilities of the modern reader, and they have often, too, consisted of little more than subjective judgements such as 'It is difficult to believe that someone spoke as the historian reports that he did.' Such assertions continue to be made and defended despite a considerable body of early stylistic studies of Thucydides' prose that has produced objective comparanda on the basis of which it is possible to conclude that one could not, to be sure, assert that given speakers spoke as Thucydides reports, but rather that it is at least clear that they might well have spoken in that manner -that they could have spoken in that manner- since the ideas were then so current as to find expression in tragedy" (Garrity [*supra* n.8], 377).

<sup>45</sup> A. Andrewes, "The Melian Dialogue and Perikles' Last Speech," *PCPhS* 186 (1960), 8; de Romilly (*supra* n.24), 149.

throughout."<sup>46</sup> However, there is nothing in the gnomic utterance which truly warrants such a conclusion.

It would certainly be an error to assume that simply because the gnomic utterance πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι seems out of place (at least to those reposing and engaging in Thucydidean meditations within the comfortable confines of L'Académie française) in a speech designed to raise morale, that the statement is therefore unhistorical (and decisive evidence for late composition and for the obtrusion of Thucydides' own views into a Periclean war speech).<sup>47</sup> Pericles' gnomic utterance is reflective of, if anything, a tragic cast of mind contemporary with his own period, and it is not at all inconceivable that Pericles should issue forth with what one may easily construe as a Sophoclean expression of the nature of men and cities, particularly when Athens was then suffering from the dreadful effects of the plague, a disease which eventually took Pericles' own life, in addition to a large number of his family members and friends.<sup>48</sup> For the idea that time eventually withers

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<sup>46</sup> Andrewes (*supra* n. 32), 8. The "problem" being, of course, the "problem" of Athenian ἀρχή.

<sup>47</sup> "The pessimism of 'all things must diminish' need not reflect a post-war perspective" (T. Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* [Oxford, 1998], 142); cf. Gomme's manly and sensible pugnacity: "Many have said that the commonplace which follows, πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι, must have been written after 404 B.C.; foolishly, for it is something that all know" (*HCT*, II, 178). But while it is something that all may know, it is something from which all too many moderns, alas, seek to "escape" in the manner of -as Nietzsche would have it- ein Feigling vor der Realität.

<sup>48</sup> As Plutarch relates: ἀπέθανε γὰρ ὁ Ξάνθιππος ἐν τῷ λοιμῷ νοήσας. Ἀπέβαλε δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν ὁ Περικλῆς τότε καὶ τῶν κηδεστῶν καὶ φιλῶν τοὺς καὶ χρησιμωτάτους πρὸς τὴν πολιορκίαν (*Per.* XXXVI.3-4). The death of his last remaining legitimate son, Paralus, apparently caused Pericles to finally break his austere demeanor and weep in public for the first time (*ibid.*, XXXVI.4-5).

away all things (men, cities, etc.) is frequently expressed by Sophocles,<sup>49</sup> a friend and fellow στρατηγός of Pericles during the Samian campaign,<sup>50</sup> in his various tragedies:

πανθ' ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαραινει.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, a case can certainly be made for even a Homeric, and equally suitable tragic,<sup>52</sup> understanding of Pericles' gnomic utterance insofar as, among other things, the passing of the generations of men was impressively related by Glaucus, son of Hippolochus, to Diomedes, son of Tydeus (*Il.*, VI.146-149):

οἴη περ φύλλων γενεή, τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

<sup>49</sup> Considered by Beye, for instance, to be "the *most Homeric* of the tragedians" (C.R. Beye, "Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the Homeric Embassy," *TAPA* 101 [1970], 63); cf. Aeschylus, who thought that his plays were mere "snippets from the feast of Homer":  
<sup>50</sup> Plut., *Per.* VIII.5; cf. Stadter, *Pericles*, 109, 209. However, the relationship between the two of them, especially in light of Sophocles' erotic interests (Plut., *Per.* VIII.5; cf. Pl, *Rep.* 329B-C.), may not have been the most congenial (P. Stadter, "Pericles Among the Intellectuals," *ICS* 16 [1991], 118-119). Sophocles, of course, was well aware of the utterly overpowering effects of ἔρωσ (Soph., *El.* 197-200; *Ant.* 781-800; *Tr.* 441-444, 488-489, 499-530; fr. 684 (Radt).

<sup>51</sup> Soph., *Aj.* 714, cf. 132-133 and 1081-1083 (the ὕβρις of a man which can lay low an entire city); *O.C.* 609; fr. 954 (Radt). On the specific perishability of the ἰσχὺς γῆς (*O.C.* 610-613; cf. 1211-1223).

<sup>52</sup> For penetrating remarks on the tragic dimensions to Pericles' thought in his Funeral Oration and his final speech, see C. Macleod, "Thucydides and Tragedy," *Collected Essays* (Oxford, 1983), 152-153. In the last analysis, though, Macleod aptly concludes that "great artists and thinkers need great artists and thinkers: it was *Homer* more than any other poet or writer who taught the tragedians and Thucydides to express and interpret what they lived through in their own time" (*ibid.*, 158). See also Hornblower, *CT*, I, 339; cf., though, his tentativeness on Achilles foreseeing his own death in *The Iliad* and its possible effect on the attitude of Pericles: "That Pericles calmly envisages the end of the Athenian Empire has seemed more worrying, but *perhaps* this sentence should be seen less as a 'prediction' than as 'Homeric': Homer's Achilles foresaw his own death....It *may* indeed be Thucydides, not Pericles, who is here speaking, although a Homeric attitude on the part of the historical Pericles can hardly be ruled out" (Hornblower, *Thucydides* [*supra* n. 16], 65). But to attribute to Thucydides here the sentiments expressed in a speech *by Pericles* would violate, no doubt, Hornblower's own stated principles about 'authorial comments' and indeed constitute the 'capital error' he expressly warns against elsewhere (*ibid.*, 163-164). The qualifications are something less than necessary. The focus should rather be on possible sources for Pericles' stated sentiment.



φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἄνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ' ὕλη  
 τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη·  
 ὡς ἀνδρῶν γενεὴ ἢ μὲν φύει ἢ δ' ἀποληγεί.<sup>53</sup>

What is more, the great warrior Hector, son of Priam, even at a time during the fighting when the conditions are favorable for the Trojans, is shown by the poet to be entirely capable of reflecting upon the future destruction of sacred Ilios in his famous speech to Andromache (*Il.* VI.447-449):

εὔ γὰρ ἐγὼ τόδε οἶδα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν·  
 ἔσσεται ἡμᾶρ ὅτ' ἂν ποτ' ὀλώλη Ἴλιος ἱρή  
 καὶ Πριάμος καὶ λαὸς ἐϋμμελίω Πριάμοιο.

What is significant about Hector's speech to Andromache as a whole (441-465) is its combination of two different styles of thought: "the severe and the heroic on the one hand, the intimate and the compassionate on the other."<sup>54</sup> Even more significant, though, is that Hector's reflections upon the future doom of Ilios do not lead him to succumb to any sort of effeminate pleadings, general stultification, or paralysis of action. On the

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. the words of Apollo on the passing of mortal men (*Il.*, XXI.463-466). Kirk notes with regard to the simile of Glaucus that it "carries no suggestion of rebirth, but means that life is transient and one generation succeeds another" (Kirk, *Iliad*, II, 176); cf. B. Harries, "'Strange Meeting': Diomedes and Glaucus in *Iliad* 6," *G&R* 40 (1993), 138-139. Edwards, more interestingly, draws attention to other ancient literary parallels to Homer's expression here with some very pertinent discussion of details (M.W. Edwards, *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* [Baltimore & London, 1987], 203-205), especially *Sir.* XIV. 17-18 [LXX]:

πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιοῦται  
 ἢ γὰρ διαθήκη ἀπ' αἰῶνος Θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ.  
 ὡς φύλλον θάλλον ἐπὶ δένδρου δασέος,  
 τὰ μὲν καταβάλλει, ἄλλα δὲ φύει,  
 οὕτως γενεὰ σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος,  
 ἢ μὲν τελευτᾷ, ἑτέρα δὲ γεννᾶται.

contrary, animated by a proper sense of shame,<sup>55</sup> Hector, after expressing great sorrow at the thought of Andromache being enslaved after the fall of Ilios, will later show himself to be *eager* and quite capable for dread warfare;<sup>56</sup> likewise, the "melancholy foreknowledge" of Achilles of his own death (*Il.*, XXI.111; cf. Kirk, *Iliad*, I, 348) does not lead to any paralysis of action. On the contrary, in Achilles' case the recognition occurs in the midst of his own ἀριστεῖα and *before* his final duel with Hector. Viewed in this Homeric light, then, Pericles' πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἔλασσοῦσθαι need not prove to be so "worrying" (Hornblower). Indeed, on the basis of a "Homeric attitude," the statement may reasonably be seen as not at all inappropriate in the circumstances in which it is given and, furthermore, the distinct possibility of its being received by those who heard the speech (men in the midst of war and deliberating about war) as an actual incentive or a *spur to action* ought

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<sup>54</sup> Kirk, *Iliad*, II, 219.

<sup>55</sup> Hector makes it abundantly clear in the most succinct manner at the very outset of his speech that he will not be deterred from going into battle because he has a strong sense of αἰδῶς and a fear of being κακός (*Il.*, VI.441-443):

ἦ καὶ ἐμοὶ τάδε πάντα μέλει, γύναι· ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰνῶς  
αἰδέομαι Τρῶας καὶ Τρωάδας ἔλκεσιπέπλους,  
αἶ κε κακὸς ὧς νόσφιν ἀλυσκάζω πολέμοιο·

<sup>56</sup> Kirk, in comparing the words of Hector (*Il.*, VI.447-449) with exactly the same words about the fall of Ilios in another context, namely, between Agamemnon and Menelaus (163-165) makes the following keen observation: "The effect [of Agamemnon's words] is no less powerful...but its tone, confident and assertive rather than pathetic and resigned, shows how repeated language can take on different colouring according to context, without awkwardness or loss of impact...It is to be noted how Hector admits his foreboding here but will be full of confidence later, in the excitement of battle" (Kirk, *Iliad*, II, 220; cf. I, 348).

not be lightly dismissed;<sup>57</sup> in fact, the gnomic utterance is in keeping with what one may identify as the inexorable logic and inner dynamic of the Homeric hero's code of conduct: in the face of death and potential perishability, one must all the more summon forth a tremendous effort to win renown (κλέος).

Certainly, then, the largely subjective objections which have been raised against the historicity of the speeches in Thucydides are not in any way compelling upon more serious reflection, and, as Gomme has most judiciously stressed, those dogmatically opposed to the speeches as reliable forms of evidence are in the end left with nothing but a "theory in the air."<sup>58</sup>

Currently, the nature of the relationship of Thucydides to Homer is an area of study in which no meaningful level of scholarly unanimity can be

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<sup>57</sup> For if the δύναμις of Athens (and its concomitant τιμή) be subject to a natural form of decay, it stands to reason (for the Homeric hero) to seize the initiative in garnering τιμή as much as possible and as soon as possible.

<sup>58</sup> Gomme (*supra* n.22), 156. This is no place to add to the vast literature and ongoing controversy concerning Thucydides' statement of purpose in his so-called "chapter on method" (I.22.1). The seminal discussion on the speeches still remains that of Gomme (*supra* n.22), 156-189; cf. *HCT*, I, 138-148. Other sensible treatments of the subject which confirm a reasonable level of historical accuracy for the speeches include: F.E. Adcock, *Thucydides and His History* (Cambridge, 1963), 27-42; Dover (*supra* n. 28), 21-27; D. Kagan, "The Speeches in Thucydides and the Mytilene Debate," *YCS* 24 (1975), 71-94; C. Farrar, *The Origins of Democratic Thinking: The invention of politics in classical Athens* [Cambridge, 1988], 131-137; C. Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides* [Princeton, 1994], 207-212; Garrity (*supra* n.8), 361-384. A full and useful bibliography has been compiled by West (W.C. West III, "A Bibliography of Scholarship on the Speeches in Thucydides 1873-1970" in P.A. Stadter (ed.), *The Speeches in Thucydides* [Chapel Hill, 1973], 124-161).

That the vast majority of ancient historians *after* Thucydides freely composed the speeches in their own historical works with little or no regard for historical accuracy must not be held against Thucydides himself. One ancient historian, however, whose accuracy in recording speeches most closely approximates that of Thucydides is St. Luke the Evangelist (F.F. Bruce, "The Acts of the Apostles: Historical Record or

said to exist concerning the major epic poems and "a strong *direct* influence on Thucydides' narrative and speeches,"<sup>59</sup> with no less a figure than Hornblower, who, admittedly, is more sensitive than most commentators to Homeric influences, remaining rather equivocal on the matter.<sup>60</sup> Increasingly, though, it is becoming an area of lively and engaging topicality, as Hornblower puts it, and the publication of the "New Simonides" will surely serve to sustain this growing interest for many years to come insofar as the "New Simonides" now furnishes us with a much needed bridge between fifth-century historiography and epic.<sup>61</sup>

At first sight, of course, the relatively small interest shown on the part of modern scholars in Homeric influences on Thucydides (and the individuals in his account) would in fact appear to be justified. As Mackie has written recently, "Homeric epic represented a world long gone, and was seen by Thucydides as an essentially *unreliable* source for the facts

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Theological Reconstruction?" *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.25.3 [1985], 2582-2588).

<sup>59</sup> Mackie (*supra* n. 40), 112.

<sup>60</sup> While acknowledging a "pretty thorough knowledge of Homer" by Thucydides, Hornblower still concludes that such "strict proof of Homeric influence on the wartime narrative, or speeches" is not to be had (S. Hornblower, *Greek Historiography* [Oxford, 1994], 65). More recently, though, in the second volume of his ongoing *Commentary on Thucydides* (published in 1996), Hornblower would seem to have arrived at a greater appreciation of the importance of Homer in Thucydides. In a section of his introduction to the second volume entitled "Thucydides' presentation of Brasidas: iv. 11-v. 11 as the *aristeia* of Brasidas?" Hornblower discusses at some length the "literary" description of Brasidas and "hard historical items" (CT, II, 38-61). His conclusion, however, that Thucydides was somehow or other "infatuated" about "the literary Brasidas he had created" (CT, II, 60) is, to say the least, rather odd indeed and certainly unsatisfactory as it now stands. To be noted, of course, is that Hornblower's title to the section in question does end with a question mark, and that his equivocation continues still.

<sup>61</sup> Hornblower, CT, II, 39-40.

of history (1.21)."<sup>62</sup> In addition to this, the famous statement of Pericles in his *λόγος ἐπιτάφιος* concerning Homer specifically, or any other poet who provides only a temporary delight to his listeners, would seem to confirm the idea that we need not look for very much in the way of Homeric influences in Thucydides' account (Thuc. II.41.4):

μετὰ μεγάλων δὲ σημείων καὶ οὐ δὴ τοὶ ἀμάρτυρόν γε  
τὴν δύναμιν παρασχόμενοι τοῖς τε νῦν καὶ τοῖς ἔπειτα  
θαυμασθησόμεθα, οὐδὲν προσδεόμενοι οὔτε Ὀμήρου  
ἐμαινέτου οὔτε ὅστις ἔπεισι μὲν τὸ αὐτίκα τέρψει, τῶν  
δ' ἔργων τὴν ὑπόνοιαν ἢ ἀλήθεια βλάψει, ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν  
μὲν θάλασσαν καὶ γῆν ἐσβατὸν τῇ ἡμετέρα τόλμῃ  
καταναγκάσαντες γενέθαι, πανταχοῦ δὲ μνημεῖα  
κακῶν τε κάγαθῶν αἶδια ξυγκατοκίσαντες.

What exactly is one to make of what Hornblower considers to be a "slighting remark" by Pericles and a curt dismissal altogether of Homer?<sup>63</sup> What might, however, initially *appear* to be a curt dismissal, is nothing of the sort at all, and more sober and studious reflection upon the matter leads one to the realization that Homer is a mighty force to be reckoned with, even in this instance.

Hornblower does note in a little more detail on these words of Pericles in his *Commentary* that "we are irresistibly reminded of i.21.1...with its dismissal of what the poets have sung about it" (CT, I, 309). While this may, in fact, be so (especially for modern-day commentators and readers), Hornblower hardly does justice to the powerful resonances contained in this important passage by having us merely consider

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<sup>62</sup> Mackie (*supra* n. 40), 113.

<sup>63</sup> For Pericles' statement as a "slighting remark", see Hornblower (*supra* n.60), 64.

Thucydides' own remarks on the *unnamed* ποιηταί and λογογράφοι in his earlier chapter.<sup>64</sup> Unequivocally, the words of Pericles, regardless of the apparent dismissal,<sup>65</sup> would have immediately and "irresistibly" called to mind to those Athenians who *heard the speech*, by the mere mentioning of his name, *Homer* and his epics, especially since Pericles follows up the specific mention of Homer (a not insignificant fact by itself) with a forceful imperative of one of the most basic and traditional injunctions of the older Greek morality, namely, that of harming one's enemies and doing good to one's friends. Rusten at least recognizes the very traditional aspect of the moral duty involved here, but he only cites later examples such as Plato and Euripides.<sup>66</sup> However, the basic injunction is found in Homer, and Odysseus perhaps gave the most poignant expression to a particular form of it when he said to Nausicaa:

[ἔσθλήν]· οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον

ἢ ὄθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν οἶκον ἔχητον  
ἀνήρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσι,

<sup>64</sup> Thuc. I.21.1.

<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the dismissal would seem to smack of a certain disingenuousness in light of what Pericles says elsewhere. As Gomme was keen enough to observe (*HCT*, I, 128), Pericles almost immediately afterwards has recourse to a normally *poetical* word in his own "singing" of the praises of Athens: τὴν πόλιν ὕμνησα (Thuc. II.42.2); Moreover, Haslam sees a further, possibly "quasi-proverbial" poetical usage, in Pericles' final recorded speech (II.61.2): καὶ ἐγὼ μὲν ὁ αὐτός εἰμι καὶ οὐκ ἐξίσταμαι (M. Haslam, "Pericles Poeta," *CP* 85 [1990], 33).

<sup>66</sup> Rusten, 161: Pl., *Rep.* 331E, *Eur., Med.* 809-810; cf. Gomme, *HCT*, II, 128-129. Rusten justly opposes (*ibid.*, 161), the suggested textual emendation by Müller of καλῶν for κακῶν (F. Müller, "Die blonde Bestie und Thukydides," *HSCP* [1958], 171). Connor likewise (but only after some protracted emotional hand-wringing) does the same in opposing Müller's proposed emendation, but he is altogether mistaken in making Pericles' "refusal to contaminate his [Pericles'] idea of greatness with any other considerations" tantamount to some vague sort of "amorality" or another (Connor [*supra* n. 17], 74 n.54). However, the basic idea which Pericles gives expression to is decidedly *traditional* and is decidedly *moral*, for, as Nietzsche would have it, *die älteren Hellenen*.

χάρματα δ' εὐμένετῃσι, μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοί.<sup>67</sup>

What is of particular importance to consider here with regard to Pericles' statement is how the Periclean moral exhortation or command has been elevated to the level of the πόλις and is now seen to be inextricably linked to the expression of Athenian δύναμις on land and sea. This will be an important facet of Pericles' thought to consider later when he exhorts the Athenians in an almost desperate manner in his final recorded speech to view their δύναμις on an entirely different plane and in a fundamentally *new* manner, that is to say, not hindered in any way by anyone save for the Athenians themselves (Thuc.II.62.2):

οἴεσθε μὲν γὰρ τῶν ξυμμάχων μόνων ἄρχειν,  
 ἐγὼ δὲ ἀποφαίνω δύο μερῶν τῶν ἐς χρήσιν  
 φανερῶν, γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης, τοῦ ἑτέρου ὑμας  
 παντὸς κυριωτάτους ὄντας, ἐφ' ὅσον τε νῦν  
 νέμεσθε καὶ ἦν ἐπὶ πλέον βουλευθῆτε· καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν  
 ὅστις τῇ ὑπαρχούσῃ παρασκευῇ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ  
 πλέοντας ὑμᾶς οὔτε βασιλεὺς οὔτε ἄλλο οὐδὲν  
 ἔθνος τῶν ἐν τῷ παρόντι κωλύσει.

Hornblower in discussing this crucial passage fails to grasp altogether the *new* dimension of δύναμις to which Pericles almost frantically now appeals, and, seeing rather a discrepancy of some kind between what Pericles says here and what he says in his earlier speech (II.41.4), attributes a bout of "apparent forgetfulness" to Pericles (CT, I, 309,

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<sup>67</sup> Hom., *Od.* VI.182-185.

335).<sup>68</sup> Gomme, not nearly as obtuse as Hornblower in this instance, believed that Pericles' unqualified appeal did constitute "an intended and purposeful exaggeration" (*HCT*, II, 170). But that is as far as he goes. The ever astute Burn, on the other hand, recognized the full import of Pericles' exhortation and observed that "this *new* point was the absolutely *unlimited* potentialities of Athens' unrivalled sea-power. The whole sea was theirs, not only so far as their ships now plied, but also as much farther as they chose. There was, in fact, a very good reason why Pericles had never exploited it before. It was a *very dangerous theme, for a people whose great fault was overconfidence*."<sup>69</sup> Hardly, then, does the exhortation seem to qualify as evidence for the view that Pericles was

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<sup>68</sup> Hornblower does not venture to offer any explanation as to what "forgetfulness" might possibly mean to someone like Pericles. Understanding, though, "forgetfulness" as Nietzsche would have us do „griechisch“ is another matter entirely. For a detailed consideration of "forgetting" as a form of concealment from oneself, see the discussion by Heidegger of ἀλήθεια (M. Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, tr. D. Krell & F. Capuzzi [San Francisco, 1984], 102-123, esp. 108-109). By this more Greek understanding of the nature of "forgetfulness", Pericles' statement can be seen as a form of "unconcealment" to the utmost degree.

Hornblower, however, rightly emphasizes elsewhere in his *Commentary* the *emotive force* of the expression in Greek 'by land or sea' (*CT*, I, 9) twice used by Pericles (Thuc. II.41.4, II.62.2); cf. the expression found in Homer: ἐπὶ τραφερῆν τε καὶ ὑγρῆν (*Od.*, XX.98; *Il.*, XIV.208)

<sup>69</sup> A.R. Burn, *Pericles and Athens* (New York, 1966; rpt. of 1948 ed.), 197-198). Burn also did not fail to see how the need for a "vote of confidence" at the time prompted Pericles, in part, to speak as he did (*ibid.*, 197); cf. Hornblower's vague and indefinite pronouncement about the apparent "rhetorical needs of the speech" (*CT*, I, 335). One must naturally wonder not only for how long Pericles actually held such a view about unlimited Athenian sea-power, but also to what extent and how often such an idea as he did have about it was discussed on a *private* level between himself and certain others, especially with one of his own wards, namely, Alcibiades, whose corrupting influence caused him to place Clinias (Alcibiades' younger brother), in the household of Aiphron for a period of time (*Pl.*, *Prot.*, 319e-320a); cf. the reported conversation between Pericles and Alcibiades concerning the nature of law and the making of clever arguments (*Xen.*, *Mem.*, I.ii.40-46). In light of Pericles' repeated exhortations to the Athenians that they not make any concessions to the Peloponnesians (Thuc. I.127.3; cf. I.140.1), one would be inclined to think that he held such a view about Athenian sea-power for at least some time prior to the outbreak of the war.



entirely rational and "a *paragon* of emotional stability."<sup>70</sup> One might only add here in addition to Burn's analysis that while Athens' δύναμις at sea may have been very formidable indeed, it is surely a decidedly unrealistic and fundamentally *irrational* idea to think that no limits whatsoever could be placed upon Athenian δύναμις, especially when one considers the disastrous Egyptian expedition and the various other setbacks which Athens had previously experienced (e.g., the loss of her land empire in the First Athenian-Peloponnesian War).<sup>71</sup> In light of the fact also of the particular aspects of Pericles' grand strategy (and the widespread

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<sup>70</sup> J.R. Wilson, "Sophrosyne in Thucydides," *AHB* 4 (1990), 52. Notwithstanding the glaring deficiency in reason and good sense evident in Pericles' last speech, one may still contend overall that Pericles was, to a considerable degree, 'rational' and that he sought to 'reason' as much as he possibly could about political and military matters. However, it would be wrong to suppose that even those men who seek to elevate reason above all other considerations are: 1) *entirely* rational; 2) always *consistent* in their actions and conduct. It has been well observed by Eliade that "a *purely* rational man is an abstraction; he is never found in real life. Every human being is made up at once of his conscious activity and his irrational experiences" and that "the contents and structure of the unconscious exhibit astonishing similarities to mythological images and structures" (Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred & the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, tr. W.R. Trask [New York, 1987; rpt. of 1957 ed.], 209). Oft times reason is used to navigate through a situation which a mistaken judgement may very well have precipitated to begin with.

As for consistency, any student of Dostoevsky knows full well about the many and variegated inconsistencies, which even the best of men, can exhibit. Nietzsche, of course, was able to say about the great Russian: "Dostojewskis, des einzigen Psychologen, anbei gesagt, von dem ich etwas zu lernen hatte" (F.W. Nietzsche, "Streifzüge eines Unzeitgemässen," *Götzen-Dämmerung, Nietzsche Werke*, Band II, ed. K. Schlechta [Darmstadt, 1982], 1021).

<sup>71</sup> On the failed expedition to Egypt and the tremendous loss of both men and ships which resulted, see Thuc. I.109-I.110.4; cf. I.104.1-2. Meiggs, against the prevailing view held now that the disaster was not as great as had been believed previously, still considers Thucydides' account to be "clear and consistent" and that it cannot be dismissed lightly (R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* [Oxford, 1972], 103-108, esp. 105). Meiggs, moreover, draws attention also (*ibid.*, 105) to the similarities in language used by Thucydides to describe the end of the expedition in Egypt with the end of the expedition in Sicily: καὶ ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν πορευόμενοι διὰ τῆς Λιβύης εἰς

suffering and discontent which it fostered within Athens), the reasonableness of making an appeal for unlimited sea-power is nothing less than highly questionable, especially when given as an encouragement to those susceptible to errors in judgement. In point of fact, it was not long after the death of Pericles that the Athenians, freed from the (somewhat) restraining hand of Pericles, would become emboldened to venture to Sicily (as early as 427 BC) with a view to subduing the place (Thuc. III.86.1-5, IV.2.2).<sup>72</sup> However, one can understand how such an emotional appeal to unlimited sea-power, particularly to the attendant τιμή which would accrue to those who actually could succeed in expanding Athenian sea-power to some degree at least, would serve as a means of galvanizing support for the continuance of Pericles' very demanding war policy. It can be seen clearly enough that a critical and powerful element of the Homeric ἦθος is being exploited to the full here by Pericles in order to extract from the Athenians his much-needed "vote of confidence" at the time.

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Κυρήνην ἐσώθησαν, οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι ἀπώλοντο (Thuc. I.110.1; cf. VII.87.6). Hornblower also notes the similarities in language but is more skeptical as to the full extent of the disaster (CT, I, 176-177).

<sup>72</sup> As Dover does not fail to note, the "ambition to reduce the Sicilian cities to the status of subjects, not simply to create a political situation favourable to Athens, is represented by Thucydides as present in the minds of the Athenians in 427" (Dover, *HCT*, IV, 197); cf. Hornblower, *CT*, I, 493-494. Ever displeased with anything less than successful results, the Athenians were quick to exile the generals Pythodorus and Sophocles (and fine Eurymedon) upon their return to Athens in 424 BC for having come to peaceful terms with the Sicilians instead of having subdued (καταστρέψασθαι) the place (Thuc. IV.65.2-4). For the similarities in description of the character of the Athenians in Thuc. IV.65.4 with the words of Pericles regarding the Athenians' "strong confidence" see Gomme, *HCT*, III, 525.

To be sure, Mackie, who is not alone in having done so,<sup>73</sup> misconstrues what Thucydides actually says about Homer and how Thucydides in fact utilizes Homer. While it is true that Thucydides does not accept that Homer and the poets may serve as *infallible* sources of information for the real facts of history, he does not discount their usefulness altogether in this very regard. Indeed, as Hornblower has recognized, Thucydides considers that Homer and oral tradition can be reliable in certain instances, and it is instructive that very early on in his narrative Thucydides employs one of his key words for "proof" or "evidence" in investigating the previously restricted use of the word "Ἕλληνες" by noting that Homer especially provides a suitable form of "proof": τεκμηριοῖ δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος. (I.3.3); the other key word used by Thucydides to mean "proof" is σημεῖον. Both σημεῖον and τεκμήριον basically indicate the same thing, "proof", for Thucydides, notwithstanding the attempts by some scholars to attribute differences in meaning to the separate terms.<sup>74</sup>

Mackie, moreover, seems to have overlooked further an important phenomenon in history, namely, that history is a *continuum* and that many of the basic beliefs and patterns of behavior which have existed in

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<sup>73</sup> "Thucydides is as adamant as any sophist in his revisionism, judging the heroic past as overblown and materially insignificant" (G. Crane, "The Fear and Pursuit of Risk: Corinth on Athens, Sparta and the Peloponnesians," *TAPA* 122 [1992], 254).

<sup>74</sup> Hornblower describes the use of the terms as a predilection for "quasi-legal language" on the part of Thucydides. He sees both terms as possessing essentially the same meaning, and is no doubt correct in considering the use of both words in I.132 to be an instance of "purely literary variation" which tells against any distinctly different

a previous age continue to persist and manifest themselves in subsequent eras, even if profound changes have taken place over time in, say, a more traditional and religious society which has been subject to an extensive rationalizing movement or revolution.<sup>75</sup>

Thucydides does not tell us anything about the distance and "far remove" of epic poetry as an *ethical* and motivating force. Indeed, that he should qualify his words as he does should serve as a clear indication to his readers that poetry (especially through ἀκοή)<sup>76</sup> was a strong force to be reckoned with, not only with respect to an understanding of the past in a more restricted, but still accurate, historical sense, but also, and

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meanings in the use of the terms more generally (CT, I, 6, 7, 17, 25, 217-219; Hornblower [*supra* n.16], 100-109); cf. Gomme, HCT, I, 135.

<sup>75</sup> Thus as Onians has forcefully observed in his masterful study, "history is a *continuum* in which men, thoughts, customs and tools of different kinds and qualities develop and overlap" and "that even in a savage community elements from different ages and *mutually inconsistent beliefs coexist*" (R.B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time, and Fate* <sup>2</sup> [Cambridge, 1991; rpt. of 1951 ed.], 8 n.1). Likewise, in a highly sophisticated and urbane society, and one can find bestial cruelty also. The highly perceptive remarks of Campbell on the paradoxical nature of Sophoclean tragedy and the morality of the Athenians in the time of Pericles are indeed most telling: "From a Platonic, and still more from a Christian point of view, the best morality of the age of Pericles is no doubt defective. Such counsels of perfection as 'Love your enemies', or 'a good man can harm no one, not even an enemy', -are beyond the horizon of tragedy, unless dimly seen in the person of Antigone. The co-existence of *savage vindictiveness* with the most affectionate tenderness is characteristic of heroes and heroines alike, and produces some of the most moving contrasts. But the tenderness is no less deep and real for this" (L. Campbell, *Sophocles in English Verse* [London, 1883], xvii). However, the first-hand observations of the Prussian aristocrat and accomplished General F.W. von Mellenthin on the modern-day character of the Russians and their continual shifting between extremes of bestial cruelty and genuine kindness are strikingly similar to the remarks of Campbell on the ancient Greeks (Maj. Gen. F.W. von Mellenthin, *Panzer Battles*, tr. H. Betzler [New York, 1984; rpt. of 1956 ed], 350-351).

<sup>76</sup> It was through ἀκοή or oral tradition, for instance, that the Athenians came to believe, albeit mistakenly, what they did about Hipparchus and Hippias (Thuc. I.20.1; cf. I.73.2). Sifakis discusses the wider concepts of oral tradition in ancient Greece and indicates various aspects its survival (even of Homeric forms) up until the present day (G.M., Sifakis, "Homeric Survivals in the Medieval and Modern Greek Folksong Tradition?" *G&R* 39 [1992], 139-154).

especially so, as a profound source of *paradeigmata* and recurrent forms of inspiration which can have a critical bearing on political and military actions.

The secularization of contemporary North American and western European countries ought not to deter one from such an understanding, for a closer analysis of contemporary "enlightened" society reveals a veritable plethora of powerful mythological structures and *paradeigmata* of great moving force.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The pervasive nature of mythological motifs and structures in contemporary society and the manner in which they still shape and influence the thinking and conduct of even the most secularized and irreligious of modern men (a descendant nonetheless of *homo religiosus*), has been most thoroughly examined and skillfully described by, perhaps, the most eminent historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, in a number of important studies. As he has keenly noted, however, many current myths have degenerated to the point of caricature and are not so easily recognized. Even so, though, such myths have not lost any of their forcefulness because of this degeneration in form. Indeed, they can easily be said to be just as powerful, if not more powerful, as if they were clearly recognized for what they are and if they had completely retained their previous form. As Eliade has judiciously observed, "The majority of the 'irreligious' still behave religiously, even though they are not aware of the fact....modern man who feels and claims that he is nonreligious still retains a large stock of camouflaged myths and degenerated rituals....The cinema [and television], that 'dream factory' takes over and employs countless mythical motifs - the fight between hero and monster, initiatory combats and ordeals, paradigmatic figures and images.... Strictly speaking, the great majority of the irreligious are not liberated from religious behavior, from theologies and mythologies. They sometimes stagger under a whole magico-religious paraphernalia, which, however, has degenerated to the point of caricature and hence is hard to recognize it for what it is" (Eliade [*supra* n. 70], 204, 205-206); but see more generally the entire section entitled "Sacred and Profane in the Modern World" (*ibid.*, 201-213). In this section of his study Eliade goes on to make some very interesting remarks concerning the "mythological structure" and "eschatological content" of Marx's system of communism (Marx, it should be remembered, prided himself on being a "scientific" thinker): "Marx takes over and continues one of the great eschatological myths of the Asiatic-Mediterranean world - the redeeming role of the Just (the "chosen," the "anointed," the "innocent," the "messenger"; in our day, the proletariat), whose sufferings are destined to change the ontological status of the world" (*ibid.*, 206-207). Cf. also, Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: The Encounter Between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities*, tr. P. Mairet (New York, 1975; rpt. of 1960 ed.), 23-38; *ibid.*, "Survivals and Camouflages of Myths," *Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts*, ed. D. Apostolos-Cappadona (New York, 1990), 32-52, esp. 43-50. Certainly, the powerful mythological role and function of Pericles' statement that Athens possessed

In fact, a closer examination of culture in 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens reveals an environment extremely rich in Homer, and his formative influence on actual conduct can be said to be most pronounced. The initial work of Peisistratus in the previous century in establishing the recitation of the Homeric poems was subsequently placed on a firmer footing by Hipparchus (Pl., *Hipp.* 228B), which very recitations at the Pan-Athenaea gave a forcefully "new insistence" to Aeschylus especially,<sup>78</sup> leading, in turn, to a wider dissemination of the poems and their even more extensive influence. This basic impetus was accentuated further by the building programme and cultural policy of Pericles who was chiefly responsible for the construction of the new roofed Odeum and the institution of musical contests at the Pan-Athenaea (Plut., *Per.* XIII.6):

φιλοτιμούμενος δ' ὁ Περικλῆς τότε πρῶτον  
 ἔψηφίσατο μουσικῆς ἀγῶνα τοῖς Παναθηναίοις  
 ἄγεσθαι, καὶ διέταξεν αὐτὸς ἀθλοθέτης αἰρεθεῖς  
 καθότι χρή τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους ἀυλεῖν ἢ ᾄδειν ἢ  
 κιθαρίζειν. ἐθεῶντο δὲ καὶ τότε καὶ τὸν ἄλλον

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(and should continue to possess) a special cultural mission in Hellas should not be underestimated: *ἕνα τε λέγων τὴν τε πᾶσαν πόλιν τῆς Ἑλλάδος παιδεύειν εἶναι καὶ καθ' ἕνα τε δοκεῖν ἂν μοι τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα παρ' ἡμῶν ἐπὶ πλείστ' ἂν εἶδη καὶ μετὰ χαρίτων μάλιστα ἂν εὐτραπέλωσ τὸ σῶμα αὐταρκες παρέχεσθαι* (Thuc. II.41.1). Of course, to Pericles' mind, this special political and cultural mission was confirmed by none other than the *δύναμις* of Athens (II.41.2). For *paradeigmata* which occur only in *direct speech* in Homer and which are particularly effective as a means of persuasion, see Edwards (*supra* n.40), 98-101; cf. Snell: "There are a few ideal cases which alone carry a name, and which must serve as our models for defining the countless remaining actions, so there is a limited number of fates, a few of them historical but most of them fictional, which we may use as standards in measuring men's lives. These archetypal fortunes of the Greek myths are kept alive by the poets, Greek as well as non-Greek, through ever-changing metamorphoses; and even Thucydides, stripped as his history is of all mythical adornments, considers his book permanently valid, because 'these and similar things, as are written here, will always happen again' (1.22)" (B. Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind in Greek Philosophy and Literature* [New York, 1982; rpt. of 1953 ed.], 208).

<sup>78</sup> H.W. Smyth, *Aeschylus*, vol. 1 (Cambridge & London, 1963; rpt. of 1922 ed.), xxvii.

χρόνον ἐν ᾧ δίδειν τοὺς μουσικοὺς ἀγῶνας.<sup>79</sup>

In recounting Pericles' specific role in this venture, Plutarch ascribes a singular and important reason to Pericles for his action, namely, the fact of his being φιλότιμος. This particular state of being φιλότιμος is one which Pericles most diligently sought to cultivate within the Athenian citizenry, as is evident from the comparatively frequent use of τιμή in his speeches.<sup>80</sup> The Athenians themselves were, in fact, reckoned to be most zealous in their love for τιμή. According to Socrates in Xenophon's representation of him, the Athenians sent the best chorus to Delos because of their being lovers of τιμή more than anything else (*Mem.* III.iii.13; cf. III.v.3):

Ἄλλὰ μὴν οὔτε εὐφωνίᾳ τοσοῦτον διαφέρουσιν

<sup>79</sup> Previously, the recitations had taken place in the unroofed Odeum. For the Pan-Athenaea, see W. Smith, W. Wayte & G.E. Marindin, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* <sup>3</sup>, vol. 2 (London, 1914): s.v. PanAthenaea. For the cultural importance of Homer as a unifying force and a note on the PanAthenaea, see C.H. Gordon, "Homer and Bible: The Origin and Character of East Mediterranean Literature," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 26 (1955), 54-57. Even if, as Podlecki notes, that Plutarch was "in error in stating that a musical contest was part of the Panathenaic Festival only under Pericles", he at least acknowledges the basic import of Pericles' actions insofar as there had been a break in the celebration of the contests in the earlier 5<sup>th</sup> century and that they were "restored by Pericles....signalling his patronage of the arts in the grand manner, like the family of the tyrant Pisistratus" (*Plutarch, Life of Pericles. A Companion to the Penguin Translation with Introduction and Commentary* by A.J. Podlecki [Bristol, 1987], 48).

<sup>80</sup> Thuc. I.144.3, II.35.1, II.36.1 II.63; φιλότιμον (II.44.4). The use of the simple noun τιμή (as honor) is not terribly common in the rest of Thucydides, occurring elsewhere only at: I.75.3, I.76.2, II.65.7, III.42.5, IV.17.4, IV.47.2, IV.62.2, IV.86.5, V.11.1, V.16.2. If the two uses of τιμή by the unnamed Athenian delegation at Sparta are credited at least in part -and not unreasonably- to Pericles, then Pericles may be said to have a hand in roughly half of the occurrences of the simple form of the noun. The use of the abstract noun concretely, φιλότιμον, is altogether exclusive to Pericles (II.44.4); cf. φιλοτιμία (II.65.7, III.82.8, VIII.89.3). Thus, judging from the use of language, no other man may be said to have been as concerned with the love of τιμή than Pericles in Thucydides' account.

Ἰθηναῖοι τῶν ἄλλων οὔτε σωμάτων μεγέθει καὶ  
 ῥώμῃ ὅσον φιλοτιμία, ἤπερ μάλιστα παροξύνει  
 πρὸς τὰ καλὰ καὶ ἔντιμα.

The pervasive influence of Homer is evident throughout the works of Plato, and such an influence can scarcely seem to be overestimated, particularly when one considers that it was not uncommon for an Athenian to show intimate familiarity and knowledge of the epic poems, as in the case of Niceratus, who describes the education prescribed for him by his father in the following words (Xen., *Symp.* III.5):

Ὁ πατήρ ἐπιμελούμενος ὅπως ἀνηρ ἀγαθὸς γενοίμην,  
 ἠνάγκασέ με πάντα τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη μαθεῖν· καὶ νῦν  
 δυναίμην ἂν Ἰλιάδα ὅλην καὶ Ὀδύσειαν ἀπὸ στόματος  
 εἶπειν.<sup>81</sup>

The thorough grounding of an Athenian hoplite, who fought with great distinction in the Athenian-Peloponnesian War,<sup>82</sup> in the Homeric poems is perhaps best seen by the person and example of Socrates, a man who is represented throughout the dialogues of Plato as discussing at considerable length the poetry of Homer and the lives and deeds of the old heroes. The most telling example of such groundedness in Homer may be found in his spoken defense at his trial. For it is in this very case, while facing the prospect of death, that Socrates cites the example of the

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Socrates' remarks about the function of poetry in adorning the deeds of the ancients for the purpose of educating *subsequent generations* (Pl., *Phaedr.* 245A); cf. H.I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, tr. G. Lamb (Madison, 1956), 12-13.

<sup>82</sup> At Potidaea, Amphipolis, and Delium (Pl., *Apol.* 28D; cf. the highly complimentary remarks of Alcibiades at *Symp.* 219E-221D). For better or worse (for Athens at least), Socrates even saved the life of Alcibiades at Potidaea (*Symp.* 220D-E). Alexander the Great, of course, particularly modeled himself in imitation of Achilles: κατὰ ζήλον τὸν



noble Achilles (Pl, *Apol.* 28C-D) and plainly resolves to adhere with intransigence to a life in pursuit of philosophy, neither fearing death nor any other thing more than being αἰσχρός:

οὕτω γὰρ ἔχει, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τῇ ἀληθείᾳ·  
οὐδ' ἂν τις ἑαυτὸν τάξῃ ἡγησάμενος βέλτιστον εἶναι ἢ  
ὑπ' ἄρχοντος ταχθῆ, ἐνταυθα δεῖ, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ,  
μένοντα κινδυνεύειν, μηδὲν ὑπολογιζόμενον μήτε  
θάνατον μήτε ἄλλο μηδὲν πρὸ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to Socrates' self-characterization as a type of Achilles, there is the very interesting comparison drawn by Alcibiades, who in the course of praising the uniqueness of Socrates, likens two major players in the Athenian-Peloponnesian War, namely, Brasidas to Achilles and Pericles to Nestor or Antenor.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, this very comparison by Alcibiades forms the basis of Hornblower's own more recent discussion of epic influences on Thucydides in his consideration of Thucydides' literary and historical presentation of Brasidas.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ἀχιλλέως (Arr. VII.14.4; cf. I.12.1-2, III.6.3). Much to his own dismay, Batis learned of such emulation at first hand (Curt. IV.6.29; cf. Hom., *Il.* XXII.395-404).

<sup>84</sup> Pl, *Apol.* 28D-E. For discussion of the persistence of the heroic models and their "enduring value" right down to Socrates with a special view to their basis in the Greek understanding of death, see J. Burton, "Why the Ancient Greeks Were Obsessed with Heroes and the Ancient Egyptians Were Not," *CB* 69 (1993), 21-34, esp. 30-31. For consideration of the persistence of the older Greek values in more remote rural communities of Greece in the present day, see now P. Walcot, *G&R* 43 (1996), 169-177; cf. L.M. Danforth, "The Ideological Context of the Search for Continuities in Greek Culture," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 2 (1984), 53-85. Walcot has detected three major characteristics which were common to the ancient Greeks and which can still be found today: 1) the sense of shame denoted by αἰδώς and σωφροσύνη, the modern-day *dropi*; 2) cleverness or μῆτις, known as *poniria* today; 3) a passion for τιμή, a passion which is still known today by its old and venerable appellation (Walcot, *ibid.*, 169-170).

<sup>84</sup> Pl., *Symp.* 221C-D.

<sup>85</sup> Hornblower, *CT*, II, 38.

But, at this point, one might finally well ask: what about the workings of the Homeric ἦθος in the person of Pericles? Aside from others comparing Pericles to Nestor, Antenor, or any other Greek hero of old, are there any real grounds for supposing that the motivation to act in accordance with the Homeric ἦθος can be found to have existed within that so-called "paragon of emotional stability", Pericles?

Perhaps the best answer to this particular question has been furnished by the actions of Pericles recorded in Plutarch's *Life*. For, after he had quelled the revolt of Samos in 439 BC, it was reported that Pericles fancied himself to be none other than someone *greater than Agamemnon* on account of having subdued a formidable foe in considerably less time than his noble predecessor (only nine months as opposed to ten years).<sup>86</sup> And this was a violent reduction of a kindred city,<sup>87</sup> by and by, which was not found to be lacking either in lengthy tortures or in the "merciful" crushing of heads:

Δοῦρις δ' ὁ Σάμιος τούτοις ἐπιτραγωδεῖ πολλὴν  
ὠμότητα τῶν Ἀθηναίων καὶ τοῦ Περικλέους  
κατηγορῶν.....ὡς ἄρα τοὺς τριηράρχους καὶ τοὺς  
ἐπιβάτας τῶν Σαμίων εἰς τὴν Μιλησίων ἀγορὰν  
καταγαγὼν καὶ σανίσι προσδήσας ἐφ' ἡμέρας δέκα  
κακῶς ἤδη διακειμένους προσέταξεν ἀνελεῖν,  
ξύλοις τὰς κεφαλὰς συγκόψαντας, εἶτα

<sup>86</sup> θαυμαστὸν δέ τι καὶ μέγα φρονῆσαι καταπολεμήσαντα τοὺς Σαμίους φησὶν αὐτὸν ὁ Ἴων, ὡς τοῦ μὲν Ἀγαμέμνονος ἔτεσι δέκα βάρβαρων πόλιν, αὐτοῦ δὲ μηνὶ ἐννέα τοὺς πρώτους καὶ δυνατωτάτους Ἴωνων ἐλόντος (Plut., *Per.* XXVIII.5; cf. *Mor.* 350E).

<sup>87</sup> A kindred relation which impelled Elpinice, the sister of Cimon, to criticize Pericles openly. But such criticism was met by Pericles with the witticism of Archilochus, the sort of witticism which was, perhaps, reserved for the rebuke of an old prostitute (Plut., *Per.* XXVIII.4-5; cf. X.5): Οὐκ ἂν μύροισι γραῦς ἐοῦσ' ἠλείφειο. Cf. the remarks of Stadter, *Pericles*, 261-262.

προβαλεῖν ἀκήδευτα τὰ σώματα.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> That Thucydides does not report the same specific details of Athenian heavy-handedness in his account of the revolt and reduction of Samos as Plutarch does, is no reason why Douris' account in Plutarch should not be accepted, especially since Samos very nearly took 'control of the sea' (κράτος τῆς θαλάσσης) from the Athenians when it revolted (Thuc. VIII.76.4; cf. Plut., *Per.* XXVIII.6). In any case, we do know from Thucydides that the terms of the capitulation were very exacting for the Samians insofar as they had to: 1) pull down their walls; 2) give up hostages; 3) hand over ships; 4) pay restitution to the Athenians for the cost of the siege (I.117.3). What is more, Thucydides has not refrained from recording elsewhere in the *Pentecontaetia* the fact that the Athenians could distinguish themselves in the fine art of killing men, especially Corinthians (I.106.1-2); cf. Hornblower's remarks on this 'one horrible afternoon's work' [*supra* n.16], 35). Lastly, Thucydides does record that Pericles himself exhorted the Athenians at a later date to keep their allies well in hand: τὰ τε τῶν συμμάχων διὰ χεῖρος ἔχειν (II.13.2).

Meiggs (who understood that the details related by Douris would have no place in the highly compressed account of Thucydides) sees no reason to discount Douris in this particular case and (correctly) believes that "the substance of the story rings true" (Meiggs [*supra* n.71], 192). Meiggs also points out the significance of the victims being trierarchs and marines, not ship's crews (*ibid.*, 192). Doubtless, the brutality was rather selective and not entirely lacking in rationality; cf. Hornblower (*supra* n. 16), 174, who believes that Pericles did have 'blood on his hands'. Stadter points out that in consequence of the length of the tortures, the crushing of the heads "may have been considered an act of mercy" (Stadter, *Pericles*, 259). Then again, one ought not to discount the particular pleasure involved in killing a man in time of war, as poetically described by Tyrtaeus (VI.17-18 [Bergk]):

ἀρπαλέον γὰρ ὄπισθε μετάφενός ἐστι δαΐζειν  
ἀνδρὸς φεύγοντος δηΐῳ ἐν πολέμῳ

Nietzsche understood the real issue at hand: "Der Mensch, in seinen höchsten und edelsten Kräften, ist ganz Natur und trägt ihren unheimlichen Doppelcharakter an sich. Seine fruchtbaren und als unmenschlich geltenden Befähigungen sind vielleicht sogar der fruchtbare Boden, aus dem allein alle Humanität, in Regungen Thaten und Werken hervorwachsen kann. So haben die Griechen, die humansten Menschen der alten Zeit, einen Zug von Grausamkeit, von tigerartiger Vernichtungslust an sich: ein Zug, der auch in dem ins Groteske vergrößernden Spieglbilde des Hellenen, in Alexander dem Großen, sehr sichtbar ist, der aber in ihrer ganzen Geschichte, ebenso wie in ihrer Mythologie uns, die wir mit dem weichlichen Begriff der modernen Humanität ihnen entgegenkommen, in Angst versetzen muß (F.W. Nietzsche, "Homer's Wettkampf," *Nachgelassene Schriften 1870-1873, Nietzsche Werke*, Dritte Abteilung, Band II, ed. G. Colli & M. Montinari [Berlin & New York] 277). Thus, one may say that work on the Athena *Parthenos* continued unabated in Athens while heads were crushed in Samos.

Chapter Two:  
Homer's *Wettkampf* and The Homeric Stance of Pericles

Πηλεὺς μὲν ᾧ παιδί γέρον ἐπέτελλ' Ἀχιλῆϊ  
αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων.  
Hom., *Il.* XI.783-784.

## II.1 Homer's *Wettkampf*

Having seen how an attentiveness to what one may term "a Homeric approach" to Thucydides' account is not unfruitful, it remains now to consider in greater detail a number of the key elements which comprise the Homeric ἦθος.

While it may at first sight seem to present an overriding difficulty of oversimplification to seek to distill the essential nature of the Homeric ἦθος into a small number of key elements, such an attempt is not entirely without precedent and, indeed, is not without some warrant. No less an authority than Marrou, who, admittedly, concedes that the Homeric moral ideal was rather complicated,<sup>1</sup> can still manage to summarize that same ideal in one simple, but rather portentous phrase, the moral ideal is fundamentally an heroic morality of, or love for, *honour*.<sup>2</sup> Jaeger, on

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<sup>1</sup> "Idéal moral de nature assez complexe" (Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* <sup>6</sup> [Paris, 1965], 41). For Marrou, the difficulty is in part created by the figure of Odysseus whose notorious 'cunning' seems far from 'heroic'. However, Marrou overcomes this basic problem by considering not Odysseus, but rather Achilles as the embodiment of the heroic ideal proper: "c'est la noble et pure figure d'Achille qui incarne l'idéal moral du parfait chevalier homérique" (*ibid.*, 41). To be sure, though, Odysseus is not completely lacking in the heroic qualities which Achilles possessed. For he, too, is shown by Homer to be capable of enduring many toils and to be more than proficient in the use of military arms.

<sup>2</sup> "Il se définit d'un mot: une morale héroïque de l'honneur. C'est à Homère, en effet, que remont, c'est dans Homère que chaque génération antique a retrouvé ce qui est l'axe fondamental de cette éthique aristocratique: l'amour del la gloire" (*ibid.*, 41). Marrou also recognizes, though, another important ideal based upon the words of Phoenix to Achilles concerning his father's intentions for him (Hom., *Il.* IX.442-443):

the other hand, in offering to summarize the Homeric ἦθος considered the "motto of [Homeric] knighthood" to be the advice which Glaucus received from his father Hippolochus (Hom., *Il.* VI.208):

αἰεν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων.<sup>3</sup>

Still both Marrou and Jaeger concur in their view that the heroic ideal or ideals in question existed for the main purpose of cultivating and possessing ἀρετή.<sup>4</sup>

More broadly considered, two differing models have been advanced to present a basic framework for understanding Homer's world of heroes and the ἦθος which animated both them and the older Hellenes. Adkins, in a series of studies,<sup>5</sup> has emphasized the existence of the competitive excellences (and to a lesser extent the cooperative excellences) as the defining feature of the Homeric system of ethics, a view which has gained

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τοῦνεκά με προέηκε διδασκόμεναι τάδε παντά,  
μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμμεναι πρῆκτῆρά τε ἔργων.

In these words of Phoenix, Marrou rightly affirms the *two* ideals of the perfect "knight", namely, that he be both a great orator and a great warrior: "formule où se condense le double idéal du parfait chevalier: orateur et guerrier, capable de rendre à son suzerain service de plaid comme service d'ost" (Marrou [*supra* n.1], 37-38). As we have already seen, this two-fold ideal is one demanded of Homer's heroes and of well-born Greeks of subsequent centuries. Indeed, the later citizens of the polis, e.g., Athens, could later be seen to be aiming "above all at the ideal which Phoenix had taught Achilles: to be a speaker of words and a doer of deeds. Certainly the leading men in each state were bound to move towards that ideal, and the ordinary citizen came to sympathize with it" (W. Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* <sup>2</sup>, vol. 1 [New York & Oxford, 1967; rpt. of 1945 ed.], 112).

<sup>3</sup> Jaeger (*supra* n. 2), 7. Cf. Hom., *Il.* XI 783-784.

<sup>4</sup> Jaeger (*supra* n. 2), 5-8; Marrou (*supra* n. 1),

<sup>5</sup> A.W.H. Adkins, "Homeric Values and Homeric Society," *JHS* 91 (1971), 1-14; *idem*, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Greece: From Homer to the End of the Fifth Century* (New York, 1972), *passim*; *idem*, "Merit, Responsibility, and Thucydides," *CQ* n.s. 25 (1975), 209-220.

widespread acceptance, not only amongst classical philologists,<sup>6</sup> but also amongst those engaged in more general philosophical studies.<sup>7</sup> Dodds, on the other hand, has advocated a different model, namely, that of a "shame culture,"<sup>8</sup> a shame culture which later developed into the "guilt culture" which the modern is more familiar with. Both models have their strengths and are extremely useful in providing a framework in which to understand the dynamics of the traditional ἦθος. They should not necessarily be understood as being mutually exclusive to one another. For a proper sense of αἰδώς often serves in Homer as a powerful force for a hero either to desist from a particular action or to involve himself all the more in the competitive excellences in order to cultivate and exhibit ἀρετή. Adkins himself has not failed to recognize the important workings of αἰδώς in this way and makes due allowance within his own model of competitive and cooperative excellences for it.<sup>9</sup>

For our purposes Adkins' model will be taken as the more applicable one chiefly because the competitive excellences do play such a

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<sup>6</sup> In large part because, as Finkelburg observes, Adkins' picture of Homeric society concurs to a high degree with the reconstructions advanced by both Jaeger and M.I. Finley (M. Finkelberg, "Time and Arete in Homer," *CQ* 48 [1998], 14-28). Cf. Jaeger (*supra* n. 2), 3-14; M.I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* <sup>2</sup> (New York, 1965), 114-154.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, in work of the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* <sup>2</sup> (Notre Dame, 1984), 133; cf. *idem*, *A Short History of Ethics: A History of moral philosophy from the Homeric age to the twentieth century* (New York, 1966), 5-13.

<sup>8</sup> E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1951), 28-63. As Dodds stresses at the end of his first chapter, "Agamemnon's Apology," "the strongest moral force which Homeric man knows is not the fear of god, but respect for public opinion, *aidos*: αἰδέομαι Τρῶας, says Hector at the crisis of his fate and goes with open eyes to his death" (*ibid.*, 18). Indeed, the "highest good" is none other than τιμή (*ibid.* 17). Cf. Jaeger (*supra* n. 2), 7.

<sup>9</sup> Adkins, *Moral Values* (*supra* n.5), 18-19.

predominant role in relation to political and military matters, but also for the further reason that Adkins has made a careful study of how the traditional ἦθος had persisted to the time of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War. Indeed, it is the traditional ἦθος, best exemplified in the person of Pericles, but also most effectively championed by Pericles *and* Cleon, which overcame the opposition to the newer ἦθος which called for a restriction, or at least a suspension of some kind, of Athenian expansionism, on the basis of quietism, justice, and other such considerations.<sup>10</sup> The clash between the older and the newer values in fact presented the most critical problem of the period with respect to domestic politics and foreign policy, especially in Athens where the period after the Persian Wars provided the initial basis for one of the

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<sup>10</sup> Adkins provides a most valuable summary which is well worth considering in full: "Thucydides has a very different estimation of Pericles and Cleon; but their values....are the same. They reject an *arete* which is marked by the refusal of unjust gain and an unwillingness to rule over other cities...Thucydides, son of Melesias...had opposed Athens' expansionism until he was ostracised in 443 or 442; and the Corinthians...argued that the Corcyreans could best display their *arete* by being just. This *arete* is new, opposed to traditional *arete*, which may demand a very different kind of action; and we can see how little chance it has of influencing action when faced with the demands of traditional *arete*, whether in foreign policy or any other sphere of action; for it is on the requirements of traditional *arete* that Pericles and Cleon take their stand. Traditional *arete* requires that one shall be willing to take risks to secure and increase the prosperity of the group to which one belongs: it is sharply opposed to quietism and inactivity. To juxtapose the idea of *arete* with that of inactivity or avoidance of danger is to produce, in terms of the traditional *arete*, an outrageous oxymoron and to pour scorn on the new *arete*, which requires just co-operation (represented by Pericles and Cleon as mere shirking and inactivity), with a rhetoric which it would have little chance of withstanding. Traditional *arete* was far more deeply rooted, more evidently advantageous, and indeed vitally necessary in defence against the attacks of others. Small wonder that the majority of Athenians favoured her expansionism. The policy might well be even more attractive to a *kakos*, who had no personal *arete*, but might thus feel himself to be participating in the *arete* of his city, and even playing a small part in expressing it in action" (Adkins, *Moral Values* [*supra* n.5], 134-135).



greatest intellectual, political, and cultural efflorescences in all of world history.

The manner in which the agonistic ideal pervaded virtually all aspects of the Homeric world may be clearly seen in the fierce striving for excellence exhibited in the midst of the athletic contest (ἄθλον). During the course of the athletic contests held by the Phaeacians, for instance, Laodamas, son of the King Alcinous, invites Odysseus, son of Laertes to participate in the athletic contests being staged in order to see whether or not he can garner that special renown (κλέος) which is earned solely by one's own physical efforts:

δεύρ' ἄγε καὶ σύ, ξεῖνε πάτερ, πείρησαι ἀέθλων,  
εἰ τινὰ που δεδάηκας· ἔοικε δέ σ' ἴδμεν ἀέθλους·  
οὐ μὲν γὰρ μεῖζον κλέος ἀνέρος ὄφρα κ' ἔησιν,  
ἢ ὅ τι ποσσίν τε ῥέξῃ καὶ χερσὶν ἔῃσιν.  
ἀλλ' ἄγε πείρησαι, σκέδασσον δ' ἀπὸ κήδεα θυμοῦ.<sup>11</sup>

Odysseus, mindful only of his return to his native Ithaca, initially declines the challenge (Hom., *Il.*, VIII.152-157). However, Euryalus, son of Naubolus proceeds to revile Odysseus to his face for not having accepted the challenge of Laodamas and goes so far as to liken him to a mere merchant or trader (πρηκτῆρ), who is principally concerned with enriching himself and satisfying his greed for gain (158-164), whereupon Odysseus, unable to bear such a terrible insult, responds not only in

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<sup>11</sup> Hom., *Il.*, VIII.145-149. As Dimock comments "even the Phaeacians, though in their peace-loving way they regard the contests simply as entertainment, think that a man's physical prowess is a matter of the *first importance*....Physical prowess is clearly an essential ingredient of manly virtue" (G.E. Dimock, *The Unity of the Odyssey* [Amherst, 1989], 96-97).

word (in a incisive and powerful speech), but also by a convincing and brilliant *deed*, by throwing the discus farther than any of the Phaeacians. In fact, after declaring himself far superior to all others,<sup>12</sup> he issues forth a challenge to take on any other of the Phaeacians with the exception of Laodamas, the son of his host.

Such an instance of a determined striving-for-excellence in athletic competition is by no means an isolated instance either in Homer,<sup>13</sup> or for that matter, in the Greek world more generally.<sup>14</sup> What is more, the

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<sup>12</sup> Odysseus does recognize one exception to his pre-eminence, namely, Philoctetes with the bow (*Od.* VIII.219-222):

οἷος δὴ με Φιλοκτῆτης ἀπεκαίνυτο τόξω  
 δῆμῳ ἔνι Τρώων, ὅτε τοξαζοίμεθ' Ἀχαιοί.  
 τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἐμέ φημι πολὺ προφερέστερον εἶναι,  
 ὅσσοι νῦν βροτοὶ εἰσιν ἐπὶ χθονὶ σῆτον ἔδοντες.

<sup>13</sup> The most famous example of athletic contests is the funerary ἀεθλα staged by Achilles in honor of the dead Patroclus, contests which (replete with quarrels between the contestants) take up over two thirds of Book XXIII of *The Iliad* (Hom., *Il.* XXIII.257-897). For discussion of the contrast to be found in the narrative of the various contests between "passionate ambition, with its disastrous results, and reason", see Richardson, *Iliad*, VI, 166, 219-224, 230-241. However, notwithstanding the strife which does ensue, it may be seen overall as the 'positive' kind of strife "marking a peaceful close to the internal dissensions of the Greeks" (*ibid.*, 166). Indeed, the funerary ἀεθλα as a whole serve, both as 'heroic institution and epic narrative', to "defuse the intensity of passion accumulated in the struggles which have preceded" (*ibid.*, 164-165), and end with Achilles awarding the prize of a spear to none other than Agamemnon, thus signifying clearly their final reconciliation (Hom., *Il.* XXIII.884-895); cf. Richardson, *Iliad*, VI, 165-166, 270-271). That an enemy could never be a friend, even in death, was an idea well expressed later in the 5<sup>th</sup> century by Creon (Soph., *Ant.* 523):

οὔτοι ποθ' οὐχθρός, οὐδ' ὅταν θάνῃ, φίλος.

<sup>14</sup> Even in a tragic play, a long and detailed description of the ἀγών par excellence, the chariot-race (ἵππικῶν ὠκύπους ἀγών), is not at all considered to be out of place, as in, for instance, the Old Slave's description of the 'death' of Orestes (Soph., *Elect.* 680-763). Alexander the Great, of course, often established and celebrated contests, gymnastic and musical, wherever he went (Arr., *Anab.* I.11.1, III.1.4, V.20.1, VII.14.1, VII.14.10). It is noteworthy that Alcibiades, who was most zealous (προθυμότεστα) in supporting the Sicilian Expedition, at the beginning of his speech to the Athenian assembly urging the Athenians to embark on it (despite the fact that the Athenians were ignorant of the size of the island and the magnitude of the task), put great stress on his lavish outlays and

consequence of not succeeding in an ἀγών is illustrated in its most severe form by the emotional devastation of Aias, son of Telamon, when he lost the contest for the armor of Achilles.<sup>15</sup>

Even in the "rational" person of Pericles, however, one may discern some indication of the agonistic ideal and its demands in this very respect. Pericles, although he may not have been the best of wrestlers, was still animated enough by such a desire to be pre-eminent in the sport that he had recourse to his famous oratorical skills to show at least that he could still vanquish Thucydides, son of Melesias, in the contest (Plut., *Per.* VIII.3-4).<sup>16</sup> To ignore such a form of evidence as merely a quaint anecdote, as many modern scholars are wont to do, would be to

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several victories at Olympia in the chariot race and considered them to be an important source not only of τιμή, but also of proof for his worthiness to command and of δύναμις both individually *and* for the πόλις: οἱ γὰρ Ἕλληνες καὶ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν μείζω ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν ἐνόμισαν τῷ ἐμῷ διατρεπεῖ τῆς Ὀλυμπιάζε θεωρίας, πρότερον ἐλπίζοντες αὐτὴν καταπεπολεμηθῆναι, διότι ἄρματα μὲν ἑπτὰ καθῆκα, ὅσα οὐδεὶς πω ἰδιώτης πρότερον, ἐνίκησα δὲ καὶ δεύτερος καὶ τέταρτος ἐγενόμην καὶ τᾶλλα ἀξίως τῆς νίκης παρεσκευασάμην. νόμῳ μὲν γὰρ τιμὴ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ δρωμένου καὶ δύναμις ἅμα ὑπονοεῖται (Thuc. VI.16.2; cf. Plut., *Alc.* XI.1-2). The victories referred to by Alcibiades were most recent at the time, probably coming in 416 BC (*HCT*, IV, 246-247). One can only speculate, of course, to what extent the emphasis on his victories influenced the overall judgement of the Athenians towards him and the expedition, but it is certainly telling that Alcibiades should have deemed it important enough to go on at such length about his accomplishments in this respect. Doubtless, as a whole, much of his persuasiveness was owing to Alcibiades' "unhesitating generalizations on matters of historical fact...and on the dogmatic confidence with which he interprets the present...or predicts the future" (*ibid.*, IV, 246). One should not discount too quickly, though, the tangible proofs of pre-eminence which Alcibiades had garnered and laid claim to, especially in a traditionally-minded audience of honor-seeking Athenians.

<sup>15</sup> Soph., *Aj. passim*. The wrestling contest between Ajax and Odysseus (Hom., *Il.* XXIII.700-739) was stopped by Achilles and ruled indecisive with both parties splitting the prize, and so it would therefore seem to be not too closely related to the later contest for the arms of Achilles; cf. Richardson, *Iliad*, V, 245-249. However, Odysseus was able to relate elsewhere the deep resentment which Ajax still felt for him, who, even in death would not grant even a word to Odysseus (*Od.* XI. 541-562).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Plut., *Mor.* 802C.

lose sight of an important characteristic of a man who had a marked capacity for imposing his will on historical events.<sup>17</sup>

As Adcock has further stressed, it is not nearly enough for a Homeric hero to merely possess ἀρετή. Rather, it is imperative that a hero *do* something with his possession since success, not good intentions, are what the group to which one belongs lives by: "it is *aischron* to fail, whatever one's intentions, in those activities which are held to contribute to the defense of the *oikos*, or of the group for whose success one is held responsible in war. It is misleading...even to say that courage is highly valued; it is only courage-leading-to-success that is regarded: failure is *aischron*, whether one exerted oneself bravely or ran like a rabbit."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Thus in a lengthy commentary on Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, Stadter has seen fit to pass over without any comment whatsoever the incident involving Pericles and Thucydides, son of Melesias (Stadter, *Pericles*, *loc. cit.*). Nietzsche, of course, writing from a much different perspective, knew better and readily saw the direct ethical line leading from Homer, through Themistocles, right down to Pericles: "Jeder große Hellene giebt die Fackel des Wettkampfes weiter; an jeder großen Tugend entzündet sich eine neue Größe. Wenn der junge Themistokles im Gedanken an die Lorbeern des Miltiades nicht schlafen konnte, so entfesselte sich sein frühgeweckter Trieb erst im langen Wettstreit mit Aristides zu jener einzig merkwürdigen rein instinktiven Genialität seines politischen Handelns, die uns Thukydides beschreibt. Wie charakteristisch ist Frage und Antwort, wenn ein namhafter Gegner des Perikles gefragt wird, ob er oder Perikles der beste Ringer in der Stadt sei, und die Antwort giebt: „selbst wenn ich ihn niederwerfe, läugnet er daß er gefallen sei, erreicht seine Absicht und überredet die, welche ihn fallen sahen" (F.W. Nietzsche, "Homer's Wettkampf," *Nachgelassene Schriften 1870-1873, Nietzsche Werke*, Dritte Abteilung, Band II, ed. G. Colli & M. Montinari [Berlin and New York, 1973], 282). Cf. the remarks of Rhodes on the hazards of ignoring a *topos* solely on the grounds that it is a *topos* (P.J. Rhodes, "In Defence of the Greek Historians," *Greece & Rome* 41 [1994], 157-158). Without question, Rhodes' words of caution can be equally applied to mere "anecdotes" as well. For discussion of the importance of the athletic contest amongst aristocrats as a form of displaying ἀρετή, see C.G. Starr, *The Aristocratic Temper of Greek Civilization* (New York & Oxford, 1992), 31-42, esp. 36-38.

<sup>18</sup> Adkins (*supra* n.5), 13, cf. 134-135; cf. Hainsworth: "Heroes cannot be, they must do; courage in war, generosity in peace, not idle strength or wealth are admired. The simplest form of heroism is the successful accomplishment of a mighty deed" (Hainsworth, *Iliad*, III, 47).

While this striving for ἀρετή and pre-eminence may be a boon to the one possessing it (and seeking to *do* something with it), both for himself and for the group for which he fights, it may also be a bane to both the individual and the group concerned or, perhaps to just one of the two, depending upon the circumstances.<sup>19</sup> The words of Laertes typify well the type of striving for excellence which is of a "positive" nature, when, upon seeing his son Odysseus and his grandson vying with one another for ἀρετή and to be conspicuously pre-eminent, declares (*Od.* XXIV.514-515):

τίς νύ μοι ἡμέρη ἦδε, θεοὶ φίλοι; ἦ μάλα χαίρω  
 υἱός θ' υἱωνός τ' ἀρετῆς πέρι δῆριον ἔχουσιν.

This kind of strife (δῆριον, ἔρις) can exist on many different levels. Friends or family members can vie with one another, or possibly against one another, with beneficial or deleterious effects, just as individual factions or city-states may do so on a higher plane of activity. And just these forms of strife give *pleasure* to those listening about to from a minstrel (*Od.*, VIII.72-92).

The words of Laertes, however, point in the direction of one further aspect of the Homeric ἦθος which is of critical importance, namely, that of generational striving-for-excellence. This is the standard of ἀρετή set by the fathers (πατέρες) which places a heavy burden of striving-for-

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<sup>19</sup> Nestor, for instance can regard Achilles as a great bulwark of wicked war for all the Achaeans (*Hom.*, *Il.* I.284). But, when Achilles has been dishonoured (*Il.* I.355-356,

excellence upon sons. Characteristic of the Homeric hero in this regard is the hope and expectation of a father that his son should not prove to be inferior to him in valor, and, much more preferably in fact, that his son should *exceed* him in ἀρετή. It is this example of the fathers in ἀρετή that prompts Eumaeus, for instance, to relate to Odysseus in disguise, how he thought that Telemachus (now away at Pylos and in danger of his life) would prove to be not in any way inferior to his father (*Od.*, XIV.175-177).<sup>20</sup>

In a similar fashion, Achilles, while in the depths of Hades, anxiously inquires of Odysseus about his own son Neoptolemus. When Odysseus tells him that Neoptolemus is in fact pre-eminent in both word and deed (*Od.*, XI.538-540), Achilles exults:

ὥς ἐφάμην, ψυχὴ δὲ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο  
φοῖτα μακρὰ βιβᾶσα κατ' ἀσφοδελὸν λειμῶνα  
γηθοσύνη ὅ οἱ υἱὸν ἔφην ἀριδείκετον εἶναι.<sup>21</sup>

There is one additional dimension, though, to the basic idea of generational striving-for-excellence which needs to be more closely examined since it plays such a fundamental role in stimulating the

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I.412, I.501-510), this same Achilles can be, on account of his withdrawal, a source of innumerable woes to the Achaeans (*Il.* I.1-4).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the words, though, of Athena to Telemachus of how this often times is not the case with sons who prove to be less able than their fathers (*Od.*, II.276-277).

<sup>21</sup> Hom., *Od.* XI.538-540. Hector, too, in a prayer to Zeus and the other gods asks that his son be granted pre-eminence amongst the Trojans and hope that someday a man coming back from war will be able to say of his son (*Hom.*, *Il.* VI.479-481):

καί ποτέ τις εἶποι ἄπατρός γ' ὄδε πολλὸν ἀμείνων'  
ἐκ πολέμου ἀνιόντα· φέροι δ' ἔνερα βροτόεντα  
κτείνας δήιον ἄνδρα, χαρεῖη δὲ φρένα μήτηρ.

striving-for-excellence in general. This is the appeal or rebuke delivered by a man or a god to another hero at a critical moment when decisive and heroic action is needed. The appeal basically consists in citing the example of the excellence of the father who came before, and it is an appeal which is quite remarkable for being in all instances so extremely successful.

Perhaps the most instructive example of this sort of rebuke is that given by Agamemnon when he comes upon Diomedes, son of Tydeus and Sthenelus, son of Capaneus, standing in their chariot. Accusing Tydeus of avoiding battle, Agamemnon immediately proceeds to cite the example of his father (*Il.*, IV.372-374):

οὐ μὲν Τυδέϊ γ' ὧδε φίλον πτωσκαζέμεν ἦεν,  
ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρὸ φίλων ἐτάρων δηΐοισι μάχεσθαι,  
ὡς φάσαν οἱ μιν ἴδοντο πονεύμενον·

After a fairly lengthy disquisition on Tydeus and his mighty exploits at Thebes and elsewhere, Agamemnon returns again to emphasize what he had been implying all along, that Diomedes was inferior to his father (*Il.*, IV.399-400):

τοῖος ἔην Τυδεὺς Ἀιτώλιος· ἀλλὰ τὸν υἱὸν  
γείνατο εἶο χέρεια μάχη, ἀγορῇ δέ τ' ἀμείνω.<sup>22</sup>

The rebuke of Agamemnon produces a profound effect, reducing Diomedes to a state of silence out of a feeling of shame (*Il.*, VI.402):

αἰδεσθεῖς βασιλῆος ἐνιπὴν αἰδοίοιο.

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Sthenelus, too, is cut to the quick by the rebuke but he ventures to respond in words and asserts that he and Diomedes are in fact better than their fathers in valor. Diomedes at this point interjects, bidding Sthenelus not to argue with Agamemnon and encourages him rather bethink himself of furious valor in battle, at which point Diomedes leaps to the ground and advances into battle. What soon follows is nothing less than Diomedes' own ἀριστεῖα: a striving-for-excellence which manifests itself in a series of brilliant deeds. Moreover, when Diomedes shows signs of waning from his wounds, none other than the goddess Athena interposes and again rebukes Tydeus' son by regarding him as inferior to his father (*Il.*, V.801-802). The stern rebuke again serves to achieve its desired effect.

Needless to say, it is a type of rebuke to which Pericles, as we shall see, is no stranger.

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. the rebuke which Tlepolemus, son of Heracles, issues to Sarpedon (*Hom.*, *Il.*



Τῆς μὲν γνώμης, ὧς Ἀθηναῖοι, αἰεὶ τῆς αὐτῆς  
ἔχομαι μὴ εἶκιν Πελοποννησίοις....

Thuc. I.140.1

## II.2 *The Homeric Stance of Pericles: Obduracy and Desire*

At the assembly in Athens (432/431 BC) which was called in response to the final assembly of the Lacedaemonians to decide once and for all whether or not the Athenians should make any concessions to the Peloponnesians, Thucydides makes clear that many men came forward and spoke on both sides of the issue, some maintaining that the war was necessary, with others to the contrary maintaining that the Megarian Decree should not stand in place of peace (Thuc. I.139.3-4). It is at this point that Thucydides introduces Pericles with a "second formal introduction,"<sup>23</sup> before Pericles' first recorded speech in his account with a description of Pericles' superlative ability to speak and to act in ways one would expect from a Homeric hero (Thuc. I.139.4):

καὶ παρελθὼν Περικλῆς ὁ Ξανθίππου, ἀνὴρ κατ'  
ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον πρῶτος Ἀθηναίων, λέγειν τε  
καὶ πράσσειν δυνατώτατος, παρήνει τοῖδε.

As Hornblower notes, the description has "Homeric precedents."<sup>24</sup> But to speak only of mere "precedents" would certainly seem to understate the case. For, indeed, one of the basic ideals for a Homeric hero is to possess and make evident to others the ability to excel at speaking and to perform valorous deeds (Hom., *Il.* IX.443; cf. *Od.*, II.272, IV.164, XIII.297-

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V.635.637). See, also Kirk, *Iliad*, 242.

<sup>23</sup> Hornblower, *CT*, I, 225.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, *CT*, I, 225.

299). This very ideal persisted and remained one of the chief determinants of adjudging a man's excellence well until the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., Xen., *Symp.* VIII.23) and even beyond.<sup>25</sup> Conversely, words unaccompanied by deeds are contemptible and deserving of nothing less than hatred as, for instance, Antigone says to her sister Ismene (Soph., *Ant.* 538). Thus, the two aspects of exhibiting ἀρετή are firmly linked with one another. Pericles very significantly is represented as one who does not rest content with a mere ability to speak persuasively, but is ever so intent on doing deeds which will not diminish or devalue his own τιμή and the τιμή of Athens, either real or perceived. The characterization of Pericles by Thucydides is most apt and accurate. Furthermore, it invites a deliberate comparison with the Homeric ἦθος.

Clearly, Pericles places great stress in all his speeches on a "rational" policy of engaging the Peloponnesians. However, at the same time, it is striking that Pericles also very frequently appeals to the pursuance of τιμή and ἀρετή, and to meeting, or even excelling, the standards set by the fathers and of the men of the preceding generation.

The initial stance of Pericles in insisting that no concessions be made to the Peloponnesians is, in some ways, reminiscent of the violent quarrel

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<sup>25</sup> This ability to excel in word and deed is found in the Christian era as well. Of Moses, it was said: ἦν δὲ δυνατὸς ἐν λόγοις καὶ ἔργοις αὐτοῦ (*ActAp.* VII.22) Likewise was it true of the God-Man Christ: ὃς ἐγένετο ἀνὴρ προφήτης δυνατὸς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ (*EvLuc.* XXIV.19). In light of the basic injunction for all Christians to act accordingly (*EpCol.* III.17), the basic ideal may be said to exist still today, although, of course, in a more refined or elevated manner. As Weil noted: "L'Evangile est la dernière et

between Achilles and Agamemnon in the first book of the *Iliad*. Pericles initially states that he is firmly opposed to yielding to the Peloponnesians (Thuc. I.140.1). This particular position of Pericles is something which is expressly confirmed by Thucydides elsewhere in his narrative (I.127.3):

ὦν γὰρ δυνατώτατος τῶν καθ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἄγων  
τὴν πολιτείαν ἠναντιοῦτο πάντα τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις,  
καὶ οὐκ εἶα ὑπέικειν, ἀλλ' ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ὄρμα τοῦς  
Ἀθηναίους.

Likewise, Achilles refuses to yield in any way whatsoever to Agamemnon lest he be dishonoured by him (*Il*, I.292-293):

ἧ γὰρ κεν δειλός τε καὶ οὔτιδανός καλειόμην,  
εἰ δὴ σοὶ πᾶν ἔργον ὑπέιξομαι ὅττι κεν εἴπησ.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the speech of Achilles in general throughout the *Iliad* is that it includes more frequent repetition of ideas than one normally finds in oral poetry, and it thus conveys a pronounced and definite sense of urgency.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Achilles, the "most eloquent" of the speakers in the *Iliad*,<sup>27</sup> employs the emotive particles ἦ and δὴ very freely, along with 'attention-arresting' νῦν δέ. Can the same be said for Pericles?

Not unsurprisingly, Pericles does in fact make relatively frequent use of the 'attention-arresting' νῦν δέ. Indeed, he uses it on three separate occasions: twice in his first speech for not making any concessions to the Peloponnesians (I.143.1, I.144.2), and once in the funeral oration

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marveilleuse expression du génie grec, comme l'*Iliade* en est la première" (Simone Weil, "L'*Iliade* ou le Poème de la Force (II)," *Les Cahiers du Sud* 231 (1941), 32.

<sup>26</sup> Hornblower, *HCT*, II, 46-47.

(II.46.2). While the particular uses of  $\nu\upsilon\nu$   $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$  by themselves are not of the greatest consequence, they accentuate in a subtle manner the differing approach of Pericles in seeking support for his belligerent policy in contradistinction to that of, say, Archidamus who does not use  $\nu\upsilon\nu$   $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$  at all, and instead advises great circumspection without any sort of emotional appeals. In addition, while Pericles does not use the particle  $\tilde{\eta}$ , he is rather free in his use of the particle  $\delta\acute{\eta}$ , and that at some telling points (I.142.3, I.142.7, II.40.3, II.41.4, II.42.1, II.62.1, II.64.1, II.64.3 (twice), II.64.5).

Of more importance, though, is the manner in which Pericles insists repeatedly on not yielding to the Peloponnesians. Towards the end of his first speech he makes clear what is really at issue for him and for Athens (according to his understanding at least) in contending that war against the Peloponnesians was *necessary*, which very thing was by no means true at all, as Thucydides himself acknowledged in his narrative when introducing Pericles (Thuc. I.139.4). What is at issue for Pericles, though, is garnering the greatest amount of  $\tau\iota\mu\acute{\eta}$  from participating in the greatest dangers, a practice in accordance with living up to the standards of the fathers, that is to say, in cultivating most assiduously the *traditional*  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\epsilon\tau\acute{\eta}$  (Thuc. I.144.3-4):

ἔκ τε τῶν μεγίστων κινδύνων ὅτι καὶ πόλει καὶ ἰδιώτῃ  
 μεγίσται τιμαὶ περιγίγνονται. οἱ γοῦν πατέρες ἡμῶν  
 ὑποστάντες Μήδους καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ τοσῶνδε ὀρμώμενοι...

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<sup>27</sup> Hainsworth, *Iliad*, III, 99.

ὦν οὐ χρη λείπεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τοὺς τε ἐχθροὺς παντὶ  
 τρόπῳ ἀμύνεσθαι καὶ τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις πειρᾶσθαι  
 αὐτὰ μὴ ἐλάσσω παραδοῦναι.

Notwithstanding the 'rational' arguments put forth in the speech in support of a policy of opposition to the Peloponnesians, one cannot but gain the distinct impression that the primarily *emotional* appeal to the traditional ἀρετή was well calculated to persuade those Athenians who had serious misgivings about the prudence of entering into a war against the Peloponnesians. And indeed, the Athenians, considering that they were being advised for the best, resolved not to be 'dictated' to by the Peloponnesians about any terms or conditions whatsoever.

What is even more telling, perhaps, is how Pericles found it necessary to have frequent recourse to this same sort of appeal (II.62.3; cf. II.36.1-3), adding even further Homeric colorings to his subsequent appeals. Thus, in the Funeral Oration, a speech which should be seen as just one part of a consistent political policy,<sup>28</sup> Pericles calls upon the Athenians to recognize that love of τιμή alone is 'ageless' (II.44.4):

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<sup>28</sup> Rusten is typical of the skeptical or naïve approach to the Funeral Oration which sees the speech as somehow exceptional to the others of Pericles: "His [Pericles'] speeches reflect this emphasis: *apart from the funeral oration*, they consist of three successive attempts (1.140-4, 2.13, 2.59-64) to elucidate and justify a single strategy to his people" (Rusten, 114). While, admittedly, the Funeral Oration might appear to be qualitatively different from Pericles' other speeches (and it is different insofar as it is ostensibly a tribute to the dead), it should be clear enough that Pericles did not hesitate to make good use of the timely opportunity in the Funeral Oration to exalt the power of Athens and to encourage the Athenians to be lovers (ἐρασταί) of their *powerful* city in order to convince them to adhere to his 'single strategy.' In this regard Pericles essentially does nothing contrary to the traditional ἀρετή. Cf. now Sicking: "Both speeches [the funeral oration and Pericles' last speech]...must be understood from the military and political circumstances at the moment, and are to be seen as politically expedient answers to a specific situation. What makes them both remarkable is not their alleged 'idealism' or

τὸ γὰρ φιλότιμον ἀγήρων μόνον.<sup>29</sup>

The use of ἀγήρως here is particularly interesting since not only is it a distinctly Homeric word with extremely powerful associations,<sup>30</sup> it is also exceedingly rare in Thucydides. In fact, it is used only in one other instance, and that by Pericles himself, when he refers to the eternal praise which the men who died for Athens had earned (II.43.2):

κοινῇ γὰρ τὰ σώματα διδόντες ἰδίᾳ τὸν ἀγήρων  
ἔπαινον ἐλάμβανον καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐπισημότατον.

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even 'romanticism' but the firm and purposive determination of the speaker. Instead of compromising with his opponents, Pericles openly attacks anyone who refuses to accept that caution, restraint, frugality, and a desire to preserve the status quo are no longer the prime virtues" (C.M.J. Sicking, "The General Purport of Pericles' Funeral Oration and Last Speech," *Hermes* 123 [1995] 417). It is worth noting that while Pericles' exhortation that the Athenians become "lovers" of a powerful Athens is, as Lattimore observes, "overtly sexual and denotes the aggressor in relationships" (S. Lattimore, *Thucydides. The Peloponnesian War* [Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1998], 95, note for 2.43), the objects of ἔρως can be quite varied, and many of them are not of the sort which admit of a sexual connotation. The word is found in Homer to denote a "passionate desire" for a large variety of non-sexual objects: food, drink, war, song, and dancing (C.F. Smith, "Traces of Epic Usage in Thucydides," *TAPA* 31 [1900], 73). Cf. Ebeling, I, 483.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Soph. fr. 201d (Radt): ἀρετῆς βέβαιαι δ' εἰσὶν αἱ κτήσεις μόναι.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Hom., *Il.* II.447, VIII.539, XII.223, XVIII.444; *Od.* V.136, V.218, VII.94, VII.257, XXIII.223. Perhaps the most striking association of all is that of the 'ageless aegis' of Athena (*Il.* II.447). It is not surprising, of course, that Pericles should seek to call to mind any associations with Athena, seeing that his portrait found its way on to the shield of Pheidias' Athena Parthenos (see the Strangford Shield in A.R. Burn, *The Warring States of Greece* [New York, 1968], 104 pl. 100), to say nothing of his building program as a whole.

Chapter Three:  
The Aristocrats in Competition: Cimon and Pericles

Jede Begabung muß sich kämpfend entfalten, so gebietet die hellenische Volkspädagogik: während die neuen Erzieher vor Nichts eine große Scheu haben als vor der Entfesselung des sogenannten Ehrgeizes.

Nietzsche, *Homer's Wettkampf*

### III.I Aristocrats in Competition

The struggle for attainment of the agonistic ideal may be seen in any number of personal rivalries in ancient Greece, some of which had far-reaching repercussions on a much larger, political level. It is, perhaps, most evident, though, in what one may justly regard as the most celebrated rivalry in the history of Athens between two men, namely, the personal rivalry between Cimon, son of Miltiades, and Pericles, son of Xanthippus. A closer examination of the lives of both men, along with an assessment of the merit of their respective actions, is certainly warranted.

Delbrück, in his *History of the Art of War Within the Framework of Political History*, seemed hardly mindful of the military accomplishments of Cimon and his altogether crucial role in contributing to the firm establishment and the steady growth of the Attic Maritime League, a contribution due both to Cimon's greatness of soul (μεγαλοφροσύνη),<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Critias is reported to have prayed for this particular quality of Cimon's (Plut., *Cim.* X. 5). Moreover, in contrast to the 'arrogant' Pausanias who alienated the allies (VI.2; cf. Thuc. I.95.1, 130.1-2), Cimon, on account of his 'speech and character' secured the hegemony of Hellas for Athens (Plut., *Cim.* VI.2). It is important that four things be remembered in this connection (in 478/477 B.C.), namely, that the Spartans: 1) desired to free themselves from the Persian War; 2) thought that the Athenians were capable of leading; 3) were *well-disposed* to the Athenians, particularly Cimon; 4) the allies themselves were not averse to Athens assuming the leadership (Thuc., I. 95.-96. 1; cf. Plut., *Per.* X.4 on favorable Spartan feeling towards Cimon even *after* Tanagra; XXIX. 2 on favorable Spartan feeling extended to Cimon's sons many years later). Naturally, the



to his outstanding military talents.<sup>2</sup> For he accords him virtually no consideration in his seemingly comprehensive work; yet, in this very same work Delbrück devotes a considerable amount of time and space in discussing the war-time strategy of Pericles, son of Xanthippus, as if his military abilities and accomplishments far outstripped those of Cimon. And, indeed, Delbrück is not at all restrained in his praise for Pericles, contending that "the structure of the Peloponnesian War, together with the reports of numerous battle victories, obliges us to give him a position not simply among the great statesmen, but also among the great military leaders of world history."<sup>3</sup> But is such high praise of Pericles as a military leader completely justified?

Curiously enough, in the very same chapter in which Delbrück accords Pericles such high accolades as a military leader, Delbrück concedes that of Pericles' "nine victories as a commander...we know too little to be able to conclude from them anything as to Pericles' strategic talent."<sup>4</sup>

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Athenians welcomed the opportunity to arrange matters according to their own best interests (Thuc. I.95. 2). On *praotes* and *philanthropia*, see H. Martin, "The Concept of *Praotes* in Plutarch's Lives," *GRBS* 3 (1960), 65-73; "The Concept of *Philanthropia* in Plutarch's Lives," *AJP* 82 (1961), 164-175.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch specifically states that Cimon was more fitted than Pericles for the waging of war: ἦν [Cimon] γὰρ...δὲ πρὸς πόλεμον εὐφρέστερος (*Mor.* 812.F).

<sup>3</sup> Hans Delbrück, *Warfare in Antiquity. History of the Art of War*, vol. 1, tr. Walter J. Renfroe, Jr. (Lincoln 1990), 137.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 137. Too little indeed! While Pericles figures most prominently within Thucydides' narrative of events immediately leading up to the Athenian-Peloponnesian War and in the early stages of it in a *political* capacity, and as the leading exponent of a 'defensive' campaign against the Peloponnesians, it is most striking that he does not stand out as being particularly effective as a *strategos*. Pericles first appears (in 454 B.C.) when the Athenians made a landing along the coast of Sicyon and defeated the Sicyonians in battle (Thuc., I. 111.2), but afterwards the siege of Oeniadae in Acarnania proved fruitless (I.111.3); he quelled the revolt in Euboea, but not without first coming to terms, by means of bribes, with the Spartan king Pleistoanax who had invaded Attica (I. 114. 1-3; cf. II.21.1, V.16.3; *Plut.*, Per. XXII. 1-2 for the mention of

Apparently, it is enough to satisfy Delbrück that Pericles merely *conceived* of a grand strategy involving a protracted war of attrition,<sup>5</sup> and that he managed to implement it,<sup>6</sup> regardless of how well it succeeded in actual fact.<sup>7</sup>

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bribes); later he did play an important role, as we have seen, in the reduction of Samos, a key member of the Alliance, which had revolted in 440/439 B.C. (Thuc., I.140-142); lastly, during the Athenian-Peloponnesian War, he sent out cavalry patrols (II.22.2) and invaded Megaris, aided by the large force which had been operating around the Peloponnesus, only to withdraw later (II.31). For the figure of 'nine victories' or 'trophies' which Delbrück seems to have had in mind, see Plut., *Per.* XXXVIII.3. Stadter, however, sees 'nothing unreasonable' in the figure ascribed to Pericles by Plutarch (Stadter, *Pericles*, 344).

<sup>5</sup> As the astute military historian B. H. Liddell Hart has rightfully insisted, we must be clear about our use of terms and carefully distinguish between strategy and grand strategy: "Although the phrase 'Periclean strategy' is almost as familiar as the 'Fabian strategy' in a later age, such a phrase narrows and confuses the significance of the course that war pursued. Clear-cut nomenclature is essential to clear thought, and the term 'strategy' is best confined to its literal meaning of 'generalship' –the actual direction of military force, as distinct from the policy governing its employment and combining it with other weapons: economic, political, psychological. Such policy is in application a higher-level strategy, for which the term 'grand strategy' has been coined. In contrast to a *strategy of indirect approach which seeks to dislocate the enemy's balance in order to produce a decision*, the Periclean plan was a grand strategy with the aim of gradually draining the enemy's endurance in order to convince him that he could not gain a decision" (B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York, 1991), 10; cf. 212, 220, 319-333, 353-360).

<sup>6</sup> "The execution of this decision [to sacrifice the Athenian countryside] is a strategic deed that can be compared favorably with any *victory*. Moreover, it was an 'inevitable necessity' which only 'scholarly prigs' would deny today (Delbrück [*supra* n. 3], 137). Surely enough, great advantages can be won in war before the fighting has even begun. Adolf Hitler, for instance, was particularly adept at securing such advantages without the actual use of force in the early stages of his career (Liddell-Hart [*supra* n. 5], 207-221, esp. 213-219). But it is not at all certain that such was indeed the case in this particular instance. Clearly, Athenian resolve and morale were sorely tested by the decision to abandon Attica, with the farming class being particularly disaffected and displeased with the removal from the countryside (Thuc. II.14. 2, significantly repeated and further emphasized at II.16.2: ἐβαρύνοντο δὲ καὶ χαλεπῶς ἔφερον οἰκίας τε καταλείποντες καὶ ἰερά). Of course the plague, which carried away no less than one third of the population, while it perhaps could not have been foreseen *did* in fact do much more harm since much of the populace was constricted within the walls and without adequate shelter (II.52. 1-2; Plut., *Per.* XXXIV.5). The mere fact that Pericles *recognized* that his policy entailed suffering and (presumably) would produce delayed benefits (II.61.1-3) means little. In war, as Napoleon said, the "moral is to the physical as three to one," and one does well to cultivate its maintenance. Moral influence was rightly understood by the Chinese theorist and practitioner of war Sun Tzu as being one of the fundamental factors in war (*Art of War*, I. 1, 2, 4, 11; II. 3). For a sound discussion of the 'way of farmers' in Greece and the pronounced adverse psychological effect produced by an invading army, see the illuminating study by Victor Davis Hanson, *The*

Of course such a lavish view of the apparent merits of Pericles on the basic level of strategy and, more particularly, on the higher plane of grand strategy, is by no means peculiar to Delbrück, and it is a view which has not in any significant way come to be seen as outdated or, for that matter, of a questionable nature. In general, scholars seem to have adopted a rather favorable view of Periclean grand strategy,<sup>8</sup> chiefly attributing the failure of the Athenians to prevail in the war to their having abandoned the key principles espoused by Pericles himself.<sup>9</sup>

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*Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Civilization* (New York, 1995), 127-178, esp. 144-145, 165-166; cf. Hanson's earlier work, *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece* (Pisa, 1983), 111-143. Incidentally, in Aristotle's view an agrarian-based democracy made for the best and most stable form of democracy (Arist., *Pol.* 1318 b 7-1319 a 39).

<sup>7</sup> "For there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited" (Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, II.7; cf. II.5), and "victory is the main object of war. If this is long delayed, weapons are blunted and *morale depressed*...we have not yet seen a *clever operation that was prolonged*" (II.3, 6). During the time Pericles' war policy did not produce any clearly tangible benefits to the Athenians, it certainly did however manage to produce, in no small way on account of the effectiveness of Archidamus' gradually applied pressure, a great deal of discontent in Athens (Thuc. II.59. 1-2, 65.1-3; Plut., *Per.* XXXIII.7-8, XXXIV.5, XXXV.4) so much so in fact that Pericles felt compelled to resort to some rather extraordinary measures, namely, the refusal to call a meeting of the Ekklesia or any other gathering (Thuc. II.22.1; Plut., *Per.* XXXIII.6). For a detailed discussion of this extraordinary matter, see Edmund F. Bloedow, "Pericles' Powers in the Counter-Strategy of 431," *Historia* 36 (1987), 9-27; cf. Stadter, *Pericles*, 4), 311. It should not be forgotten that Pericles was actually displaced from his position of authority and fined (Thuc., II.65.3-4; Plut., *Per.* XXXV.3-4), according to Plato on a charge of theft for which Pericles very nearly was put to death (Pl., *Gorg.* 515E-516 A); cf. Stadter, *Pericles*, 323-325.

<sup>8</sup> For a recent study which does call into question the merits of Periclean war policy, see George Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1997), 40-55.

<sup>9</sup> These were essentially four. That during the course of the war the Athenians (Thuc., II.65. 7): 1) 'keep quiet' 2) take good care of the fleet; 3) not add to their 'rule'; 4) do nothing to jeopardize the safety of the *polis*. While not devoid of merit in themselves, such counsels are wanting in the crucial offensive element needed to ensure a more favorable outcome. But of course the successful blending of defensive and offensive components in an overall grand strategy is an exceedingly difficult thing to accomplish, and the difficulty is only increased by the 'friction' which is a natural concomitant in war. On this particular difficulty, see Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, IV. 1, 3, 4, 5; "Military Maxims of Napoleon," in T.R. Philips (ed.), *Roots of Strategy* (Harrisburg, 1985), 413, 437; on the attendant 'friction' see Williamson Murray, "War, Theory, Clausewitz, and Thucydides: The Game May Change But the Rules Remain," *Marine Corps Gazette* 81

Certainly the political successors of Pericles did not particularly distinguish themselves and brought harm to Athens over the longer term (Thuc. II.65.7). But their own failures do not necessarily vindicate the grand strategy of Pericles in its entirety, nor do they vindicate the 'provocative' Athenian foreign policy which brought the war about.<sup>10</sup>

Among modern scholars Kagan, for instance, in his very nearly hagiographical study of Pericles, approvingly quotes Delbrück in placing Pericles "among the great military leaders of world history" and appears to endorse just such a view.<sup>11</sup> In fact, that Pericles had managed to prevail upon the Athenians to adopt his particular policy upon the

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(1997), 62-69, esp. 64-66. 'Friction' was particularly pronounced at Epipolae (Thuc., VII.43-45), much to the chagrin of the Athenians.

<sup>10</sup> As Gomme noted, a proper inquiry into the causes of the war would require a book in itself (*HCT*, I, 465), but a few words here would not be out of place. The ultimate cause was the growth of Athenian power and the attendant Spartan fear it produced (Thuc. I.23. 6; cf. I.88). This in itself made the Athenians the "provocative cause" (*HCT*, I, 152); but other more immediate causes made the ultimate cause more manifest, namely: 1) the Corcyraean affair, solidified, after much debate, by the making of a "defensive alliance" by the Athenians with the Corcyraeans (Thuc. i. 44. 1); 2) the Potidaean affair (I.56-65); 3) the actions of the Aeginetans "behind the scenes" on account of their fear of the Athenians, due to their loss of autonomy (I.67.2); 4) the Megarian Decree (I.67.4; cf. I.139.1). If, as Gomme has observed, the Athenians had *not* interfered in the Corcyraean affair, "Spartan fears *might not* have been sufficiently provoked to lead her into war (that is, *Perikles' judgement may have been wrong*); for another thing, these quarrels helped the war-spirit on both sides, and weakened the influence of an Archidamos" (*HCT*, I, 154). Such a mistaken judgment would neither be the first nor the last in history. Hitler, for instance, believed that he could involve Germany in Poland in 1939 without the Western Powers committing themselves to a war. He was, however, mistaken (and greatly surprised) when Britain and France did in fact declare war (Albert Speer, *Inside The Third Reich*. tr. Richard and Clara Winston [New York, 1970], 227-228); cf. Liddell Hart (*supra* n. 5), 214-215. On how the 'defensive alliance' of the Athenians broke the 'spirit' of the Thirty Years' Peace, see E. F. Bloedow, "Athens' Treaty With Corcyra: A Study in Athenian Foreign Policy," *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 185-210, esp. 190-192.

<sup>11</sup> Donald Kagan, *Pericles and The Birth of Democracy* (New York, 1991), 230. However, to Kagan's credit, he does seem to acknowledge certain inadequacies in Pericles' grand strategy (*ibid.*, 242-245, 256-259), although to him the blame for its ultimate failure would appear to fall more on the side of the adversaries of Athens, who were not sufficiently "persuaded" or "educated" by the supreme Mind (Anaxagorean no doubt) of Pericles (*ibid.*, 229). Perhaps they went away dissatisfied with this "education," much as

outbreak of war, constitutes for Kagan nothing less than "his greatest triumph as an *educator*."<sup>12</sup> Be that as it may, there is little doubt that the reputation of Pericles as an exceptional statesman and military leader has been rather firmly established. But there is good reason to ask whether or not this is altogether justified. Moreover, what are to we make of the comparative neglect or devaluation of Cimon, that strong "arm of the Attic state,"<sup>13</sup> in relation to Pericles? A closer look at the life of Cimon yields some interesting findings.

Plutarch tells us that from the start that Cimon was a philo-Laonian (*Cim.* XVI.1-4; cf. I.4, XIV.3) and that he gave all three of his sons Spartan names: Lacedaemonius and Eleius (by a woman of Cleitor),<sup>14</sup> and Thessalus (by Isodicé).<sup>15</sup> These could be said to have represented a veritable "political platform."<sup>16</sup> Being the son of Miltiades,<sup>17</sup> Cimon inherited as a young man the onerous burden of payment of a fine of fifty talents after his father's ignoble death, and since he was unable to pay the fine he was of no consequence in Athens at first (IV.3).<sup>18</sup> He also had a reputation for disorderliness and heavy drinking, and was rather given

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Socrates did in respect to Anaxagoras himself, or for that matter, like Pericles' very own sons, who "browsed around like sacred cattle" (Pl., *Prot.* 319 e-320 a).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 231; cf. 229.

<sup>13</sup> H. Berve quoted in H. Bengtson, *History of Greece*, tr. E.F. Bloedow (Ottawa, 1988) 115.

<sup>14</sup> A fact for which Pericles is said to have often reproached him (Plut., *Cim.* XVI.1).

<sup>15</sup> According to Diodorus the Topographer, all three sons had Isodicé as their mother (Plut., *Cim.* XVI.1)

<sup>16</sup> Bengtson (*supra* n. 13), 457, n. 13.

<sup>17</sup> This made him a relation of Thucydides (Plut., *Cim.* IV.1-2). His mother was Hegesipyle.

<sup>18</sup> The fine was later paid by Callias who fell in love with Elpinicé, Cimon's sister (Plut., *Cim.* IV.7).

to vengery (IV.3-4, 8-9; *Comp. Cim et Luc.* I.6-7).<sup>19</sup> In addition he lacked, according to Stesimbrotus, a literary education and did not seem to possess the Attic cleverness and glibness of tongue which distinguished so many Athenians of his day.<sup>20</sup>

Notwithstanding these deficiencies, Cimon had, as a whole, noble traits and was considered to be not inferior to his father in daring (τολμή), nor inferior in intelligence (ξύνεισις) to Themistocles; and, what is more, he was believed to be more just than both, their superior in statesmanship, and their equal as a soldier (*Cim.* V.1). It would not be long before Cimon proved that to be entirely the case.

While still a youth, Cimon showed great equanimity during the Persian invasion, and being the first to act when Themistocles was seeking to persuade the people to abandon the city and fight at Salamis (480 B.C.), he led a procession to the Acropolis and dedicated a horse's bridle to the goddess:

ὄτε γὰρ τὸν δῆμον ἐπιόντων Μήδων Θεμιστοκλῆς  
 ἔπειθε προέμενον τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὴν χώραν ἐκλιπόντα  
 πρὸ τῆς Σαλαμῖνος ἐν ταῖς ναυσὶ τὰ ὄπλα θέσθαι καὶ  
 διαγωνίσασθαι κατὰ θάλατταν, ἐκπεπληγμένων τῶν  
 πολλῶν τὸ τόλμημα πρῶτος Κίμων ὤφθη διὰ τοῦ  
 Κεραμεικοῦ παιδρὸς ἀνιῶν εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν μετὰ τῶν  
 ἐταίρων ἵππου τινὰ χαλινὸν ἀναθεῖναι τῇ θεᾷ, διὰ  
 χειρῶν κομίζων, ὡς οὐδὲν ἵππικῆς ἀλκῆς, ἀλλὰ  
 ναυμάχων ἀνδρῶν ἐν τῷ παρόντι τῆς πόλεως δεομένης.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> But apparently Cimon's character improved with age and he did not sink, as many are wont to do who have both wealth and opportunity, into the baser forms of Oriental debauchery and feasting (Plut., *Comp. Cim. et Luc.* i. 2-4).

<sup>20</sup> Such a lack of 'cleverness' did not, however, disappoint Cimon in his division of spoils at Byzantium (Plut., *Cim.* IX.1-4).

<sup>21</sup> Plut., *Cim.* V.2.

After having dedicated the horse' bridle to the goddess, Cimon then took a shield from the temple, finished his prayers, and went down to the sea. What is most noteworthy about Cimon's decisive action is the result of it: it emboldened no small number of Athenians to take heart and not give in to despair in the face of the looming danger (Plut., *Cim.* V.3). In connection with this gallant action by Cimon, though, Burn astutely noted that it must have been very difficult for Pericles to have witnessed it under the circumstances. Indeed, the young Pericles (perhaps fourteen years old at the time) "must have *burned inwardly* as he took part in the evacuation, with the *women and children*...It was a symbolic action...Kimon was advertising his acceptance of Themistocles' thesis, Athens hope of safety was in her fleet."<sup>22</sup> The recognition of relative helplessness at a critical time for the city must have remained firmly embedded in the memory of a passionate lover of τιμή such as Pericles, embedded for a very long time indeed.

Having subsequently distinguished himself at Salamis, Cimon, on the other hand, was besought by the people to perform deeds worthy of Marathon, and, having met with the approbation of Aristides the Just (*Cim.* V.4), he entered into politics and was gladly welcomed by the people; he was especially attractive to the commoners on account of his

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<sup>22</sup> A.R. Burn, *Pericles and Athens* (New York, 1962; rpt. of 1948 ed.), 36.

easy disposition. Most significantly, the expected deeds "worthy of Marathon" were in fact forthcoming.

Accordingly, Cimon was sent out with Aristides as a commander and because of the arrogance of Pausanias, coupled with the overriding virtue and agreeable disposition of Cimon, Athens secured the hegemony of Hellas with the willing obeisance of the allies and Lacedaemonians (Plut., *Cim.* VI.2-3; *Comp. Cim et Luc.* II.2-3; *Arist.* XXII.1-4; cf. Thuc. I.95.1, I.130, 1-2). His own troops were noted for being well disciplined and loyal to him (*Cim.* VI.1), and under such conditions, Cimon began to make his presence felt even more. In a series of military engagements Cimon established the Attic Maritime Alliance (478/477 B.C.) as a strong force to be reckoned with for many years to come.

First besieging the Persian base Eion on the Strymon, Cimon took the place and enslaved the inhabitants (476/75 B.C.);<sup>23</sup> subsequent to this, Cimon subdued the piratical Dolopians on the island of Scyros and the Carystians on Euboea (475).<sup>24</sup> The reduction of Scyros (469) conjoined with the discovery of the bones of the legendary hero Theseus and their removal therefrom to Athens made him thoroughly enamoured by the

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<sup>23</sup> Thuc. I.98.1; Plut., *Cim.* VII.1-5. On account of this success Plutarch records that Cimon, although not named personally, was greatly honored by the people in a series of public inscriptions (*Cim.* VII.3-VIII.1).

<sup>24</sup> Thuc. I.98.2-3; Plut., *Cim.* VIII.3-5. While the settlement of Scyros removed the threat of piracy, it also was "convenient for the communication with Lemnos," (George Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. 5 [London, 1851], 413).



Athenians;<sup>25</sup> once there they were entombed in the Theseum and Cimon himself was regarded as a "second Theseus."

Due to the Athenians' strictness in exacting tributary payments (Thuc. I.99.1),<sup>26</sup> ripples of discontent arose within the Maritime Alliance and Naxos was subdued by Cimon, being the first confederate state to revolt (ca. 469 B.C.).<sup>27</sup> Not long afterwards, Cimon carried the war against Persia deeper into her sphere of influence and won a double victory (both on land and at sea) at the Eurymedon in Pamphylia (ca. 467); this signal achievement, in which the Athenians captured or destroyed the entire Phoenician fleet of 200 triremes (Thuc. I.100; cf. Plut. *Cim.* XII-XIII), ranks among the "most glorious of Grecian exploits."<sup>28</sup> Here, under the command of Cimon, "the spirit of Greek seamanship" immediately rendered Athens a major power in the ancient world, and through the momentous victory at the Eurymedon "the Aegean was transformed into a Greek lake."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Plut., *Cim.* VIII.5-6; cf. *Thes.* XXVI. Grote made the interesting observation concerning "the protective functions of the mythical hero of democracy...[and] the growing intensity of democratical feeling" in Athens ([*supra* n.24], 415-416).

<sup>26</sup> The main causes of the revolts were: 1) failure to bring in the tribute money; 2) failure to provide the necessary number of ships; 3) refusal of military service (Thuc. I. 99.1). This last matter did not redound to the credit of the Confederates inasmuch as it made it easier for the seasoned Athenian veterans to subdue those who had little practical experience and who thereby entered into war lacking sufficient preparation (I.99.3; cf. Plut., *Cim.* XI).

<sup>27</sup> Thuc. I.98.4. The reduction of Naxos, as Grote observed, "however untoward in its effects upon the equal and self-maintained character of the confederacy, strengthened its military force by placing the *whole Naxian fleet with new pecuniary contributions in the hands of the chief*" (Grote [*supra* n.24], 416).

<sup>28</sup> Grote (*supra* n.24), 418.

<sup>29</sup> Bengtson (*supra* n.13), 117.

Greatly enriched by the immense spoils of war, Cimon set out to beautify the city.<sup>30</sup> And, in the manner of the great-souled man, he gave freely of his wealth,<sup>31</sup> even taking away the fences from his own fields to enable the needy to feed themselves without fear (Plut., *Cim.* X).<sup>32</sup> Cimon's "generosity" or "freedom from envy" was said to have surpassed that of the Athenians of old and he greatly endeared himself to the people; it was almost as if, says Plutarch, he had restored the Golden Age of Cronus (*Cim.* X.5-6). And it is with just such a figure that Pericles, upon entering the political scene, had to contend, a figure whose "individuality merged with the state,"<sup>33</sup> and who actively sought to preserve Sparta, Athens' "yoke-mate," during her gravest crisis after the great earthquake of 464 (*Cim.* XVI.4-8).

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<sup>30</sup> According to Plutarch, Cimon: 1) built elegant resorts; 2) planted plane trees in the marketplace; 3) converted the Academy into a well-watered grove and furnished it with walk-ways and running-tracks; 4) constructed the southern wall of the Acropolis; 5) laid the first foundations for the Long Walls by filling up the various swamps and marshes (*Cim.* XIII.6-8).

<sup>31</sup> On the nature of the great-souled man, see Aristotle's discussion in *Eth. Nic.* 1123 a 25-1125 a 35. While modern critics may tend to be cynical about such liberality as Cimon exhibited, it is important to bear in mind that considerations of honor in conferring benefits are not necessarily incompatible with a genuine sense of good-will and generosity, especially in the case of one imbued with an aristocratic ethos and committed to an aristocratic policy (cf. Plut. *Cim.* X.7-8). One recalls in this connection the remark by Thoreau: "We are often reminded that if there were bestowed on us the wealth of Croesus, our aims must still be the same, and our means essentially the same" (Henry David Thoreau, *Walden: Or, Life in the Woods* [New York, 1995], 212); cf. the anecdote reported by Plutarch concerning Rhoesaces and Cimon (*Cim.* X.8-9).

<sup>32</sup> On the unusual nature of opening up one's fields, see Hanson (*supra* n. 6), 138, 141. The practice of distributing clothes to elderly citizens in need also made a "deep impression" (*Cim.* X.2).

<sup>33</sup> Bengtson (*supra* n.13), 115. Grote summarizes Cimon's political and military policy thus: "The maintenance of alliance with Sparta on equal footing- peace among the great powers of Greece and common war against Persia- together with the prevention of all farther democratical changes in Athens- were the leading points of his political creed" (Grote [*supra* n.24], 432). Cimon seemed to desire nothing less than the destruction of the entire rule of the great King (Plut., *Cim.* XVIII.3.6).

In sharp contrast to the natural munificence and highly accomplished generalship of Cimon, Pericles presents a very strange figure indeed. He was descended on both sides from nobility and was the son of Xanthippus.<sup>34</sup> But despite being well-educated and possessing exceptional ability as an orator, Pericles as a young man was exceedingly circumspect and fearful of facing the people.<sup>35</sup> This was in large part due to his resemblance to the tyrant Pisistratus, which occasioned his fear of ostracism (Plut., *Per.* VII.1-2).<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, not taking any part in politics, he devoted himself to military campaigning and apparently showed himself to be brave and bold: ἐν δὲ ταῖς στρατείαις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς ἦν καὶ φιλοκίνδυνος.<sup>37</sup> However, he did nothing of any real note in the military sphere to enhance his political stature.

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<sup>34</sup> Xanthippus had defeated the Persians at Mycale in 479 B.C, despite having been exiled earlier (ca. 484). Before his exile he had been the chief prosecutor of Miltiades, the father of Cimon, in 489 (Plut., *Per.* III.1-2; Stadter, *Pericles*, 62-63). On the persistence of fractious family rivalries (e.g., the Philaids and the Alcmaeonids) see John R. Cole, "The Oresteia and Cimon," *HSCP* 81 (1977), 101-102.

<sup>35</sup> Plut., *Per.* VII.1.

<sup>36</sup> There were several reasons for his fear: 1) his physical resemblance to Pisistratus; 2) his resemblance in manner of speaking with him; 3) his wealth; 4) his distinguished family (the Alcmaeonids); 5) his powerful friends (Plut., *Per.* VII.1-2). The fate of his own father (and also his uncle Megacles) probably had some effect on his thinking too (Stadter, *Pericles*, 88-89; cf. 62-63).

<sup>37</sup> Plut., *Per.* VII.2. Stadter, however considers this statement to be the invention by Plutarch of a "probable detail" (*Pericles*, 90). Admittedly, it is true that Pericles never won any great victories on the scale of, say, Cimon's military victories, and much too little is known about his early military career to entirely substantiate the claim for boldness. Yet one would expect a young man with a desire for glory to exhibit some measure of it at least. He apparently exhibited conspicuous bravery at Tanagra in 457 (Plut. *Per.* X.2), where the circumstance of Cimon's brief appearance and the valour of his friends, particularly would have demanded it; but, of course, as Aristotle says "one swallow does not make a spring, nor even one fine day." Cf. Pericles' own expectations of the Athenians (Thuc. I.144.3, II.43.4). He was, of course, best known (Plut., *Per.* XVIII.1) for his caution (ἀσφάλεια). Perhaps both elements always existed in a fundamental tension within him, especially after the Athenian setback in Egypt.

But inasmuch as Pericles was arrayed against the "reputation" or "glory" of Cimon, he set out to win the favor of the people by the distribution of public monies since he could not at all match the personal munificence of Cimon (IX.1-2).<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, when the opportunity presented itself, with Cimon away on foreign campaigns (VII.3), Pericles, in a manner altogether *contrary to his nature* (παρὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν), a nature which was thoroughly aristocratic, ingratiated himself with the people and assumed the cause of the multitudes (VII.3-4).<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, he modified his behavior so that he was seen infrequently (save for important occasions), and even refused to accept invitations to dinner (VII.5), a type of behavior at some variance with the more general Greek practice of maintaining a certain accessibility.

Again when Cimon was away in Messenia assisting the Spartans in the siege at Ithome,<sup>40</sup> Pericles, through the agency of Ephialtes,<sup>41</sup> began to

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<sup>38</sup> Plut., *Per.* IX.1. The attempt to wrest control from Cimon took place in two stages according to Stadter: 1) the winning of public favor; 2) the currying of public favor to limit the powers of the aristocratic party and effect the ostracism of Cimon (Stadter, *Pericles*, 112-113).

<sup>39</sup> He acted so for three reasons: 1) he feared being suspected of hankering after a tyranny; 2) he sought his own political preservation; 3) he sought to gain power against his rival - Cimon (*Per.* VII.4). That Pericles felt constrained to act against his own nature, which was proudly aristocratic, in order to assert himself politically can only give rise to a whole host of important and interesting questions. Surely pronounced and lasting feelings of anger and resentment towards Cimon and his policies (e.g., cooperation with Sparta) must have lodged themselves within Pericles' breast. Cf. the remark by Perlman: "The rivalry between Cimon and Pericles in matters of foreign policy was not the result of differences of opinion, but rather of competition because of Cimon's *achievements*" (S. Perlman, "Panhellenism, the Polis, and Imperialism," *Historia* 25 [1976], 11). Regardless of what Pericles may have really thought about Sparta before his political change (contrary to his personal nature), inveterate opposition to Sparta was the one certain way in which he could determinedly seek to distinguish himself afterwards. One might even say that he staked his "political identity" on this course of action. It proved to be an identity which was not amenable to any sort of modification.

<sup>40</sup> Plut., *Per.* IX.3-5; *Cim.* XV.1-2; cf. Thuc., I.102.1-2.

weaken the powers of the Areopagus and pushed through further democratic reforms (festival monies, jury pay, and other payments); with them the "gradual transformation from a productivity state to a welfare state" had begun,<sup>42</sup> Cimon's position was seriously undermined, and when he returned to Athens he was ostracized.<sup>43</sup> The Spartan-Athenian Alliance was no more.

However, a viable form of Athenian-Spartan dualism of the sort which Cimon favored could quite possibly have been maintained indefinitely. Eventually, with Sparta gradually becoming through the passage of time, what with her declining population and ever-present problems with the Messenians and the helots,<sup>44</sup> less of a political and military force, it is quite conceivable that she may have been more than willing to accept a role as an equal or even a junior partner (so long as her own interests

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<sup>41</sup> On the uncertainty concerning Ephialtes and his exact role, see Stadter, *Pericles*, 120-121.

<sup>42</sup> Bengtson (*supra* n.13), 124.

<sup>43</sup> With his ostracism, Cimon's power effectively came to an end. While he returned from exile at Tanagra, and later effectively brokered a truce between Athens and Sparta (in 451), sure indications that Pericles was still not entirely secure in his position at Athens, he went on a last expedition to Cyprus, dying at Citium while besieging it in 449.

<sup>44</sup> In the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Spartan rule within the Peloponnesus was to be overturned. The military genius of Epaminondas, along with his "oblique order," was an additional crucial factor in Theban success in 371 B.C. at Leuctra (G.L. Cawkwell, "The Decline of Sparta," *CQ* 33 [1983], 399-400); thereafter, the "Spartan sword was shattered" (Bengtson). For the critically important "dislocations" effected by the creations of Messenia and Megalopolis by Epaminondas, "one of the most daring innovators of all time" (Bengtson), see Liddell Hart (*supra* n. 5), 14-16. Needless to say, Pericles was no Epaminondas, neither as a strategist nor as a grand strategist. Already at the time of the campaign at Pylos (425 B.C.), the potential loss of only 420 hoplites was considered a very great disaster for the Spartans, and reason enough to sue for terms (Thuc. IV.15). Of the 420 hoplites on Sphacteria, 292 were taken to Athens alive, 120 being Spartiates (IV.38.5). On the deleterious effects of the earthquake of 464 B.C. and its far-reaching consequences, see Thuc., I.101.2-3; Plut., *Cim.* XVI.4-8; cf. Gomme, *HCT*, I, 298-299.

were reasonably secured) in policing Athenian interests within and immediately around the Peloponnesus.<sup>45</sup> But such an arrangement would have required a Cimon (provided he had the necessary measure of popular backing) and a Pericles reconciled with one another, perhaps in some such manner as proposed by Aeschylus.<sup>46</sup> Even later with Cimon removed from the picture, a Pericles by himself who was decidedly less hostile and uncompromising towards Sparta could have made at a critical juncture an overture for joint rule along with some sort of concession, perhaps the revocation of the Megarian Decree,<sup>47</sup> in order to defuse the very tense situation which had developed after the Corcyraean and Potidaean affairs had materialized and had brought matters to a head.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For an interesting study of "Athenian-Spartan dualism," with some modern implications, see Peter J. Fleiss, *Thucydides and the Politics of Bipolarity* (Nashville 1966).

<sup>46</sup> For an allegorical interpretation of the *Oresteia* and the *Eumenides* which sees Aeschylus calling for "private and factional vengeance...[yielding] to public interest and institutional justice," see John R. Cole, "Cimon's Dismissal, Ephialtes' Revolution and the Peloponnesian Wars," *GRBS* 15 (1974), 99-111, esp. 107-110. With significant democratic reforms already in place after 462 B.C., the Cimonian "party" would have had, of course, to accept some limitation of its oligarchical powers.

<sup>47</sup> Liddell Hart's observations concerning breakdowns in negotiations are worth noting here: "History reveals, also, that in many cases a beneficial peace could have been obtained if the statesman of the warring nations had shown more understanding of the elements of psychology in their peace "feelers"...each party is afraid to appear yielding, with the result that when one of them shows any inclination towards conciliation this is usually expressed in language that is too stiff, while the other is apt to be slow to respond- partly from *pride* or *obstinacy* and partly from a tendency to interpret such a gesture as a sign of weakening when it may be a sign of *returning common sense*" (Liddell Hart [*supra* n. 5], 358). If the Megarian Decree had been revoked, there still most probably would have been the problem of Potidaea.

<sup>48</sup> It does not at all logically follow that an endless litany of further concessions would have been pressed upon the Athenians as Pericles maintained if the Athenians had made any one concession (I.140.5). Neither was it clearly the case that the *Spartans* were plotting against Athens (I.140.1) nor in fact that the war was "inevitable" (I.144). But such considerations would mean little to one virtually obsessed with *τιμή* and invariably opposed to Sparta and who, in fact, repeatedly urged Athens on to war (I.127.

At the beginning of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War, superiority of naval skill was still very much on the side of the Athenians.<sup>49</sup> Yet in the end, after a long and costly struggle, Sparta *did* adapt,<sup>50</sup> albeit with the help of Persian gold (VIII.29ff.);<sup>51</sup> she *did* in fact defeat Athens at sea (most notably at Notium in 407 B.C. and at Aegospotami in 405),<sup>52</sup> thereby becoming the new naval power in Greece. Of course her "maritime empire," was not to last, and it soon "sank beneath the waves in the waters of Cnidus" (in 394 B.C.).<sup>53</sup> But, as Starr has noted, the ability of the Spartans to persevere and adapt is one of the few remarkable instances in history in which a land-based power had thus reacted,<sup>54</sup> thereby emphasizing yet again the supreme importance of not

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3, I.140. 1). For the Athenian belief in general that there would be a war, see Thuc. I.44.2. On the opposing *slowness* of the Spartans to go to war, for which the Corinthians upbraided them, see I.69-71; cf. the rejoinder of Archidamus at I.84.

<sup>49</sup> This superiority was made very evident in Thucydides' description at the Battle of Sybota in 433 B.C. (I.49.1-4) in which both sides fought more in the manner of a land battle than a naval one because of their lack of 'skill'; cf. I. 84.1-4, I.85.2, I.87.4-5, I.92.1. Pericles did not think it would be an easy matter for the Peloponnesians to acquire skill in naval warfare (I.142.6-9). In thinking so he was, strictly speaking, correct. But with "plenty of practice" the Spartans did acquire some skill, and they later proved themselves eminently capable under the command of the Spartan Lysander.

<sup>50</sup> Archidamus realized the importance of skill in naval warfare and money to finance a fleet (I. 80.3-4, I.81.4-5, I.81.6, I.82.1) and expected the war to be handed down to the next generation (I.81.6). In more modern times, by way of comparison, very few men thought that the American Civil War (1861-1865) would last more than a few months, save for the old General Winfield Scott (1766-1866), known as "Old Fuss and Feathers."

<sup>51</sup> A circumstance *not* apparently foreseen even by Pericles who did, however, think that money might be procured by the Peloponnesians from either Olympia or Delphi (I.143.1; cf. I.142.1); but a circumstance much better appreciated, perhaps, by Archidamus (I.82.1).

<sup>52</sup> "The decision in the war was brought about by the *Spartan fleet*...The combination of the occupation of Deceleia in Attica and the blocking of the Dardanelles led to the economic ruin of Athens....With this engagement [Aegospotami] the greatness of Athens sank into the grave" (Bengtson [*supra* n.13], 153. The real winner, as in many wars, was a third party: Persia.

<sup>53</sup> Bengtson (*supra* n.13), 162.

<sup>54</sup> "The Spartans also discovered that victory could be reached only by attaining naval mastery; they and the Romans later are almost unique in all history in facing the need

underestimating one's opponents,<sup>55</sup> least of all of viewing them with *contempt*,<sup>56</sup> and of the importance of avoiding a war, especially a prolonged one, so long as it is possible to do so and one's own security or safety is not reasonably threatened.

Some time ago Ehrenberg raised the possibility of Pericles being subject to passion, and, as a consequence, his not always being ruled by "reason and sensibility."<sup>57</sup> He also raised the interesting possibility that Pericles may have had a "divided personality."<sup>58</sup> In the end, however, Ehrenberg seemed to accept the picture of an eminently rational Pericles, a veritable "unity of passionate patriotism and rational clarity."<sup>59</sup> But as we have seen, while Pericles may very well have been animated by a sincere love for Athens, and while he may have been a statesman of some

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to gain naval power *and actually securing it*" (Chester G. Starr, *The Influence of Sea-Power on Ancient History* [New York, 1989], 46.

<sup>55</sup> On how the Russians adapted to German strategy and tactics in the Second World War, see the review of David M. Glantz and Jonathan House, *When Titans Clashed: How The Red Army Stopped Hitler* (Lawrence, 1995) by Williamson Murray in *Marine Corps Gazette* 82 (1998), 73-74. This new study should lay to rest the notion that the German army merely succumbed to overwhelming numbers. Cf. Hanson W. Baldwin, "Stalingrad -Point of No Return, June 28, 1942 -February 2, 1943," in Harry Roskolenko (ed.), *Great Battles and Their Generals* (Chicago, 1974), 235-262, esp. 260-261. It is worth noting that Hitler, according to Speer, believed, both before the war and (increasingly so) during it, in the "biological superiority" of the Siberians, Russians, and White Russians (being as they were particularly inured to hardship), yet he thrust aside his own thesis because it ran *counter* to his plans for the East (Speer [*supra* n. 12], 142-143, 252-253).

<sup>56</sup> Exactly as Pericles had encouraged the Athenians to do: *ιέναι δὲ τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ὁμοσε μὴ φρονήματι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ καταφρονήματι* (Thuc. II.62.3); cf. Plut., *Per.* V.3, XXVIII.7. A danger also naturally exists in holding too firmly to a sharply delineated and overly rigid conception of "national character." Allowances must be made for change over time and for anomalies of personality and disposition (e.g., Brasidas, Gylippus, and Lysander on the Spartan side).

<sup>57</sup> Victor Ehrenberg, *Sophocles and Pericles* (Oxford, 1954), 155-157.

<sup>58</sup> "There was, of course, one strong emotional force in Pericles which sometimes did override reason. That was his patriotism, his passionate love and ambition for Athens" (*supra* n. 57, 156).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.



genuine merit, he was also very much a man who was overcome by a pronounced love of individual glory, and a man who may not have mastered so well after all strong personal feelings of resentment towards Cimon and his family,<sup>60</sup> and by extension, towards Sparta. The particular circumstances surrounding Pericles' rise to power and the manner in which he attained it are not insignificant. Indeed, the circumstances furnish one with an important means of understanding Pericles' conduct later in his career. His "neglect" of the state extended beyond just finance.<sup>61</sup> On account of his overzealous insistence upon the acquisition of *τιμή* in a war against the Peloponnesians, Pericles may justly be regarded as the "primitive author" of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War and for something less than the most rational of reasons.

Of course, to blame Pericles solely for the outbreak of the war would be an oversimplification. After all, the Athenians themselves did take his counsel. Moreover, the other contending powers in Greece, namely Corinth, and even the rather far removed Corcyra, both of whom were naturally concerned with their own best interests (perceived rightly or wrongly by them), were contributing parties to the unfolding drama. But as the foremost man in an Athens which was only nominally a

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<sup>60</sup> He continually sought to humiliate the sons of Cimon, even many years after the death of Cimon (Plut., *Per.* XXIX.2). In the Corcyraean affair, he sent out Lacedaemonius, "as if to mock him," with only a small contingent of ten ships (XXIX. 1; cf. Thuc. I.45.1-3). One wonders at what point in time exactly Pericles conceived of a means whereby to mock him. Stadter notes that Plutarch included this incident "to give additional insight into Pericles' character, reminding us of the importance of *personal rivalry*" (Stadter, *Pericles*, 266-267).

democracy, (Thuc. II.65.9; cf. I.139.4), and as the head of the leading state in Hellas, Pericles must shoulder the largest share of blame. War is a "harsh schoolmaster" (III.82.2), especially for those who are susceptible to the allurements of expansionism, love of honor, and rivalry (Thuc. III.82.8). Agariste's dream had come true after all: she gave birth to a lion.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> On Pericles' "neglect" of Athenian finances due to his monumental building program and the dangerous policy of enfranchisement, see Bengtson (*supra* n. 13), 125,

<sup>62</sup> Plut., *Per.* IX.2.

## Conclusion

"With privilege goes responsibility."  
 E.B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed*

### *Conclusion*

Maintaining "moderation" with respect to might, as Weil observed, requires practically a super-human virtue.<sup>1</sup> Unquestionably, the proper maintenance of it will always present itself as one of the most formidable of challenges in the sphere of military and political transactions, both now and in the future. Indeed, so difficult is it to resist the temptation to excess that, in the end, even the cautious "paragon of emotional stability" Pericles succumbed to it. In fact, one may go even further and say that, as a whole, one of the most intelligent, sophisticated, and urbane peoples in all of antiquity -the Athenians- showed themselves to be unable, or unwilling at least, to resist the temptation to embark on a reckless course of action (under the influence of a "passionate desire") which embroiled them in a long and disastrous war; a reckless course of action which showed itself at the outset of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War in the decision to enter into it, a reckless course of action later during the Sicilian Expedition in the decision to undertake it.

It is, of course, not surprising that many should still be impressed by the "rhetorically supreme" speeches, as Rasmussen aptly called them,<sup>2</sup> of

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<sup>1</sup> Simone Weil, "L'Iliade ou le Poème de la Force," *Les Cahiers du Sud* 231 [1941], 21.

<sup>2</sup> A.H. Rasmussen, "Thucydides on Pericles (Thuc. 2.65)," *C&M* 46 (1995), 45.

Pericles. For they are, in fact, not devoid of a certain amount of clear and intelligible rational argumentation. Certainly, it is not too difficult to see how those who are particularly sympathetic to a "democratic" Athens and what she represents, or the impressive person of Pericles, might interpret the speeches of Pericles in Thucydides' account of the war as constituting evidence for the belief that Thucydides himself was Pericles' greatest champion and most vigorous defender.

However, the objective historian that Thucydides was did not fail in his portrayal of Pericles to record the other, less rational, means of persuasion which Pericles so effectively employed during various "great crises"; means of persuasion, which, if anything, were much more effective in gaining assent from a people with a pronounced love of τιμή than any purely rational appeals might have hoped to accomplish under the circumstances. Careful attention, then, to the "consecrated" elements of the Homeric ἦθος, best typified perhaps in the unique appeal to φιλότιμον ἀγήρων (Thuc. II.44.4), which figure so prominently in the speeches of Pericles reveals, ultimately, a Pericles who was obsessed with the cultivation and possession of τιμή and ἀρετή to an inordinate degree. Indeed, Pericles' intense preoccupation with the agonistic ideal, as manifested principally by his fierce rivalry with the great Cimon, show the dangerous lengths to which Pericles could go in his pursuit for τιμή and ἀρετή, and, as a consequence, eventually put Athens herself at considerable risk. One cannot help but conclude that it is primarily for

this reason that Thucydides did not confer the highest accolade upon the "lover of power" Pericles, and instead attributed ξύνεσις only indirectly to him (and not in conjunction with any distinctly Spartan virtues). Upon more serious reflection Pericles really, as Rasmussen has duly stressed, very much "fades into the background" when compared to the brilliant figures of Brasidas, and even Themistocles.<sup>3</sup> The qualification of Pericles' ξύνεσις by Thucydides should not fail to serve as an ample warning to the attentive student of history. The *Doppelcharakter* of Pericles proved, in reality, to be a highly dangerous one, particularly when one aspect of it became more pronounced as Pericles grew older and as he felt increasingly thwarted in his attempts to garner τιμή and ἀρετή, especially in relation to generational striving-for-excellence.

Nevertheless, the alarming frequency with which even the most intelligent of men can succumb to the temptation to excess should not necessarily lead anyone to conclude out of cynicism or resignation that the "*illusion de fatalité*" is anything more than just that: an illusion. Real contingency has existed throughout history and informed choices can be made regarding the best course of action an individual or a state should follow. Certainly, the willingness to make a concession, for instance, in accordance with reason during a political crisis need not always be construed as a sign of weakness. Indeed, on the contrary, the ability to

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

make such concessions may very well be rather, as Liddell Hart believed, the "sign of returning common sense."<sup>4</sup>

Of course, the passionate defenders of power who have no scruples about the basic justice of their actions may well continue to opt for a course which does not allow for any concessions to be made. Yet, even those firmly committed to the use of power must accept that some limitations exist upon its intelligent use. Even some intellectual elites in the United States today are aware of the fact that the often violent, and brutally imposed, expansionism of American hegemony is not always met with complete and cheerful acceptance in many parts of the world, and that a continued policy of reckless expansionism, or if one prefers, πλεονεξία, will not be without long-term consequences, some of which may directly result in the serious diminution of American power at a later date.<sup>5</sup> This particularly will be the case when diplomatic solutions are not even seriously considered and simply dismissed out of hand, as

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<sup>4</sup> B.H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy* (New York, 1991), 358. But of course the restoration of "common sense" may very well have to be preceded by the setting aside of pride or obstinacy (*ibid.*, 358).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs* 78 (1999), 35-49. As Huntington points out in his discussion of the "rogue superpower": "While the United States regularly denounces various countries as 'rogue states,' in the eyes of many countries it is becoming the rogue superpower....If a unipolar world were unavoidable, many countries might prefer the United States as the hegemon. But this is most likely because it is distant from them and hence unlikely to attempt to acquire any of their territory. American power is also valued by the secondary regional states. Benign hegemony, however, is in the eye of the hegemon. 'One reads about the world's desire for American leadership only in the United States,' one British diplomat observed. 'Everywhere else one reads about American arrogance and unilateralism'" (*ibid.*, 42). The parallel with what the Corinthians regarded as the "tyrant city" of Hellas (Thuc. I.122.3, I.124..3) is not without a certain significance.

they were recently by American officials at Rambouillet concerning Kosovo.<sup>6</sup>

Alternatively, for those who take seriously the "rhetoric about 'self-determination' and 'human rights,' the lucidity and severity of Thucydides' account, while it may not furnish one with abundant examples of any such serious concerns on the part of the Athenians or the Peloponnesians, can nevertheless provide one with a clear and intelligible description of the basic motivations which animated men at a time when the Greek genius was still able to express itself most nobly, and while relatively free from self-deception.<sup>7</sup> On account of this freedom from self-deception, Thucydides is extraordinarily well-placed in his recounting of the events of the Athenian-Peloponnesian War to serve as a most excellent antidote to the "intentional ignorance" which afflicts so much scholarship, particularly in the United States, today.<sup>8</sup> As Chomsky has forcefully stated in the postscript to his lengthy study on the use of power by the United States:

Canada and Europe have choices. The easy path is to persist in obedience to the dictates of the master, refraining from offering help to the victims of U.S. terror....leaving the United

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<sup>6</sup> Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "Histoire secrète des négociations de Rambouillet," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Mai, 1999), 4-5; cf. Noam Chomsky, "L'OTAN, maître du monde," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Mai, 1999), 1, 4-5.

<sup>7</sup> "Les Grecs, le plus souvent, eurent la force d'âme qui permet de ne pas se mentir; ils en furent récompensés et surent atteindre en toute chose le plus haut degré de lucidité, de pureté et de simplicité. Mais l'esprit qui s'est transmis de l'*Iliade* à l'Évangile en passant par les penseurs et les poètes tragiques n'a guère franchi les limites de la civilisation grecque; et depuis qu'on a détruit la Grèce il n'en est resté que des reflets" (Weil [supra n. 1], 33).

<sup>8</sup> See especially Edward Said, "La trahison des intellectuels," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Août, 1999), 6-7.



States free to exercise its will in the fashion that only the most naive or cynical can fail to understand. Or they could strike an independent course, taking seriously the rhetoric about 'self-determination' and 'human rights' that is produced with much outraged indignation when some official enemy can be accused of abuses and crimes and acting accordingly. No student of history will expect any demonstration of courage or integrity, in this regard.<sup>9</sup>

In an age when historical memory is becoming increasingly eradicated,<sup>10</sup> when rational and logical thought are less and less in evidence,<sup>11</sup> thereby making way for the easier success of irrational appeals on the part of all manner of jingoists,<sup>12</sup> and when so many today succumb all too easily to the temptation of joining the ever-burgeoning ranks of lukewarm Laodiceans,<sup>13</sup> Chomsky's expectation that courage and integrity will be found wanting, may not seem altogether misplaced. However, the serious and conscientious student of Thucydides, armed with a clear understanding and "full wisdom", may yet prove that things will be

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<sup>9</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Turning the Tide: The U.S. and Latin America* <sup>2</sup> (Montréal and New York, 1987),

<sup>10</sup> "Spectacular domination's first priority was to eradicate historical knowledge in general; beginning with just about all rational information and commentary on the most recent past....With consummate skill the spectacle organises ignorance of what is about to happen and, immediately afterwards, the forgetting of whatever has nonetheless been understood....History's domain was the memorable, the totality of events whose consequences would be lastingly apparent. And thus, inseparably, history was knowledge that should endure and aid in understanding, at least in part, what was to come: 'an everlasting possession', according to Thucydides....When social significance is attributed only to what is immediate, and to what will be immediate immediately afterwards, always replacing another, identical immediacy, it can be seen that the uses of the media guarantee a kind of eternity of noisy insignificance" (Guy DeBord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, tr. Malcolm Imrie [London and New York, 1990], 13-14, 15); cf. Jim Zwick, "The Contested Public Memory of an American Icon: Mark Twain's Anti-Imperialist Writings," 1 November 1997. <http://www.boondocksnet.com/twain/contested.html> (18 April 2000).

<sup>11</sup> DeBord (*supra* n.5), 27-30.

<sup>12</sup> Arthur Kroker and David Cook, *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics* <sup>2</sup> (Montréal, 1991), 14-16.

<sup>13</sup> *Apoc.* III.14-20, esp. 16-17.

otherwise. For it is only with such a clear understanding of men and their doings, as can be gained from the sober and serious study of Thucydides, that one may begin to establish a basis for truly meaningful action on the part of committed and informed citizens in the modern democratic societies. Certainly, it is only by an understanding of the mistakes made (along with their underlying reasons and their direct consequences) by, for instance, Pericles and the Athenians who chose to accept his counsel, as recorded by Thucydides, that one may reasonably expect that such mistakes can be avoided in the present, and in the future.

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