The Peloponnesian War
Part I

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Table of Contents

The Peloponnesian War
Part I

Professor Biography i
Course Scope 1
Lecture One Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War 2
Lecture Two The Greek Way of War 5
Lecture Three Sparta—Perceptions and Prejudices 8
Lecture Four Sparta and Her Allies 11
Lecture Five The Athenian Democracy 14
Lecture Six Athens and the Navy 17
Lecture Seven Victory over Persia, 490–479 B.C. 20
Lecture Eight Athens or Sparta—A Question of Leadership 23
Lecture Nine Cimonian Imperialism 26
Lecture Ten Sparta after the Persian Wars 29
Lecture Eleven The First Peloponnesian War 32
Lecture Twelve The Thirty Years' Peace 35
Maps 38
Timeline ..... Part II
Glossary ..... Part II
Biographical Notes 42
Bibliography ..... Part III

The Peloponnesian War

Scope:

Thucydides was an Athenian participant in, and historian of, the Peloponnesian War. Despite his Athenian bias, he has left us a remarkably accurate account of the war and the events and issues leading up to it. His account allows for the study of this first major conflict among Western states with constitutional governments subject to electorates of free citizens. Thucydides not only wrote a military narrative, but also offered his interpretation of politics within Athens, Sparta, and the lesser city-states which influenced the war. It was he who first saw the connection among internal politics, foreign policy, and diplomacy. And he was aware of how fiscal and economic conditions, too, dictated the decisions of the belligerents. Hence, scholars and policymakers since the 19th century have studied Thucydides's account of the Peloponnesian War as a key to understanding war, diplomacy, and politics.

This course has a threefold purpose. First, it is necessary to reexamine Thucydides's thesis that the war was inevitable because of Spartan fear of the growth of Athenian power since 479 B.C. Too often, Athens and Sparta have been viewed as city-states of stark contrasts, whose societies and forms of government made conflict all but inevitable. Yet Spartans and Athenians shared many similarities in their constitutions and society, and they had both been part of the evolution of the wider Hellenic culture since the Homeric Age. A growing body of evidence, along with reexamination of the literary sources, indicates that the Peloponnesians, and particularly the Spartans, were by no means primitive in their fiscal or economic way of life. The Peloponnesians, for example, maintained a creditable fleet through the course of the war. Further, the Spartan victory in 404 B.C. cannot be dismissed simply as a result of Athenian mistakes. Given this new perspective, it is important to reconsider the outbreak of the war: Was it the result of specific actions by the participants or of greater, inevitable forces? A different set of participants and events could well have produced a different outcome.

Second, it is necessary to study the course of the war, for the fighting changed not only weapons and tactics but the very means and aims of waging war. Henceforth, seasonal clashes of citizen hoplites, or heavy infantry, gave way to long-term campaigning by mixed forces of cavalry, heavy infantry, and light infantry (peltasts). The Athenians also pioneered the use of combined naval and land operations. As a result, the costs of war rose, and all the belligerents had to devise new means of covering expenditure. At the same time, the Peloponnesian War demonstrated the decisive roles of generalship, of the courage of soldiers, and of the willingness of citizens to sacrifice for the common cause to win a war. In this regard, Peloponnesians and Athenians were far more alike than different; hence, they waged a ferocious and long war.

Finally, the conflict tested the citizens and the constitutions of each city-state or *polis* (plural: *poleis*). It also eroded the order of Greek city-states and opened a series of struggles among the leading states—Sparta, Athens, Thebes, Argos, and Corinth—to forge a wider hegemony and thus impose order in the Aegean world. This conflict ultimately ended in political stalemate and opened the way for the conquest and unification of the Greek city-states under the Macedonian Kings Philip II and Alexander the Great.

Lecture One
Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War

Scope: Thucydides (465–400 B.C.), Athenian general and adherent of Pericles, penned his eyewitness account of the Peloponnesian War after being exiled in 424 B.C. Although he survived the war, Thucydides failed to complete his history, which ends abruptly in 411 B.C.; we must depend, accordingly, on the less-accomplished narratives of Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus for information on the last six years of the war. Thucydides set the standard of historical writing and analysis in the West, and he is often hailed for his accuracy and objectivity, yet he wrote from a distinctly Athenian perspective. He idealized Pericles, and occasionally revealed anti-Spartan prejudices.

Thucydides wrote a narrative of the war so convincing that it has influenced all subsequent interpretations. The British Victorian scholar George Grote, for example, saw the struggle of Athens and Sparta as comparable to that between Great Britain and Napoleonic France. This comparison, implicitly accepted by most historians even today, has left open the question of why Sparta won the war. In the era of the Cold War, scholars hoping to find ways to avoid a crisis between the United States and the Soviet Union which could escalate into nuclear war debated Thucydides's judgment that the Peloponnesian War was inevitable. This model, too, is problematic; equating Sparta with the Soviet Union is misleading (and unfair to Sparta). Clearly reading the account of Thucydides, in tandem with other ancient sources, generates a host of questions as to the causes, course, and outcome of the Peloponnesian War, as well as of the characteristics of both Athenian and Spartan society.

Outline

I. The Peloponnesian War was a 27-year struggle that ranged from 431 to 404 B.C. and pitted the two great city-states of Sparta and Athens against each other. The conflict ultimately involved most of the Greek world—not only the immediate area of Greece proper but also the Greek colonies in Sicily and southern Italy—as well as the Persian Empire and western Asia Minor.

II. There are two overriding reasons for studying the Peloponnesian War. First, it allows us to look at a number of institutions in the world of Classical Greece, in a period that stretches from 480 B.C. (the end of the Persian Wars) to 323 B.C. (the death of Alexander the Great).

- **A.** In examining the Peloponnesian War, we can observe the intersection of politics, economics, and society in Athens and Sparta and their allies, largely because these are states in which citizens voted. In other words, this was not a war between kings or professional armies but between citizens from different polities.
- **B**. There are only four instances in world history in which a citizen body has asserted itself and become the sovereign body within the state.
  1. These instances are Athens and Sparta, the Roman Republic, the British Parliamentary Order of the 17th century, and the federal experiment in the United States.
  2. The Peloponnesian War is thus relevant for exploring such questions as: How does a total population become involved in conflict? What course does such a conflict tend to follow, and what are the results?

III. The second reason for studying the Peloponnesian War is that it is one of the best-documented conflicts from antiquity.

- **A.** The historian Thucydides, an Athenian aristocrat who participated in the war, left us an excellent record. From the pages of Thucydides's history, Pericles emerges as the model wartime democratic leader.
- **B.** Thucydides set a standard for writing history in the West that endures to this day. Like Herodotus, writing about a half a generation earlier, Thucydides commented with a certain degree of objectivity on his own society and others.
- **C.** In the opening lines of his history, Thucydides tells us that he was determined to write about the war between Athens and Sparta because he believed it to be a greater war than any previous conflict, with the two sides at the height of their powers and preparedness, and with the "whole of mankind" involved in the conflict.
- **D.** Later in the first book of his history, Thucydides describes his methods and sources and the care with which he checks facts. He tells us that in recording speeches of the principal figures, he has tried to remain as

close as possible to the general sense of the speakers' words (although scholars sometimes debate this point).

E. We are fairly confident that the speeches and narrative in Thucydides's history are reasonably accurate, but we may question his interpretation of events. His thesis is that Athenian power drove Sparta to war.

1. The first four books of the histories relate to events in Athens, where Thucydides was a member of the political class, an elected general.

2. Thucydides was exiled for military incompetence in 424 B.C., so he was away—and hence unable to provide eye-witness reports—for the period addressed in Book V. While in exile, Thucydides had access to information from the Spartans, from Sicily, and from Alcibiades, a fellow Athenian exile.

F. Thucydides's history breaks off in the eighth book at around 411–410 B.C., and for the rest of the war we must rely on later accounts from Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch.

IV. Thucydides tells us that the Peloponnesian War took place in three phases.

A. The first phase is the 10-year struggle known as the Archidamian War, ironically named after the Spartan king Archidamus, who warned his countrymen that this war would be passed on to their children.

1. The Archidamian War ended in 421 B.C. with the Treaty of Nicias between Athens and Sparta.

2. This peace treaty was supposed to last 50 years, but conflict erupted within the first year.

B. The second phase of the war is a six-year period of unrest and sporadic conflict that lasted from 420 to 414 B.C. Thucydides, who was in Sparta at the time, seems to have known from the start that the Treaty of Nicias (which was not accepted by the allies of Sparta, that is, the members of the Peloponnesian League) was badly flawed.

C. The third phase, lasting from 414 to 404 B.C., is known as the Ionian or Decelean War.

1. After 414 B.C., Athens and Sparta maneuvered to renew the struggle, often fighting through proxies.

2. "Ionia" refers to the western shores of present-day Turkey, an area settled by Greeks speaking the Ionian dialect. This phase of the Peloponnesian War involved naval combat in the Aegean Sea.

3. **"**Decelea" refers to a fortress in Attica (the "district of Athens") that the Spartans used as a base for besieging Athens.

D. Although he lived to the end of the war, Thucydides did not finish his history.

V. In some ways, our sense of Thucydides's having written history as a contemporary is artificial. We might argue, for example, that the Peloponnesian War, as conceived by Thucydides, is really part of a series of struggles for hegemony between Athens and Sparta that started in 461 B.C. (when Thucydedes was a small child) and lasted till 375 B.C. (a quarter-century after his death).

A. Some historians and political scientists have compared the hegemonic struggle between Athens and Sparta to a similar era of conflict in Europe from 1870 to 1945. In his book *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, for example, A. J. P. Taylor concentrates on part of this period (from the Franco-Prussian War through the First World War) and discusses Classical Greek parallels.

B. Thucydides gives us perspectives on the Athenians and Spartans that are invaluable for understanding the Classical period. Further, his vision of the struggle between Athens and Sparta has had a profound influence on subsequent generations of scholars, popular writers, the mass media, political scientists, and military officers.

1. An early important student of Thucydides was George Grote (1794–1871), a member of Parliament who wrote a multivolume history of Greece.

2. Grote was a master of English prose and his knowledge of the ancient text of Thucydides was excellent, but he did not have the benefits of modern archaeology or of modern research on coins, inscriptions, or documentary sources.

3. Like Thucydides, Grote was influenced by contemporary events in his interpretation of history. He wrote in the aftermath of the struggle between Great Britain and Revolutionary and Napoleonic France.

4. Grote drew a connection between Athens and Britain, both great naval powers and societies based on merit and democratic principles. In the same way, he found parallels between Sparta and the imperial structure of France after 1805.

5. Grote's interpretation of a conflict between a great naval power he considered heroic and a great land power for which he evidently had less sympathy has persisted to this day, and has contributed to a negative view of Sparta.

C. In the early 20th century, this image of a naval versus a land power was revived by the historian Arnold Toynbee in his analysis of the First World War. Once again sea-faring Britain is presented as similar to Athens, and the Germany of Kaiser Wilhelm associated with Sparta. Here, too, Sparta suffers in the comparison.

D. The image of Sparta as regressive was reinforced during the Cold War in debates over the reasons for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. From 1945 to 1991 scholars, political scientists, and policymakers saw in the Peloponnesian War a model of what can happen when great powers based on electorates stumble into a war that may become far more ruinous and drag on much longer than predicted.

1. In 1969, Donald Kagan, a professor of Greek history at Yale University, published a book in which he argued that it was the Spartans' inability to control their allies, principally Corinth, that drove them to war, rather than their fear of Athenian power.

2. Kagan's interpretation inspired a response by a prominent British scholar and Marxist, Geoffrey de Sainte Croix, who asserted that the causes of the Peloponnesian War were to be found in the social and economic conditions of Sparta. This view spawned a series of scholarly debates in which Sparta was represented as the quintessential exploitative society.

3. Both Kagan and de Sainte Croix agree that Sparta was a conservative, regressive, oppressive society, but they fail to explain the simple fact that the Spartans won the war. In this course, we shall address that issue.

E. *A War Like No Other* by Victor Hanson (published in 2005) suggests that the Peloponnesian War has lessons to teach us about current struggles with fundamentalism within Islam, issues surrounding the civil war in Lebanon, and the breakdown of social structures in the Middle East.

1. In Hanson's analysis, Sparta again suffers, represented as a regressive society, almost alien to the West. Hanson tends to overlook the fact that Sparta stood at the head of a great league that bound together much of southern, central, and northern Greece and controlled access to the important Isthmus of Corinth.

2. Hanson also overlooks the Spartans' ability to work within supposedly conservative institutions to overcome the Athenians.

F. In an effort to understand our own dilemmas, many modern interpretations have set up a dichotomy between Sparta and Athens that is too often overdrawn.

1. Both Athenians and Spartans were Greeks. They lived in city-states, they worshiped the same gods, they were bound by the same traditions, and they engaged in hoplite warfare.

2. Thus, the Peloponnesian War pitted against each other two city-states that differed by degree, rather than by opposing economic, political, or ideological systems. This point helps explain why the war came about, why it was fought for so long, and, in a way, why Sparta won and Athens lost.

Suggested Reading:

George Grote, *History of Greece from the Earliest Period to the Close of the Generation Contemporary with Alexander the Great*.

Victor D. Hanson, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*.

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Robert B. Strassler, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*.

Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How accurately does Thucydides record events and causes? How does his work compare to that of other Greek historians, notably Herodotus and Xenophon?

2. What Athenian prejudices does Thucydides display throughout his history? How does his background influence his recording and interpreting of events? How accurately are the Spartans depicted by Thucydides?

3. Why has Thucydides's interpretation of the causes and course of the Peloponnesian War influenced subsequent scholars and writers?

Lecture Two
The Greek Way of War

Scope: The two great wars of the 5th century B.C.—the Persian War (499–449 B.C.) and the Peloponnesian War—are by far the best-documented, yet ironically they did not conform to the classic rules of warfare among Greek city-states. In the late 8th century B.C., citizens of moderate property armed themselves with heavy armor and shields and fought as hoplites: spearmen standing in a dense formation or phalanx. Citizen hoplites asserted the power of the popular assembly over the aristocratic council and elected officials. Tyrants, backed by such citizen armies, overthrew aristocracies, and tyrannies, in turn, fell as citizen hoplites created broader-based governments—in the form of oligarchy, timocracy, or democracy. Greek city-states fielded armies that fought decisive battles in seasonal conflicts. Fighting was at close quarters, brief, and violent. Sparta, through its network of alliances among Peloponnesian and central Greek city-states, fielded a formidable army of hoplites, and was able to impose an era of peace in the Greek world in 546 B.C. In 490 B.C., Athenian citizen hoplite forces decisively defeated the imperial armies of Persia, and Peloponnesian hoplites did the same in 480–479 B.C. These victories preserved the order of free city-states and Hellenic civilization.

Outline

I. This lecture examines the Greeks' approach to land battles, focusing on three points in particular.

- **A.** First, the Greek way of fighting depended on heavy infantry soldiers known as hoplites.
- **B.** Second, this unusual method of fighting was closely tied to the Greek city-state, the *polis*, and its political institutions.
- **C.** Third, this type of fighting underwent major changes during the Peloponnesian War. The combat undertaken between 431 and 404 B.C. was not characteristic of the traditional clashes among city-states.

II. How Greek soldiers fought.

- **A.** Greek hoplites were heavily armed warriors whose principal defensive measure was an unusual heavy shield called a *hoplon,* which was made of wood, reinforced with bronze, padded with leather. It was strapped on the left shoulder and held by a handle on the right, offering more protection than other shields used in the ancient Near East.
  - **1.** The hoplite was also protected with a breast- and back-plate. He had greaves, extending from his ankles to his knees, and wore a helmet.
  - **2.** This panoply (full armor) has become known to us through excavations and artwork. The earliest depiction we have of hoplite combat gear is on the Corinthian Chigi Vase, found in an Etruscan tomb and dating from about 680 to 650 B.C.
  - **3.** The primary attack weapon was a spear, followed by a sword or a dagger used at close quarters.
  - **4.** These armaments evolved out of techniques and equipment devised in the ancient Near East. Relief works from Assyria and the Neo-Hittite kingdoms depict heavily armed infantry warriors bearing similar equipment.
- **B.** The hoplites were effective only if joined as a disciplined infantry unit—that is, men standing shoulder to shoulder with their shields overlapping, spears held overhand, and organized in ranks of eight to 16 soldiers deep. The point of this battle line was to move in close formation and clash with the opposing line, which would have been similarly armed.
- **C.** When the two lines came into contact, they would hack at each other. A lucky shot might kill the opposing hoplite, thus exposing part of the line to further attack. The opposing line might then close up ranks or, realizing that the line was broken, retreat.

III. This type of warfare, characteristic of the Greek world from the end of the 8th century B.C. to the 4th century B.C., evolved in the unique political environment of the Greek city-state.

- **A.** Citizenship in a city-state was closely linked to military service. Hoplites were originally men of the propertied class who, as part of their obligations to the city, armed themselves, drilled with their fellow citizens, and defended the state.

B. To much of the ancient world, this kind of fighting was uncharacteristic. It required drill and discipline and a sense of virtue and courage that could only be inculcated in a Greek city-state. These men lined up and fought together in formation because they were fellow citizens.

1. In many hoplite battles, the infantry line drifted to the right, as Thucydides notes in his description of a 418 B.C. battle at Mantinea between the Spartans and the Argives. Each man inevitably drifts to the right to cover his unprotected side under the shield of the man beside him.

2. This tendency was remedied by the development of more sophisticated armies with light troops—peltasts, archers, and cavalry—who supported the heavy infantry.

C. This warfare was also devised at a time when the Greek city-states were relatively scattered and small in both numbers and prosperity. Since one strategy was to burn the enemy's crops, battles were traditionally fought on level plains. Up until the Persian invasion of 480 B.C., hoplite battles were usually brief engagements fought over border zones.

D. Another unusual aspect of hoplite fighting was that the formation was vulnerable to attack in the flanks. That is, if cavalry or light infantry could get behind the line, the warriors might panic.

IV. Hoplite warfare came into use at a pivotal point in Greek political and intellectual development.

A. In the Bronze Age (1600–1200 B.C.), the earliest Greek city-states were petty kingdoms, perhaps a dozen in number, that resembled the governments in the ancient Near East. Warfare in these city-states was based on chariots.

B. That system collapsed after 1200 B.C. and was replaced by cavalry in the early Iron Age. Maintaining a cavalry was expensive in Greece, however, where horses could not be grazed easily. By 700 B.C., most Greek city-states were aristocratic republics dominated by the landed classes who could provide the horses and armament for cavalry troops.

C. That domination passed after 700 B.C. with the adoption of more effective hoplite warfare. Men who had the means to arm themselves could now serve in the civic levies, which meant that the assemblies, the voting citizens, increased in numbers.

D. In some city-states, tyrants seized power by putting themselves at the head of the armed citizens, breaking the power of the aristocracy, and trying to rule constitutionally. Such tyrants usually fell from power because Greece had no tradition of monarchy and because they lacked the resources to hire bureaucrats or professional soldiers. This pattern was typical in Greece in the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.

E. The overthrow of such a tyrant would result in oligarchy (government of the few) or timocracy (government by honor or rank), in which the high state offices were held by the top classes; nonetheless, the assembly of landowners elected officials and ultimately determined policy.

F. Aristotle, writing in the 4th century B.C., was the first to observe that military service dictated the nature of constitutions. When Greek warfare was dominated by cavalry, power accrued to the aristocracy. When warfare shifted to hoplites, government moved to oligarchies and timocracies. As will be seen in a later lecture, when the trireme warship was adopted for naval warfare, democracy resulted.

G. Thus, the type of government a city-state adopted was determined greatly by the type of military service expected of its citizens; all Greeks agreed that the city-state rested in its citizens and the laws passed by those citizens. The Greeks believed that the rule of law in the *polis* marked them as superior to those who lived under kings.

H. Finally, it should be stressed again that hoplite warfare depended on citizens fighting in ranks together. Spartans were particularly known for their practice of *sophrosyne*, "moderation," an idea associated with hoplite warfare. The warrior marched into battle in measured step, side by side with his fellow citizens, all of whom had voted for the war in which they fought.

V. The Peloponnesian War would significantly accelerate changes in warfare that were probably already in progress.

A. Many scholars have argued that Greek infantry combat as devised in the Archaic Age (750–480 B.C.) has come to characterize Western warfare ever since. The ancient Greek view of combat is associated with the phenomenon of "decisive battle," and it may be connected with the modern West's stress on discipline, training, and technology, and an emphasis on the collective power of soldiers rather than the bravery of individual warriors.

B. Warfare in the Greek world also fueled economic and fiscal development in the Greek city-states. Scholars have argued that the connection between economic development and warfare has carried forward to the present.

C. Ironically, although the Peloponnesian War was fought by hoplite citizen armies, there was no "decisive battle." One reason for this is that both Sparta and Athens had, by this point, evolved beyond mere city-states. Their allies and resources meant that a single battle would not determine the victor. The result was a war of attrition that had profound consequences for the Greek world.

1. At the same time, warfare was becoming more complex. Both Sparta and Athens hired professional soldiers and incorporated light infantry and cavalry. This complexity explains why the Peloponnesian War did not conform to the established paradigm of "decisive battle."

2. Further, Pericles, the Athenian leader at the outbreak of the war, framed a strategy to preserve citizens' lives by sacrificing property. He advocated an indirect approach, a war of attrition, perhaps even a settlement by diplomacy rather than battle. This strategy, too, would drive the war in unexpected directions.

Suggested Reading:

J. K. Anderson, *Military Theory and Practice in the Age of Xenophon*.

Victor D. Hanson, *The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece*.

William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society Since A.D. 1000.*

Questions to Consider:

1. How did armor and shields protect in battle? What was the nature of hoplite combat? How would the concepts of "discipline" and "courage" be understood in Classical Greece?

2. How did the hoplite style of fighting define political rights and social values? How did the adoption of hoplite warfare transform the political life of Greek city-states?

3. How did hoplite warfare define the subsequent Western way of war? Why was "decisive battle" traditionally considered the ultimate end of war?

Lecture Three
Sparta—Perceptions and Prejudices

Scope: At the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans considered themselves the traditional leaders of Greece. They credited their success to their constitution and their ordered way of life, which they attributed to the legendary lawgiver Lycurgus. Two kings, hereditary commanders and priests, a council (*gerousia*), and a board of five *ephors* (official overseers) governed together by consensus, subject to the approval of the assembly of Spartan citizens. Spartans, trained as citizen hoplites devoted to their *polis*, lived a frugal, modest life. In many ways, Sparta resembled early republican Rome. The Spartans ruled over dependent populations of free *perioikoi* (noncitizens required to give military service) and servile helots in Laconia and Messenia, areas which constituted nearly half the Peloponnesus. Modern scholars have often viewed Sparta as an authoritarian or regimented and soulless society, but modern assessments are based on writings by those who were neither native nor favorable to Sparta. Greeks, however, admired Sparta's *eunomia* (good order), its constitution, and the virtues (*arete*) of individual Spartan citizens.

Outline

I. The society and constitution of Sparta have inspired interest and admiration since antiquity.

A. Many ancient Greek authors admired Sparta for its *eunomia*, that is, the principle of good order and government by proper law. These same authors despaired of Athens as a radical democracy. The views of Sparta from ancient authors generally fall into two categories.

1. Some writers believe that Sparta's constitution should serve as a model for other states. They idealize Sparta as an unchanging world in which the institutions of government can be traced to the legendary lawgiver Lycurgus of the 8th century B.C.

2. Others praise Sparta of the past but deplore conditions in their own day, believing that the Spartans have fallen from greatness because they lack morality and have been corrupted by money.

3. This "Spartan mirage" created by ancient authors presents problems for modern historians.

B. In addition, Sparta itself has not provided modern scholars with the same kind of archaeological data available from other Greek city-states. Thucydides himself commented that if Sparta were to be deserted, it would leave no evidence of its greatness, such as temples or monuments, but only a collection of villages (*obai*).

C. The principal sources of information about Sparta were written either before the Peloponnesian War or well after.

1. Herodotus, writing in the mid-5th century B.C., offers probably the most unprejudiced information. According to him, the Spartans were unusual in retaining kingship and distinct early cults.

2. Aristotle, writing in the 4th century B.C., reports on the Spartan constitution, and Polybius, in the 2nd century B.C., follows up with later information. Of course, Plutarch also provides biographies of certain Spartan kings.

3. Finally, there is a strange work by an unknown author posing as the historian Xenophon, an Athenian who wrote about the later stages of the Peloponnesian War and its aftermath.

D. The Spartans contributed to the "Spartan mirage" by representing themselves as simple folk. They were, however, far more sophisticated in diplomacy and negotiation than is usually recognized.

II. With these caveats in mind, we can now review the Spartan constitution and institutions at the time of the Peloponnesian War.

A. Sparta was a collection of essentially five villages in the Eurotas valley in the region known as Laconia. The Spartans descended from Dorians, who had arrived in the valley in the 11th century B.C. By 800 B.C., the villages had been consolidated into a city-state.

B. The Spartans retained two royal dynasties, the senior Agiad line and the junior Eurypontid family. The kings were hereditary military commanders and priests who ruled far more by influence than by dictate. Because the kings did not have the means to establish a bureaucracy, the government of Sparta became an oligarchy.

C. As in all Greek city-states, Sparta had a governing council (*gerousia*), whose 28 members were voted by acclaim from the citizen body. The council could act in the name of Sparta or could summon the assembly

of citizens to decide important issues. As was true in most Greek city-states, the assembly was ultimately the sovereign body that passed laws.

D. The franchise in Sparta was restricted. Only men who were aged 30 years or older and full Spartans by descent could vote in the assembly. These citizens may have numbered between 5,000 and 10,000, although some estimates put the figure as low as 3,000.

E. The Spartans devised an additional component of this system: a board of five *ephor*s. These overseers, elected annually from the citizen body, supervised the training of young Spartans and the public moral and religious life.

1. Some scholars have argued that these *ephors* were foreign ministers, but there is little evidence to support this view.

2. Instead, available sources, particularly Thucydides, present a traditional society in which meetings were held by the kings, the *gerousia*, and the *ephors*. In these meetings, the kings and the two councils arrived at decisions by consensus rather than by debate and vote. They then presented their position to the assembly for deliberation and ratification.

3. Spartans voted only to decide the most important issues. Spartan society was a conventional one with a homogeneous population; most people deferred to authority and tradition. Although some recent scholars have argued that Spartan foreign policy was erratic, it was, in fact, probably quite consistent.

III. The Spartans ruled a wide area beyond the city of Sparta proper: the region of Laconia (modern-day southeastern Peloponnesus) and Messenia, the region immediately to the west. Messenia had been conquered by Sparta in two major wars, traditionally dated from 736 to 716 B.C. and from 668 to 657 B.C.

A. The populations of Laconia and Messenia were divided into different classes.

1. The *perioikoi* ("dwellers around") were free people living in communities under their own laws. They were not Spartan citizens but owed military service to Sparta and were summoned out, drilled, and commanded in battle by Spartan officers.

2. Helots were slaves who were the private property of individuals—not, as most modern accounts have asserted, state slaves.

3. These classifications were somewhat fluid. *Perioikoi* could be demoted to helots as punishment for rebelling, or promoted to citizenship for loyalty.

4. Citizens and the *perioikoi* made up about half the population of Sparta, while various dependent and slave populations made up the other half.

B. By conquering and incorporating the various areas around Sparta as allies, dependents, and *perioikoi*, the Spartans alleviated the demographic pressures that drove most Greek city-states to colonize overseas.

C. In 580 B.C., Sparta began to bring more distant states into alliance and, ultimately, became the leader of a coalition of armies composed of its allies in the Peloponnesian League. The Spartan training program, the *agoge*, drilled citizens to a level of athletic and military excellence and inculcated in them the values of the *polis*, which enabled them to lead and command allies and *perioikoi*.

IV. In many ways, Spartan society was a version of what scholars call the Early Archaic, that is, the early Greek society of the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.

A. Although the Spartans did not generally use gold or silver (coin or specie) in daily markets or make displays of their prosperity, they did accrue private wealth, and the state used money in its transactions. Indeed, many Spartan citizens would be classified as aristocrats in any other Greek city-state. The image of Spartans as provincial bumpkins, a stereotype promoted by Athenian comedy, is far from the historical reality.

B. The Spartans had an impressive training program in which both males and females, beginning at age six, were enrolled in a set of rigorous grades. Once they completed that training, the men were assigned to mess halls, akin to the regimental messes for professional British soldiers in India. There, traditional martial values and conservative religious views were developed and shared.

C. Spartans were taught to read and write. They took their religious values seriously and were also sticklers for oaths and traditions. They had a special reverence for the law and were willing to sacrifice for the communal good and the stability of the city-state.

1. Herodotus relates an anecdote about the exiled Spartan King Demaratus explaining to King Xerxes of Persia the military success of the Spartans: "They are free yet not entirely free, for they have a master,

and the master is law. … Whatever this master commands, they do, and this command never varies. It is never to retreat in battle, however great the odds, but always to remain in formation."

2. Later, Xerxes came to understand these words when 300 Spartans, supported by their Peloponnesian allies, drove back repeated Persian attacks in the ferocious defense of Thermopylae.

V. If Sparta had left a written record, historians might produce accounts stressing Spartan virtues rather than deploring Spartan institutions as exploitive.

A. In summary, the Spartans had a scheme for categorizing people according to their military value, and a system of command that went beyond their single city-state. Their success in establishing such arrangements is part of the reason they won the Peloponnesian War.

B. Ancient authors relate two types of anecdotes about Sparta: one that mocks the Spartans' training program and value system, and one that applauds them. Plutarch tells of a group of Spartan youths jumping up to offer a seat to an elderly man at the Olympic Games, noting, "All the Greeks know what is right to do, but only the Spartans do it."

Suggested Readings:

W. W. G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta*, *c. 950–192 B.C.*

Stephen Hodkinson, *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta.*

G. L. Huxley, *Early Sparta*.

Anton Powell, *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 B.C.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What are the sources for Spartan history? Why have these sources led to so many hostile views of Sparta and, in effect, a "Spartan mirage"?
2. In what ways did Sparta evolve along typical Hellenic lines in the Archaic Age (750–480 B.C.)? In what ways was Sparta similar to other city-states, notably Athens?
3. Why did other Greeks admire Sparta? How important were religious and moral values to Spartans in deciding major issues?

Lecture Four
Sparta and Her Allies

Scope: By the mid-6th century B.C., Sparta had united the Dorian city-states of the Peloponnesus and central Greece into a league that brought peace and prosperity to the Hellenic world. In 750 B.C., few would have expected Sparta to emerge as the hegemon of the region. Far more likely would have been Argos, because the Argolid in the Bronze Age (1600–1225 B.C.) was the political and cultural center of the Peloponnesus. In the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., Sparta united Laconia and Messenia and consolidated their military and political institutions, wresting from Argos hegemony of the Peloponnesus by 546 B.C. In 431 B.C., Sparta drew on the manpower of her Peloponnesian allies to field an army of 50,000 hoplites and 150 triremes. Contrary to popular modern perception, Sparta had considerable financial resources for waging war. Her naval allies Corinth, Megara, Sicyon, and Aegina were the economic centers of the Peloponnesus, having prospered in overseas trade since the 8th century B.C. In the judgment of Thucydides, the Spartans' pride in their traditional role as hegemon, along with fear of Athenian power, led to the inevitable outbreak of war in 431 B.C.

Outline

I. This lecture concludes the background exploration of Sparta with a look at the Peloponnesian League.

- **A.** The term "Peloponnesian League" is of 19th-century coinage. It is imprecise because the alliance included important members outside the Peloponnesus, particularly the city of Thebes in central Greece.
- **B.** One significant Peloponnesian city-state outside the League and hostile to Sparta was the inland city of Argos. This city was the traditional rival of Sparta for control of the region.

II. Several key points about the Peloponnesian League contribute to understanding the Peloponnesian War.

- **A.** The league evolved out of the Spartan genius for classifying different dependent populations. Furthermore, individual Spartans had ties of guest friendship (*philoxenia*) with aristocrats in many city-states beyond the Peloponnesus.
  - **1.** When Sparta moved out of Messenia and Laconia, she devised new methods of associating with Greek city-states to tap into their military and political power; in other words, she developed an effective power-based system of alliances.
  - **2.** Sparta particularly wanted allies against Argos in order to protect its system in Laconia and Messenia.
- **B.** Sparta stood at the southern terminus of a set of land routes that stretched across the Peloponnesus to the Gulf of Corinth. This waterway, along with the Saronic Gulf, formed a passageway across Greece.
  - **1.** The Gulf of Corinth also served as a passageway from Peloponnesus to central Greece. One could reach Macedon from there via a series of passes through Thermopylae to Thessaly.
  - **2.** In many ways, the Peloponnesian League was the political and military manifestation of those trade routes' function of binding the region together.
- **C.** Ships could take the Gulf of Corinth out to the western waters known as the Ionian Sea, and from there sail up among the western islands of Greece, cross over to the heel of Italy, and sail along the coast to the rich Greek colonies in Sicily and southern Italy.
  - **1.** Sparta and most of her allies sought to exploit these resources to the west.
  - **2.** Corinth and Sicyon, two cities on the Gulf of Corinth; Megara, at the northern tip of the Isthmus of Corinth; and Aegina, an island in the Saronic Gulf, all were great commercial powers, all engaged in colonizing, and all were brought into the Spartan alliance.

III. How did the Spartans gain leadership of the Peloponnesian League? The answer to this question can be found in her rivalry with Argos, a contest that may be traced back to the Bronze Age.

- **A.** From the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, we know that Agamemnon, Lord of Mycenae, was the leading king (*wanax*) in the Greek world. His brother, Menelaus, ruled in Sparta. Mycenae, in the northeastern Peloponnesus in the Argolid region, was the dominant power of the Greek world.
- **B.** When the Greek city-states began to reassert themselves after a "dark age," power in the Argolid shifted from Mycenae to Argos. The Argives tried to press their claims against the emerging economic centers of the Peloponnesus—Corinth, Sicyon, Aegina, and Megara.

C. Sparta challenged Argos, and over the course of the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. the two city-states fought for the right to forge alliances and to take the lead in organizing political unification in the Peloponnesus. Sparta won, although this outcome was by no means inevitable.

D. The Spartans clashed repeatedly with the Argives and with Messenia. At stake were the roads into central Greece and, ultimately, to Megara, located in the middle of all the key routes that the major powers wanted to control.

E. The conflict reached its climax at the Battle of Champions, described by Herodotus, which took place around 546 B.C. The Spartans won the battle, and their victory persuaded the economic centers of the Peloponnesus to align with Sparta. These states included Corinth, Sicyon, Aegina, and Megara, all with large fleets and important commercial interests overseas.

F. In return for providing military aid to Sparta, these cities received protection against Argos and against tyrants who might try to overthrow constitutional rule. Sparta recognized the autonomy and legitimacy of its allies' governments and provided agricultural products to feed their growing populations.

G. Spartan success in sustaining these alliances was stunning. Archaic Greek culture bloomed rapidly in the 6th century B.C., in part because the Spartans imposed political order, shutting down the constant city-state warfare that had characterized Greek history for 200 years.

H. Sparta's success also depended on a remarkable set of kings, including Cleomenes I (who ruled c. 520–490 B.C.), the architect of many of these alliances and the originator of the early Peloponnesian League. Cleomenes is credited with giving the League the structure and substance that enabled it to stand against the Persian invasion.

IV. There have been several different schools of thought on how the Peloponnesian League should be understood and assessed.

A. One view of the League is as a series of separate alliances between Sparta and each individual state in which Sparta promised to respect the member state, and the state, in turn, pledged military forces to Sparta. In this view, the League was extremely loose, and its actions were largely dictated by practical concerns.

1. If Sparta was in a position of strength, it could dictate its wishes to its various allies. If Sparta was internally weak or politically divided, then League members could operate almost independently.

2. This would be true of two of the most powerful members of the League, Corinth and Thebes.

3. In this view the cause of the Peloponnesian War can be traced to Sparta's inability to control her allies.

B. Another view holds that the League was held together by bonds of religious conviction; it was more than just a set of loose alliances brought together in opposition to Argos.

1. The Spartans and other League members were deeply religious. When they swore oaths to the gods, as they had done in establishing the League, they intended to keep them.

2. Such oaths were akin to legally binding contracts with the gods that, if broken, could bring punishment to the entire community.

C. The Peloponnesian League was structured as a series of constitutional arrangements, and the Spartans led discussions of policy that involved the whole League. If a major war was to be waged, the Spartan assembly would convene; members of the League could send representatives and voice opinions on whether or not the operation was justified.

D. The Spartans became adept at commanding these allied forces. They were assisted in this endeavor by two factors.

1. First, the Spartans still had kings who acted as commanders in military campaigns and provided a sense of unity to the coalition armies. In contrast, in Athens and other city-states commanders were elected officials who might lose their positions or face prosecution if they failed on the battlefield.

2. The Spartans' second advantage was their training system, which was adopted by other members of the League through the use of Spartan advisors.

E. These two factors made the army of the Spartans and the Peloponnesian League extremely effective. From 546 to 331 B.C., Sparta maintained its hegemony as a result of the resilience of its traditions of command and the structure it was able to impose on League members.

Suggested Reading:

W. W. G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta, c. 950–192 B.C.*

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How important were geography and the seas in defining the political development of the Peloponnesus? In what ways was Sparta favorably placed to assert her hegemony over the Peloponnesus and central Greece?
2. Why did the Spartans triumph over the Argives? What qualities of Sparta led other states to seek alliances with the Spartans? How did the Spartans deal with their allies?
3. How did the Spartans make use of the military forces of the Peloponnesian League prior to the Persian Wars? Did the Spartans deserve their reputation? Why was the Spartan peace so important for the development of late Archaic Greek civilization?

Lecture Five
The Athenian Democracy

Scope: By 431 B.C., the Athenians had enjoyed nearly three generations of self-government under their first democratic constitution, which they credited to the reformer Cleisthenes in 508–506 B.C. Cleisthenes based his constitution on the laws of his predecessors, but he made the assembly (*ekklesia*) sovereign. All Athenian citizens, regardless of property or rank, voted in the assembly and sat on juries. Athenians classified as "thetes" (with little or no landed property) could win full citizenship by volunteering to row in the fleet, and many took advantage of the opportunity. The council (*boule*) acted as the steering committee of the assembly; all elected officials, notably the board of 10 generals (*strategoi*), were subject to the scrutiny of the assembly and swore an oath of allegiance to the democracy. The Athenian assembly used the peculiar vote of ostracism as a means of choosing between two leading political leaders. The Athenians, who spoke an East Greek Ionian dialect, were linked to the Greek cities of the Aegean islands and Ionia (or the western littoral of Asia Minor). As Ionians, they were feared as upstart radicals by the conservative Dorian city-states of the Peloponnesian League. Furthermore, Athens was the largest single city-state in the Greek world, because all free residents of the region of Attica, more than 1,000 square miles, were Athenian citizens. During the Persian Wars, the Athenians displayed resilience and courage that astonished their fellow Greeks and gained them mastery of the Aegean world after 479 B.C. It was Athenian success, in the opinion of Thucydides, that drove the Spartans and their allies to war in 431 B.C.

Outline

I. This lecture introduces Athens, its democracy, and the evolution of its unusual democratic constitution.

- **A.** The first question to explore is: How did this democratic constitution come about?
- **B.** Secondly, we shall examine how the Athenian democracy actually operated. Remarkably, it was a direct participatory democracy in which all male citizens over the age of 18, without property qualifications, had the right to vote.

II. The Athenian constitution, in some ways, was typical for a Greek city-state.

- **A.** The Athenians had an elected set of officials who had replaced the ancient kings. They also had a council (*boule*) that acted as the steering committee for the assembly. The council was divided into 10 executive subcommittees (*prytaneis)* and each assumed power for one-tenth of the year.
- **B.** There were no restrictions on the assembly of citizens, which was the ultimate lawmaking body. The *demos*, the population of free adult male citizens, had the right to address the assembly, to vote, and to expect justice. The notion of checks and balances, such as in the United States government, did not exist; the citizens were truly sovereign.
- **C.** Thucydides attributes to Pericles a speech known as the Funeral Oration in the second year of the Peloponnesian War. In it, Pericles sums up the unique Athenian traditions of democracy, asserting that it is not class but ability than enables an Athenian man to gain a position of public responsibility. This idea ran contrary to the fundamental beliefs of most other governments in the Greek world.

III. How did this Athenian democracy come about? How did it function?

- **A.** From c. 1200 to 600 B.C., Athens lagged behind most city-states in development. Attica, a region of approximately 1,000 square miles, was rich in resources such as marble and iron. All free residents of Attica were considered Athenians. By contrast, Sparta was the principal city and Laconia and other areas were dependent on the Spartan *polis*.
- **B.** The Athenians also had a history that differed from that of most members of the Peloponnesian League. They could claim descent from the original inhabitants of the region, going back to the Bronze Age. They had been spared conquest by the Dorians with the collapse of the legendary Achaean kingdoms; thus Athenians had never been a subject population.
- **C.** More reliable information from the 7th century B.C. shows Athens to be a typical aristocratic republic. A series of powerful families dominated Attica and held political office in Athens.
  - **1.** Members of these aristocratic families, the *Eupatridae* ("well-born"), were elected to the board of nine *archons*, and then automatically given membership in the council or *Areopagus*.

2. Most voters were beholden to these aristocrats, who held the people's mortgages or controlled their land. Poor Athenians often fell into debt slavery, and Athens became a source of labor for the growing economic powers of the Peloponnesian League.
3. By 600 B.C., Athens was on the brink of a political and social explosion that should have produced a tyrant. Unlike most Greek city-states, which had developed new types of institutions in overseas colonies, Athens was in many ways a conservative agrarian society dominated by a privileged group of families, with a large citizen class which was falling into destitution.

D. In c. 594 B.C., the Athenians called in a moderator, Solon, an aristocrat of moderate rank, who reorganized the Athenian constitution just enough to prevent a crisis. He also carried out economic reforms and encouraged the Athenians to develop commercial crops for export.
1. Under Solon's reorganized constitution, qualification for high rank was based on wealth, not birth. Athens was reorganized into four property classes that determined social position.
2. The Solonian classes were the *pentakosiomedimnoi* (annual income more than 500 bushels), *hippeis* or knights (annual income of 300–500 bushels), *zeugitai* ("yokemen" or hoplites, with an annual income of 200–300 bushels) and thetes (annual income less than 200 bushels).
3. Solon also created a new Council of Four Hundred from the top three property classes which would act as the committee for the assembly.
4. He instituted courts of appeal, in which 6,000 jurors, most from the lower classes, could hear appeals in the court of the magistrates.

E. A generation later Athens came under the leadership of Peisistratus, a remarkable tyrant who implemented the Solonian reforms for nearly 20 years. By calling the assembly and the council to legitimize his laws, he taught the Athenians to govern themselves. Peisistratus also continued the economic reforms that turned Athens into a commercial state based on seaborne commerce and skilled labor.

F. The downfall of the tyranny in 510 B.C. was brought about by Spartan military intervention and the desire of King Cleomenes I to enlist Athens as a Spartan ally under a constitution headed by the King's guest-friend Isagoras, who would have put the propertied classes in power.
1. The democratic reformer Cleisthenes instead ousted the Spartans and passed laws that transformed Athens into a democracy.
2. The whole of Attica was reorganized into 10 tribes. Each tribe contained three *trittyes* ("thirds"). There were three categories of *trittys*—city, coastal, and inland—a total of 30 *trittyes* in total. A tribe was made up of one city, one coastal, and one inland *trittys,* all assigned by lot, and none contiguous with each other. Each *trittys* was subdivided into *demes*, or wards, in which citizens were registered. This redistricting broke forever the power of the Athenian aristocrats.
3. These tribes acted as regiments in the army; Athenians from across Attica henceforth drilled together as hoplites. These units were also the basis of citizenship and standing in the assembly. A Council of Five Hundred replaced the old council of Solon, and executive committee membership was drawn from the new, artificial tribes.

G. By approximately five years into Cleisthenes's reforms, numerous Athenians had gained experience on the council and served on juries. Within a decade of the reforms, the Athenians had begun to call their government a "democracy" and had begun to pass additional reforms.
1. In 501/00 B.C., a new board of 10 generals (*strategoi*) was created; it became the major elected body of the Athenian constitution. Henceforth, *archons* were chosen by sortition rather than election. Thus the prestige of the *Areopagus*, the aristocratic council of ex-*archons*, might have been diminished.
2. As a result of the Cleisthenic reforms and of innovations introduced in the next decade, the Athenian assembly essentially took over most of the powers that in other Greek states were held by the elected magistrates and the council (the aristocrats).
3. Elected officials were required to undergo a competence test (*dokimasia*) and render accounts (*euthynai*) when they left office. Officials who failed to perform adequately could be tried in popular courts.
4. The assembly had a powerful weapon in ostracism, a law introduced by Cleisthenes and used by Themistocles (c. 525–460 B.C.), the architect of the Athenian navy and victor over the Persians in 484–479 B.C. Under this law, anyone suspected of aspiring to be a tyrant could be voted out of Athens for 10 years. Themistocles used this law as a means of removing his political rivals.

H. By 480 B.C. and the time of the Persian invasion, the Athenians had become accustomed to governing themselves under a truly remarkable system. The assembly had previously unimagined powers but used them with moderation, and the citizens of Athens had more direct experience in governing themselves than those in any modern democracy.

1. To address the assembly, Athenian statesmen such as Pericles and Themistocles developed oratory to a high degree of excellence. Athenians became accustomed to hearing debates, weighing issues, and voting, even on unpopular political positions.

2. Perhaps the Athenians' encouragement of political dissent can be seen in their response to Aristophanes's anti-war play *The Acharnians*. Although the play characterized the citizens as having been bamboozled into war by Pericles, it was still voted first prize at a dramatic competition—before the citizens voted again to continue the war.

Suggested Reading:

Charles Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution*.

J. M. Moore, ed., *Aristotle and Xenophon on Oligarchy and Democracy*.

R. K. Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens.*

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did Athenian development lag behind that of other states in the Peloponnesus in the Early Archaic age? How did Solon's reforms change the aristocratic rule of Athens?

2. What was the role of Peisistratus in promoting political and economic development? Why was he remembered fondly by later Athenians?

3. How did Cleisthenes and Themistocles advance democracy? How responsibly did the Athenians govern themselves? Why would the Athenian democracy draw so much criticism from Greek writers?

Lecture Six
Athens and the Navy

Scope: In the 6th century B.C., Greek city-states manned their fleets of triremes with citizens of the lower classes. The trireme, a warship propelled by 170 citizen oarsmen rowing in unison, depended on ramming tactics to sink opposing vessels. In 480 B.C., the Athenians launched 200 triremes to oppose the imperial navy of King Xerxes of Persia. The Athenian fleet was the mainstay of the coalition navy that was to win the Battle of Salamis in 449 B.C. Although Athens was a commercial center dependent upon seaborne commerce, it was not a naval power when the democracy was established in 508–506 B.C. Between 505 and 480 B.C., the Athenians constructed the single greatest fleet in the Greek world; this building program propelled democratic institutions. The thetes (the lowest property class), who made up the majority of Athenians, became vital to the city's defenses because they rowed the triremes. The democratic leader Themistocles used the windfalls from a silver strike at Laurium in 483 B.C. to construct triremes and to develop harbor facilities. Henceforth, the navy and democracy were to be the foundations of Athenian greatness.

Outline

I. Aristotle, writing at the end of the 4th century B.C., noted that a state's constitution depends heavily on the military obligations of its citizens.

- **A.** Before the advent of the navy, men from the lowest Athenian class (thetes) generally served as auxiliaries or light infantry on the battlefield. They could not perform hoplite service and were not taken seriously in the assembly.
  - **1.** Once these men became rowers in the fleet of triremes, they gained a higher position in society and could assert their political rights.
  - **2.** Thus, the development of the Athenian navy went hand–in–hand with the development of democracy.
- **B.** In this lecture we shall describe the construction of triremes and how these ships were used in combat. We shall also examine the economic and political consequences of Athens's development into a naval power on the eve of Xerxes's invasions.

II. The trireme was a warship that evolved from ship designs in the Levant.

- **A.** Several spectacular finds have been made of warships and cargo ships from the late Bronze Age, mostly from shipwrecks off the coast of Asia Minor. In circa 1200–600 B.C., warships called *pentakonters* (50-oared ships) were essentially converted cargo ships designed to carry large numbers of men. Battles were engaged by bringing ships side by side, boarding, and essentially fighting a land battle on the deck of a vessel.
- **B.** Sometime in the 8th or 7th century B.C., the functions of cargo ships and warships became differentiated. Modern archaeologists working in a neo-Hittite palace-temple complex in southeastern Turkey have found reliefs that show the differences.
- **C.** The impetus for building warships probably came from the monarchs of the Near East, such as those of the Assyrian and Persian Empires. Great kings wanted navies able to win decisive battles, which would ultimately lead to conquests. Probably under their orders, Phoenician shipwrights eventually created the trireme, which became the premier warship sometime in the 6th century B.C.
- **D.** Greek rulers quickly made use of triremes and the tactics associated with them. Tyrants on the Aegean islands and in Ionia launched the first Greek fleets of triremes. In response, Sparta sent expeditions to humble such tyrants as Polycrates of Samos and Lygdamis of Naxos in the late 6th century B.C. These fleets were successful and they attracted the attention of the Peloponnesians.
- **E.** By the time of the Ionian Revolt in 499–494 B.C., all the Greek city-states had shifted from *pentakonters* to triremes. Battle maneuvers changed accordingly: The boarding tactics used with *pentakonters* changed to the ramming tactics of the triremes.

III. Ancient Greek vases and reliefs depict a great number of triremes. In 1985–1987, the Greek government reconstructed a trireme, the *Olympias*.

- **A.** Tests with the *Olympias* indicated that the three banks of rowers could easily move the trireme at nine to 10 knots, although the vessel was remarkably unseaworthy.

1. The ships were about 120 feet long and 18 feet across at the widest point, with a draft of about 10 feet. They were beached when meals were prepared, and overnight.
2. The vessels tended to sail along the shores or among the islands, stopping whenever possible to take on water and food.
3. Perhaps the most frightening voyage in the Mediterranean world at that time would have been the trip from northwestern Greece to the toe of Italy, when a ship would be out of sight of land for up to two days.

B. Triremes were propelled by 170 rowers and manned by 10–20 marines (hoplites) and four archers. Other crew included the helmsman, the *auletes* (flutist), and various petty officers. The ships could move at great speed in combat, either in closed or open waters.

C. In combat, the sails were taken down, and the men rowed in unison to run into the opposing ship with a bronze-sheathed ramming device mounted onto the prow below the waterline. Success in this maneuver required timing and speed as well as discipline of the highest order.
1. Tests of the *Olympias* indicate that, when rowed at full speed, a trireme could turn 180 degrees in about one minute.
2. The Athenians became extremely adept at barreling broadside into an enemy ship and then pulling out. Thucydides records such tactics repeatedly in his history of the Peloponnesian War.
3. The favored technique of the Athenians was known as the *periplous*, the "sailing around," which involved elaborate maneuvering to see which ship could turn faster and hit the other first.
4. The Peloponnesians favored a technique known as the *diekplous*, "sailing through and out," that involved sailing prow to prow and smashing against the enemy vessel.
5. Another tactic used in the Hellenistic age involved sailing against an opposing vessel, then pulling in the oars at the last minute and shearing off the oars of the other ship.

IV. Only the largest city-states could launch a substantial fleet of triremes.

A. This meant that certain naval allies, such as Sicyon, Corinth, Aegina, and Megara, would play an important role in the Peloponnesian League. By 480 B.C., the Peloponnesians could launch at least 150 ships.

B. The Athenians entered the naval business rather late. In fact, the argument of Aristotle that the establishment of navies and of democracy invariably go together may not be historically correct with regard to Athens. About six to eight years after the democracy was founded (508–506 B.C.), the Athenians were able to send only 20 ships to support the Ionian Revolt.

C. By 480 B.C., that fleet had increased to 200 ships. Corinth had built a number of ships for the Athenians during a war against Aegina, but what really drove the construction of Athens's own fleet were two key events.
1. First was the emergence of Themistocles as the dominant political leader in Athens. He saw the Persian threat and decided to develop an Athenian navy and port facilities in response.
2. Second, the rich silver strike discovered at Laurium in 483/2 B.C. produced a windfall that Themistocles insisted be used to build a fleet.

D. The Athenian fleet probably doubled in size in the years immediately before the invasion of Xerxes. Athens's fleet of 200, plus the 150 ships of the Peloponnesian League, defeated Xerxes's fleet at the Battle of Salamis and drove back the Persian invasion.

V. What were the implications for the development of Athens when that state became a major naval power?

A. Democracy was already in place in Athens, as has been noted, but naval advancements changed the state into a full participatory democracy with no restrictions on office-holding. To man a fleet of 200 triremes required about 34,000 thetes trained as rowers. Inevitably, these men realized their importance to the defense of the state and asserted their political power.

B. Important economic and commercial consequences also arose from the growth of Athenian naval power.
1. Triremes were built using an extremely costly shell construction technique. Ships were encased in lead to protect their bottoms, and the oars alone required significant amounts of timber. Maintenance required construction of facilities such as dry docks, as well as the employment of a great number of specialized craftsmen to repair ships.
2. One scholar, Eugene Borza, has calculated that from 483 to 410 B.C. Athens may have built as many as 1,500 triremes. This specialized industry engaged thousands of Athenians and metics (resident aliens).

3. In the early 5th century B.C., Athens was rapidly evolving into a city with significant seaborne commerce and a great navy. Those involved in these activities were paid very well, with thetes earning a drachma a day by serving in the fleet.
4. With so many Athenians now committed to the navy, it is understandable that the navy would become, in many ways, the defining institution of the Athenian democracy. Those serving in the navy would always support the democracy, and the assembly would always vote to construct ships.

Suggested Reading:

Jordan Borimir, *The Athenian Navy in the Classical Period: A Study of Athenian Naval Administration and Military Organization in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.*

Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*.

J. S. Morrison and J. F. Coates, eds., *The Athenian Trireme*.

J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, *The Greek Oared Ship, 900–322 B.C.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the conditions of service on triremes in the Classical period? Why were citizen crews preferred? How did training at sea give confidence to the thetes in the Athenian assembly?
2. How did the construction of a great fleet change economic and social life at Athens? How did the construction of this fleet promote democracy? Did the construction of such fleets inevitably change city-states into democracies, as argued by Aristotle?

Lecture Seven
Victory over Persia, 490–479 B.C.

Scope: The Spartans and Athenians were compelled to ally against the Great Kings of Persia Darius I (521–486 B.C.) and Xerxes (486–465 B.C.), who sought to conquer the Greek homeland. Twice, Persian armies invaded Greece. In 490 B.C., 10,000 citizen hoplites of Athens defeated a Persian army at Marathon. In 480 B.C., King Xerxes invaded Greece at the head of an army of 250,000 men and a fleet of 1,200 triremes. Athens deferred to Sparta, which commanded Hellenic forces on land and sea. Although Spartan King Leonidas won immortality by his dramatic stand at Thermopylae, Persia emerged the victor. The democratic leader Themistocles convinced the Athenians to abandon their city and to fight the decisive naval battle of Salamis that ended the Persian threat. Although their city was in ruins in 479 B.C., the Athenians stood as leaders to the East Greeks who revolted from Persian rule. To the Spartans and Peloponnesians, Athenian success brought concern about the future of the Greek world.

Outline

I. The Persian Wars, from 490 to 479 B.C., are seen as the defining moment that moved the Greek world from the Archaic into the Classical period.

- **A.** In the Persian Wars, the Greek city-states joined to beat back a Great King in defense of the principles of autonomy and freedom. Many writers have noted that the Greek victory held the promise that the Greek city-states might develop institutions that could reconcile self-government with large-scale security measures and, perhaps, lead to a federal unity.
- **B.** That ideal, however, fell far short of reality in the final stages of the Persian Wars. During Xerxes's invasion of 480 B.C., the Athenians and Spartans were already clashing. Further, according to Thucydides, Athens's growth into a naval power in the aftermath of the Persian Wars engendered fear among the Spartans and their Peloponnesian allies, making a clash inevitable.
- **C.** This lecture examines how the coalition against the Persians sharpened the differences between Sparta and Athens, and how the Persian Wars were a precondition to the emergence of Athenian power, dictating many of the events that led to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.

II. Who were the Persians? Why did they invade Greece?

- **A.** The Persian Empire was the last of the successful Near Eastern empires that could be traced back to the earliest territorial empires of the Mesopotamian conquerors Sargon of Akkad, Ur-nammu, and Hammurabi. In 490 B.C., it stretched from the southeastern corner of Europe across the Near East and encompassed about 35 million subjects.
- **B.** Even though the Persians were ruled by a king, the Greeks admired them.
- **C.** The Persian kings also ruled over many Greeks, including those who had settled on Cyprus, in the islands of the Aegean, and along Ionia, today the western shores of Asia Minor. In 499 B.C., the Ionian Greeks rebelled against Persian rule, but this Ionian Revolt was brutally suppressed.
- **D.** The rebels had obtained aid from Athens and Eretria, in mainland Greece. In the second year of the uprising, the rebels had burned Sardis in Western Asia Minor, the capital of the Persian satrap, so that the Great King was to punish Athens and Eretria for aiding the rebels.
  1. Several expeditions were sent out, targeting Athens. In 490 B.C., an expedition sailed from Ionia across the central islands of the Aegean, sacked Eretria, then landed on the east shore of Attica at Marathon.
  2. In response, the Athenians marched their full citizen levy of 10,000 hoplites to Marathon, surprising the Persian fleet anchored in the bay and containing the Persian army for a week.
  3. The Athenian general Miltiades, a veteran of the Ionian Revolt, planned the order of battle, with a weak center and converging weighted wings. The Athenians launched an attack at dawn which surprised the Persians, who were attempting to board their ships to sail against Athens.
  4. Ultimately, the Athenians defeated the Persians at Marathon. The runner Pheidippides raced back to the city and announced the triumph with the single word *nike* (victory) before he collapsed. The Athenian army returned and prevented the Persian fleet from landing at Phaleron, the harbor of Athens.

5. All the Greeks, incuding the Spartans (who missed the battle due to their observance of the Carneian Festival), admired the Athenians for this first Greek victory over the Persians.

E. King Darius of Persia henceforth had to conquer Greece, on the fringes of his empire, because the defeat at Marathon encouraged rebellions in Egypt and Babylonia. It fell to Darius's son Xerxes to try to conquer Athens and Sparta.

III. The expedition of King Xerxes left Sardis and marched across a bridge of ships built between Sestos and Abydos, then continued along the shores of Northern Greece through Macedon and into Central Greece. Xerxes's army might have numbered as many as 250,000 men, and was accompanied by a fleet of at least 1,200 triremes.

A. Xerxes expected most cities to surrender. He expected the few that would stand in opposition—Sparta, Athens, and members of the Peloponnesian League—would defend their own cities rather than offer united resistance, so that each Greek city could be isolated and captured.

B. Initially Xerxes's expectations were met; Macedon and Thessaly "Medized"; Thebes and Argos prepared to welcome the Great King. Athens and Sparta, however, knew they were on the menu of conquests, and were determined to resist to the end.

C. The coalition of Athens, Sparta, and the members of the Peloponnesian League had difficulties from the start. The Spartans and Peloponnesians did not trust the Athenians, and certain members of the coalition were already negotiating with the Persians.

D. The Peloponnesians wished to fight only at the Isthmus of Corinth, thereby giving up Central Greece, including Athens. At a meeting of the coalition in May of 480 B.C., Themistocles, democratic leader of Athens, made two decisive concessions.

1. First, he agreed that the Spartans should command on both land and sea.
2. Second, he agreed—and persuaded the Athenian assembly to agree—that the initial strategy would be to fight the Persians in the narrow pass of Thermopylae in central Greece. The Athenian fleet took up positions off Artemisium on the northern shore of the island of Euboea.
3. The plan was to check the Persian fleet and army until their provisions ran out, at which point the Persians would retreat. All the Greeks had to do was not lose.
4. In the event the line of defenses fell and the Persians penetrated central Greece, Themistocles agreed that the Athenians would evacuate Athens and Attica, and the Hellenic fleet would concentrate at Salamis, in the Saronic Gulf, for the decisive battle.

E. For two days, the Greek fleet off Artemisium fought the Persian fleet to a strategic draw, inflicting heavy losses on Xerxes's ships.

F. When the Phoenecian fleet failed to turn the Greek positions at sea, Xerxes was forced to launch frontal assaults against the Greeks holding the pass at Thermopylae.

1. At Thermopylae, the Spartans had committed 300 men under King Leonidas, along with 7,000 Peloponnesian and Boeotian hoplites.
2. When the Persians finally launched a frontal assault into the pass, they were beaten back and suffered heavy losses.
3. On the third day of fighting, the Persians found a way around the pass and surprised the Greeks from behind. Leonidas got word of the attack, sent most of the other Greeks away, and remained with the Spartans in a last stand. Leonidas fell, and his force was destroyed.

G. The Persian army advanced across central Greece and burned Athens. Attica, however, had been evacuated, and the fleet had re-concentrated at Salamis. Many of the Peloponnesians wanted to leave to defend their home cities, but Themistocles again emerged as a decisive leader.

1. On the eve of battle, in late September of 480 B.C., Themistocles sent a message to Xerxes that the Greeks were ready to flee and that he should send his Egyptian squadron to block the west exit of Salamis.
2. Themistocles promised that the Greeks would go into battle in the narrows of Salamis, but that he would bring the Athenians over to the Persian side in the course of the fighting.
3. The next morning Xerxes sent the Phoenician squadron into the narrows, and the Greeks were forced to attack.

4. Themistocles had duped Xerxes, because the Athenians rammed the Phoenicians in close fighting, and by the end of the day many of the ships were swept as wrecks out into the Aegean. Persian naval power was destroyed.
5. In the face of this disaster, Xerxes was forced to return to Persia to secure his throne.

IV. The Greeks did not realize the magnitude of their victory at the Battle of Salamis.

A. In the spring of 479 B.C., the Peloponnesians and Athenians under Pausanias, regent of Sparta, defeated the remaining Persian army under Mardonius at Plataea. In the summer, the Greek fleet surprised and captured the Phoenician fleet on the beaches near Mount Mycale in Ionia.

B. The victories of 479 B.C. ended Xerxes's plan to conquer Greece, and the alliance between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians was hailed as a great triumph. The euphoria of victory, however, covered up tensions between Athens and Sparta.

C. Nonetheless, Themistocles and the Athenians were seen as the architects of victory. Thucydides, writing a generation and a half later, had unbounded admiration for Themistocles. As we shall see, however, Themistocles did not go on to lead the Greek world in a new political order; instead, he would find himself an exile in Persian Asia Minor.

Suggested Reading:

A. R. Burn, *Persia and the Greeks: Defense of the West, 546–478 B.C.*

J. M. Cook, *The Persian Empire*.

Herodotus, *The Histories*.

Charles Hignett, *Xerxes' Invasion of Greece*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did the Persian Wars alter the political balance in the Greek world between 499 and 479 B.C.? Was Persian rule antithetical to the institutions of the *polis*? What were the motives and aims of the Ionian rebels in 499–494 B.C.?
2. What did the Greeks' strategy reveal about their military organization and new ways of waging war? How did Themistocles prove decisive in the Greek victory? After the victories of 480–479 B.C., was a clash between Athens and Sparta inevitable?

Lecture Eight
Athens or Sparta—A Question of Leadership

Scope: In 479–477 B.C., the Spartans failed to convert their leadership in the Persian War into hegemony over the Greek world. The Greeks of the Aegean islands, the shores of Asia Minor, and Cyprus, who had revolted from King Xerxes, looked first to Sparta for direction, but indifferent Spartan leadership compelled them to turn to Athens in 477 B.C. The Spartan regent Pausanias, hero of Plataea, was recalled in disgrace, exiled, and later executed for fomenting rebellion among the *perioikoi* and helots. King Leontychidas was prosecuted for taking bribes. Furthermore, by 477 B.C., most Spartans thought it would be better to withdraw from the naval war against Persia than run the risk of having Spartan citizens corrupted by overseas service. Hence, the Athenian general Aristides was free to organize a new Delian League, headed by Athens, to carry on the naval war.

Outline

I. This lecture considers leadership in the Greek world in the aftermath of the Persian Wars. The outcome was contrary to the expectations of contemporaries and, in the opinion of Thucydides, set in motion a series of actions that led inevitably to the Peloponnesian War.

II By late summer of 479 B.C. it was clear that the Persians lacked the power to launch another attack on Greece, although eventually resources could have been summoned to embark on another expedition.

A. The Greeks overestimated Persian power and expected a counterattack in the immediate future. Most Greeks did not realize until more than 20 years after the Persian Wars that the Persians were not going to return to the Aegean world.

B. The two leading figures in the Greek world in 479 B.C. were Themistocles, the democratic leader of Athens who had been reelected *strategos* (general) that year, and Pausanias, a cousin of King Leonidas and regent for Leonidas's son, Pleistarchus. In many ways, Sparta would seem to have been the logical choice to lead the Greek world.

1. Most Greeks regarded the Spartans as natural leaders of any coalition, in contrast to the modern caricature of them as unimaginative, regressive, oppressive, and possessing little understanding of naval matters.

2. In fact, Sparta had successfully commanded the allied forces in 480 and 479 B.C. Further, Sparta had many naval allies with long ties of friendship and commerce with the cities of eastern Greece, which had now rebelled against the Persian king. These cities included Corinth, Samos, and Megara.

3. Furthermore, most governments of the Ionian Greek city-states were conservative. Power was in the hands of the aristocrats. Therefore, the political organization of Sparta and the Peloponnesians seemed familiar.

C. In contrast, Athens did not seem a natural choice for Greek hegemony.

1. In the aftermath of the Persian Wars, the Athenians grew divided over their own leadership. The Ionian city-states, which were not democracies, could not understand why Athens had such difficulty deciding who should run the assembly.

2. Also, in 498 B.C., the Athenians had pulled out of the Ionian Revolt prematurely, despite ties of common kinship and cult worship with the Ionians. In fact, after the rebellion had been put down, Themistocles sponsored a tragedy by Phrynichus, *The Sack of Miletus*, which dramatized the hardships suffered by the Ionian rebels. The drama reportedly brought tears to the eyes of the Athenian audience.

3. Finally, in 479–478 B.C., during common naval operations among the Peloponnesians, Athenians, and Ionians, the Ionian aristocrats got a close look at the Athenian thetes and may have become even more wary of democracy.

III. In the early years after the defeat of Persia, however, Sparta failed to provide leadership. Ultimately, the Ionians invited Athens to organize a naval league and take on the war against Persia. In time, that naval league would evolve into the Athenian Empire, the imperial order so hated by the Peloponnesians and the Spartans.

A. Sparta's failure was caused in part by its leaders. Although not a king, Pausanias was a royal figure who had commanded successfully in 478 B.C. He liberated Cyprus, and then established a base at Byzantium,

the former Persian provincial capital, where he learned to enjoy the comforts of Persian palace life. He was twice recalled to Sparta to answer questions about his behavior in Byzantium.

B. The other Spartan ruler, Leontychidas, was a rather uninspiring figure. He had been sent into Thessaly in central Greece to punish those states that had supported Xerxes. He was ultimately recalled to face charges of corruption, and was convicted.

C. Within two years of the victories over Persia, the character and authority of Sparta's two royal figures was called into question. The Spartans began to reconsider the leadership of such men and the wisdom of becoming so involved in the naval war.

D. At the same time, Aristides the Just returned to Athens. He had been a prominent political opponent of Themistocles' in the 480s and had been ostracized in 483/2. Recalled and elected general, he distinguished himself at the Battle of Salamis.

1. Aristides won the respect of many Ionian aristocrats, who reconsidered their affiliation with Athens.

2. The leading families of Athens and the other Ionian cities shared many ties. Athenian and Ionian aristocrats both claimed descent from the father of Nestor, the oldest and wisest of the Greeks in the *Iliad.*

3. All Athenians and Ionians worshipped Apollo of Delos as their common ancestral god.

4. By 480 B.C., Athens was clearly emerging as the financial capital of the Aegean world. Athens traded in the Black Sea and was heavily connected to trade in the Levant and Egypt.

5. All these ties played a role in Aristides' increasing authority as the *de facto* commander of the coalition fleet.

E. By the summer of 477 B.C., the Ionians were disgusted with Pausanias. Several of the leading cities, including Mytilene, Samos, and Chios, asked Aristides to organize an alliance (*symmachia*) to take charge of the naval war against Persia.

IV. The Athenians had sworn oaths with Sparta in 480 B.C. Nonetheless, Aristides took on the task of establishing what modern scholars call the Delian League.

A. Aristides drew up a list of assessments and contributions expected from all members of the new league. The leading city-states, Chios, Samos, Mytilene, and Thasos, provided ships. The lesser cities opted to pay tribute (*phoros*). According to Thucydides, the total sum collected in the first year of the Delian League was 460 talents, probably a fair assessment at the time.

B. The 10 Athenian generals elected each year by the assembly commanded the coalition forces. The money collected from the League was to be administered by 10 magistrates (*hellenotamiai*, "treasurers of the Hellenes"). League decisions were to be made in a common assembly meeting at Delos in which every state had one vote.

1. This organization seems reasonable, but most of the other states in the Delian League had no navies and were completely dependent on Athens; in any vote, there was always the implied threat that if Athens was not appeased, a lesser state could find itself facing this naval power.

2. The Ionians could have protected themselves more effectively if they had set up a constitution that allowed proportional voting. Allowing each state one vote in open assembly, however, meant that Athens could dominate the League.

3. This is not to say that the Ionians objected to Aristides's constitution. In fact, they swore serious oaths to obey these treaties.

V. By 477 B.C., two years after the victory over Xerxes, Athenian hegemony was firm.

A. Sparta now found itself in the unexpected position of facing an Athens that had not only a powerful fleet but also powerful alliances. Further, the Spartans, and particularly the Corinthians, were distrustful of the democratic leader Themistocles.

B. Despite these two concerns, the Spartans did not declare war on Athens. Credit for this goes to a second leading man at Athens, Cimon. He would be elected general repeatedly for the next 16 years and would make the Delian League and Athens itself acceptable to the Spartans and Peloponnesians. As will be seen in the next lecture, Cimon has as much claim to being the architect of the Athenian Empire and the Athenian democracy as Pericles.

Suggested Reading:

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

Anton Powell, *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 B.C.*

G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How important were individual actions of Pausanias and Aristides to the foundation of the Delian League and Athenian power? Why did the Ionians react so strongly to these events?
2. Why were the Greeks uncertain of the extent of their victory in 479–477 B.C.? What resources did Xerxes possess to mount another offensive against the Greek world? What fears and perceptions motivated the Ionians?
3. In 477 B.C., what were the crucial advantages and drawbacks for Sparta or Athens as the leader of the naval war against Persia?
4. How did the constitution of the Delian League lend itself to manipulation by the Athenians so that they could convert the League into an empire? Did the attitudes of democratic Athenians inevitably lead to this imperialism?

Lecture Nine
Cimonian Imperialism

Scope: The years after the victory over King Xerxes witnessed a renewed struggle for primacy in the Athenian assembly between Themistocles, father of the Athenian navy, and his conservative opponents, who, though loyal to Athens, preferred to consolidate rather than expand the democratic reforms. This division was quickly reflected in Athenian policy toward Sparta. The democratic Themistocles was prepared to confront Sparta over leadership of the Greek world, but he fell from favor in 476 B.C., suffering first ostracism, then exile. In his place, the conservative Cimon came to dominate the assembly and was repeatedly elected general until 462/1 B.C. Ironically, the victories of Cimon, the friend of Sparta, converted the naval alliance of the Delian League into the Athenian Empire of the Aegean world. Cimon's victories also promoted the rowers of the thetic class, who had grown impatient with the lack of democratic reform, and at the same time alarmed Sparta as Athens reduced her allies to subjects. In 452/1 B.C., after a fiasco in the Peloponnesus, Cimon was ostracized, and the radical democrats Ephialtes and Pericles came to power in the assembly.

Outline

I. This lecture explores Athenian leadership in the years after the Persian Wars and the emergence of the statesman and politician Cimon.

II. Themistocles had been a prominent figure for 15 years before the Persian Wars and was essentially the architect of Greek victory.

- **A.** He had maneuvered the Peloponnesians and King Xerxes into the naval battle at Salamis. He had also kept the Athenians in the forefront of the coalition when, at times, it seemed as if the Spartans and Peloponnesians would neglect Athenian interests.
  - **1.** The most important example of this neglect occurred in the spring of 479 B.C. The Persians had invaded Attica and sacked Athens a second time; the Peloponnesians were reluctant fight for Attica.
  - **2.** Themistocles made it clear to Pausanias, the regent of the Agiad king, that unless the Spartans and Peloponnesians made a serious commitment to defend Attica, the Athenians might go west and establish a new city-state. This threat forced the Peloponnesians to fight the Battle of Plataea.
- **B.** In the months following the victories at Plataea and Mount Mycale, the Spartans informed the Athenians that they should not rebuild the Long Walls, fearing that the Persians would return and use the city as a base. Themistocles, seeing this as a veiled Spartan attempt to keep Athens powerless, ordered the walls rebuilt. He then informed Sparta that in the future Athens would see to her own interests.
- **C.** In 479 B.C., Themistocles believed that Sparta was a far more dangerous foe to Athens than a resurgent Persia, but most Athenians disagreed. At the same time, Themistocles faced the problem of sustaining public favor in the period of reconstruction after the wars.
- **D.** Themistocles spent most of his time in Athens directing policy, dealing with the Spartans, and commanding majorities in the assembly. In contrast, his conservative political opponents, such as Aristides and Cimon, were leading expeditions overseas and winning credit for victories. As a result, Themistocles found himself isolated, out-maneuvered, and in 476 B.C. (probable date) ostracized by the assembly.
- **E.** Themistocles left Athens for the Peloponnesus and organized a democracy in Argos. The Spartans complained to Athens so bitterly about Themistocles that he was exiled from Greece in 472/1 B.C. Eventually, he landed on the shores of Asia Minor in Persian territory, and was able to persuade Xerxes to provide him with an estate there.

III. In the meantime, Athens was left to the opponents of Themistocles, who turned out to be extraordinary leaders, particularly Cimon.

- **A.** In some ways, Cimon was an unlikely figure to ostracize Themistocles and set himself at the head of the assembly. Themistocles had been a populist; Cimon was a conservative. Although deferential to the assembly, he believed that the aristocrats should lead the Athenian democracy.
- **B.** Cimon was also the official guest friend (*proxenos*) of the Spartans, and he emulated their manners to an extent. He spoke in the laconic Spartan manner and employed imagery that Spartans would have

appreciated. His official policy was that Athens and Sparta should be "yoke-fellows," pulling the plow of Greece together.

C. Although he opposed further democratic reforms, Cimon went out of his way to be generous to his demesmen, even opening his orchards at harvest time to allow people to pick at their leisure. Such acts were within the tradition of aristocratic patronage.

D. Cimon was the son of Miltiades, victor of the Battle of Marathon. After Marathon, Miltiades had led an expedition against the island of Paros, but the siege there miscarried. Miltiades was seriously wounded and later tried and fined for military incompetence. Therefore, Cimon's emergence in the early 470s was a political comeback for his family.

E. Cimon, an able general, carried out a number of operations in the 470s. These events are known to us chiefly through a brief account in Thucydides's first book, often called the *Pentakontaeteia*, ("Fifty Years"), referring to the period between the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War.

1. Cimon secured the vital Hellespontine regions, today the Dardanelles or the Bosporus. He destroyed Persian garrisons on the shores of northern Greece and enrolled the cities there in the Delian League.

2. On the island of Scyros, Cimon wiped out a den of pirates and reputedly found the bones of Theseus, the legendary hero of Athens. Such a find was considered a sign of favor from the gods.

F. Cimon also carried out operations against rebellious allies, as when the island of Naxos in the central Aegean defected from the Delian League around 471/470 B.C. Naxos was put under siege. When the city surrendered, its walls were torn down, a democracy was installed, and Naxos was enrolled as a tribute-paying member of the League.

IV. Despite these successes, Cimon faced long-term problems with his policy.

A. Cimon's position as friend of the electorate was always provisional. All his victories depended on the skillful coordination of naval and land forces, which meant that every victory won increased the confidence of the thetes. In time, the thetes would become dissatisfied with a policy that did not further reforms or give them access to high office.

1. The Athenian constitution still had social restrictions. For instance, membership on the council (*boule*) was reserved for the top three property classes, while election to the board of nine *archons* was restricted to the top two property classes.

2. As the *demos* gained self-confidence, Cimon's reluctance to sponsor democratic government reforms or to take an active role in the politics of Athens put him at a disadvantage.

B. At the same time, Cimon's policy of accommodation with Sparta changed in the mid-460s as a result of two events. The first was Cimon's victory in 467 or 466 B.C. at the river Eurymedon on the shores of southern Turkey. Clearly, Persia was no longer a threat and many allies wondered whether Athenian leadership was still needed.

C. In 465 B.C., Athens disputed with the island *polis* of Thasos the ownership of rich silver districts in the Thracian *peraea* (coastal hinterland) opposite the island. When Thasos seceded from the Delian League, Cimon put the city under siege. The Thasians then appealed to Sparta for aid.

1. The Spartans, believing that Cimon was using the forces of the Delian League to advance the interests of Athens and to trample the autonomy and freedom of Thasos, voted to invade Attica.

2. Before the Spartans could do so, Sparta was struck by an earthquake that leveled the city. News of the disaster inspired the *perioikoi* of Messenia to revolt.

3. Under the circumstances, Sparta did not invade Attica; they interpreted the earthquake as a sign of the gods' disfavor.

4. Meanwhile, in 463 B.C., Thasos surrendered, but Cimon returned to Athens under political attack. In 462/461 B.C., he faced the likelihood of ostracism.

D. It is significant that the Spartans seemed to offer Cimon a way out of his political difficulties in Athens. They were so alarmed by the rebellion in Messenia that they appealed to Athens to send military aid. Cimon and the assembly responded. Cimon marched 4,000 hoplites into the Peloponnesus to assist the Spartans. There were difficulties as soon as he arrived.

1. Thucydides claims that most Spartans feared the Athenians because the latter were too revolutionary. It is also likely that Cimon was more accustomed to giving than taking orders. In any event, the Spartans quickly asked the Athenians to withdraw.

2. That embarrassment was enough for Cimon's political opponents to call for his ostracism. The Spartans then found themselves facing two radical democrats, Ephialtes and Pericles, who believed that Sparta, as an oligarchy, was far more dangerous than Persia.

E. Pericles and the newly radicalized assembly were now ready to take on the Spartans. At the same time, through a series of accidents, the city of Megara defected from the Peloponnesian League, and entered into an alliance with Athens. In 461 B.C., Athens and Sparta embarked on the First Peloponnesian War.

Suggested Reading:

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did Themistocles fail to maintain his leadership in the Athenian assembly?
2. Why did Cimon win popularity among the Athenians? Why did aristocrats in Sparta serve the Athenian democracy so loyally?
3. How did Cimon's success change the relationship between Athens and the allies of the Delian League? Why did the Battle of Eurymedon and the revolt of Thasos mark turning points?
4. How did the Spartans view Athens under the domination of Cimon? How was diplomacy conducted between Athens and Sparta? Why were *proxenoi* (guest-friends) so important?

Lecture Ten
Sparta after the Persian Wars

Scope: Between 477 and 461 B.C., Sparta withdrew from naval war against Persia. As a result, the Spartans' history seems to have held little interest for Classical authors who were impressed by the success of Cimon's victories. The scandals of 477/6 B.C. may have undermined Sparta's reputation among its allies and encouraged challenges from rival Argos and the rebel *perioikoi* and helots of Messenia. Modern scholars have argued that because Spartan political and social institutions were flawed and regressive, the Spartans preferred isolation, lest their citizens be corrupted by overseas contacts. Yet these views rest on inferences drawn from Thucydides. The historian Diodorus Siculus, writing in the 1st century B.C., recorded the debate and decision of the Spartans to declare war against Athens in 475 B.C. An elder noble, Hetoemaridas, dissuaded the assembly, on the grounds that Athens had not violated its oaths of alliance. While the Spartans were occupied with other issues, Athens began to expand, but that situation changed dramatically in 465 B.C. after Cimon's victory at Eurymedon and a dispute with Thasos over silver mining rights. In 464 B.C., the Spartans were hardly in decline when they received the Thasians' appeal for aid. It was Athenian actions in 462/461 B.C. that drove the Spartans to war.

Outline

I. Thucydides is surprisingly quiet about events in Sparta in the 50 years between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, a period usually designated the *Pentakontaeteia*. The fragmentary nature of the record of Spartan history at this time raises one of the issues that we considered in earlier lectures: the traditional misrepresentation of Sparta as repressive.

- **A.** Many scholars believe that the repressive nature of Spartan society emerged during the *Pentakontaeteia*. The scandals involving the regal figures Pausanias and Leontychidas prompted the Spartans to return to older traditions and sparked fear of helot rebellion.
- **B.** This position is, to a large extent, premised on Thucydides's accounts. In Book IV, he relates an ominous story of the Spartans' promising freedom to 2,000 helots who had fought for the state; those men were never heard from again. According to Thucydides, the potential for the helots to rise up was the Spartans' primary fear.
  1. Other sources also relate anecdotal accounts about the relationships of Spartans and helots. We are told that the Spartans declared war on the helots (probably the Messenians) each year and that the helots were monitored by a secret police (*krypteia*).
  2. While the truth of these stories is unknown, most modern interpretations consider it axiomatic that the fear of a helot rebellion dictated Spartan policy during the *Pentakontaeteia*.
  3. What is known is that the Spartans maintained control of their dependent populations until the winter of 370/69 B.C., when the city was attacked by a Theban army.
  4. It should be noted that most other Greek city-states had subject populations, and some had large numbers of agricultural slaves.
  5. Thus, Sparta must be considered in the wider context of Greek political and social relationships. Many Greek city-states had hinterlands attached to a *polis* which included dependent and slave populations.
- **C.** Another assertion often made is that most Spartans in this period did not want to become involved in overseas adventures. The scandals associated with Pausanias and Leontychidas—Pausanias being charged on two occasions with tyranny and Leontychidas being tried on charges of bribery—served as warnings that those who traveled in the wider world risked falling away from the Spartan code of virtue.
- **D.** The scholars Donald Kagan and Geoffrey de Sainte Croix maintain that the Spartan constitution was unstable, and that foreign policy remained exclusively in the hands of the five elected *ephors*.
  1. The board of *ephors* changed each year, and some have argued that if more were known about the composition of that board, a kaleidoscopic set of policy changes in Sparta could also be documented.
  2. However, Sparta was a traditional society. The two kings met with the council (*gerousia*) and consulted with the *ephors*. In many instances, decisions were probably reached more by discussion and consensus than by debate and vote. When the authorities were agreed, they brought their opinion before the assembly, which was, in the end, sovereign.

3. The image of a group of hawk-like *ephors* who pushed a reluctant assembly into war against Athens is based on the inherited image of Sparta, and is difficult to prove from the sources.

E. Further, most modern historians fail to understand the role the kings played in Spartan society: They reigned, but did not rule.

1. Spartan kings had what the Romans would call *auctoritas,* that is, influence and charisma. They were revered for their inherited positions and for their positions as the quintessential Spartans.
2. Any king who acted out of the bounds of tradition, however, was immediately called up before the *ephors* and *gerousia*.
3. Sadly, during the *Pentakontaeteia*, no such dynamic, charismatic king from either of the two families (the Agiad or the Eurypontid line) emerged to play the role expected of a Spartan king.

II. Although the Spartans emerged victorious from the Persian Wars, their ability to control their allies suffered.

A. Two leading states, Thebes and Argos, had consorted with the Persians; they were viewed as "Medizers," and had reason to oppose Sparta in mainland Greece after 479 B.C. Such threats were probably more significant to most Spartans than the rising power of Athens in the Aegean.

B. Diodorus Siculus, writing in the 1st century B.C., tells us that in the *Pentakontaeteia*, the Spartan authorities requested the assembly to consider whether the Athenians had violated their oaths. (Presumably, these were the oaths sworn in 480 B.C. to fight Xerxes.)

1. According to Diodorus, the motion went forward and many in the assembly were inclined to launch an expedition against Athens.
2. When a senior Spartan, Hetoemaridas, argued that the Athenians had done nothing to violate their oaths, the assembly relented.
3. The crux of the issue was whether or not the Athenians had disregarded the freedom and autonomy of their allies, and whether they had violated oaths with Sparta by setting up their own league. The Spartan assembly decided that they had done neither.

C. At this time, the Spartans were also increasingly concerned about the power of Argos and Thebes. Argos was attempting to join together all the villages and townships of the region known as the Argolid, a vast, fertile area in the northeastern Peloponnesus. At the same time, in central Greece, the Thebans were attempting to establish a kind of federal league that would join together 11 city-states.

D. Both Thebes and Argos had been compromised by their alignment with King Xerxes, and Sparta spent a great deal of time coping with them as possible challenges. Sparta eventually succeeded in restricting Argos, which drove the Argives to seek an alliance with Athens. Thebes was later to become one of the beneficiaries of the war between Athens and Sparta, ultimately defeating Sparta at the Battle of Leuctra in 371 B.C.

E. Thus, in the 470s and 460s B.C., the Spartans had good reason not to become more involved in the Aegean. Their reluctance was not based on their fear of helot rebellion or their conservative nature, but on the fact that they lacked strong royal leadership and faced serious challenges at home.

F. Recall, too, that Cimon was more than acceptable to the Spartans as an Athenian leader, and that Athens was building her confederation in regions that were largely outside the orbit of the Peloponnesian League.

III. Athens enjoyed the advantage, at this time, of being able to expand, while Sparta was preoccupied with other issues. That situation changed dramatically in 465 B.C. after Cimon's victory at Eurymedon and the dispute with Thasos over the mines.

A. Sparta was willing to aid Thasos until she was struck with an earthquake and faced the subsequent rebellion of the helots and the *perioikoi* in Messenia. As seen in the last lecture, the Spartans summoned their Athenian aliens to help put down the rebellion, then immediately dismissed them.

B. Thucydides says that the Spartans feared the Athenians' "revolutionary" ways, but it is more likely that Cimon clashed with the commander of the Peloponnesian and Spartan forces. Whatever the cause, the Spartan dismissal of the Athenians was a blunder.

C. Cimon, returned to Athens, was humiliated by this fiasco. The Athenian assembly promptly elected the radical democrats Pericles and members of the Eupatrids. Like Themistocles, they believed that war with Sparta was inevitable. Immediately, the assembly concluded alliances with Thessaly and Argos—daggers aimed directly at Sparta.

D. At the same time, the Spartans were so concerned with putting down the Messenian revolt that they neglected to intervene and arbitrate between the Corinthians and Megarians over a border dispute. The Megarians, in frustration, applied to Athens for aid. Athens responded.
   1. The alliance with Megara gave Athens control of the strategic passes leading out of the Peloponnesus into central Greece; Athens had some protection thereby from Peloponnesian invasion.
   2. Megara's alliance with Athens was also a shocking violation of its oaths with Sparta. The Spartans had no choice but to declare war.

Suggested Reading:

E. Badian, *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentacontetia*.

W. W. G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta, c. 950–192 B.C*.

Anton Powell, *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 B.C*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the virtues and flaws of Spartan institutions? What is the evidence for a Spartan decline as early as 475 B.C.?

2. What challenges did Sparta face in Argos and Thebes? Why were Themistocles and the spread of democracies across the Peloponnesus so dangerous to Sparta?

3. Why did Sparta consent to Athens's right to lead the Delian League? How did Cimon allay Spartan fears? How did the Spartans view the rise of Athenian power between 475 and 464 B.C.? Why did they respond to the appeal of Thasos?

Lecture Eleven
The First Peloponnesian War

Scope: In 461 B.C., the Spartans and Athenians clashed in what is often called First Peloponnesian War (461–446 B.C.). The immediate catalyst of the initial clash was the election by the Athenian assembly of the radical democrat Pericles, who concluded anti-Spartan treaties with Argos and Thessaly. In 461 B.C., democrats seized Megara and entered into an alliance with Athens. The Spartans declared war because Megara controlled the strategic routes out of the Peloponnesus, preventing Sparta from invading Attica. In 461–459 B.C., the Athenian navy swept the Peloponnesians from the seas and captured Aegina. In 457 B.C., the Athenians twice invaded Boeotia. At the Battle of Tanagra, they fought the Spartans to a draw; two months later, they defeated the Boeotians and imposed democracies in central Greece. It was only Athenian setbacks in Egypt in 455/4 B.C. that compelled Pericles to negotiate an armistice with the Spartans and to conclude a peace with Persia in 451 B.C. In 447/6 B.C., Boeotian and Megarian exiles restored oligarchic governments and returned to the Spartan alliance. Rather than fight, Pericles and the Spartan king negotiated, and as a result Sparta recognized the integrity of Athens and her Aegean empire.

Outline

I. The First Peloponnesian War is usually dated from 461–446/445 B.C. using the Athenian calendar year, a lunar year beginning and ending in midsummer.

- **A.** Thucydides addresses this war only in passing. Historians must therefore refer largely to other sources, such as Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, and later Byzantine scholars.
- **B.** A number of inscriptions on public monuments in Athens also serve as sources of information. The study of such inscriptions is known as *epigraphy*.

II. The Athenians had an overwhelmingly important strategic advantage in the First Peloponnesian War.

- **A.** The war erupted in 461 B.C. when the Athenians forged an alliance with Megara. With that alliance, Athens gained control of the strategic passes through which a Peloponnesian army could invade Attica and either besiege Athenians or force the Athenians to fight.
- **B.** In the final crisis of 432 B.C., the Athenians passed the Megarian Decree, which the Spartans and the Peloponnesians could only view as tantamount to an act of war in its effort to break the Peloponnesian League's advantage.

III. The Athenians fought the Peloponnesians largely as a sideshow to other operations in which they were engaged.

- **A.** Despite Cimon's victory at Eurymedon in 467/6 B.C., there was still no peace with Persia. Fleets of Athenian and allied vessels sailed east to the island of Cyprus and began to support rebellions that were erupting in the Persian Empire. These included rebellions in the Phoenician cities and, in 459 B.C., a rebellion in Egypt led by a pharaoh known as Inaros.
- **B.** Athens took the initiative immediately in the first clash with Sparta. The Peloponnesians' only way to challenge Athenian control of Megara was to launch a fleet. Their first effort at taking on the superior Athenian navy, however, ended in disaster.
  1. In 459 B.C., in the Saronic Gulf, the Athenian fleet soundly defeated the Peloponnesian fleet, landed forces on the island of Aegina, and put the city of Aegina under siege.
  2. The city was eventually forced to surrender. The Athenians took over Aegina, enrolled the city into the Delian League, tore down its walls, imposed democracy, and stripped Aegina of its fleet.
- **C.** Aegina had been an ancient Dorian ally, but control of it now allowed Athens to raid the Peloponnesian shores freely. In 457 B.C., the Spartans managed to invade central Greece (Boeotia), hoping to reach Athens from the west. But the Athenians confronted this army and fought it to a draw at Tanagra in central Boeotia.
- **D.** The Peloponnesians withdrew, but the Athenians returned into Boeotia two months later, smashed the Boeotian federal army, and installed democracies across Boeotia and central Greece. Athens now controlled central Greece through friendly governments.

E. By 457 B.C., the Peloponnesians found themselves in a hopeless position, unable to wage any kind of effective war. They had been defeated at sea, they had lost two of their key naval allies, and they had lost all of their allies in central Greece.

F. It was only because the Athenians were occupied fighting the Persians that they did not exploit their advantages and put an army in the Peloponnesus to join forces with the Argives and march directly on Sparta.

G. In 432 B.C., in his first book, Thucydides records important speeches in Sparta. Although the details of these speeches have often been questioned, they are vital to understanding the decision of the Spartan assembly to go to war at that time.

1. The Corinthian allies, in particular, promoted an image of aggression that sounds more like Athenian actions in the 450s than in the 430s.
2. It should be noted, however, that for a generation of Spartans, the events of the 450s—the control of Megara, the use of Athenian naval power—colored their view of Athens.

IV. By the mid-450s, the Athenians were winning. Then disaster struck.

A. The Athenians overcommitted themselves in the war against Persia and underestimated the abilities of King Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, to mount counteroffensives against the rebels. Artaxerxes was concerned, above all, with rebellion in the Phoenician cities and Egypt.

B. The Egyptian pharaoh Inaros who had raised the rebellion in 459 B.C. received substantial Athenian naval aid. Athens dispatched more than 200 triremes to Egypt to operate in tandem with the rebel army. Initially, the insurgence went well. A rebel victory would be a favorable outcome for Athens, because it would allow Egypt to supply Athens with grain.

C. King Artaxerxes and the Persians, however, were far more adept and determined than anyone realized. First, they put down the rebellions in Phoenicia. Then, in 455 B.C., they invaded Egypt. When Persian forces reappeared in the Nile Valley, the Athenian fleet was caught on an island and eventually had to be abandoned.

D. The perception across the Aegean world in 454 B.C. was that Athenian naval power had been broken. A series of rebellions erupted. This was a decisive point in the change of character of the Delian League.

1. The Athenians realized that they were overextended and had to cut their commitments in the east.
2. A number of public inscriptions record settlements imposed on allied cities in Ionia, in the islands, and, eventually, even on the island of Euboea, next to the coast of Boeotia.

E. These measures were taken in tandem with another important action in 454 B.C.: The Delian League was moved from the island of Delos to Athens. Scholars interpret this action as symbolic of the transformation of the Delian League into an Athenian Empire.

V. Pericles now stepped forward and took several important actions to cut Athenian commitments.

A. In 451 B.C. he recalled Cimon, who had connections as the *proxenos* of the Spartans, to negotiate a five-year armistice, an agreement to stop hostilities. At the same time, the Argives concluded a peace with Sparta. These actions closed one theater of operations.

B. Cimon then sailed out with an allied expedition into the eastern Mediterranean in 450 B.C. At the Cypriot town of Salamis, Cimon defeated the Persian fleet in 449 B.C., which led to a treaty known as the Peace of Callias. This treaty, in effect, settled the Persian Wars.

1. As part of this treaty, Athens gave up active support of rebels in the Persian Empire, including Egypt, and pulled out of Cyprus.
2. The Persians agreed not to send any fleets into the Aegean, and allowed the Athenians to retain control over the Ionian cities and European possessions that had once belonged to Persia.
3. The Peace of Callias was a diplomatic victory for Athens, but it also raised the question of why the Delian League was still necessary.

C. It should be noted that the rebellions Athens faced were quite dangerous. One inscription from 459 or 458 B.C. lists 177 casualties in one year, a significant loss out of the 1,000 to 1,200 men who would have been available for service.

1. Pericles knew that Athens could not sustain this scale of military operation overseas.
2. The fighting in the late 450s probably began to crystallize in Pericles's mind a policy that Athens must consolidate its empire and avoid far-flung commitments in Egypt and elsewhere.

VI. Two events in 447/6 B.C. revealed how unpopular the Athenians were, and highlighted their inability to incorporate allies from the area giving access to the Gulf of Corinth.

A. In Megara, the population rebelled, seized control of the town, reinstituted an oligarchy, and rejoined the Peloponnesian League.

B. At the same time, the various puppet Athenian governments in Boeotia were overthrown. The Athenian force sent to assist these governments was defeated at the Battle of Coronea. Athens agreed to evacuate all of Boeotia in order to secure the return of their soldiers.

C. Athens lost its inland allies. Sparta, after waiting for the five-year armistice to expire, promptly invaded Attica. As a result, rebellions broke out across the Athenian Empire.

D. Pericles confronted the Peloponnesian army at the border of Attica, but instead of engaging in battle, he and King Pleistoanax negotiated. Though there were later rumors of bribery, the two sides concluded the Thirty Years' Peace, which remained in effect until 432 B.C.

E. The Peloponnesian army backed off, and the Athenians put down the rebels in the Aegean world. The treaty would seem to have been a workable solution. It will be examined further in the next lecture.

Suggested Reading:

Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did internal events at Athens in 462–460 B.C. lead to the outbreak of war with Sparta in 460 B.C.?

2. How were the Spartans and Peloponnesians at a disadvantage? Did the war threaten to destroy Sparta? Why was Megara so important?

Lecture Twelve
The Thirty Years' Peace

Scope: In 446 B.C., Pericles and King Pleistoanax negotiated the Thirty Years' Peace, which should have settled outstanding questions between Athens and Sparta. The peace was based on political realities, and each side made significant concessions. The Athenians acknowledged the loss of Megara and Boeotia, which returned to their Spartan alliance. Pericles had already initiated the construction of the Long Walls linking Athens to the port of Piraeus so that the population could be evacuated to safety in any future Peloponnesian invasion. The Spartans conceded Athenian control of Aegina and the integrity of the Athenian Empire. To the Athenians, the peace was premised on parity between the two great states; the Spartans interpreted the treaty differently. With the return of Megara, the Spartans believed that, in the event of any future crisis, they could invade Attica; to Sparta, the treaty enshrined their primacy in the Greek world. Most Spartans took seriously their oaths to uphold the peace, but few were reconciled to Athens. Sparta, too, had learned that Megara was vital to its own hegemony. Given their political and economic interests, Athens and Sparta were not likely to clash. In 441–439 B.C., Samos rebelled from Athens, and the Spartans declined to aid Samos. But the Spartans acted because of the reluctance of their allies to intervene rather than out of a commitment to the peace. Hence, the success of the peace rested far more on the perceptions of the signatories than on the substance of its provisions.

Outline

I. This lecture examines the Thirty Years' Peace and the arrangements that might have enabled Sparta and Athens to avoid major conflict. Most of the specific terms of the treaty can be surmised from points in Thucydides's history. The treaty itself would have been inscribed on stone monuments (*stelae*) probably erected in both Athens and Sparta. It's likely that the *stelae* were destroyed when war was declared.

II. The last lecture described the Athenians and the Spartans positioned to fight a decisive hoplite battle that would have determined the hegemony of the Greek world.

- **A.** Probably both Pleistoanax and Pericles were reluctant to lose citizen-soldiers in a major clash. Both may also have realized that perhaps this one battle would not be decisive. Both city-states had now acquired a number of allies and resources, which meant that a single engagement was not likely to settle the war.
- **B.** The peace treaty was probably concluded early in the summer of 445 B.C. This treaty seems to have addressed a number of the outstanding issues between Athens and Sparta, although Thucydides viewed it as just one more signpost pointing the way to inevitable war.

III. What do we know about the provisions of the Thirty Years' Peace?

- **A.** The treaty apparently offered the possibility of arbitration in the event of a dispute. Such a provision likely provided for the disputants to submit their case to arbitration in Delphi, the international shrine that housed the oracle. This provision was important because it recognized that Sparta and Athens were, in effect, equal hegemons.
- **B.** The Spartans and all their allies signed the treaty individually, an act which was consistent with recognition of the freedom and autonomy of the allies. But Athens apparently signed for the entire Delian League; this was, in essence, a legal recognition of the integrity of the Athenian Empire and a point that the Athenians would not concede.
- **C.** The treaty also probably provided for the exchange of prisoners—of utmost importance to all Greek city-states—and outlined territorial concessions. These provisions reflected the political reality of the time.
  1. Megara and Boeotia were both returned to the Peloponnesian League, which meant that Thebes emerged again as the dominant power in central Greece and would ally with Sparta.
  2. Oligarchic governments were reinstalled in the Boeotian cities and in Megara, and the strategic passes around Megara once again came under Peloponnesian control.
  3. The return of Megara and Boeotia to the Peloponnesians was not a significant strategic issue to the Athenians because they believed they were protected against invasion by the Long Walls. In the 450s, Athens had constructed this set of parallel walls to connect the city to its port. In the event of a future war, the population could be evacuated into the safe area between the walls. The Long Walls would also protect the transportation, from the harbor to the city, of supplies brought in by ships.

4. The Spartans did not force the issue of Aegina, which remained under Athenian control.

IV. The treaty allowed Athens, under Pericles's leadership, to consolidate control of the Aegean and to press for political reform at home.

A. The great building programs associated with the Classical age were initiated in Athens in the period after the treaty.

B. The 17 years that the treaty remained in effect gave Pericles the opportunity to demonstrate his genius as an orator in the assembly, enacting political reforms, enriching the Athenian citizens, and transforming Athens into a model for Greece.

C. In addition to becoming the financial capital of the Aegean world, Athens also became the intellectual capital. The city attracted philosophers, as well as writers like Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes.

V. The two signatories to the treaty intended to abide by their oaths. There is, however always a difference between the terms parties agree to in writing and their understanding of those terms. The Greeks, in particular, thought that tradition (and the appropriateness of their actions in that context) were more important than adherence to the details of a particular law or contract.

A. The Spartans accepted the treaty but exiled King Pleistoanax for bribery. The Spartan assembly seems to have been judicious enough to distinguish between the man and the policy. In fact, the treaty was viewed as a victory: Sparta, as they saw it, had invaded Attica and forced Athens to negotiate.

1. In addition, the Spartans recovered almost all their holdings except Aegina. If there was a conflict in the future, the Peloponnesians could always invade through Megara.
2. Thus, the Spartans probably considered the arrangement acceptable to settle the crisis and confirm their own hegemony.

B. The Athenians considered the treaty a confirmation of their empire. They believed they had made a number of important concessions and, in return, expected an attitude of parity on the part of the Peloponnesians. If necessary, they would invoke the arbitration clause.

C. It is not clear, then, that the two sides understood the treaty in the same way. Nonetheless, there were reasons to believe that the treaty would last. The Athenian Empire and the Peloponnesian League were on two different economic orbits. In addition, several incidents took place during the 17 years the treaty was in effect that proved its viability.

1. The most prominent of these incidents occurred in 441–439 B.C. with the island of Samos, one of only three allies in the Delian League that retained its own government and navy.
2. Samos entered into a dispute with the weaker city-state of Miletus. The Athenians backed Miletus. The Samians rebelled, calling in Persian assistance.
3. The Samians launched a fleet. For 40 days, the Samian navy controlled the southeastern quadrant of the Aegean. This was a signal that an ally could control a significant portion of the Aegean and challenge Athenian naval hegemony.
4. The Athenians quickly mobilized vast forces and besieged the Samians, who eventually surrendered. But in the course of the rebellion, the Samians appealed to the Spartans, asserting that the Athenians were attacking their freedom and autonomy.
5. The Spartans considered this issue in their assembly but concluded that they could not break their oaths with the Athenians by becoming involved in the conflict.

VI. Athenian actions in the period leading up to the final crisis of 433/2 B.C. were not threatening to the interests of the Peloponnesian League.

A. In fact, everything that was done furthered Athenians interests—but not in areas that conflicted with Peloponnesian interests. Colonies and naval expeditions were sent out, particularly to areas vital to Athenian economic interests but remote from Spartan interests.

B. A review of the Athenian record up to the final crisis shows little evidence for the Peloponnesians that Athens had violated the Thirty Years' Peace. Yet that is exactly the argument that the Spartans would make in 432 B.C.

C. To understand how Athenian actions that were in line with the treaty became irrelevant in the final crisis requires a look at how Athens was transformed in this period, the dynamics of the Athenian democracy, the Spartans' perceptions of that democracy, and the final crisis itself in 435–432 B.C.—topics covered in the next lecture.

Suggested Reading:

E. Badian, *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentacontetia*.

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

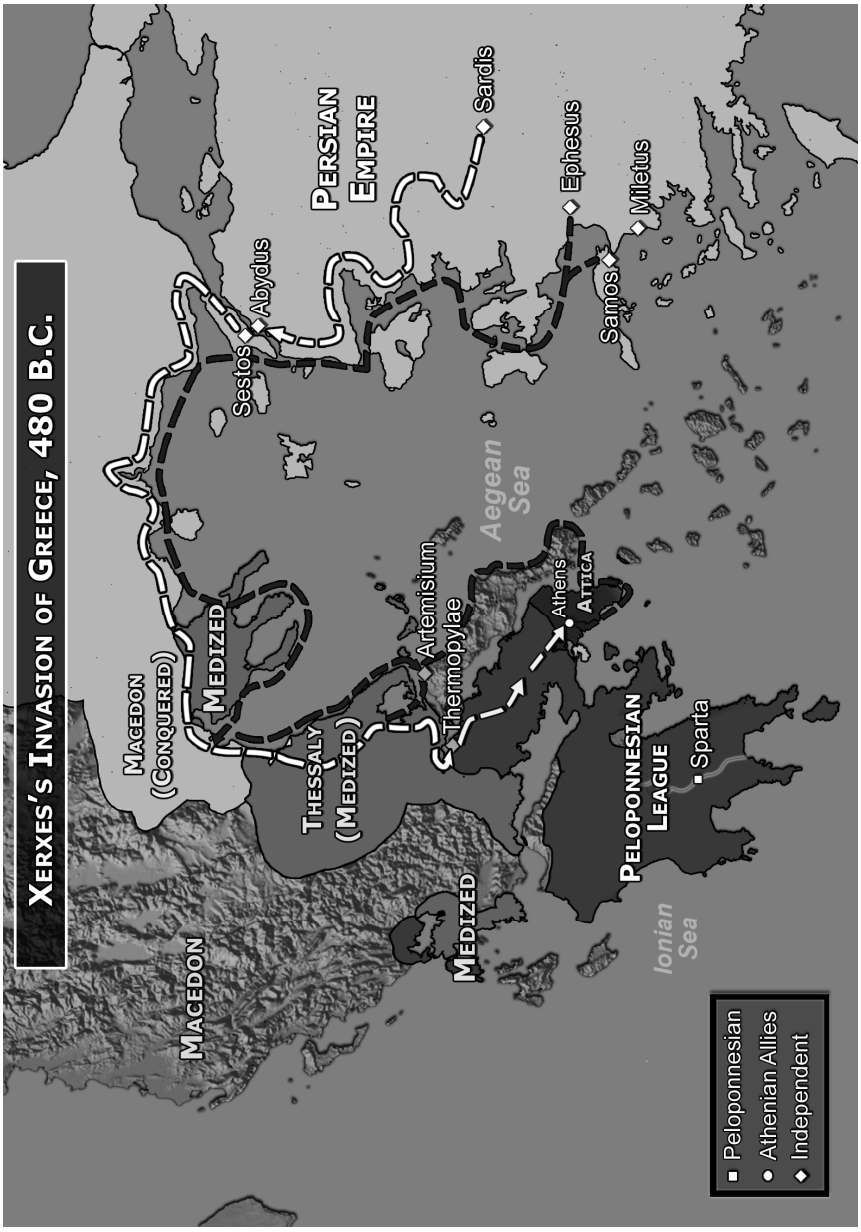
Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

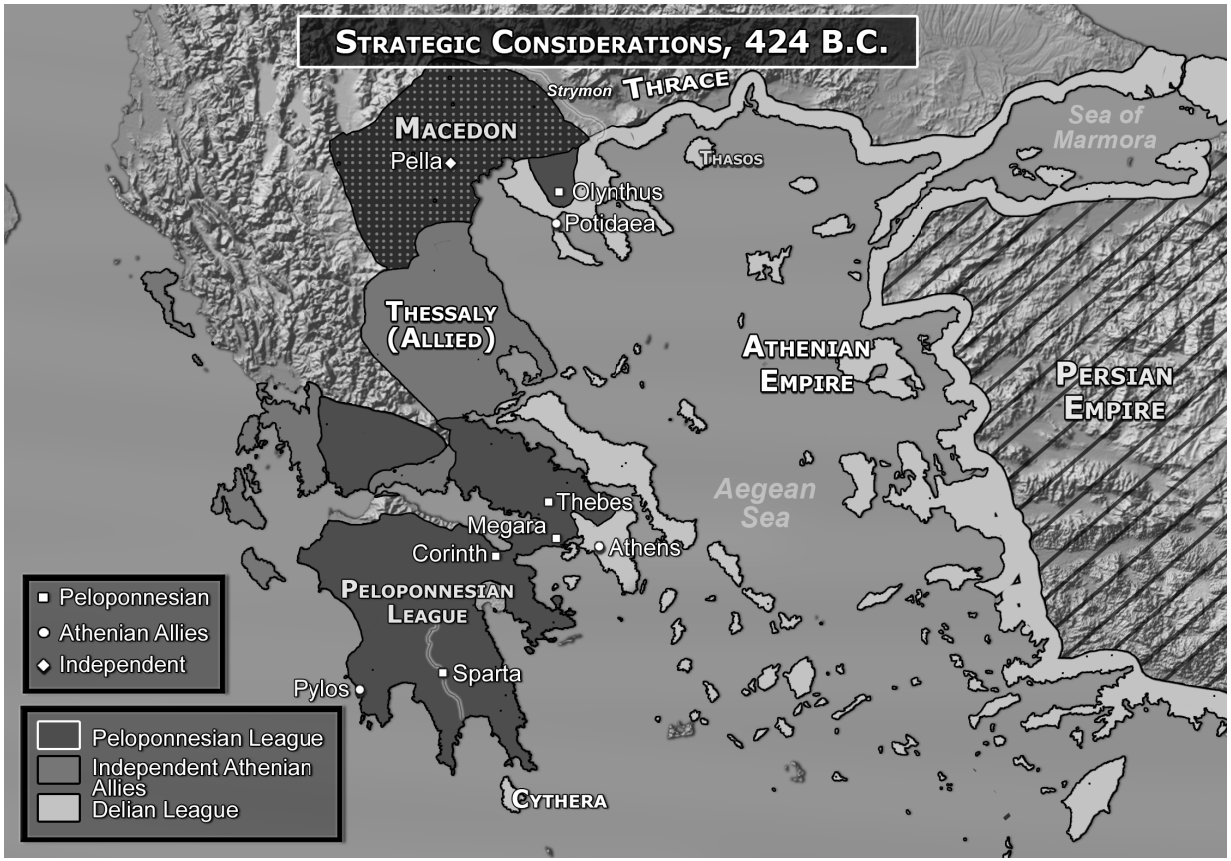
G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Athenians and the Spartans prefer to negotiate a peace rather than risk decisive battle in 446/5 B.C.?
2. Who gained the most from the Thirty Years' Peace? Was it truly a peace between equal powers? What provisions indicated this? How did each side perceive the terms or perhaps the "spirit" of the terms?
3. What was the potential for future clashes between Athens and Sparta? Did the terms of the Thirty Years' Peace offer a means to avoid a general Hellenic war in future, or did the terms make a future general war more likely, even inevitable?

Maps


Xerxes's Invasion of Greece, 480 B.C.
Macedon
Macedon (Conquered)
Medized
Thessaly (Medized)
Medized
Persian Empire
Sestos
Abydus
Sardis
Ephesus
Miletus
Samos
Artemisium
Thermopylae
Athens
Attica
Aegean Sea
Peloponnesian League
Sparta
Ionian Sea
Peloponnesian
Athenian Allies
Independent



Biographical Notes

Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.). Athenian poet who wrote 120 tragedies of which seven survive, including the *Oresteia* (458 B.C.).

Agamemnon. Lord (*wanax*) of Mycenae in the *Iliad* and commander of the Greeks at the siege of Troy.

Agesilaus II. Eurypontid King of Sparta (r. 399–360 B.C.), he presided over the rise and fall of the Spartan hegemony.

Agis I. Eurypontid King of Sparta (r. 427–400 B.C.), he restored Sparta's reputation with his victory at Mantinea, commanded Peloponnesian forces at Decelea, and secured Spartan domination in Greece after the war. His death precipitated a succession crisis which Lysander sought to exploit.

Agis II. Eurypontid king of Sparta (427–400 B.C.). He restored Sparta's reputation by his victory at Mantinea in 418 B.C. He commanded Peloponnesian forces at Decelea in 414–404 B.C. and secured Spartan domination in Greece after the war.

Alcibiades (c. 450–404 B.C.). Son of Cleinias and father of Pericles, he opposed Nicias over the peace and promoted the alliance with Argos. He was selected to command the expedition to Sicily but was recalled to face charges of impiety; in exile, he advised both Spartans and Persians. In 410–497 B.C. he mounted the Athenian military recovery but chose exile rather than face charges for military misconduct. He was murdered on orders of either Sparta or the Thirty Tyrants at Athens.

Alcidas. Spartan *navarch* who failed to raise the siege of Mytilene. He won a tactical victory off Corcyra but withdrew, leaving the pro-Spartan oligarchs to be massacred by the democrats.

Alexander I. Argead King of Macedon (r. 498–454 B.C.) who preserved his kingdom from destruction during the invasion of Xerxes and sought to extend his sway over the western districts of Macedon and the Greek cities of the shore.

Alexander III, the Great. Argead King of Macedon (r. 336–323 B.C.) and son of Philip II and Olympias, he conquered the Persian Empire in 334–326 B.C. and transformed the face of the ancient world.

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (500–428 B.C.). The greatest natural philosopher of the Classical age, his cosmology and writing were condemned for denying the gods. Charged with impiety by political opponents of Pericles, he died in exile.

Anaxilas, tyrant of Rhegium (496–476 B.C.). Ruled an eparchy in southern Italy and northeastern Sicily.

Andocides (440–390 B.C.). Athenian orator and oligarch, he turned state's evidence on the mutilation of the herms and was exiled. He returned to Athens under the amnesty issued by the democracy restored in 403 B.C.

Antiochus. Long-time friend of Alcibiades and helmsman in the Athenian fleet. In violation of military practice, he was appointed by Alcibiades to command the fleet at Notium, where he was lured into a tactical defeat by Lysander.

Antiphon (c. 460–411 B.C.). Athenian oligarch and orator who masterminded the movement to overthrow the democracy in 411 B.C.

Archelaus. Argead King of Macedon (r. 413–399 B.C.) who succeeded his father Perdiccas II. He failed to bring Amphipolis or the Chalcidice under his rule. He allied with Athens and sponsored important military, social, and economic reforms.

Archidamus II. Eurypontid King of Sparta (r. 469–427 B.C.) A respected king, and able commander who opposed war in 432 B.C., he commanded the Peloponnesian army in Attica and against Plataea.

Aristagoras. Tyrant of Miletus (r. c. 515–499 B.C.) who instigated the Ionian Revolt and abdicated as tyrant in 499 B.C. He commanded the Ionian forces that sacked Sardis.

Aristarchus. Athenian oligarch in 411 B.C.; elected general by the Four Hundred. When the oligarchic movement collapsed, he fled to King Agis II at Decelea after betraying the Athenian fortress at Oenoe.

Aristeus (d. 430 B.C.). Son of Adimantus, he commanded the Corinthian volunteers sent to assist Potidaea.

Aristides the Just, son of Lysimachus (520–468 B.C.). Athenian general at Marathon. A conservative political opponent of Themistocles, he was ostracized, recalled, and distinguished himself at Salamis and Plataea. On invitation of the allies, he organized the Delian League.

Aristocrates. Athenian politician and general who participated in the Four Hundred but defected when he learned of the oligarchic plot. A loyal democrat, he commanded at Arginusae and returned to face trial and execution in 406 B.C.

Aristogenes. Athenian general and commander at the battle of Arginusae; he chose exile rather than return to Athens to face trial in 406 B.C.

Ariston. Corinthian naval commander at Syracuse, he directed the attacks in the Second Naval Battle in the Great Harbor that destroyed the fleet under Nicias.

Aristophanes (446–388 B.C.). Athenian comic poet and conservative critic of the Athenian democracy. He lampooned Pericles, Lamachus, and Cleon, and called for an end to the Peloponnesian War.

Aristotle (386–322 B.C.). A philosopher and scientist who, dissatisfied with Plato's cosmology, sought materialist explanations and wrote on a range of subjects. *Politics* is a brilliant exposition on Greek governments, and his logic and inductive reasoning have influenced all subsequent Western philosophy. His *Constitution of the Athenians* is the major source on the evolution and institutions of Athenian democracy. He tutored Alexander the Great.

Artaphernes. Son of Artaphernes (fl. c. 510–480 B.C.) and nephew of King Darius I. He commanded Anatolian contingents during the invasion of Xerxes.

Artaxerxes I, King of Persia (465–424 B.C.), son of Xerxes, spent the first half of his reign countering Athenian attacks in Asia Minor, the Levant, and Egypt. After the Peace of Callias (449 B.C.), he consolidated his empire, but could not exploit the Peloponnesian War to Persian advantage.

Artaxerxes II, "Memnon," King of Persia (r. 405–359 B.C.). The elder son of King Darius II and Queen Parysatis, he defeated and slew his brother Cyrus the Younger at Cunaxa. In response to Spartan intervention in Asia Minor, he raised the Greek coalition that fought Sparta to a stalemate in the Corinthian War. By the King's Peace of 386 B.C., he regained the Greek cities of Asia Minor.

Aspasia of Miletus (c. 470–400 B.C.). Courtesan and mistress of Pericles.

Astyochus. Spartan *navarch* and guest friend to Alcibiades. Based at Miletus, he was unable to exploit the dissension in the Athenian fleet at Samos.

Athenagoras. Radical democratic orator of Syracuse and foe of Hermocrates in a debate in 415 B.C.

Brasidas, son of Tellis (d. 424 B.C.). A Spartan officer, he relieved Methone from Athenian attack. As *symbolos* in the fleet under Cnemus and Alcidas, he urged aggressive action at Corcyra and was wounded in the attack on Pylos. As commander of the Peloponnesian forces in Chalcidice, he raised rebellions against Athens.

Callias (fl. 490–445 B.C.). Athenian politician, reputedly the wealthiest man in Athens and a convinced democrat. He fought at Marathon and negotiated the peace that bears his name and ended the Athenian-Persian War.

Callicratidas (d. 406 B.C.). Spartan *navarch* who refused to pay court to Cyrus the Younger and returned the Peloponnesian base to Miletus; he was defeated and killed at the Battle of Arginusae in 406 B.C.

Callixenius (d. c. 400 B.C.). Member of the Athenian *boule* who persuaded the assembly to suspend judicial procedure to put on trial the six generals commanding at Arginusae.

Cambyses. King of Persia (r. 530–522 B.C.) and son of Cyrus I, he conquered Egypt in 525–522 B.C.

Cimon (507–449 B.C.). Son of Miltiades, he restored the Philiad political fortunes and secured the Athenian Empire by his victories over the Persians. A political conservative and *proxenos* of Sparta, he averted war between Athens and Sparta. The fiasco over Athenian support to Sparta led to his ostracism but Pericles later secured his recall. He concluded an armistice with Sparta and won the naval victory at Salamis that led to the Peace of Callias.

Clearchus, son of Ramphias (d. 401 B.C.). A Spartan officer and both *proxenos* and *harmost* of Byzantium, he commanded the Peloponnesian fleet supporting the revolt of Byzantium. He commanded a squadron at the Battle of

Arginusae, and was the leading officer of the Ten Thousand, winning the Battle of Cunaxa. After the battle, he was murdered on orders of King Artaxerxes II.

Cleinias (d. 447 B.C.). Athenian politician and father of Alcibiades, he fought at Artemisium and fell at the Battle of Coronea. He moved the decree to reorganize collection of tribute in the Delian League.

Cleisthenes (c. 565–500 B.C.). The Alcmaeonid politician and democratic reformer who opposed the Peisistratid tyrants. He was *archon* in 525/4 B.C. but was exiled from Athens. He returned following the overthrow of Hippias and later turned democratic reformer against Isagoras.

Cleitophon. A leading figure in the Four Hundred who proposed the commission to rewrite the laws of Athens preparatory to the meeting at Colonus.

Cleobolus. Spartan ephor who opposed the Peace of Nicias. In violation of Spartan convention, he and Xenares intrigued secretly with the Corinthians to renew the war against Athens.

Cleomenes I. Agiad King of Sparta (c. 520–490 B.C.). He imposed the Spartan hegemony throughout the Peloponnesus and Central Greece. He expelled the tyrant Hippias from Athens but failed to secure the city to the Spartan alliance; he defeated the Argives at Sepeia and arrested Medizing aristocrats in the Peloponnesian League; and he arranged for the deposition of Demaratus by bribing the Delphic oracle. When the scandal was revealed, he was deposed and sought to incite Messenians and Arcadians to revolt. He was arrested and died under mysterious circumstances.

Cleon (c. 465–422 B.C.). Athenian orator, general, and a leading demagogue in the debate over the fate of Mytilene. He and Demosthenes captured the Spartans trapped on Sphacteria. Elected general in 423/2 B.C., he captured Torone but fell outside of Amphipolis in an ambush led by Brasidas.

Cleophon (d. 404 B.C.). Athenian general and orator, he was elected general in 429/8 B.C. He was a leading demagogue, persuading the assembly to reject Spartan peace overtures. He was murdered on orders of the Thirty Tyrants.

Cnemus. Spartan officer who commanded Peloponnesian forces in Northwest Greece. He failed to capture Amphilochian Argos and the Peloponnesian fleet under his command suffered a major defeat at the hands of Phormio. He and Brasidas staged a raid on Salamis in 429 B.C.

Conon (c. 444–392 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded squadrons at Naupactus and in the Hellespont. In 406 B.C., when his squadron was trapped at Mytilene, Athens launched the relief fleet that won the Battle of Arginusae. In 405 B.C., he escaped from Aegospotami to find refuge with King Evagoras of Salamis. In 394 B.C., he defeated the Peloponnesian fleet off Cnidus and returned to Athens with money to rebuild the Long Walls and the Athenian fleet.

Critias (460–403 B.C.). Oligarch who participated in the Four Hundred and fled to Sparta. Selected by Lysander to head the Thirty, he carried out executions and confiscations of property that provoked a democratic rising in 403 B.C.

Cylon. Olympic victor who attempted to seize Athens with Megarian assistance to make himself tyrant. Despite oaths of safe conduct, he and his followers were executed by the Alcmaeonid *archon* Megacles, whose family was thereafter tainted with a "curse."

Cypselus. Tyrant of Corinth (r. 657–625 B.C.) and backed by the hoplites, he overthrew the Bacchiad aristocracy and sponsored colonies, commerce, and building programs that transformed Corinth into a major economic center.

Cyrus I, "the Great," King of Persia (r. 559–530 B.C.). The first Achaemenid King of Persia who conquered the Lydian and Babylonian empires.

Cyrus the Younger (c. 424–401 B.C.). The younger son of Darius II and Queen Parysatis, he cooperated with Lysander in defeating Athens. He was slain at Cunaxa in a bid to seize the throne from his brother, Artaxerxes II.

Darius I (521–486 B.C.). King of Persia who organized imperial administration and crushed the Ionian Revolt.

Darius II. Achaemenid King of Persia (r. 424–405 B.C.) who maintained cautious neutrality during the Archidamian War, but his satrap Tissaphernes negotiated a treaty with Sparta.

Datis (fl. c. 500–480 B.C.). A Median noble of high rank who commanded Persian naval forces against Naxos and during the expedition against Athens.

Demaratus. Eurypontid King of Sparta (515–491 B.C.) who opposed Cleomenes on the restoration of Hippias to Athens and actions against Aegina. He bribed the oracle of Delphi to exile Demaratus, who was succeeded by his cousin Leotychidas. As an exile at the Persian court, Demaratus advised Xerxes during the expedition of 480 B.C.

Demosthenes (d. 413 B.C.). Athenian general who won decisive victories over the Peloponnesians near Amphilochian Argos which secured Northwest Greece. Architect of the Athenian victory at Pylos and captured Nisaea, he shared with Eurymedon command of the second Athenian expedition to Syracuse.

Demosthenes (384–322 B.C.). Athenian orator and foe of Philip II and Alexander the Great. His speeches, notably the *Philippics*, are masterful invectives.

Diodorus Siculus (c. 90–30 B.C.). His historical work is invaluable for the history of Greek Sicily and Carthage and provides important information on Sparta and the Peloponnesus not preserved in Thucydides's summary of the *Pentakontaeteia*. His account is an important supplement to Xenophon's.

Diodotus. Athenian orator who twice spoke against Cleon in the assembly on the punishment of Mytilene. After the second debate, Diodotus' milder punishment was passed.

Diomedon (d. 406 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded at Arginusae, and was therefore convicted and executed for misconduct by the assembly.

Dionysius I (b. c. 432 B.C.). Tyrant of Syracuse (r. 405–367 B.C.), adherent of Hermocrates, and officer in the Syracusan army. He seized power at Syracuse and negotiated a treaty with Carthage. By successive wars against Carthage, he regained most of Greek Sicily and then imposed his hegemony over the Italiot cities.

Draco. Eupatrid Athenian who wrote the first laws of Athens; his harsh penalties gave rise to the adjective "draconian."

Elpinice (507–449 B.C.). A notorious figure in Athenian aristocratic circles who advanced the interests of her brother, Cimon.

Endius. Spartan ephor and guest friend of Alcibiades. He accompanied the Peloponnesian Fleet in the Aegean and negotiated the alliance with Miletus.

Epaminondas, son of Polymnis (418–362 B.C.), Theban general. The military genius behind the Theban hegemony, he defeated the Spartan army, invaded the Peloponnesus, and concluded alliances with Argos, the Arcadian League, and Messene.

Ephialtes (d. 462/1 B.C.). Athenian radical democratic politician who called for reducing the powers of the *Areopagus*. He was assassinated after the ostracism of Cimon, leaving Pericles sole leader of the radical democrats.

Erasinides (d. 406 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded at Arginusae.

Euripides (480–406 B.C.). Athenian tragic poet who repeatedly criticized the Peloponnesian War in *Andromache* (425 B.C.), *Hecuba* (424 B.C.), *Trojan Women* (415 B.C.), and *Phoenician Women* (410 B.C.).

Eurymedon (d. 413 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded the squadron that intervened in Corcyra. He was tried and fined for military misconduct in Sicily but was restored to favor. He commanded with Demosthenes the second expedition to Syracuse and was killed in the Third Battle in the Great Harbor.

Euryptolemus. He invoked the *graphe paranomon* against the motion of Callixenius during the trial of the six generals. His constitutional objections were shouted down by the assembly.

Euthydemus (d. 413 B.C.). Athenian general who witnessed the treaty and alliance in 421 B.C. Serving at Syracuse, he was elevated by the assembly to serve as general with Nicias.

Gelon. Tyrant of Syracuse (r. 491–478 B.C.) and commander of the cavalry of the tyrant Hippocrates. From his capital at Syracuse, he imposed his hegemony over southeastern Sicily. He defeated the Carthaginians at the Battle of Himera.

Gylippus. Spartan officer who commanded Peloponnesian forces at Syracuse.

Hamilcar (d. 480 B.C.). Son of Mago, he was possibly the hereditary king within an aristocratic republic of Carthage. He commanded the Carthaginian mercenary army defeated at the Battle of Himera.

Hannibal (d. 406 B.C.). Carthaginian general who ruthlessly captured and sacked Selinus and Himera.

Hannibal (247–183 B.C.). The son of Hamilcar Barca, he succeeded as Carthaginian commander in Spain, invaded Italy, fought the Romans to a strategic draw during the Second Punic War, and was defeated by Scipio Africanus at Zama.

Hermocrates (d. 407 B.C.). Politician and general of Syracuse, he convinced the Siceliot delegates at Gela to settle outstanding issues and so undermined Athenian interests. He directed the defense of Syracuse and then commanded the Syracusan squadron in the Aegean.

Herodotus (c. 490–425 B.C.). Hailed as the father of history, his account of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians is the chief source of early Greek history as well as for contemporary peoples of the Near East.

Hesiod (c. 700 B.C.). Poet of Boeotia (Central Greece), he wrote the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*.

Hetoemaridas. Leading Spartan citizen who persuaded the assembly not to vote for war against Athens, permitting the rise of Athenian power under Cimon.

Hiero I. Tyrant of Syracuse (r. 478–467 B.C.), he defeated the Etruscan fleet off Cyme (Cumae) and was hailed a defender of Hellenism at Olympia.

Hipparchus, son of Peisistratus, tyrant of Athens. He was the younger brother of Hippias, whose misadventures provoked an assassination plot in which he was cut down during the Panathenaic Festival.

Hipparchus. Nephew of the tyrant Peisistratus and political opponent of Themistocles, he was the first man ostracized by the Athenian assembly.

Hippias. Son of Peisistratus, tyrant of Athens, he alienated Alcmaeonid and Philiad nobles and angered Sparta by his alliances with Argos and Thessaly. His ever-more-oppressive rule lost him popular support and King Cleomenes I of Sparta expelled Hippias, who sought refuge at Sardis. Hippias accompanied the Persian expedition to Marathon.

Hippocrates. Deinomenid tyrant of Gela (r. 498–491 B.C.) who forged the first eparchy or dynastic state of a tyrant in Sicily.

Hippocrates. Athenian general who shared command with Demosthenes in the night attack on Nisaea and Megara.

Hipponicus, son of Callias (d. 424 B.C.). Athenian general who participated in the operations against Megara and Boeotia. He was defeated and killed at Delium.

Homer (c. 750 B.C.). Reputedly a native of Smyrna, this blind poet was credited with the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Hyperbolus (d. 411 B.C.). Athenian demagogue who was ostracized in 416 B.C.when Alcibiades and Nicias agreed to pool their voters. Hyperbolus retired to Samos where he was assassinated on orders of oligarchs or the Four Hundred.

Inarus (Egyptian: *Ienheru*). Libyan prince who raised a revolt in Lower Egypt against Persian rule. The revolt collapsed and Inarus was captured and executed.

Isagoras. Conservative Athenian aristocrat and guest friend (*philoxenos*) of King Cleomenes I of Sparta. Elected eponymous *archon*, he dissolved the *boule* and sought to impose an oligarchy. His actions enabled Cleisthenes to rally the Athenians to expel Isagoras and pass democratic reforms.

Isocrates (436–338 B.C.). Athenian orator and Panhellenist who called for Greek unity in his *Panegyricus* and pleaded for a new alliance between Athens and Sparta against Persia. He redefined "Hellene" as a cultural rather than racial designation and came to see Philip II of Macedon as the champion of Greek harmony (*homonia*) and unity.

Lacedaemonius. Athenian general who commanded the initial detachment sent to Corcyra and reluctantly committed Athenian ships against the Corinthians at the Battle of Sybota. His action saved Corcyra but enraged the Athenians.

Laches (475–418 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded with Charaoedes the Athenian forces in Sicily; he was tried and acquitted for misconduct. Later, he proposed the armistice with Sparta and negotiated with Nicias the peace and alliance between Athens and Sparta. He fell at the Battle of Mantinea.

Leonidas I. Agiad King of Sparta (r. 490–480 B.C.), he commanded the Greek forces at Thermopylae that checked the advance of Xerxes. With his bodyguard of 300, he made the heroic stand to permit the withdrawal of the Greek army.

Leotychidas. Eurypontid King of Sparta (r. 491–469 B.C.), elected king after the expulsion of Demaratus. In 478/7 B.C. he was convicted of peculation and exiled.

Livy (59 B.C.–17 A.D.). A brilliant stylist, he penned a history of Rome from Romulus to Augustus. The extant 35 books are a fundamental source of Roman history, especially on the Second Punic War and the overseas wars of Rome down to 168 B.C.

Lucullus, **Lucius Licinius** (c. 117–56 B.C.). A lieutenant of Sulla and consul, Lucullus defeated Mithridates VI of Pontus and reformed the province of Asia.

Lycurgus (c. 775–750 B.C.). Legendary lawgiver of Sparta; most Spartan institutions were attributed to Lycurgus.

Lygdamis. Tyrant of Naxos (r. 523–490 B.C.) who defied both Sparta and Persia.

Lysander (c. 450–395 B.C.). *Navarch* of Sparta, he was appointed command of the Peloponnesian fleet in the Aegean as *epistoleus* (secretary to the *navarch*) after the Spartan defeat at Arginusae. He ended the Peloponnesian War by his victory at Aegispotami and imposed the Thirty Tyrants on Athens. Lysander failed to convert his success into primacy within Sparta. Lysander fell at the Battle of Haliartus.

Lysias, son of Cephalus (c. 459–380 B.C.). Attic orator who fled the Thirty Tyrants and returned with the democratic exiles led by Thrasybulus.

Lysias. Athenian general who commanded at Arginusae. He was convicted of and executed for military misconduct by the assembly.

Mardonius (d. 479 B.C.). Nephew and son-in-law of King Darius I, he commanded the abortive expedition against Greece in 492 B.C. He was a senior commander of Xerxes's expedition and intended satrap of Greece. He was defeated and slain at the Battle of Plataea.

Megacles. Eponymous *archon* of Athens, he was the leading Achaemonid noble who thwarted Cylon's coup by violating promises of safe conduct to supporters of Cylon who had taken refuge in the temple of Athena. He was exiled for this religious pollution that gave rise to the "curse of the Alcmaeonidae."

Megacles, son of Alcmaeon. The leading Alcmaeonid opponent to Peisistratus.

Megacles, son of Hippocrates and nephew of Cleisthenes. The Alcmaeonid opponent to Themistocles. Ostracized in 487/6 B.C., he was recalled and distinguished himself fighting the Persians.

Melanchridas. A Spartan *navarch*, he commanded the Peloponnesian fleet in the Aegean Sea and supported the revolt of Chios.

Menander (d. 413 B.C.). Athenian general and associate of Nicias elected by the assembly to serve as general with Nicias.

Miltiades (c. 550–489 B.C.). Athenian politician, general, and *archon*. He ruled the Greeks cities of the Thracian Chersonesus as a tyrant and Persian vassal. He participated in the Ionian Revolt and fled to Athens, where he was elected general and planned the Athenian attack at Marathon. He was tried and fined by the assembly for mishandling an expedition against Paros.

Mindarus. Spartan *navarch*, he suffered a tactical defeat at Cynossema and was defeated and slain at the Battle of Cyzicus.

Mnesicles (fl. c. 450–425 B.C.). Athenian architect who planned and directed the construction of the Propylaea.

Nestor. Son of Neleus, legendary King of Pylos in the *Iliad*, and wisest of the Greeks at Troy. Many noble Athenian and Ionian families claimed Neleid lineage (i.e. descent from Nestor).

Nicias, son of Niceratus (470–413 B.C.). The leading conservative general and politician at Athens after the death of Pericles. His campaigns, marked by caution and indecision, gained the confidence of the assembly. Nicias opposed radical democrats, foremost Cleon and Alcibiades. After the death of Cleon, Nicias dominated the assembly and concluded the Peace of Nicias. He was responsible for the failure of the Athenian expedition against Syracuse.

Nicostratus. Athenian general and colleague of Nicias, he shared with Laches command of the Athenian detachment at the Battle of Mantinea.

Old Oligarch (fl. c. 440–420 B.C.). The modern name given to the author of the *Constitution of the Athenians* who used the pseudonym Xenophon. An Athenian aristocrat, the author criticizes the Athenian democracy but preserves details about the administration of the Athenian empire and reflects the antipathy of the oligarchs who sought to overthrow the democracy.

Paches, son of Epicurus (d. 427 B.C.). Athenian general who commanded the forces besieging Mytilene.

Pagondas. Boeotarch from Thebes who, with his colleague Arianthides, used a massed hoplite attack on the right wing to smash the Athenians at Delium.

Parysatis. Queen of Persia, wife of King Darius II, she favored Cyrus the Younger and secured his appointment as lord (*karanos*) of the western satrapies of Asia Minor.

Pausanias (d. c. 470 B.C.). Agiad Regent of King Pleistarchus (r. 480–478 B.C.), he commanded the Hellenic forces at Plataea. In 478 B.C. he commanded the Hellenic fleet but was recalled to face charges of tyranny at Byzantium. Cimon expelled Pausanias from Byzantium, but Pausanias was recalled and convicted of fomenting rebellion among the Messenians. He took sanctuary in the Temple of Artemis; on orders of the ephors, the temple was besieged, and Pausanias was allowed to starve to death.

Pausanias. succeeded his father Pleistoanax as Agiad King of Sparta (r. 409–395 B.C.). He intervened in the Athenian civil war and restored the Athenian democracy. He was convicted for military misconduct and exiled to Tegea.

Peisander (fl. c. 430–411 B.C.). Athenian orator and oligarch who proposed the constitutions of the Four Hundred and 5,000 at the assembly of Colonus. He headed the mission to the Athenian fleet at Samos. On his return to Athens, Peisander encouraged oligarchic revolts in the Athenian Empire. With the fall of the Four Hundred, he fled to Sparta and was condemned *in absentia*.

Peisistratus. Son of Hipporcrates, tyrant of Athens (r. 561 B.C.; r. 556/5; r. 546–526 B.C.). He seized power on three separate occasion. During his third tyranny, he transformed the economic and cultural life of Athens. Using the Solonian constitution as a cloak of constitutional legitimacy, he inadvertently gave the Athenian assembly the routine and confidence to rule on its own when the tyranny fell in 510 B.C.

Peithias (d. 427 B.C.). Democratic leader on Corcyra, his assassination by oligarchs sympathetic to Sparta precipitated the *stasis*.

Pelopidas (410–364 B.C.). Theban democratic politician and associate of Epaminondas, he expelled the Spartan garrison on the citadel of Thebes, reorganized the Boeotian League , and was the political genius behind the Theban hegemony.

Perdiccas II, King of Macedon (r. 454–413 B.C.). Son of Alexander I, he exploited the rebellions against Athens in the Chalcidice.

Periander. Tyrant of Corinth (r. 625–585 B.C.), he ruled harshly and so ensured the downfall of the tyranny.

Pericles, son of Xanthippus (c. 495–429 B.C.). Athenian general and statesman who led the Athenian democracy and presided over the height of Athenian civilization. A convinced imperialist, he turned the Delian League into the Athenian Empire. With the ostracism of Cimon and assassination of Ephialtes, Pericles assumed the leadership of the radical democrats. He sponsored legislation that turned Athens into a full participatory democracy and favored consolidation of Athenian power in the Aegean. He negotiated the Thirty Years' Peace and dominated the Athenian assembly until his death.

Pericles, son of Pericles and Aspasia (c. 450–406 B.C.). Elected general, he commanded at Arginusae and was convicted and executed.

Phaeax. Athenian orator and politician who headed the mission to Sicily in 422 B.C.

Pharnabazus (d. c. 373 B.C.). The Persian satrap of northwestern Asia Minor who cooperated with the Spartans.

Pheidias (c. 480–430 B.C.). Athenian sculptor and architect who planned the Parthenon on the Acropolis. His masterpieces were the chryselephantine statue of Athena Parthenos, the statue of Athena Promachus, and the statue of Zeus at Olympia, the last of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Pheidippides (d. 490 B.C.). The Athenian state runner who made the celebrated run to Athens to announce the victory at Marathon. He expired upon shouting "*nike"* – victory.

Philip II. Argead King of Macedon (r. 359–336 B.C.). The father of Alexander the Great, Philip transformed Macedon into the leading Hellenic power. He defeated the coalition army of Athens and Thebes at the Battle of Chaeronea and united the Greek city-states into the League of Corinth.

Phormio (d. c. 427 B.C.). Athenian general and democrat, he commanded at Samos, in Acarnania, and in Potidaea. As general, he won two major naval victories over larger Peloponnesian fleets at Naupactus and Rhion.

Phrynichus (fl. c. 511–476 B.C.). Athenian tragic poet whose *The Sack of Miletus* critiqued Athenian policy during the Ionian Revolt.

Phrynichus (d. 411 B.C.). Athenian general and politician who won the Battle of Miletus but withdrew the fleet to Samos. A personal foe to Alcibiades, he joined the oligarchs, was relieved of command when implicated in the oligarchic conspiracy, and assassinated by Samian democrats.

Pindar (518–438 B.C.). Boeotian lyric poet whose odes to victors in the Olympic or Nemean games are masterpieces of verse and imagery.

Plato (427–347 B.C.). Athenian philosopher regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of antiquity. His early and middle dialogues provide a wealth of information on the intellectual life of Athens in the later 5th century B.C. as well as the career of Socrates.

Pleistarchus, Agiad King of Sparta (r. 480–459 B.C.) and son of Leonidas. He proved an undistinguished king who was long under the authority of regents.

Pleistoanax, Agiad King of Sparta (459–409 B.C.). He concluded the Thirty Years' Peace with Pericles and was then exiled on charges of bribing the Delphic oracle. He returned from exile and negotiated the Peace of Nicias.

Plutarch of Chaeronea (46–127 A.D.). Philosopher and biographer who wrote biographies of noble Greeks and Romans, which are invaluable sources for the leading figures of the 5th century B.C. and preserve a wealth of information on Spartan and Athenian constitutions and customs.

Polybius (203–120 B.C.). Historian and statesman of the Achaean League. He wrote an insightful history explaining the rise of Roman power but is a major source on the constitution and customs of Sparta as well as the history of the Peloponnesus.

Polycrates. Tyrant of Samos (c. 535–522 B.C.) who launched an early fleet of triremes and sponsored a major building program on the island.

Polygnotus of Thasos. Painted the frescoes of the Propyaleum on the Acropolis.

Protomachus. Athenian general who commanded at the Battle of Arginusae and chose voluntary exile rather than face charges for military misconduct.

Pseudo-Xenophon (fl. c. 385–375 B.C.). The pseudonym of a moralizing critic of Spartan society who wrote the *Constitution of the Spartans*, which presents an image of Spartan decline due to avarice and corruption after 404 B.C.

Pythodorus. *Archon* and Athenian general, he relieved Laches of command of the Athenian fleet in Sicily.

Pythodorus. Athenian oligarch who moved to establish the Four Hundred, he returned to join the Thirty in 404–403 B.C.

Rhamphias. Spartan officer who succeeded Brasidas as commander at Chalicidice and refused to return Amphipolis to Athens under the Peace of Nicias.

Salaethus (d. 427 B.C.). Spartan officer sent to organize the rebellion of Mytilene.

Sappho (c. 650–635 B.C.). Lyric poetess of Mytilene, Lesbos.

Seuthes I. King of Thrace (r. 424–410 B.C.) who opposed Athens, which had allied to King Archelaus of Macedon.

Sitalces. Son of Teres and King of Thrace (r. 431–424 B.C.), he was an erstwhile ally of Athens. He was persuaded to invade Macedon and the Chalcidice for 30 years.

Strombichides, Athenian general who commanded the Athenian fleet opposed to the Peloponnesian fleet in the Aegean Sea.

Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.). Athenian philosopher who served as a hoplite at the siege of Potidaea and the battles of Delium and Amphipolis. As *prytanis*, he objected to unconstitutional motions to put on trial the six generals; as a member of the *boule*, he refused illegal orders issued by the Thirty. He was tried, convicted, and executed for impiety and corruption of the youth.

Solon. The Eupatrid poet, lawgiver, and sole *archon* of Athens who abolished debt slavery and mortgages, created a new *boule* of 400 and popular courts of appeal, and reorganized Athenian citizens by economic class.

Sophocles (495–406 B.C.). Athenian tragic poet (*Oedipus Rex*, *Antigone*, *Oedipus at Colonus*) and general who served during the revolt of Samos. He was elected one of the 10 *probouloi* to direct Athenian strategy and finances.

Sophocles. Athenian general who commanded the second Athenian fleet sent to Sicily. Upon his return, he was tried and exiled for military misconduct.

Themistocles, son of Neocles (c. 525–460 B.C.). *Archon* and democratic politician, he built the Athenian navy, rallied his countrymen to oppose the Persian invasion, and defeated Xerxes's fleet at Salamis. He clashed with his conservative opponents Cimon and Aristides. His anti-Spartan policies led to his ostracism and subsequent exile and flight to Persian Asia Minor.

Theramenes, son of Hagnon (d. 404 B.C.). Athenian politician and general who joined the Four Hundred and thwarted the betrayal of Athens by the oligarchs. He was a political ally of Alcibiades and Thrasybulus; he incited the assembly against the generals commanding at Arginusae; and he negotiated the surrender of Athens and joined the Thirty. He voiced his opposition to the Thirty's excesses and was executed on orders of Critias.

Theron, Tyrant of Acragas (r. 488–476 B.C.). He seized Himera to prevent a Carthaginian intervention. He commanded the Greek forces at the Battle of Himera with his father-in-law, Gelon.

Theseus. Son of Aegeus, he was the legendary King of Athens credited with the synoecism of Attica. He is best known for slaying the Minotaur and for his callous abandonment of Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Cnossus, on Crete. Theseus' descendants ruled Athens down to King Codrus.

Thrasybulus (d. 388 B.C.). A trierarch in the fleet at Samos, he was elected general and secured the recall and election of Alcibiades. He and Alcibiades cooperated in restoring Athenian control of the Hellespontine regions. At Arginusae, he was one of the trierarchs who failed to rescue the survivors. He fled to Thebes and led the democratic exiles to overthrow the Thirty and restore the Athenian democracy.

Thrasyllus (d. 406 B.C.). A hoplite in the Athenian fleet, he was elected general at Samos after the exile of Alcibiades. He commanded at Arginusae and so was recalled, tried, and executed along with his five colleagues.

Thucydides, son of Olorus (465–400 B.C.). Athenian general regarded as one of the greatest historians. He was exiled for his failure to relieve Amphipolis and thereafter interviewed participants and wrote a history of the Peloponnesian War. The incomplete account, surviving in eight books, ends at 411 B.C.

Thucydides, son of Melesias. Conservative politician and opponent of Pericles, he criticized the use of the funds of the Delian League for Athenian building programs; his faction was the first to stand together and vote in the assembly.

Tissaphernes (d. 395 B.C.). Persian satrap of Sardis who sought to exploit the war between Sparta and Athens. He secured under the Treaty of Miletus the Ionian cities in return for financial assistance to the Spartan fleet.

Tolmides. Athenian general who raided the shores of the Peloponnesus and brought Achaea into the Athenian alliance. He was defeated and slain by the Boeotians at Coronea.

Toynbee, **Sir Arnold Joseph** (1889–1975), British historian, celebrated for his *A Study of History* (in12 volumes, 1934–1951). He drew telling parallels of modern wars to the Peloponnesian and Punic Wars.

Tyrtaeus (fl. c. 675–650 B.C.). Spartan lyric poet whose elegies and choral lyric poems expressing the Spartan martial ethos reportedly roused the Spartans to victory in the Second Messenian War.

Xanthippus. He supported his Alcmaeonid relatives and prosecuted Miltiades. He was ostracized but was recalled to win distinction at Mount Mycale and Sestos.

Xenares. Spartan ephor who opposed the Peace of Nicias. He and his colleague Cleobulus, in violation of Spartan convention, intrigued secretly with the Corinthians to renew the war against Athens.

Xenophon (431–355 B.C.). Athenian mercenary general, historian, philosopher, and student of Socrates who served with Cyrus the Younger and recorded the march of the Ten Thousand in *Anabasis*. His narrative Greek history, *Hellenica*, lacks the precision and insight of Thucydides's work. Works by other authers (e.g., Pseudo-Xenophon, Old Oligarch) were attributed to him.

Xerxes. Achaemenid King of Persia (r. 486–465 B.C.) who invaded Greece and suffered a decisive defeat at the Battle of Salamis.

The Peloponnesian War
Part II

Professor Kenneth W. Harl

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Table of Contents

The Peloponnesian War
Part II

Professor Biography i
Course Scope 1
Lecture Thirteen Triumph of the Radical Democracy 2
Lecture Fourteen From Delian League to Athenian Empire 5
Lecture Fifteen Economy and Society of Imperial Athens 8
Lecture Sixteen Athens, School of Greece 11
Lecture Seventeen Crisis in Corcyra, 435–432 B.C. 14
Lecture Eighteen Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. 17
Lecture Nineteen Strategies and Stalemate, 431–429 B.C. 20
Lecture Twenty Athenian Victory in Northwest Greece 23
Lecture Twenty-One Imperial Crisis—The Chalcidice and Mytilene 26
Lecture Twenty-Two Plague, Fiscal Crisis, and War 29
Lecture Twenty-Three Demagogues and *Stasis* 32
Lecture Twenty-Four Pylos, 425 B.C.—A Test of Leadership 35
Map 38
Timeline 39
Glossary 46
Biographical Notes ..... Part I
Bibliography ..... Part III

The Peloponnesian War

Scope:

Thucydides was an Athenian participant in, and historian of, the Peloponnesian War. Despite his Athenian bias, he has left us a remarkably accurate account of the war and the events and issues leading up to it. His account allows for the study of this first major conflict among Western states with constitutional governments subject to electorates of free citizens. Thucydides not only wrote a military narrative, but also offered his interpretation of politics within Athens, Sparta, and the lesser city-states which influenced the war. It was he who first saw the connection among internal politics, foreign policy, and diplomacy. And he was aware of how fiscal and economic conditions, too, dictated the decisions of the belligerents. Hence, scholars and policymakers since the 19th century have studied Thucydides's account of the Peloponnesian War as a key to understanding war, diplomacy, and politics.

This course has a threefold purpose. First, it is necessary to reexamine Thucydides's thesis that the war was inevitable because of Spartan fear of the growth of Athenian power since 479 B.C. Too often, Athens and Sparta have been viewed as city-states of stark contrasts, whose societies and forms of government made conflict all but inevitable. Yet Spartans and Athenians shared many similarities in their constitutions and society, and they had both been part of the evolution of the wider Hellenic culture since the Homeric Age. A growing body of evidence, along with reexamination of the literary sources, indicates that the Peloponnesians, and particularly the Spartans, were by no means primitive in their fiscal or economic way of life. The Peloponnesians, for example, maintained a creditable fleet through the course of the war. Further, the Spartan victory in 404 B.C. cannot be dismissed simply as a result of Athenian mistakes. Given this new perspective, it is important to reconsider the outbreak of the war: Was it the result of specific actions by the participants or of greater, inevitable forces? A different set of participants and events could well have produced a different outcome.

Second, it is necessary to study the course of the war, for the fighting changed not only weapons and tactics but the very means and aims of waging war. Henceforth, seasonal clashes of citizen hoplites, or heavy infantry, gave way to long-term campaigning by mixed forces of cavalry, heavy infantry, and light infantry (peltasts). The Athenians also pioneered the use of combined naval and land operations. As a result, the costs of war rose, and all the belligerents had to devise new means of covering expenditure. At the same time, the Peloponnesian War demonstrated the decisive roles of generalship, of the courage of soldiers, and of the willingness of citizens to sacrifice for the common cause to win a war. In this regard, Peloponnesians and Athenians were far more alike than different; hence, they waged a ferocious and long war.

Finally, the conflict tested the citizens and the constitutions of each city-state or *polis* (plural: *poleis*). It also eroded the order of Greek city-states and opened a series of struggles among the leading states—Sparta, Athens, Thebes, Argos, and Corinth—to forge a wider hegemony and thus impose order in the Aegean world. This conflict ultimately ended in political stalemate and opened the way for the conquest and unification of the Greek city-states under the Macedonian Kings Philip II and Alexander the Great.

Lecture Thirteen
Triumph of the Radical Democracy

Scope: For more than 30 years, from 461 to 429 B.C., Pericles directed the assembly at Athens, carrying the reforms of Cleisthenes to their logical conclusion. At a comparatively young age, Pericles emerged as the dominant figure in the assembly after the ostracism of his conservative foe Cimon and the assassination of his senior political ally Ephialtes. Within a decade, Pericles transformed Athenian politics, making the assembly sovereign in both law and practice. Powers to discipline magistrates were transferred from the *Areopagus*, the council of ex-*archons*, to the popular juries composed of citizens of hoplite or thetic rank. Pericles introduced wages for jury and council service, established circuit courts for rural Attica, and initiated building programs offering high pay to poor citizens. In 451/50 B.C., Athenian citizenship was restricted, and slaves and foreigners usurping citizen rights were severely punished. With these reforms and the power of his oratorical skills, Pericles assured his domination of the assembly. Yet with his death in 429 B.C., the Athenian assembly would face a crisis—seeking a democratic leader of Pericles's stature to guide policy in a great war.

Outline

I. This lecture turns to reforms sponsored by Pericles in the 450s and 440s B.C. that transformed Athens into a full participatory democracy.

- **A.** In the opinion of Thucydides, Pericles established a high standard of democratic leadership, one that all later Athenian political figures failed to attain.
- **B.** The question therefore arises: How did war, in effect, destroy democratic institutions, radicalize the democracy, and lead to the emergence of demagogues rather than political leaders in the tradition of Pericles?

II. Although it seems that he was elected general continually from 462 to 429 B.C., Pericles was, as mentioned in the last lecture, more successful as an orator and democrat than as a general.

- **A.** The board of 10 generals, the *Strategeia*, was elected annually, with each general representing a tribe. The generals were elected to assume military commands, but because of their natural positions of authority, some became prominent figures in the assembly.
- **B.** As general, Pericles proposed numerous reforms that were adopted by the Athenian assembly and which, over the course of 30 years, transformed Athens into a full democracy. These efforts were anathema to many conservative writers in antiquity, including one known as the Old Oligarch, as well as to Plato and Aristotle.
- **C.** It is remarkable that Pericles enacted reforms while fighting the First Peloponnesian War. These reforms greatly enhanced the position of the thetes and members of the hoplite class, the overwhelming majority of Athenian citizens.
- **D.** In 457 B.C., the property qualifications required to hold the position of councilman on the *boule* were dropped, as were those required for membership on the board of nine *archons*.
  1. Any Athenian over the age of 30, whatever his position in society, could hold any office.
  2. Therefore, the *Areopagus* and the board of nine *archons*, the oldest institutions of the constitution, lost their aristocratic character over the next two decades.
  3. Day-to-day management of the government probably did not change as much as most aristocrats feared it would.
- **E.** Another important reform was the transfer of the powers of *dokimasia* and *euthynai* from the *Areopagus* to the popular courts, which henceforth acted as the guardians of the democracy.
  1. Establishment of popular courts can be traced back to the time of Solon. Every year, 6,000 adult male citizens, most of the thetic class, registered for jury service. These men were on call for whenever a trial was scheduled.
  2. Jurors were selected to serve as panels (*dikasteria)* assigned to a specific case. These panels could be quite large, as many as 500 jurors, and were selected on the morning of the trial to avoid bribery.
  3. Pericles introduced a pay rate for jurors of two *obols*, that is, one-third of a drachma, per day.

F. Soon after Pericles took power in 461 or 460 B.C., magistrates, councilman, and liturgists were required to undergo a competence test and to render their accounts to the popular juries—in effect, the assembly. Even Pericles was put through this scrutiny. This reform offended most aristocrats in the Greek world.

G. In 451 or 450 B.C., Pericles passed a law that required all Athenians to be authenticated as such by both father and mother. This law tended to affect aristocrats, men of prominent families who had married their counterparts in other cities; their children, thus, were not Athenians.

H. All these laws were intended to break aristocratic control over the electorate and to increase participation in government. The pay for jurors and councilmen meant that members of the thetic class, the poorest citizens, could undertake this important public service.

I. The attitude in most other Greek city-states (and in Republican Rome) was that citizens owed obligations of service to the state. They were required to pay for arms with which to defend the state, and for the offices and expenses of office if they undertook public service.

1. This arrangement, of course, put power in the hands of the propertied classes. Citizenship was not seen as a set of rights but as a set of obligations the citizen assumed with respect to the state.

2. With his reforms, Pericles asserted that all citizens should have the ability to participate in public offices, and that the state should underwrite that participation, if necessary.

III. Although they made Athens a full-fledged democracy, Pericles's reforms also had an unforeseen consequence that became evident only in the later stages of the Peloponnesian War: Within Athens emerged an articulate group of aristocrats increasingly disenchanted with the Athenian democracy.

A. Greek civilization was aristocratic in its ethos and its aesthetics; Athens was no different. Beginning in the late 6th century B.C. with the reforms of Cleisthenes, many Athenian aristocrats were more than willing to serve the democracy as generals and *archons*. The rules of election had changed, but the natural leaders were returned to high office.

B. At least part of the aristocracy perceived Pericles's reforms as undercutting their birthright. Between 450 and 430 B.C. a new generation of Athenian aristocrats arose, many of whom looked to Sparta as their model and believed the Athenian democracy should be replaced.

1. During the Peloponnesian War, the second and third generations of this group would conspire to overthrow the Athenian constitution in 411 B.C. During this fateful year the Athenian assembly temporarily voted itself out of office.

2. After the defeat of Athens in 404 B.C., exiled Athenian aristocrats known as The Thirty were put in power by Sparta to govern Athens along oligarchic lines.

3. Athenian aristocrats dined in exclusive clubs (*hetairiai*), where they debated at length how to overthrow the democracy. These were the settings of many of Socrates's conversations in Plato's *Dialogues.*

C. Aristocrats opposed to Pericles's reforms were not just critics. Some were more than willing to collaborate with Sparta against Athens and return the city to its ancestral constitution.

IV. How is it that these controversial reforms passed in Athens?

A. Athens hovered on the brink of civil war from 461 to 457 B.C., when the radical democratic reforms were passed. In 461 B.C., the radical democratic leader Ephialtes was assassinated; in 457 B.C., on the eve of the Battle of Tanagra, young Athenian aristocrats plotted a coup.

B. Some sense of the pro-reform atmosphere in Athens can be gained from the trilogy of tragedies of Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*, produced in 458 B.C.

1. This three-part tragedy, set in the city of Argos, retells the tale of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Aeschylus brilliantly reinterprets the legend as an allegory about the progress of justice.

2. Within the trilogy, Aeschylus traces a violent blood feud, but this tradition of revenge evolves into the reasoned order of the Athenian democratic law courts. The message for Athenian citizens was that the rule of law was all-important, not the outcome of individual reforms.

3. Aeschylus, as a poet, was a respected public figure, and many other Athenians understood that the rule of law should prevail, while in other city-states, similar political reforms might have provoked *stasis* (civil war).

C. Thucydides also credits Pericles himself with the success of the Athenian democracy. In the second book of his history, Thucydides says that Pericles "could respect the liberty of the people and, at the same time,

hold them in check." Pericles gained the confidence of the *demos* and gave a certain unity to political life in Athens for 30 years.

1. We might question whether Pericles, in his later years, notably during the crisis of 432 B.C. and in planning the strategy of 431 B.C., operated with the same foresight as earlier.
2. Pericles must nonetheless be considered the consummate democratic leader for 30 years, the man behind the success of the Athenian democracy.

Suggested Reading:

Charles Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution*.

Anthony Podlecki, *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy*.

P. J. Rhodes, *The Athenian Boule*.

R. K. Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why were the Athenians willing to enact radical democratic reforms after 462/1 B.C.? What factors facilitated the creation of participatory democracy for the thetic class?
2. What was required of a democratic leader in the assembly? How accurately does Thucydides judge the abilities of Pericles as such a leader? Why would the political heirs of Pericles after 429 B.C. not impress Thucydides?
3. How do Athenian democratic notions differ from modern ones?

Lecture Fourteen
From Delian League to Athenian Empire

Scope: In 432 B.C., when the Spartans declared war on behalf of "freedom of the Greeks," most Greeks regarded Athens as a tyrant city suppressing the freedom and autonomy of the 200 cities of the Delian League. In fairness, the Athenians had formed the Delian League at the behest of their Ionian allies in 477 B.C., and the Ionians swore oaths in which they accepted Athenian leadership. Athenian generals commanded expeditions; Athenian financial officials (*hellenotamiai*) administered League funds, which were kept on the island of Delos because most allies commuted military service by payment in silver (*phoros*). The Athenians quickly dominated the League assembly and ruthlessly suppressed rebellions by members such as Naxos in 470 B.C. In 466 B.C., Cimon won a decisive victory over the Persians at the Eurymedon. The following year, the Athenians faced a serious revolt by the island *polis* of Thasos (465–463 B.C.). The Thasians invited the Spartans to invade Attica and only a devastating earthquake in 464 B.C. prevented Spartan intervention.

The revolt of Thasos marked a turning point for the allies. Under the radical democrat Pericles, most allies were turned into tribute-paying subjects between 461 and 446 B.C. Decrees carved on stone record the imposition of Athenian garrisons, officials, and democratic government on allied cities. Athenian law was enforced throughout the Aegean world, as was the adoption of Athenian weights, measures, and coins. Athenian rule brought peace and prosperity, but as Pericles warned the Athenians in 432 B.C., their empire had become a tyranny.

Outline

I. This lecture examines the evolution of the Delian League into the Athenian Empire, and some of the implications of that development.

- **A.** The emergence of Athenian power in the Aegean and the creation of its naval empire completely changed the political dynamics of the Aegean world, redefining the ideas of the city-state, freedom, and autonomy; and calling into question democracy as the preferred form of government in Greek city-states.
- **B.** The economic and social benefits of empire, which were considerable, are also examined. The intellectual and cultural achievements associated with Athens in the Periclean age were funded through the collection of tribute from 200 often-reluctant allies in the Delian League.

II. A speech of Pericles, recorded by Thucydides at the end of the first book of his history, introduces the issues.

- **A.** In this speech, Pericles is addressing the Athenian assembly following the decision to go to war against Sparta. His intent is to fire up the Athenians to make the sacrifices necessary for war. He reminds his fellow citizens of both the privileges and the burdens of empire. The issue at hand goes beyond "the question of freedom or slavery" to the loss of the empire and protection from the dangers incurred in administering it.
- **B.** Some scholars believe that many Athenians had qualms about their imperial dominion, while others, particularly Geoffrey de Sainte Croix, see Athens as the closest to an ideal state the ancient world ever achieved. This latter view seems somewhat romanticized: That is, because the origins of constitutional rule, democracy, and freedom are traced to Athens, some scholars seem to regard Athens as exempt from the more unseemly aspects of empire.
- **C.** These scholars further argue that the democracy exported by Athens to many of her allied cities was opposed not so much by the cities themselves as by the upper classes. In this view, Athens can be seen as representing a form of progress, and the Delian League not quite as unpopular as Thucydides suggests.

III. When the allies joined the Delian League, they did so out of fear of Persia.

- **A.** Some scholars believe that many allies quickly understood the profits that could be made in a war against Persia. These scholars assert that, until the defeat in Egypt in 454 B.C., the allies benefited substantially by participating in the fleets that plundered various provinces of the Persian Empire. The idea of campaigning with the Athenians at that time may have been extremely popular.

B. The revolt of Thasos in 465–463 B.C., however, can be read as a warning of impending change. Even Cimon, the most popular Athenian general among the allies, was not above using League military forces to enforce Athenian will.

C. In 454 B.C., Delian League treasury was moved from the island of Delos to the Acropolis in Athens.

1. The *Athenian Tribute Lists*, recorded annually from 454 B.C. to 412 B.C., show increasing tribute imposed on the allies as their contributions to the treasury. The original amount of approximately 460 talents per member increased in 431 B.C. to about 600 talents; by 425 B.C., the tribute was 1,500 talents or more.

2. The Athenians melted down the fine silver paid by the allies, re-minted it into Athenian coins, and used it to meet their own expenditures.

D. At about the same time, a number of post-rebellion decrees were inscribed in stone and erected in Athens and some allied cities.

1. One important decree, dated to around 446–445 B.C., led to the reorganization of tribute collection and divided the empire into five major collection districts: the Chalcidice, the Thraceward regions, the Hellespontine regions, Ionia, and the islands of the Cyclades.

2. The Athenian Coinage Decree, passed at about the same time, resulted in the imposition of the Attic standard for weights, measures, and coinage. Coins of various Greek city-states had to be re-minted into Athenian coinage. The Athenians profited from this enterprise, which might also be viewed as a direct assault on the sovereignty of the allied states.

3. All these measures amounted to a statement that the members of the Delian League had become extensions of the Athenian state. This arrangement was legitimized under the Thirty Years' Peace.

4. The influence of these changes on members of the Delian League can be seen in an inscription relating to the city of Chalcis on the island of Euboea dated to 446–445 B.C. The inscription required the swearing of an oath of loyalty to Athens by all adults in Chalcis.

5. Such decrees were completely inconsistent with notions of autonomy and freedom in the ancient world. However, it is often argued, they would have been accompanied by a restructuring of the government into a democracy modeled on that of Athens.

E. Some scholars argue that, except for the aristocrats, the populations in allied cities favored Athenian rule because it brought economic and political benefits, but this may be a rather simplified view.

1. In judicial and administrative matters, Athens interfered repeatedly in the lives of citizens in its allied states. This interference ran counter to the idea in most ancient Greek states that the freedom to live under the state's ancestral constitution was more important than the type of government established by that constitution.

2. The allied rebellions during the Peloponnesian War indicate something much stronger than simply the desire for democracy among the lower classes. In many ways, the Athenians' actions trampled on traditional notions of freedom and autonomy which, ironically, the Delian League had been established to protect.

IV. The Athenians never denied the imperialist nature of their rule.

A. Thucydides chiefly blames the allies for the rise of the Athenian Empire out of the Delian League. The allies were not willing to fight the Persians from the 450s onward, leaving the task to Athens. When Athens pressed for its agreed-upon tribute, the allies revolted, but their earlier payments had gone toward strengthening Athenian military might, allowing Athens to enforce its will.

B. This situation contrasts markedly with the Peloponnesian League, which still represented some form of consensus on the part of the member states. Thus, the Athenian Empire was unpopular, not just among the aristocratic classes of its allies but also among the general classes throughout the Greek world.

C. Some smaller states remained loyal to the Athenians out of fear of their larger neighbors.

1. During the later stages of the Peloponnesian War, Athens was able to win over some rebellious allies by making concessions, but these allies were generally the lesser, disarmed states.

2. It is easy to mistake such alignments for indicators of loyalty to Athens and democracy; they were actually based on expediency.

3. Delian states in rebellion, especially in the Hellespontine regions and Ionia, also called on Persia for aid.

D. In addition to the tribute, Athens demanded taxes and various fees from citizens of its allied states. Such payments were seen as a reminder of the loss of freedom and autonomy. To the Athenians, imperial

dominion meant more than an increase in military power; it brought with it an enormous financial windfall to sustain the development of the democracy, building programs, and security for trade routes.

E. The empire was the source of significant benefits, but it also required the Athenians to shoulder the burdens of unpopularity and to defend their interests in the allied states. Much of the Peloponnesian War, then, would revolve around the ability of the Peloponnesians to destroy the economic base of the Athenians in a war of attrition.

Suggested Reading:

Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*.

G. E. M. de Sainte Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who bore more responsibility, Athens or the allies, for turning the Delian League into the Athenian Empire? Was such a transformation inevitable? Was a more cooperative alliance a possibility?

2. What measures imposed by Athens did the allies resent the most? Why would most allies not wish to receive democracy from Athens? Did Athenian-imposed democracies in allied cities command wide support, as some scholars would argue?

3. How did the Spartans and other Peloponnesians view the Athenian Empire after 461 B.C.? What did the Spartans mean when they declared war on Athens in 432 B.C. to champion "the freedom of the Greeks"?

Lecture Fifteen
Economy and Society of Imperial Athens

Scope: For more than 30 years, from 461 to 429 B.C., Pericles directed democratic reform at Athens and a strong imperial policy abroad that generated unprecedented prosperity for imperial Athens. Athenian fiscal expenditures on the navy, arms, building programs, and pay for jury and council service fueled prosperity and monetized daily markets. Athens emerged as the financial center of the Aegean world, basing her success largely on seaborne commerce. Athens imported foodstuffs and other raw materials from the lands of the Black Sea and Egypt, and exported high-quality goods, along with silver obtained from the state mines of Laurium or in tribute. Thucydides appreciated the power of Athenian financial resources and based his interpretation of economic development in other Greek states on the success of Periclean Athens. Hence, he reasoned that Athenian political power rested on the revenues of the empire, and these, in turn, provoked fear in the Spartans which made war inevitable. Athenians and Peloponnesians, however, did not compete for markets, but rather operated in different markets. It was, perhaps, not so much Spartan fear of Athenian financial power as Spartan resentment of Athenian arrogance that moved the Spartans to declare war in 432 B.C.

Outline

I. This lecture explores the economy of imperial Athens during the 5th century B.C.

- **A.** Although Thucydides emphasizes resources and economic power (*ta chremata*), he does not offer details of the inner workings of the Athenian economy—how tribute was collected, how markets were stimulated, what types of products were most important, and so on. Such information must be gleaned from other sources, such as inscriptions, archaeological research, and literary works.
- **B.** The 5th century was a significant point in the economic life of the ancient world. Athens was the first state to monetize its markets and base its wealth on seaborne commerce.
- **C.** Several topics related to the economy will be explored in this lecture: What points do scholars debate regarding the ancient world's economy; how does Athens fit into this debate? What pressures or demands stimulated the Athenian economy; how did the imperial experience play into these demands? What were the benefits and level of sophistication of the Athenian economy? Finally, how did the Athenian economy compare with the economies of members of the Peloponnesian League; did economic interests make the war inevitable?

II. The current scholarly debate about the ancient economy revolves around two viewpoints.

- **A.** The first of these, put forth by M. I. Finley and others, may be characterized as minimalist. These historians believe that Athens and Sparta should be classified, by modern Western standards, as underdeveloped economies.
  1. The economies of Athens and Sparta produced little by way of capital goods and did not sponsor research, technological development, or scientific experimentation.
  2. The majority of the population engaged in agriculture or the production of consumables, such as textiles or pottery.
  3. Finally, Athens depended heavily on slave labor; at least one-third of the workforce was made up of servile laborers.
  4. In this view, the economies of Athens, Sparta, and members of the Peloponnesian League are impressive in their outward public buildings, but they rest on a fragile base.
- **B.** A number of scholars have recently reconsidered this minimalist position on the ancient economy. They believe that the extensive public expenditures of the Athenian state, in construction of the fleet and in building programs, greatly stimulated economic development and markets. Further, scholars in this camp argue that the role of slaves in the Athenian economy is exaggerated.
  1. Slaves were used in craft work, on building programs, and elsewhere, but the economy did not depend on slaves to the extent of, for example, the Roman economy in the 1st century B.C.
  2. The only number from antiquity suggesting that the Athenians depended on large numbers of slaves comes from Thucydides, who notes that 20,000 slaves deserted Athens for Sparta in the last 10 years of the Peloponnesian War. This figure, however, is given little weight by scholars.

3. Other evidence suggests the opposite conclusion: Athens had no large slave market, as the Roman Republic did. Captives were probably either ransomed within one or two days of battle or sold to local markets; they were not transported to Athens for sale there.
4. In addition, calculations involving the size of small farms in Attica reveal that Athens probably had a thetic class large enough to man its fleet, but the farms were not extensive enough to require slave labor.
5. Finally, most crafts were performed by Athenian free people or metics, that is, free Greeks of other city-states with resident noncitizen status in Athens.

III. One of the chief pressures on the economy in Athens was the rising population.

A. The population of Athens was about 180,000 at the time of the Persian invasion in 480 B.C., and may have been as high as 300,000 by the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 432 B.C. The population was reduced by the plague (430–427 B.C.) and other events and, by 412 B.C., may have fallen back to 180,000, then risen again.

B. To meet the population's demand for foodstuffs, the Athenians established trade routes that allowed them to import cheap wheat from Egypt or the Black Sea region. Other imports included rye, salted meat and fish, legumes, vegetables, and citrus fruits.

C. Because of its rising population, Athens also needed to exploit its own resources effectively. These resources included marble, lead, iron, and, perhaps most important, silver. In silver mining revenues alone, the Athenian state probably netted 1,000 talents annually.

D. Athens pioneered an economy that produced a wealth of furnished goods—furniture, jewelry, textiles, and fine ceramics. The Athenians also engaged in commercial farming, particularly in the production of olive oil and wine.

E. The growing demand for foodstuffs and consumables stimulated the Athenian economy; in this realm, the democratic state was essential.

1. The democracy was committed to a high level of expenditure, particularly in the areas of naval service, public service, and building programs.
2. Such programs put an enormous amount of money in the hands of the lower classes and enhanced the quality of life for Athenians.
3. At the same time, this influx of money probably meant that prices were high in Athens. However, this attracted shippers from other parts of the world to send their goods to the city.

IV. Between 480 and 450 B.C., Athens advanced to the position of economic capital of the Aegean world. The Athenians themselves understood that the imperial order and, above all, the navy were at the root of their prosperity.

A. From 483 to 410 B.C., the Athenians constructed approximately 1,500 triremes, which represented about 1,500 talents yearly in basic construction costs alone. Shipbuilding was centered in the Piraeus; the Athenian state investment there in the navy had the equivalent effect on its economy of the British investment in its navy in the 18th century.

B. The economic prosperity of Athens enabled Thucydides to speak sanguinely of the immense revenues of the Athenians and their confidence that they had sufficient resources to wage a long-term war of attrition.

C. Two accounts give some idea of the reserve held in the treasury on the Acropolis. At some point in the 5th century B.C., it is reported that the treasury held at least 10,000 talents of silver; the total was about 9,000 just before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. To put those sums in perspective: Artaxerxes, the Great King of Persia, running an empire much larger than that of Athens, had an annual income of about 14,000 talents in around 432 B.C.

D. Another indication of Athenian wealth comes in 428 B.C., when the government imposed a direct war tax (*eisphora*) on its three highest property classes (the hoplites and above) which netted 200 talents. If this amount was one percent of the net worth of these classes, then Athenian private property was valued at 20,000 talents.

E. The Athenian economy was significantly stronger and more successful than the economies of its enemies in the Peloponnesian League. Yet the success of the empire rested entirely on the navy and its ability to collect tribute, impose order, suppress piracy, and create the stability necessary for successful economic

life. Any threat to that naval supremacy would be treated by the Athenians with alarm, as will be seen in the crisis with the Corinthians in northwest Greece.

Suggested Reading:

M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*.

Peter Garnsey, Keith Hopkins, and C. R. Whittaker, eds., *Trade in the Ancient Economy*.

Stephen Hodkinson, *Prosperity and Wealth in Classical Sparta*.

Thomas R. Martin, *Sovereignty and Coinage in Classical Greece*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What accounts for the different scholarly views on the nature of ancient economies? Why has Athens been classified as a slave economy?
2. What were the main factors stimulating Athenian economic growth in the 5th century B.C.? How important were the navy and military expenditures? What was the role of seaborne commerce? Was the Athenian economy in 432 B.C. underdeveloped?

Lecture Sixteen
Athens, School of Greece

Scope: In the period between the Thirty Years' Peace and the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, Pericles presided over a Golden Age in terms of the visual and literary arts. The Athenians under Pericles defined the city-state through architecture, religious festivals, and public life. Major building programs on the Acropolis in 447–435 B.C. and in 414–410 B.C. created masterpieces. The *agora*, the commercial and civic center, and the Pynx, the location of the assembly, were expanded and remodeled. At the same time, Athens emerged as the intellectual center of the Aegean world. Athenian tragic poets such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, along with the comic poet Aristophanes, defined Western drama. The Athenian democracy provided conditions conducive to the writing of history and the flourishing of philosophy and oratory, so that the Attic dialect became "literary Greek" and remained so into the Byzantine age. To a great extent, the view of Classical civilization as the heritage of the West is largely a legacy of the Athenian democracy.

Outline

I. In his Funeral Oration, Pericles characterized Athens as the "school of Greece." In doing so, he conveyed the importance of the sacrifice Athenians were making for their state during the Peloponnesian War.

- **A.** This lecture explores Athenian achievements in two areas—visual and literary arts—and how the imperial experience of Athens, especially under Pericles, stimulated literary, aesthetic, and architectural changes that marked Athens as unique.
- **B.** Much Athenian architecture is traditional, as is much of the metre of Athenian poetry, but the Athenian democracy dictated many of the cultural forms that would come to characterize Greek cities in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C.

II. Beginning with architecture:

- **A.** Athenian temples conformed to systems known as *orders*—Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian orders—that can be traced back to early Greek history. The Athenians built on a scale, however, that previously in the Greek world would have been associated with tyrants. In Athens, the Parthenon and related buildings on the Acropolis were voted by the assembly and built in the name of the Athenian democracy.
- **B.** The Peloponnesians were in awe of the splendor of Athenian public monuments and the fact that building activities continued even during the darkest days of the war. For example, the Erechtheum, a great temple, was rebuilt in the latter stages of the war.
- **C.** Modern archaeologists have noted a concerted effort in the 460s–450s B.C., at the time of Cimon and in the early stages of Pericles's domination of Athens, to expand the *agora* and the public areas to facilitate the progress of commerce.
  - **1.** The *agora* was the principal market and political center of Athens. It lies to the north and northwest of the Acropolis.
  - **2.** On the northwestern spur of the *agora* is a Doric temple, probably dedicated to Hephaestus and dating from the 450s–440s B.C.
  - **3.** Other structures included a council hall for meetings of the *boule*, statues of the heroes of the 10 tribes of Athens, and law courts.
  - **4.** The most impressive structure was the *tholos*, a round building that served as the *prytaneion*, housing the councilmen who were on call for 40 days at a time (*prytaneis*).
- **D.** All these public monuments were reconstructed rapidly in the aftermath of the Persian sack of Athens. The rebuilding of the Acropolis (meaning "high point") was largely the work of Pericles.
  - **1.** Most of the reconstruction took place from about 447 B.C., including the Propylaea, or great entryway, on the west side.
  - **2.** The Parthenon was built to replace the old temple of Athena, which was left on the Acropolis as a war memorial.
- **E.** After the Peace of Callias was concluded with the Persians in 449 B.C., Pericles urged the assembly to draw on the revenues of the empire to carry out beautification projects in Athens and throughout Attica. He

argued that as long as the Athenians provided protection in the Aegean world, they could use the money collected from allies as they saw fit.

F. The architect Mnesicles was commissioned to rebuild the western gateway at the Propylaea. Later, probably around 425 B.C., the temple of Athena Nike was erected to celebrate the victory over the Spartans at Pylos.

G. Perhaps the most significant monument on the Acropolis is the Doric-style temple of the Parthenon.

1. The east pediment of the temple depicts the birth of Athena; the west shows the contest between Poseidon and Athena to determine who will be patron of the city.

2. The temple originally had alternating triglyphs and metopes, many of which included sculptural figures in traditional mythological scenes. (Many of these are now in the British Museum.) The inner frieze that shows the Panathenaic festival of Athena was added during the Peloponnesian War.

3. The temple was probably finished around 408 B.C. It housed the archaic cult statue of Athena, dated to the 8th or 7th century B.C.

4. Worship did not take place in the Parthenon, which was considered the home of Athena. Instead, worship involved parading the cult statue through the city, with the procession usually ending in the theater, where sacrifices were made.

5. The size and magnificence of the Parthenon stressed the power of Athens and the favor of the goddess.

H. To the north of the Parthenon is the Erechtheum, an Ionic temple dedicated to ancestral divinities and legendary figures.

I. The rebuilding of the Acropolis and the construction of rural sanctuaries in Attica transformed Athens into the showplace of the Greek world. As Pericles noted, this was the achievement of the Athenian democracy. These buildings represented the *demos*, not aristocrats or tyrants.

III. The Athenian democracy also provided the setting in which the writing of drama, philosophy, and history flourished.

A. All Greek city-states had ritual dramas associated with worship. In Athens, such drama was commonly connected to Dionysus, the god of ecstasy; one of the best dramas in this vein is the *Bacchae* of Euripides.

B. Athenian drama quickly transcended religious performance. In 536/5 B.C., Thespis is reported to have introduced the idea of an actor appearing on stage to speak with the chorus.

1. From that point on, starting with the dramatists of the early democracy, a literary form developed in which actors stood in front of a *skene* (a scene or background), in a natural declivity (which later evolved into a Greek-style amphitheater), and engaged in an *agon* (a contest or debate).

2. The stories could take on a tragic tone, as was previously described in the *Oresteia*, or a comic tone, as in the comedies of Aristophanes.

3. Modern Western ideas of drama, a kind of debate in which actors suffer or endure and, in so doing, learn from the experience, is an achievement of the Athenian democracy.

C. This type of drama provided a new purpose for theaters, which were originally designed to be destinations for religious processions, then later used for political assemblies.

D. The Athenians quickly established their brilliance in the field, and the tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides would come to define Western drama.

1. Initially, each play was performed only once. Later, revivals were held, and Athenian drama was exported to the courts of rulers in Syracuse, Macedon, and elsewhere.

2. The comedies of Aristophanes serve as a principal source of understanding many of Pericles's successors in the later stages of the Peloponnesian War. Aristophanes's works mock Cleon and other leaders, and skewer Athenian democratic institutions.

IV. Besides drama, other intellectual movements were unique contributions of the Athenian democracy.

A. The Sophistic Movement was closely associated with critics of the democracy, particularly Socrates, who endeavored to apply the technical and analytical language associated with earlier Greek thinkers and writers to the analysis of political virtue and other moral issues.

B. The Sophists (meaning "wise-like ones") were orators and thinkers who charged for their teaching services and were known for their abilities in debate. Many of these men were attracted to Athens because of its intellectual atmosphere and because it had a large upper class willing to hire instructors to teach debate skills.

C. The historical writings of both Herodotus and Thucydides fall in the philosophical tradition. Historians applied the analytical language used in earlier Greek prose to explore the causes and effects of great events in human affairs.

D. These four distinct literary forms—drama, moral philosophy, oratory, and history—are largely the products of the Athenian democracy, so much so that Attic Greek would become the language in which most literary genres were written.

Suggested Reading:

F. M. Cornford, *Before and After Socrates*.

John Dillon, ed. and trans., *The Greek Sophists*.

Jennifer Neils, *The Parthenon from Antiquity to the Present*.

J. J. Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece*.

Robin Waterfield, *The First Philosophers: The Presocratics and Sophists*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What features of the Athenian democracy encouraged achievements in the visual and literary arts? Why was architecture so important? How did Athens set a standard for public architecture for Greek cities?
2. Why did Athens produce drama, oratory, philosophy, and history of such a high order? How did these genres reflect the values of Athenian democratic society?

Lecture Seventeen
Crisis in Corcyra, 435–432 B.C.

Scope: In 435 B.C., a civil war between democrats and oligarchs at Epidamnus, a remote Greek colony on the shores of Epirus, involved the two rivals Corcyra and Corinth in a regional dispute. Corcyra (modern Corfu), a democracy with 120 triremes, had despised Corinth since 664/3 B.C. Now, when Corinth backed the democrats in control of Epidamnus, Corcyra intervened on behalf of the exiled oligarchs, who laid siege to Epidamnus. The Corinthians, after suffering a humiliating naval defeat off Leukimme in 434 B.C., readied a greater fleet to reckon with Corcyra. The Corcyraeans, as neutrals under the Thirty Years' Peace, appealed to Athens for aid. The Athenian assembly, persuaded by Pericles, offered limited assistance in the form of 10 triremes, which proved decisive in preventing the Corinthians from defeating the Corcyraeans in a second naval battle off Sybota in 433 B.C. The Athenians had acted in violation of the spirit of the Thirty Years' Peace, lest the Corcyraean fleet fall into Peloponnesian hands. In so doing, the Athenians enraged the Corinthians, who escalated a conflict in northwest Greece into a general crisis.

Outline

I. Before exploring the crisis that precipitated the Peloponnesian War, it may be useful to review developments thus far and to consider Thucydides's interpretation of these events.

- **A.** Lectures to this point have focused on the background to the Peloponnesian War, particularly the changing cultural and political situation in Greece between 480 B.C. and 435 B.C., where this lecture begins.
- **B.** Previous lectures looked at the belligerents in the conflict and at the principal sources for its history, primarily the work of Thucydides. We have developed a good understanding of the positions and interests of Athens, Sparta, and the various allies; the way diplomacy was conducted; and the wider ramifications of the war.
- **C.** Thucydides himself included such background information, particularly in his first book. There, he tells of the emergence of Athens and Sparta as powers, and discusses the immediate cause of the war—the *stasis* on Corcyra—which Thucydides believed was only the *prophasis*, the immediate excuse or pretext for war. He then describes the *Pentakontaeteia*, the 50-year period between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, before launching his chronological account. Our course generally follows the same structure.

II. Within a decade of the signing of the so-called Thirty Years' Peace, a local crisis in Corcyra rapidly escalated to a regional crisis involving all the great powers of the Greek world.

- **A.** This rapid escalation, from 435 to 432 B.C., has fascinated historians, popular writers, political scientists, and policymakers. It has often been compared to the July crisis of 1914 that led to the outbreak of World War I, or the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.
- **B.** In 435 B.C., a *stasis* (civil war) erupted in Epidamnus (the modern Albanian city of Durazzo), which served as a staging ground for ships sailing to Greek Italy. Epidamnus was a colony of the city of Corcyra (modern Corfu). The *stasis* there pitted democrats against aristocrats.
- **C.** The democrats quickly seized the upper hand and drove the aristocrats from the city; the aristocrats, in turn, hired mercenaries and put Epidamnus under siege. The democrats inside the city immediately appealed to Corcyra for assistance, but were turned down.
- **D.** The democrats next appealed to Corinth, the leading commercial power of the Peloponnesian League. The Corinthians were more than willing to help the Epidamnian democrats, because they wanted control of the city as a port from which to launch ships to Italy and Sicily.
- **E.** Although Corcyra had been founded by the Corinthians sometime in the 7th century B.C., the colonists there had fallen out with Corinth.
  - **1.** The Corcyraeans had a long tradition of neutrality, even avoiding the responsibility of joining the Greek confederation in 480 B.C.
  - **2.** Other colonies in northwest Greece had much better ties to Corinth and would provide ships and money in the clash with Corcyra and, later, in the Peloponnesian War.
- **F.** When the Corcyraeans learned that the Corinthians were readying a fleet to support the democrats in Epidamnus, they immediately lent their assistance to the aristocrats besieging the city.

1. Some 40 Corcyraean triremes sailed to Epidamnus to assist in the siege, while another 80 targeted the Corinthian fleet.
2. The Corinthians were defeated by the Corcyraeans at an island called Leukimme. The Corcyraeans then proceeded to raid the western shores of Greece, attacking Corinthian allies and colonies and interrupting shipping.
3. Shortly after the Corcyraean victory, Epidamnus surrendered, and the aristocrats took control of the city.

III. For Corinth, the humiliation of the defeat could not go unanswered.

A. In the winter of 434 B.C., the Corinthians began to mobilize a new fleet that included contingents from all the naval allies of the Peloponnesian League, although this was not a League action. The Corcyraeans, hearing news of the Corinthian expedition, appealed to Sparta to act as an arbiter.

B. Any hope of arbitration, however, was quickly dashed. The Corinthians were smarting from their defeat, and the only way to restore their honor and credibility was to humble Corcyra.

C. In desperation, the Corcyraeans sent an embassy to Athens, which probably arrived in the spring of 433 B.C. When the Corinthians heard this news, they did the same.
1. Both the Corcyraeans and Corinthians had *proxenoi* who would bring them before the *prytaneis* to present their cases.
2. An assembly with full powers was summoned, perhaps one of the most heated assemblies held since the Persian Wars.
3. The Corcyraeans requested that Athens assist them by signing an alliance to oppose Corinth. The Corinthians, in turn, argued that the Athenians should either remain uninvolved or ally with Corinth in accordance with the obligations under the Thirty Years' Peace.

D. Thucydides presents the debate in two speeches, one by the Corcyraeans and one by the Corinthians; the Athenians ultimately voted to ally with Corcyra. Plutarch tells us that Pericles also pressed for the Corcyraean alliance.
1. The Corcyraeans convinced the Athenian assembly that Corcyra would be a useful ally in a conflict with Sparta and Corinth, which they saw as an immediate danger. Thucydides, too, believed that the crisis in Corcyra represented the first stage of a general war between Athens and Sparta.
2. The Corcyraeans reminded the Athenians that they would be better off with the Corcyraean fleet on their side in a war against Sparta and Corinth rather than with the Corcyraean ships under the control of Corinth and, therefore, in opposition to Athens.
3. In contrast, the Corinthian argument, which nearly persuaded the Athenians, pointed out that war was not inevitable. Corinth was merely asking for the right to discipline her own allies, as the Athenians had done during the revolt of Samos in 400 B.C.
4. The Athenians also understood that if the Corinthians believed they had been treated unjustly, they would next appeal to Sparta.
5. Either choice could be dangerous for the Athenians. In the end, they voted for a defensive alliance with Corcyra that tried to dodge the issue of the Thirty Years' Peace.

E. The Athenians sent 10 ships to observe and offer assistance in the event that Corcyra was invaded. This squadron became involved in the second naval engagement between the Corinthians and Corcyraeans, the Battle of Sybota.
1. This battle was fought with the Corinthian vessels weighted on the left wing; the opposing Corcyraean right was supported by the Athenian ships; and the various Corinthian allies occupied the center and right.
2. The Athenian ships held back until it appeared that the Corinthians were going to land on Corcyra. Then, for the first time, Athenian and Peloponnesian ships clashed. The Athenians, with their more sophisticated tactics, forced the Corinthians to pull back.
3. In the late afternoon, another squadron of 20 Athenian ships arrived, causing the Corinthians to break off the action. The Corinthians charged Athenians with interfering, while the Athenians maintained that they were merely supporting their ally.
4. According to sources other than Thucydides, Pericles may have convinced the assembly to elevate the alliance with Corcyra to a full *symmachia*, send additional ships, and take other measures to show a credible Athenian presence in the west in the hopes that Corinth would back off.

F. Rather than reading this policy as a warning, the Corinthians took it as a challenge. The defeat at Sybota was another humiliation, and the Corinthians were legitimately angry that the Athenians had violated the spirit of the Thirty Years' Peace. From this point forward, the Corinthians would transfer their ire from the Corcyraeans to the Athenians. Their next step would be to involve Sparta.

Suggested Reading:

E. Badian, *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentacontetia*.

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

J. B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does Thucydides present the unfolding of the crisis over Epidamnus and Corcyra? Does his narration of events, including the speeches presented to the Athenian assembly, prove that war between Sparta and Athens was inevitable?
2. What were the arguments for and against the Athenian acceptance of the alliance with Corcyra? How important was Pericles in this debate? What were the aims of Pericles; did they make a clash with Sparta likely?

Lecture Eighteen
Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War

Scope: Although Athens and Corinth clashed over Corcyra in the autumn of 433 B.C., neither side had declared that the Thirty Years' Peace had been violated. The Spartans were not yet involved, and the crisis need not have escalated into a general war. Pericles, however, erred in securing passage of the Megarian Decree (an embargo on Megara) as a warning to Corinth. Corinth responded in the spring of 432. B.C. by backing the rebellion of Potidaea, the Athenian ally in the Chalcidice. Potidaea, a former Corinthian colony, appealed for Spartan assistance. After hearing the appeals of their allies and the explanations of the Athenians, the Spartan assembly voted for war in the summer of 432 B.C. Thucydides believed that the vote was inevitable, given the Spartans' fear of Athenian power. If so, neither Sparta nor Athens was prepared to go to war in 432 B.C. Furthermore, the Spartans offered to desist from war if the Megarian Decree was rescinded. The Athenians responded with offers of arbitration. The Spartans refused to acknowledge parity with Athens, and the Athenians refused to accept a subordinate role. Political perceptions more than tangible interests drove the two states to declare war.

Outline

I. The previous lecture ended with the Battle of Sybota, probably fought late in the summer of 433 B.C., in which Athenian and Corinthian ships clashed off the island of Corcyra. At this point, the Corinthians believed that the Thirty Years' Peace had been violated. How did this regional crisis escalate into a general Hellenic war?

- **A.** Thucydides argues that the declaration of war in the summer of 432 B.C., just over a year after the Battle of Sybota, was the result of Spartan fear of Athenian power. Thucydides also believes that war was inevitable; he saw the incidents leading up to the crisis as merely excuses for war.
- **B.** This lecture explores the question of whether the chain of events leading to war could have been halted at some point if the parties had been willing to engage in arbitration.

II. In the summer of 433 B.C., the Corinthians won the Battle of Sybota; they then withdrew, leaving Corcyra her independence and her fleet.

- **A.** Scholars believe that the Athenians then sent a force into the Gulf of Ambracia to support a town called Amphilochian Argos, which was at odds with Corinthian colonies in the region. This measure, along with others, was apparently taken to block Corinth from aggression against Corcyra. At the root of these actions was the Athenian concern that the Corinthians would take over the Corcyraean fleet.
- **B.** Thucydides moves his narrative quickly to a rebellion and the siege of Potidaea in northeastern Greece, which probably occurred in the spring of 432 B.C. A tributary state of the Delian League, Potidaea appealed to the Spartan assembly for assistance against Athens. At the same time, other allies came forth with grievances, including the Megarians.
- **C.** The Megarians were concerned about a decree passed in Athens that banned them from using any ports in the Athenian Empire.
  1. Although the Megarian Decree was a major issue in 432 B.C., Thucydides effectively omits it from his history, possibly because it was regarded as blunder by Pericles, who proposed it.
  2. In fact, these other issues—the Battle of Sybota, the appeal from Potidaea—were likely of lesser concern to the Spartans than the situation with Megara. Megara held the passes that allowed the Peloponnesian army movement into Attica and central Greece.
  3. The alleged reason for adoption of the Megarian Decree was sacrilege on the part of the Megarians. The decree itself was, in effect, an embargo. It prevented Megara from trading in the Athenian Empire, which would result in food shortages and, possibly, the replacement of Megara's oligarchy with a government friendlier to Athens.
  4. The Athenians' long-term purpose behind the decree is difficult to determine. It did serve as a warning to Corinth to end its opposition to Athens in her alliance with Corcyra.

III. The Megarian Decree gave Corinth an issue that would get Sparta's attention, but the decree alone was probably not enough to prompt a debate about going to war. Instead, the issue that was brought before the Spartans was the appeal by the Potidaeans, colonists of Corinth, for support in its rebellion against Athens.

A. Potidaea sat at a strategic point in the Chalcidice, a region of three peninsulas attached to northern Greece. It was the only Corinthian colony in the area, occupying the northern isthmus of the westernmost peninsula, Pallene, and controlling the routes from Macedon into the rest of the peninsula. The Potidaeans knew that Corinth would support their rebellion, given the issues of Sybota and the Megarian Decree.

B. When the Athenians learned of the rebellion, they threatened to send in a force of 1,000 hoplites and 30 ships already in place off the shores of Macedon. The Potidaeans secretly negotiated with the Corinthians, who sent 2,000 volunteers to assist their colonies. The Athenians, in turn, sent additional forces north.

C. Other cities in the area rebelled and sought help from King Perdiccas of Macedon. Athens now faced a major uprising in a region vital for timber, metal, hides, salted meat, and leather goods.

D. The Potidaeans, with the help of Corinth, were able to bring their case before Sparta. The immediate issue brought before the Spartan assembly was whether the Peloponnesians should invade Attica on the grounds that the peace had been violated. The Megarians were present at the meeting, as were other aggrieved allies.

1. According to Thucydides, the Corinthians spoke first, contrasting Athenian resolve, innovation, and aggression with Spartan inaction. The Corinthian speakers then introduced the issues of Potidaea, Megara, and the grievances against Athens, arguing that the Athenians had violated the Thirty Years' Peace.

2. Thucydides then tells us that a group of Athenian officials was allowed to speak on behalf of the city. Thucydides presents the Athenians as proud and unyielding. They concluded their speech by asserting that the Spartan way of life was foreign to the rest of the Greeks and that war against Athens would result in hatred for Sparta.

3. The Spartan assembly was probably enraged after hearing the two speeches, but King Archidamus encouraged deliberation and arbitration. An *ephor* named Sthenelaidas then spoke, urging the Spartans not to betray their allies to the Athenians. His words resonated; the Spartans voted overwhelmingly that the treaty had been violated.

4. Within weeks, an assembly of the Peloponnesian allies was convened, during which the Corinthians again used their powers of persuasion to secure a majority vote against the Athenians.

E. The Peloponnesian League went to war, officially, to secure *eleutheria*, "freedom" of the Greeks. But first, the Spartans sent missions to inform the Athenian assembly of their decision.

1. The second mission was apparently a serious effort to negotiate. The Spartans wanted the Athenian assembly to rescind the Megarian Decree unilaterally, but Pericles stood firm. In a speech, he warned the assembly that if the Athenians acceded to this Peloponnesian demand, ever-increasing demands would result, and their state would never be treated as an equal.

2. The final mission from Sparta simply delivered an ultimatum: Give freedom to the Greeks or face war. Of course, the Athenian assembly rejected the ultimatum. Fighting broke out the next year.

IV. What were the real reasons that drove the Corinthians, Athenians, and Spartans to war?

A. The Corinthians intended to rehabilitate their image in northwest Greece among their colonies and allies. They had been repeatedly frustrated and felt they had been wronged by Athens; to go to war against Athens, however, required the involvement of Sparta.

B. In this situation, Pericles and the Athenians did little to seek peace. Instead, they consistently pursued policies that would maintain the integrity of the Athenian Empire and failed to acknowledge interests that were vital to the Spartans. In this regard, the Megarian Decree was a colossal blunder, raising an issue for which the Spartans would fight and from which the Athenians would not withdraw.

C. Although Thucydides believed the Spartans acted out of fear, it seems more likely that they were driven by outrage over the violations of autonomy against members of the Delian League. Above all, the Megarian Decree looked to the Spartans like an act of war. When the Athenians would not rescind it, the Spartans felt they had no choice but to declare war.

D. All three participants—Corinth, Sparta, and Athens—entered the conflict confident that they had a strategy that would assure victory. In this, they share a similarity with the nations of Europe in the July crisis of 1914 preceding the First World War. As many generals know, however, no strategy survives first contact with the enemy.

Suggested Reading:

Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*.

Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*.

J. B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did Pericles and the Athenians pass the Megarian Decree? Why was this action so provocative? Was it a major blunder that brought on the Peloponnesian War? What accounts for Thucydides's view on the Megarian Decree as a mere pretext for an inevitable war?
2. How are we to view the speeches to the Spartan assembly in July 432 B.C., as recorded by Thucydides? Are they accurate accounts or a partisan interpretation?
3. Why did Pericles refuse to rescind the Megarian Decree? If he had done so, could war have been avoided?
4. Who was most responsible for the outbreak of war in 432 B.C.: Athens, Sparta, or Corinth? How useful are analogies drawn to the July crisis of 1914?

Lecture Nineteen
Strategies and Stalemate, 431–429 B.C.

Scope: In 432 B.C., King Archidamus II of Sparta warned his countrymen that the impending war with Athens would be a lengthy one—it would undoubtedly be passed on, in fact, to their children. The strategies pursued by Athens and Sparta at the opening of the war produced a stalemate that proved the king's prediction. In 431 B.C., King Archidamus invaded Attica at the head of the full Peloponnesian levy, to force a decisive hoplite battle. Pericles had anticipated the Spartan strategy. He evacuated the population of Athens behind the Long Walls; Attica was surrendered to repeated ravaging by the Peloponnesian army. In turn, the Athenian fleet of 200 triremes, along with allied contingents, scoured the Peloponnesian shores, sacking towns, destroying port facilities, and interrupting the shipment of foodstuffs from Sicily. By demonstrating Athenian power and denying Sparta victory, Pericles planned to persuade Sparta to settle the war at the treaty table rather than on the battlefield. Sparta and Corinth simply redoubled their efforts, while the Athenians suffered privations and the outbreak of plague in 430 B.C. With the death of Pericles in 429 B.C., the belligerents found themselves at a stalemate.

Outline

I. The initial strategies of Athens and Sparta resulted in a stalemate by the beginning of 429 B.C., the third year of the war. This lecture includes a description of the organization of Thucydides's history, followed by a review of the principal elements of the war. This will be the framework of the rest of our course.

- **A.** Beginning in his second book, Thucydides delivers a chronological account of the war, basing it on a seasonal calendar rather than the political calendars used in the Greek world.
- **B.** This course will review: the 10-year period known as the Archidamian War, from 431 to 421 B.C.; the Peace of Nicias (421 B.C.); the launching of the Sicilian expedition (415 B.C.); and the siege of Syracuse by Athenian forces (414 B.C.). This act provoked the naval conflict known as the Ionian or Decelean War, which saw the final defeat of Athens, which will be explored at the end of the course.

II. The geographic and political situation at the outbreak of the war was as follows:

- **A.** When the Athenians entered the war in 431 B.C., they controlled most of the members of the Delian League. The League had been reorganized in the mid-5th century B.C. into tribute districts.
  - **1.** A northern section included the cities of the Chalcidice and those on the shores of what is today northern Greece and most of European Turkey. The Athenian ally in this Thraceward region was Sitalces, king of Thrace, while the Spartan ally was King Perdiccas II of Macedon.
  - **2.** Various cities in the Hellespontine region along the shores of the Dardanelles and the Bosporus were also members of the Delian League. The Ionian district included cities on the shores of Asia Minor and in the central islands of the Aegean, with the exception of Thera and Melos.
  - **3.** Crete was not involved in the war, although the Dorian cities of Crete were friendly to Sparta and the Peloponnesians.
  - **4.** The Athenians also had allies in Thessaly and to the west, in regions vital to Corinth and the Peloponnesians.
  - **5.** Two native peoples of the region, the Acarnanians and the Amphilochians, disliked the Corinthian colonies along the southern shores of the Gulf of Ambracia and in the western sections of Greece.
- **B.** The Peloponnesians controlled all of the Peloponnese (except Argos and some towns of Achaea on the north shore) and most of the Greek states of central Greece, notably Boeotia. A less-than-stable ally could also be found in Macedon. Outside of the core areas, the Peloponnesians could also summon friends from Italy and Sicily.

III. In 431 B.C., Pericles was confident that Athens had the financial resources necessary to wage a long war, and he persuaded his fellow citizens to adopt an indirect strategy that involved sacrificing property in the interest of lives.

- **A.** The Long Walls that connected Athens to her port were the key to Pericles's strategy.
  - **1.** Pericles moved the population of Attica and Athens, perhaps 300,000 people, behind the Long Walls. He then planned to send his fleet to ravage the Peloponnesus, to put down rebellions in the Athenian

Empire, to prevent the Spartans from cooperating with the Persians, and to attack Corinthian economic and military interests in northwest Greece.

2. By this approach, he hoped to damage the ability of the Peloponnesians to wage war, and to convince them to end the war through a negotiated settlement.
3. A German military thinker of the late 19th century, Hans Delbrueck, noted the dangers of this strategy for the morale and economic resources of Athens.

B. The Athenians had at their disposal impressive military forces to inflict the type of damage on the Peloponnesians that would force a settlement. They could call on 13,000 hoplites of the first class, along with other kinds of troops, and had a fleet that included 200 triremes. Men and ships from Athenian allies significantly augmented these forces.

C. In 431 and 430 B.C., the Athenians sent huge fleets around the Peloponnesus to ravage allies of the Peloponnesian League, hitting ports, destroying dry docks, and, above all, interfering with the shipment of grain and foodstuffs from southern Italy into the Corinthian Gulf.

IV. King Archidamus II had warned his fellow Spartans that the war might well be handed down to their children. Perhaps he alone, of all the participants in 431 B.C., was not optimistic that any of the initial strategies would work.

A. Nonetheless, the Peloponnesians could launch a fleet of about 150 ships, and had reason to believe that they could hold their own against the Athenians. The problem was that this fleet had to be split between two seas. The Peloponnesians needed to defend their home waters, as well as the Saronic Gulf, especially the ports of Megara and Corinth.

B. The Peloponnesians, however, had greater numbers and superior hoplites. Clearly, the Spartan plan was to fight the Athenians for control of the home waters, try to reverse the decision of Sybota, build up a network of allies to break Corcyra and Athenian friends in the west, and invade Attica and force a hoplite battle or, more likely, negotiation.

C. When Archidamus crossed the frontier at Eleusis in 431 B.C., he restrained his forces from plundering too widely, still hoping that Athens might negotiate. He sent heralds to the city, requesting again that the Megarian Decree be rescinded.

D. Pericles apparently passed a resolution prohibiting the assembly from receiving further Spartan delegations as long as a Spartan army was in Attica. Archidamus began to ravage the countryside.

1. With the Spartans just north of Athens, Pericles had to use all his powers of persuasion to prevent the Athenians from being drawn into a battle to save their fields.
2. The Athenians followed Pericles's strategy in the first year of the war and saw their fields torched. The Spartans may have taken that reaction as a challenge and became more determined to pursue their strategy and press for a decisive victory.
3. In 430 B.C., the Athenians, overcrowded within the Long Walls, began to suffer diseases that carried off about 25 percent of the population. Pericles came under severe criticism, was deprived of political office and was fined, and died of disease in 429 B.C.

E. Late in 430 B.C., the Athenians sent out peace overtures, but the Spartans essentially demanded the surrender of the Athenian Empire. Both sides were now committed to a strategy of decisive victory, and each had to rethink its initial plan.

V. The initial strategies pursued by Sparta and Athens have excited a great deal of controversy among scholars and are studied to this day.

A. Some scholars have argued that Pericles's strategy of sending out fleets to ravage the Peloponnesian shores was more a psychological demonstration than a serious effort to hurt Sparta. Such an indirect approach is behind arguments for pursuing a combination of armed force and diplomacy in times of crisis.

B. However, the Spartans' devastation of the Attic countryside had a harsh economic impact on most Athenians. Pericles knew that the Athenians would endure this suffering: in return, though, his strategy had to hurt the Spartans and Peloponnesians and deliver some kind of victory.

C. In fact, the Athenian naval demonstrations in 431 and 430 B.C. hurt the Peloponnesian League considerably. The situation at sea became so insecure that many shippers dared not sail from Sicily or Italy, and others rerouted their shipments of foodstuffs to Athens.

D. When the naval measures proved insufficient in 429 B.C. and with Pericles probably no longer in charge, the Athenians went after Corinthian colonies in the northwest.

E. Remarkably, neither side felt compelled to negotiate, in spite of the destruction of their vital interests. The commitment to strategies designed to destroy the economic base of the opponent increased the intensity and levels of hatred on both sides.

F. Scholars often note Sparta's failure to secure the support of the Persians at the outbreak of the war, but the Persians probably realized that Sparta was far more dangerous, in many ways, than Athens. Given that, it was up to the Athenians or Spartans on their own to come up with a strategy that would break the deadlock.

Suggested Reading:

Donald Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army*.

Donald Kagan, *The Archidamian War*.

Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War*: *Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the resources and strategies of Athens and Sparta in 431 B.C.? How did each define victory? Which had the better strategy?

2. What were the flaws in Pericles's strategy? How should the Athenians have waged the war after 429 B.C.?

3. What accounted for the deadlock by 429 B.C.? How did suffering change the attitudes, strategies, and aims of Athens and Sparta? Why was a long, destructive war the likely outcome?

Lecture Twenty
Athenian Victory in Northwest Greece

Scope: Although Pericles died in the autumn of 429 B.C., he had ceased to direct Athens for nearly a year. The Athenians were left with able generals but no great democratic leader. In a change of strategy, the Athenians escalated operations in northwest Greece—a region dominated by Corinth and vital to the Peloponnesians. The Athenian general Phormio, based at Naupactus, interdicted merchant vessels from Greek Sicily and won two stunning victories over superior Peloponnesian squadrons. Phormio's victories raised Athenian spirits but did not deal a significant blow against the Peloponnesian navy. Over the next three years, the general Demosthenes secured the northwest by adroit use of local guides and peltasts (light infantry). By 426 B.C., the major Corinthian colonies Ambracia, Anactorium, and Leucas had fallen into Athenian hands, and Peloponnesian naval and financial resources were compromised. Further, the Athenians learned lessons in the use of open-order tactics and of mercenaries and allies. The fighting in northwest Greece in 428–426 B.C. dictated the later course of Greek warfare. Yet Athenian success in northwest Greece was offset by desultory fighting in the Aegean world and rapid depletion of Athenian finances—the war lasted far longer than Pericles had predicted.

Outline

I. This lecture examines Athenian and Peloponnesian fighting in northwest Greece—the lands around the Gulf of Corinth and the Gulf of Ambracia.

- **A.** This theater of operations was vital to the Peloponnesians, but by 426 B.C., the Athenians had won a decisive strategic victory there. The victory promised to deliver the Athenians an overwhelming advantage in pressing either the war or negotiations.
- **B.** The Athenians, however, could not follow up on this advantage because they were simultaneously fighting in northern Greece and dealing with King Perdiccas II of Macedon. That theater of operations will be considered in the next lecture.

II. The theater of northwest Greece was significant for several reasons.

- **A.** In 431 B.C., the Corinthians were probably sanguine that they could at least win in this region and reverse the humiliations they had suffered in 434/3 B.C. fighting the Corcyraeans and Athenians at Sybota.
  - **1.** The Corinthians had sufficient ships and a number of important connections with the populations in this part of Greece.
  - **2.** Western and northwestern Greece had never experienced the development of a *polis*; most inhabitants still lived in tribal societies. Their soldiers were not hoplites but peltasts, men who fought with javelins, slings, and bows and arrows.
  - **3.** The Corinthians had ties with the various Aetolian tribes in western Greece and colonies in the Gulf of Ambracia, notably Anactorium and Ambracia. The island *polis* of Leucas and the town of Sollium were also tied to Corinth. These towns had contributed to the Corinthian navy, had fought in the Persian Wars, and were regarded as members of the Peloponnesian League.
- **B.** The Peloponnesians were probably surprised, however, at the size and range of Athenian depradations in the area that stretched from the Saronic Gulf around the Peloponnesus and into the Gulf of Corinth.
  - **1.** In 431 and 430 B.C., huge Athenian fleets scoured the shores of these regions. They won over allies to Athens, giving support to Corcyra, to the Archarnians on the western shores of Greece, and to Amphilochian Argos at the eastern end of the Gulf of Ambracia.
  - **2.** These three allies, the two tribal peoples and the Greek *polis* of Amphilochian Argos, threatened to unhinge the connection of Peloponnesian allies in the region.
  - **3.** The Athenians also had allies among the Messenians who had settled in Naupactus, on the narrowest point in the Corinthian Gulf. Thus, Athens was able to disrupt Corinthian trade.

III. Early in 429 B.C. (as mentioned in the last lecture), it became evident to both sides that new strategies had to be devised; leadership was also a problem.

- **A.** Pericles had fallen out of favor in Athens and died in 429 B.C. In his stead, the Athenians found two able generals, Phormio and Demosthenes. Lacking, however, was a great democratic leader with the skills and stature of Pericles.

B. The same issue confronted the Peloponnesians. King Archidamus was the only king available, but he was the Eurypontid king (from the junior line) and his family did not have a distinguished record. Further, he was not committed to the war, he was a guest friend to Pericles, and he was suspected by some Peloponnesians and Spartans of being overly friendly to Athens. Pleistoanax, the Agiad king, was still in exile.

C. In 429 B.C., Athens stationed a detachment of 20 triremes permanently at Naupactus under the command of Phormio. From this position, Phormio was able to stop trade coming in from the west. In response, the Spartans decided to launch a major offensive in western Greece. An army was readied at Delphi under a Spartan officer known as Cnemus.

D. This army marched into Aetolia and made a beeline for Amphilochian Argos, their main objective in the Gulf of Ambracia. The army encountered locals using peltast tactics, and was driven off in humiliating defeat. Amphilochian Argos was never seriously threatened.

E. At the same time, a naval force set sail from Sicyon and Corinth to bring reinforcements to the army operating in Aetolia. Its apparent mission was to land at Naupactus and then cut inland to join the main column moving against Amphilochian Argos. This force never disembarked.

1. The squadron under Phormio hit the Peloponnesian force just in front of Naupactus and won a stunning naval victory.

2. The Corinthian commanders adopted a defensive crescent formation known as *kyklos*, but Phormio encircled their ships with his, forcing the Peloponnesian ships ever closer together. Later in the day, the Athenians rammed several ships and chased the remains of the Corinthian squadron back to Sicyon.

F. Angered, the Spartans launched 77 triremes, intent on destroying the Athenian force in Naupactus and securing the Gulf of Corinth.

1. The Athenians sent reinforcements to Phormio, but these were under the command of a general named Nicias, who arrived late and missed the critical engagement. Phormio was forced to engage the fleet of 77 ships with his squadron of 20.

2. The Peloponnesian fleet, on the southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth, was shadowed by the Athenian fleet, on the northern shore. The object of the battle was to drive the opponent's ships up on the shore to be dealt with by hoplites.

3. Eventually, Cnemus ordered his ships to zero in on the Athenian fleet. The left wing of the Athenian fleet (11 ships) managed to break away and head for Naupactus. The other nine ships were driven up on the shore but were rescued by Messenian hoplites.

4. Cnemus ordered a pursuit of the Athenian ships that had fled for Naupactus. Ten of the ships had made it to the harbor, but one lagged behind. That ship concealed itself behind a cargo vessel before surprising a Peloponnesian ship in pursuit. The Peloponnesian ship was struck broadside and sunk immediately.

5. Phormio took advantage of the resulting loss of cohesion among the Peloponnesians. The squadron was driven back to Corinth in disarray. The superiority of Athenian seamanship was proved.

IV. The Athenians gained an initiative. They had beaten back an attack on Amphilochian Argos and had won stunning naval victories in the Gulf of Corinth. But Phormio was recalled, and in 428 B.C., the fighting was somewhat desultory. In 426 B.C., a new Athenian general, Demosthenes, was sent west.

A. Demosthenes was one of the most remarkable generals to emerge from the Peloponnesian War. His use of combined naval and land operations, light-armed forces, and stealth and ambush came to characterize Greek warfare in the 4th century B.C. and beyond.

B. Demosthenes inherited a strategically favorable situation. The Athenians were in the process of knocking out Corinthian colonies and had numerous allies in northwest Greece. They did not, however, have a commanding position in the western waters. In 426 B.C., the Spartans mounted another operation to take Amphilochian Argos.

C. The Spartans again assembled an impressive army in central Greece. Commanded by Eurylochus and supported by local guides, this force advanced on the city of Amphilochian Argos.

1. At the same time, the people of Ambracia, the principal Corinthian colony in the area, sent their hoplites and mercenaries against Amphilochian Argos. These forces took a strategic position to cut off the city and waited for the Peloponnesians to arrive.

2. Meanwhile, the Athenians mobilized their own allies, including the Acarnanians, the Amphilochians, and Messenian hoplites. The two armies met in the summer of 426 B.C. to fight the first serious land battle of the Peloponnesian War.
3. Demosthenes, with perhaps 2,000 hoplites to the Peloponnesians' 6,000, concentrated most of his forces on his right flank. In doing so, however, he lured the Peloponnesian and Ambracian forces to attack from an unfavorable position.
4. Once they engaged, about 400 Athenians ambushed the Spartans from behind their left flank. The Spartan forces panicked, the commander fell, and the result was a disaster.
5. Cleverly, Demosthenes allowed the Peloponnesians to depart under safe conduct and concentrated his forces against the Ambraciot hoplites. When a second Ambraciot force arrived, Demosthenes again ambushed them in a night attack and wiped them out.

D. The victories in 426 B.C. resulted in the collapse of the Corinthian position in northwest Greece. In the next year and a half, Demosthenes reduced all the Corinthian colonies in the area and handed them over to the Arcarnanians and Amphilochians. By the beginning of 425 B.C., the western waters were in Athenian hands and Corinth was humiliated.

V. The Peloponnesians had suffered a major setback; the stage was set for an even greater Athenian victory in 425 B.C. at Pylos.

A. The opening up of the western waters to Athenian control meant that the Athenians not only could interdict trade from the west, but they could also now consider intervening actively in the west. In waging an economic war of attrition, once northwest Greece was secured, Sicily and Italy were Athens's next logical targets.

B. Demosthenes had an admirable ability to learn from his mistakes. He perfected the tactics of stealth and night attacks, which he would later use at Pylos. Demosthenes remained, first and foremost, a military commander. Indeed, in Demosthenes, the Athenian tradition of generals acting as both military and political leaders would go by the wayside. A new group of leaders would emerge, the demagogues. They will be discussed in a later lecture.

C. As Demosthenes did, the Spartan commander Brasidas displayed daring and imagination in leading coalition forces. He learned many of the same lessons as Demosthenes and would apply them with devastating effect in the Chalcidice.

D. By 425 B.C., the Athenians had decisively won the Archidamian War in the northwest theater. But the far more important theater was northern Greece, the Chalcidice and Hellespontine regions. All the victories in northwest Greece and the disruption of Peloponnesian trade could not compensate for the crisis that was soon to break in the northern Aegean.

Suggested Reading:

Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*.

Donald Kagan, *The Archidamian War*.

J. S. Morrison and J. F. Coates, eds., *The Athenian Trireme*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were Athenian aims in northwest Greece in 431–424 B.C.? How did commitments in other theaters of operation influence Athenian strategy after 429 B.C.?
2. Why were northwest Greece and the Gulf of Corinth vital to the Peloponnesian League? What was the danger to them if the Athenians secured these waters and intervened in Sicily?
3. What traits marked the tactical brilliance of Phormio and Demosthenes as commanders? How well did Athenians wage coalition warfare against Corinthian interests?

Lecture Twenty-One
Imperial Crisis—The Chalcidice and Mytilene

Scope: In the Chalcidice, the Athenians waged an uneven struggle against rebel cities backed by King Perdiccas II of Macedon. The Athenians came to appreciate the use of cavalry, benefiting from an alliance with the Thracian king Sitalces, who sent his mounted armies against Macedon. The fighting, however, was inconclusive and potentially dangerous to the Athenian Empire. Rebellions cut revenues and encouraged defections. The outbreak of revolts among the cities of the Hellespontine region imperiled the grain trade from the Black Sea and encouraged the Persian satraps to support Sparta. In 429 B.C., Potidaea surrendered on terms, but the siege had cost Athens one-third of her reserve. The defiant Potidaeans joined other rebels who, based at Olynthus, were just beyond the reach of Athenian forces operating from the sea. In 428 B.C., Mytilene, the largest of five cities on the isle of Lesbos, revolted from Athens. Mytilene possessed 50 triremes that could block the entrance to the Hellespont. The Athenians isolated Mytilene and compelled its surrender, but the rebellion nearly broke Athenian finances. In 427 B.C., a Spartan fleet even appeared off the Ionian coast, but the commander Alcidas soon retired. Thucydides saw this revolt and the ensuing debate in the Athenian assembly over the punishment of Mytilene as another turning point. The orator Cleon, who urged harsh punishment of Mytilene, emerged as the advocate for decisive victory. Yet in 427 B.C., the Athenians lacked the funds and manpower to achieve such a victory.

Outline

I. This lecture addresses the fighting in the northern regions of Greece. Northern Greece was, in many ways, the economic supporter of the Athenian navy.

- **A.** Northern Greece can be divided into several distinct zones. The areas controlled by Athens as part of the Delian League included the Chalcidice (the three peninsulas of Pallene, Sithonia, and Acte) and the shores of European Turkey, stretching from the Strymon River to Gallipoli and including the island of Thasos.
- **B.** The latter zone was home to two important native peoples—the Thracians, ruled by Sitalces, and the Macedonians, ruled by Perdiccas II, the son of Alexander I, who had cooperated with the Persians.

II. In these zones, the Athenians fought an uneven struggle from the start.

- **A.** The region was always vulnerable to revolt. Once the Persians were defeated, the cities of the Chalcidice and Potidaea had no interest in continuing membership in the Delian League. Further, King Perdiccas II sought to take over these Greek cities in order to tax them and use their resources to strengthen his own position in Macedon.
- **B.** In 432 B.C., the Athenians engaged as many as 4,600 hoplites and 100 triremes in a siege of Potidaea, which was one of the principal reasons for the outbreak of war. The siege dragged on into early 429 B.C., when the Potidaeans surrendered. Henceforth, Potidaea became an Athenian colony; the city's control of the isthmus to the peninsula of Pallene served as a defense against Macedonian attack.
- **C.** The siege cost the Athenians dearly, in both their financial reserves and in the hoplites lost to the plague. King Perdiccas II had offered assistance to the rebels, so the Athenians found themselves with the additional task of attempting to unseat him.
- **D.** The city of Olynthus also rebelled in 432 B.C. This city had represented a synoecism, an amalgamating of a number of towns and villages in the Chalcidice to form a common *polis*. In 429 B.C., the Athenians sent a force against Olynthus from the fleet, but that force was ambushed. Athenian commanders in this part of the Greek world had not yet learned the importance of light-armed forces and cavalry to supplement traditional heavy infantry.
- **E.** After 429 B.C., Athens controlled Potidaea and some cities on the coast; she had contained but not defeated Olynthus and several inland towns. Eventually, Olynthus united the entire Chalcidice in a league that would prove to be a powerful force in northern Greece in the 4th century B.C.
- **F.** In 428 B.C., the Athenians intercepted a Spartan mission to the king of Persia. Although the delegates were arrested, the Athenians were concerned that the Spartans might reach a diplomatic understanding with the Persians, who would then provide financial or naval assistance in the wars in the northern Aegean.

G. At the same time, Athens was facing a financial crisis. Pericles had probably envisioned a war of four or five years, but by 428 B.C., money was running out and the war was dragging on. The Spartans showed no signs of relenting in their push for decisive victory.

III. It is in this context that we are examining the revolt of Mytilene, the centerpiece of the third book of Thucydides's history.

A. Mytilene was the largest city-state on the island of Lesbos, an extremely wealthy island off the coast of modern northwestern Turkey. Mytilene was a member of the Delian League, but its government was an oligarchy. Because the city had been loyal, the Athenians had not interfered in its autonomy or freedom.

B. By 428 B.C., the fighting in northern Greece convinced the Mytilenean government that the time was ripe for rebellion. They planned to unify the five major city-states on Lesbos in a synoecism, as Olynthus had done, and seek aid from Sparta and Persia. The Mytileneans sent representatives to the Peloponnesians, who realized that such a rebellion could bring down the Athenian Empire.

C. In early 428 B.C., after receiving word of the Mytilenean preparations, Athens dispatched a fleet of 40 ships and put Mytilene under siege.

D. The Peloponnesians responded with perhaps the most savage invasions of Attica to date. Their strategy was to disrupt farming in Attica and draw Athens's attention away from Mytilene. In the spring of 427 B.C., a fleet of 42 triremes under the command of the Spartan Alcidas set sail to relieve Mytilene.

E. Athens imposed a direct war tax (*eisphora*) on her propertied classes and sent additional forces to augment those besieging Mytilene. Ultimately, the rebellion was put down when dissension arose between upper and lower classes in the city. The Athenians occupied the city, arrested members of the government, and executed the Spartan commander who had slipped in to direct the siege. The question of what to do with the Mytileneans was referred to the Athenian assembly.

1. The assembly first voted to execute all males of military age and enslave the women and children. Such punishment was fairly standard.

2. A trireme was sent out to announce the decision to the city of Mytilene, but the next day, the Athenian assembly met again to reconsider the question.

3. Thucydides preserves two speeches in this debate, one by Cleon, who had spoken the day before in favor of the punishment that had been voted, and the other by Diodotus, likely a *proxenos* to Mytilene, who spoke in favor of milder treatment.

4. To Thucydides, this debate underscored the suffering the Athenians had endured, the increasingly radical nature of the assembly, and the rise of such men as Cleon, demagogues who deliberately misled the people and departed radically from the strategy of Pericles.

5. Cleon urged the assembly to stand by its original decision, characterizing the Mytilenean revolt as "calculated aggression." Diodotus argued that Cleon's course of action offered cities no incentive *not* to revolt.

6. The assembly reversed its decision and sent a second ship to countermand the first order.

F. The rebellion, which revealed that Athens was fundamentally unpopular with most of her allies, served as a turning point in the war. The Athenian assembly, having suffered so much, would demand yet more sacrifice from the citizens and more compensation for the war. The aim of war would now have to be the ultimate defeat of Sparta.

Suggested Reading:

John H. Alexander, *Potidaea: Its History and Remains*.

Eugene N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*.

Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did the Athenians regard their northern possessions in the Chalcidice, Thrace, and the Hellespontine regions? What moved Potidaea and the Chalcidician cities to rebel from Athens?

2. How did the Peloponnesians plan to strike at Athenian interests in northern Greece? Why was the rebellion of Mytilene so dangerous? Why did the Spartans fail to support the revolt more effectively?

3. What did the Athenian debate over the punishment of Mytilene reveal about Athenian politics and the impact of the Peloponnesian War?

Lecture Twenty-Two
Plague, Fiscal Crisis, and War

Scope: The Peloponnesian War significantly changed the population and prosperity of the Greek world; Athens suffered the most immediate impact. The population of Athens had risen from 180,000 in 480 B.C. to perhaps 300,000 by 432 B.C. The outbreak of plague, along with battle losses, reduced the adult male population by at least one-quarter. Even more ruinous may have been the long-term damage inflicted on Athenian agriculture by repeated Peloponnesian ravaging in 431–425 B.C. and again in 414–404 B.C. Starting in 428 B.C., Athens imposed the first *eisphora*, a property tax on the top three classes; institutionalized the liturgies, or traditional funding of public services by the upper classes; and repeatedly raised the levels of tribute from her allies. In 412 B.C., Athens abolished the tribute in favor of an *ad valorem* tax of 10 percent on all goods traded in the Athenian Empire. Athens was driven steadily to turn citizens into taxpayers and to hire more mercenaries and allies. Sparta, too, was financially pressed. An inscription of 426 B.C. records what must have been customary levies of silver coin, grain, ships, and materiel from allies. The Spartans also drew on their dependents, the *perioikoi* and helots; their allies; and mercenaries. The commercialization of warfare in both Athens and Sparta dictated the future of Greece during the 4th century B.C.

Outline

I. The fighting in the Archidamian War (431–421 B.C.) altered life in the Aegean world and the Peloponnesian League. The fiscal, economic, and social consequences were most immediately felt at Athens, but they reverberated throughout Greece.

II. Consider Athens, where Thucydides observed, "War is a harsh master." One of the greatest changes in Athenian life resulted from the overcrowding caused by the evacuation of the Attic population behind the Long Walls and the city walls: In the summer of 430 B.C., plague broke out.

- **A.** According to Thucydides, the disease was brought by ships from Egypt. Some modern scholars, such as William McNeill, have identified the outbreak as bubonic plague, while some physicians have concluded that the symptoms Thucydides describes are common to a number of ailments, including cholera.
- **B.** Whatever the disease, its impact was profound. Approximately 25 percent of the population of Athens died of the plague. This demographic loss, as much as fiscal problems, accounts for the reduction in Athenian military operations later in the Archidamian War. Some scholars have argued that by 421 B.C., the population of Athens had fallen from 300,000 to 180,000.
- **C.** It appears that the plague did not spread beyond Athens, and that it disappeared after about 425 B.C. The Peloponnesian army avoided Attica, concentrating instead on Plataea and Boeotia.
- **D.** Thucydides details the devastating consequences of the outbreak. Besides bringing death, the plague seems to have caused many Athenians to indulge in hedonism, casting aside all moral restraints.
- **E.** Thucydides's description of the plague occurs immediately after the Funeral Oration of Pericles, offering a contrast between Pericles's praise of democracy and the breakdown of that same democratic order.

III. In the face of war and plague, the Athenians undertook a number of measures that thereafter changed warfare and fiscal organization in the Greek city-states.

- **A.** Increasingly, the armies were manned by mercenaries and allies. The coalition forces that Demosthenes had assembled in northwest Greece became standard by the end of the Peloponnesian War.
- **B.** Athens, like the rest of Greece, had to create new ways to raise money. Athens imposed a property tax (*eisphora*) on its top three citizen classes, perhaps 40 percent of the population.
- **C.** Athens also raised the tribute imposed on its allies from about 600 talents in 431 B.C. to 1,500 talents by 425 B.C., and began to impose tribute on states that were either neutral or outside the Athenian zone of influence and taxation.
  - **1.** In 412 B.C. the tribute was abolished, and a 10 percent *ad valorem* tax was imposed on all transactions in the empire.
  - **2.** This tax transferred financial obligations from independent city-states to merchants, who in turn passed the cost on to consumers. The new tax raised more revenue than the tribute system.

D. As did most peoples in the ancient world, the Athenians considered money to be gold or silver specie. There is no evidence that the silver coinage was debased into fiduciary currency, that is, a fiat currency given an artificial value by the state. At some points during the war, however, gold coins were minted by melting down statues and plate from temples.

E. The Athenians also made use of levies in coin from allies on the fringes of the empire, taking money as a substitute for other types of arrangements, but also often accepting grain and oil to feed overseas expeditions.

F. Athens extended the use of liturgies, public services that citizens financed at their own expense for the benefit of the city. In the Peloponnesian War, liturgies were used to finance the construction of triremes and the equipping of soldiers.

G. Some scholars now argue that Spartan efforts to ravage Attica and thereby undermine Athenian economic bases are overstated. The crowded population of Athens, however, was not in a position to absorb the loss of a harvest. The Athenian state took some measures in response to these hardships, such as establishing a system to provide grain and oil at reasonable prices to all citizens.

H. The scholar Josh Ober has documented that, in the two generations after the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians fortified Attica extensively. This was clearly a response to the hardships faced by the Athenians and a statement that Athens would endeavor to protect its population's property in the future.

I. Perhaps partly because of these measures, Athens recovered from defeat in the Peloponnesian War remarkably quickly, becoming a major population center once again by the early 4th century B.C.

IV. Historical sources offer far less information regarding the effects of the war on the Spartans and the Peloponnesians.

A. The biographer Plutarch, writing in about A.D. 100, and an anonymous author using Xenophon's name offer mostly moralizing commentary on the decline in Sparta as a result of the war. Like Thucydides, both authors were interested in the demographic and moral impact of war, plague, and hardship.

B. These sources, along with the image put forth by the 19th-century historian George Grote, have led to views of Spartan society as regressive, oppressive, and even, in some recent literature, totalitarian. Modern textbooks assert that the Peloponnesian War resulted in a breakdown of the Spartan economy and society and led to a decline in the Spartan population.

C. There is, in fact, little evidence of such a decline in Sparta. Some citizens lost their status, but others, most likely *perioikoi*, were made new citizens (*neodamodeis*). Helots, too, were granted their freedom.

1. One of the pieces of evidence used to assert a population decline is the Athenian capture of 292 members of a Peloponnesian regiment in 425 B.C. When the Athenians threatened to execute the men, the Peloponnesian army held off from invading Attica. Some argue that the Spartans could not afford to lose those citizens. Alternatively, neither would any other city-state take that risk.

2. Thucydides repeatedly reports the Athenians' concern about their prisoners in treaty arrangements. It seems pointless, then, to hold up the Spartan concern about their citizens as evidence of population decline.

D. The sources also report that the Spartans and the Peloponnesians found ways to finance the war, just as the Athenians had done.

1. An inscription dated to 426 B.C. records the collection of ships, grain, and money from various Spartan allies, even neutrals. The Spartans also assigned the construction of ships to various members of the Peloponnesian League.

2. Other evidence demonstrates that the Peloponnesians paid their forces when they were on expedition and that conventions had been established to collect money to support the coalition forces.

V. Clearly, Sparta had difficulties, including revolts among subject populations; on the whole, though, the Spartan system held up well.

A. Discontent among Spartan allies never reached the point where they would consider turning to the Athenians as an alternative, with the exception of Megara.

B. At the same time, some of the members of the Peloponnesian League suffered severely. Demands on Megara and Corinth were high, and archeological evidence from trade patterns of Corinthian goods suggests that Corinth paid dearly for her victory.

C. For Sparta, the consequence of war may not have been moral or demographic decline but rather the rise of Thebes. In fact, it was Thebes, not Athens, that brought down the Spartan hegemony. The Thebans did so by following their Spartan masters.

Suggested Reading:

M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*.

Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Response to Risks and Crisis*.

Victore D. Hanson, *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece*.

William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples*.

Barry Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction, and Policy, 403–386 B.C.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the most destructive forces transforming Greek cities during the Peloponnesian War? What was the impact of plague, losses in battle, and the deaths of populations from starvation and privation? Did the Greek world suffer a demographic crisis by 404 B.C.?
2. How did the Athenians and the Spartans each respond to the changes in finances and warfare wrought by the Peloponnesian War? How was warfare commercialized? What were the implications of these changes for the future of the city-state in the 4th century B.C.?

Lecture Twenty-Three
Demagogues and *Stasis*

Scope: The Peloponnesian War transformed the democratic institutions of Athens and ignited *stasis* in many city-states allied to Athens or Sparta. In Athens, no democratic leader emerged to replace Pericles; Athenians had to vote not only on new strategies but also for new leaders. Demagogues such as Cleon, in Thucydides's opinion, advocated selfish policies that risked the state, but they responded to the demands of war. As orators, they could command majorities in the assembly, while generals concentrated on waging war overseas. This division of political and military authority henceforth complicated the Athenians' ability to respond to crisis. Further, the suffering of the Athenians meant that they were no longer satisfied with the limited aims of Pericles's strategy. The leadership and assembly at Athens grew increasingly bellicose and radical. Simultaneously, the war sharpened divisions between oligarchs and democrats in the Greek world. The ugly civil wars that erupted at Corcyra in 427 B.C. revealed the tendency of both oligarchs and democrats to summon Sparta and Athens, respectively, to help settle private quarrels and purge opponents. Henceforth, many Greek cities were so bitterly divided along partisan lines that any war in the future risked revolution at home.

Outline

I. This lecture explores the political ramifications of the Peloponnesian War, a theme that Thucydides addresses in his history and one that is taken up by many later authors, as well.

A. In Thucydides's opinion, the harsh conditions of the war, the death of Pericles, and the moral deterioration of Athenians led to the rise of demagogues, that is, leaders who misled the people. Among them was Cleon, the figure who had Thucydides exiled for military incompetence.

B. Also tied to the theme of changing political institutions and the emergence of a new type of leadership in Athens is the issue of *stasis*, civil war. This Greek term comes from a word meaning "standing" or "standing apart" in ideological and political allegiances rather than ties of kinship and religion. In the opinion of Thucydides, the war sharpened those divisions and led to a breakdown of consensus in many city-states.

II. The political landscape of Athens changed.

A. As has been noted, Thucydides was an ardent admirer of Pericles and of the democracy he mediated and led. Pericles's successors, in Thucydides's opinion, were demagogues vying for the favor of the assembly. The most famous of these was Alcibiades, who emerged as a major figure in 420 B.C. Such individuals represented to Thucydides not only a deterioration of leadership but also a decline in the ability of the assembly to choose leaders and make appropriate judgments.

B. It is worth recalling at this point what the Athenians experienced by the time of the Mytilenean debate of 427 B.C., when Cleon emerged as a leading demagogue.

1. They had suffered grievously in five years of fighting. As a result, their aims in the war had escalated: They were no longer satisfied to negotiate with the Spartans; they wanted a tangible victory, and punishment of the enemy.

2. The assembly's membership increased during the course of the war, and its makeup could change depending on military operations. For example, many thetes might be absent during a major naval expedition. Thus, the assembly became more radical, and its voting patterns were far less predictable.

3. Such figures as Cleon, Alcibiades, and others shared certain personal qualities that made them effective in the assembly. They could project their voices, use broad gestures, and employ techniques of debate they had learned from the Sophists.

4. These conditions meant that Athenians began to experience real democracy in the course of the Peloponnesian War—a democracy in which the outcomes of assembly votes were never cut-and-dried and no true leader emerged, not even among the generals.

C. The heated and excitable state of the assembly heightened the implications of Pericles's political reforms.

1. The popular courts could now hold generals to account for military competence; a finding of incompetence could result in exile or heavy fines.

2. The issue of accountability affected the ability of the Athenians to wage war effectively, whereas Spartan officers were not similarly constrained.
3. A new pattern resulted in which the demagogues stayed in the assembly as much as possible, while the generals steered clear of politics. This legacy from the Peloponnesian War remained in place down to the time of Alexander the Great some 60 or 70 years later.

III. In the third book of his history, Thucydides turns to the issue of *stasis*, particularly the *stasis* at Corcyra. In his opinion, Corcyra was at the crux of the immediate issues leading to the outbreak of war.

A. As early as 434/3 B.C., divisions can be detected between the upper classes and the majority of the population in the Corcyraean democracy. The upper class favored Corinth and Sparta and would have preferred to come to an accommodation with Corinth, not to precipitate the general war of 431 B.C.

B. Aristotle, writing his *Politics* at the end of the 4th century B.C., saw Corcyra as one of the best examples of what happens in a *stasis*. Aristotle concluded that in such civil war, the victors purge the city of political opponents, violate religious conventions and the rights of citizenship, and confiscate the property of opponents—all in the name of an ideological cause.

C. Although other examples of *stasis* are found very early in Greek history, this type of class warfare intensified during the Peloponnesian War. The factions in a city could now call in outside assistance; the aristocrats and oligarchs looked toward Sparta, while those in favor of democracy sought aid from Athens. During the war, if a city was in a strategic position, the stakes became even higher.

D. In 427 B.C., after the Spartan fleet failed to achieve victory in the Aegean, the ships were transported by land to the Gulf of Corinth, where they were augmented by other forces. Brasidas was assigned to sail the fleet to Corcyra, where the oligarchic class was prepared to hand the *polis* over to the Peloponnesians. After a minor engagement in Corcyra, the Peloponnesians retreated upon hearing that a major Athenian fleet was heading their way. The Athenians anchored at Corcyra, thereby giving the democrats an edge.

E. The cause of the civil war can be traced to the release of a number of Corcyraean men captured by the Corinthians at the Battle of Sybota in 433 B.C. On their return, these men were determined to deliver their city to the Corinthians and the Peloponnesians. When efforts to bring charges against the leaders of the democracy failed, the oligarchs initiated violence. A civil war raged for days in the city, with the democrats eventually gaining the upper hand.

F. Thucydides describes the events of the war in detail and notes that the horrors of *stasis* have come to characterize the Greek world. No longer do citizens vote, he stresses, they simply take up arms and call in supporters.
1. Language itself changed: "What used to be described as a thoughtless act of aggression was now regarded as…courage," according to Thucydides. "… Any idea of moderation was just an attempt to disguise one's unmanly character …"
2. Once-important ties of kinship and marriage were cast aside, as were religious and moral conventions.
3. Leaders professed to serve the public interest but ruthlessly sought to gain power for themselves.

G. Thucydides's conclusions regarding the Corcyraean civil war might apply to any number of instances of class warfare throughout history. Scholars have argued that, henceforward, Greek cities would be divided in two—the rich and the poor—and that this division would long outlive the Peloponnesian War. Clearly, the war sharpened hatreds and rivalries throughout the Greek world.

H. Thus, Thucydides gives us one explanation for the breakdown of Athenian control in the empire. *Stasis* destroyed the values of citizenship; it destroyed the consensus that allowed assemblies to work; and it undermined *autonomia* and *eleutheria*—essentially, the rule of law—in the Greek city-states. The *stasis* of Corcyra marked a new ferocity in the Peloponnesian War that would intensify after the Athenian defeat in Sicily.

Suggested Reading:

Aristotle, *The Politics*.

W. Robert Connor, *The New Politicians of Athens*.

Mogens H. Hansen, *Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structure, Principles and Ideology*.

Charles Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution*.

Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People*.

Questions to Consider:

1. By what standards did Thucydides judge Pericles and Athenian politicians who followed Pericles after 429 B.C.? What accounted for the rise of demagogues and their politics?
2. How did conditions transform the voting and politics of the Athenian assembly? Was the Athenian assembly radicalized? Is Thucydides fair in his judgment of his fellow Athenians?
3. How typical were the atrocities of the *stasis* at Corcyra? How did the Peloponnesian War transform such civil conflicts into violent revolutions? What were the long-term consequences of such civil wars?

Lecture Twenty-Four
Pylos, 425 B.C.—A Test of Leadership

Scope: By 425 B.C., the Spartans and the Athenians were locked in a deadly struggle without prospects of either victory or negotiation. The Spartans had little to show for their efforts except the capture of Plataea in 427 B.C. The Athenians, too, were exhausted. Yet in 425 B.C., the Athenian general Demosthenes garrisoned a fort near Pylos, on the shores of Messenia, and frightened the Spartans into a fateful blunder. The Spartans, fearing a helot rebellion, besieged the fort, located on the northern peninsula enclosing the Bay of Navarino. The Athenian fleet unexpectedly returned to raise the siege and captured the Spartan triremes on the beaches. The Athenian fleet also cut off a Spartan regiment stationed on the island of Sphacteria, which protected the bay. In the summer of 425 B.C., Sparta offered peace terms for the first time. Nicias, the cautious Athenian senior general who styled himself Pericles's heir, urged peace, but the assembly rejected the terms. Cleon and Demosthenes launched a surprise attack and captured 292 of the Spartans and *perioikoi* on Sphacteria. With the prisoners in Athenian hands, the Spartans dared not invade Attica while the Athenians had means to raise tribute and strike a blow against the Spartan alliance.

Outline

I. This examination of the Athenian success at Pylos offers an opportunity to draw together threads of previous lectures covering the fighting in northwest and northern Greece and Athenian problems, notably rebellions in their own territories. It also allows a review of the issues of finance and leadership and the ability of the Spartan and Athenian assemblies to make effective decisions.

II. How did Athens and Sparta end up at Pylos, a rather remote city in the Spartan district on the western shores of Messenia?

- **A.** By 425 B.C., from the Spartan viewpoint, the war had not gone well. In the northwest, the Corinthians, Sicyonians, and Megarians had essentially been defeated. The Athenians had the western waters mostly under their control and were now intervening in Sicily. The Athenians, however, had been severely hurt in their home areas: Olynthus was in rebellion, Perdiccas II was nominally allied to the Spartans, and the revolt of Mytilene highlighted Athenian financial weakness. Thus, the Spartans still had reason to hope that they could win the war.
- **B.** In 426 B.C., the Spartans had established a colony at Heraclea in Trachis, on the western approaches of Thermopylae. This colony could be used as a base either to mount new offenses into northwest Greece or to move forces across Thessaly into northern Greece and reinforce the rebellion at Olynthus.
- **C.** Also to the Spartans' credit was the capture of Plataea, a border town on the Boeotian side of the frontier with Attica. At the outbreak of the war, the Plataeans had maintained their traditional friendship with Athens.
  1. Plataea's independence was seen as an impediment to Theban efforts to unify Boeotia into a federal league. Thebes attempted to take the city in a night attack but failed.
  2. In early 431 B.C., Athens realized that Plataea could not be defended. The population was evacuated, leaving about 480 men and 110 women to withstand a potential siege.
  3. In 429 B.C., the Peloponnesian army began a two-year siege of Plataea. Although those manning the garrison showed great ingenuity in thwarting the Peloponnesians, they were ultimately starved into submission. The survivors were executed and the territory was given to Thebes.
- **D.** Both sides in the war were searching for a strategy to assure victory. For the Spartans in 427 B.C., that strategy was to resume the invasion of Attica.
  1. The Spartans were led by young King Agis, the son of Archidamus, who had apparently died in early 427 B.C. The other king, Pleistoanax, had just returned from exile and was still perceived as being too friendly to Athens. Neither king had the charisma to conduct the war successfully.
  2. The Athenians decided to reinforce their positions in Sicily, where they had achieved significant successes against Syracuse. This strategy seemed to promise an opportunity to destroy yet another economic base of the Peloponnesian League.
  3. Clearly, the Athenians were financially strapped. In the opinion of at least one scholar, Donald Kagan, 425 B.C. represented the Athenians' last chance to achieve a significant victory.

E. An Athenian fleet was readied in 425 B.C., with two commanders, Eurymedon and a general named Sophocles. Their orders were to sail around the Peloponnesian shores carrying out raids.
  1. Demosthenes was still serving in the western waters, probably at Naupactus. He joined the expedition to further Athenian strategic interests in western Greece.
  2. The fleet put into port at Pylos, which had an unusual harbor. A long island, Sphacteria, protected the harbor but allowed two entrances into it. At the north end of the mainland, opposite the island, was a small peninsula, where Demosthenes began to fortify a camp that would protect the northern entrance into the bay.
  3. A small garrison was left on the peninsula, and the main fleet sailed off to carry out its other operations.

F. When this fort was reported to the Peloponnesians, King Agis broke off operations in Attica, and the Peloponnesian army marched back to Pylos. Naval forces were summoned, and the fort was besieged.
  1. The Spartans placed a regiment of hoplites on Sphacteria and concentrated their fleet in the bay.
  2. The Athenian fleet reappeared, captured most of the Peloponnesian ships, and cut off the Spartan forces on Sphacteria.

III. At this point, the Peloponnesians were ready to negotiate. An extended armistice was called and an embassy was sent to Athens.

A. The negotiations become protracted, with Cleon asserting himself in the assembly. According to Thucydides, Cleon wanted major Spartan concessions from these negotiations. Indeed, Cleon increased the list of concessions sought to the point where negotiations broke down.
  1. The Spartans were not only to recognize the integrity and sovereignty of the Athenian Empire, but to recognize all territorial losses and Athenian rights in the Chalcidice. Cleon then demanded the return of territories that Athens had occupied in the so-called First Peloponnesian War (461–446 B.C.).
  2. All of these concessions were beyond the Spartans' expectations for the current circumstances. They had no choice but to break off negotiations.
  3. What may have troubled Thucydides most in these actions was that the Athenian assembly approved of these demands.
  4. When the negotiations broke off, the assembly empowered its generals to secure the Peloponnesians on Sphacteria.

B. Nicias was put in charge of the operations at Sphacteria, but the seasons were changing and sailing conditions began to deteriorate. In addition, divers were secretly bringing provisions to the island. It looked as if the Peloponnesians on the island might escape, and all hopes of capturing them and forcing the Spartans to make a real peace would be lost.

C. The stage was set for another meeting in the assembly. In his account, Thucydides underscores the issue of leadership in Athens.
  1. Nicias had been in charge of the operations. Known for acting slowly and cautiously, he came under considerable attack in the assembly for jeopardizing the opportunity on Sphacteria.
  2. Thucydides focuses on a speech by Cleon, who criticized Nicias vehemently. Nicias, in frustration, offered to step down from his command and allow Cleon to assume command.
  3. According to Thucydides, Cleon, believing the offer to be rhetorical, at first accepted it. When he realized that it was genuine he tried to back down, but the assembly urged him to sail to Pylos.
  4. Ultimately, Cleon acquiesced, claiming that he could take a force of specialized troops and capture or kill the Spartans on the island in 20 days. According to Thucydides, "This irresponsible claim caused a certain amount of laughter"; nonetheless, Cleon set sail, with Demosthenes as his advisor.

D. Thucydides emphasizes the role of fortune in this episode. A fire broke out on the island and exposed the Spartan position; Demosthenes then coordinated a pre-dawn attack. Eventually, the Spartans were worn down, and those still alive surrendered on terms. The Athenians returned to Athens with the prisoners and warned the Spartans that, should Attica be invaded again, these prisoners would be executed.

E. This victory stunned the Greek world. For the first time, the Spartans had surrendered. The Spartans themselves were at a loss as to how to proceed. The Athenians, under Nicias, plotted to achieve Cleon's territorial demands of several months earlier.
  1. The Spartans feared that the Athenian position at Pylos would encourage the defection of helots, lead to rebellion in Messenia, and cause some members of the Peloponnesian League to leave the confederation.

2. The Athenians tripled the tribute levels and planned bold strokes in the next year. In Thucydides's judgment, these campaigns in 424 B.C. were at odds with Pericles's advice at the start of the war. It remained to be seen if these new strategies would break the deadlock and end the war on terms favorable to Athens.

Suggested Reading:

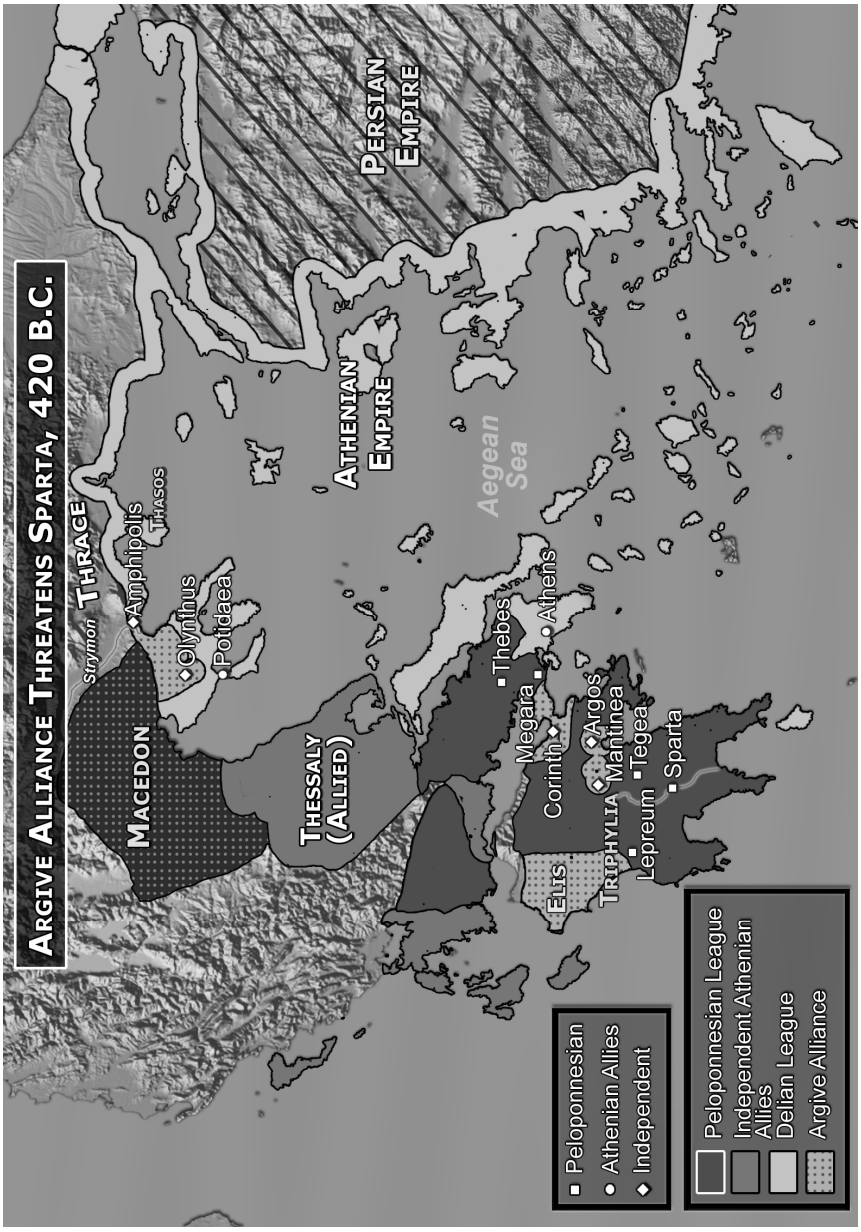
David M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia: Lectures Delivered at the University of Cincinnati, Autumn 1976, in Memory of Donald W. Bradeen*.

J. B. Wilson, *Pylos 425 B.C.: A Historical and Topographical Study of Thucydides' Account of the Campaign*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why would the Spartans and their allies have been despondent about the course of the war since 429 B.C.? In what ways had the Athenians countered their strategy? How did they see the strategic situation in 425 B.C.?
2. Why did the Athenians succeed at Pylos? Was Athenian victory the result of a string of good fortune, as Thucydides claims? Should the Athenians have negotiated with the Spartans in 425 B.C.? Was Cleon or Nicias the more effective leader for the Athenians?

Map


Argive Alliance Threatens Sparta, 420 B.C.
Thrace
Strymon
Amphipolis
Thasos
Olynthus
Potidaea
Macedon
Thessaly (Allied)
Persian Empire
Athenian Empire
Aegean Sea
Thebes
Athens
Megara
Corinth
Argos
Mantinea
Tegea
Sparta
Lepreum
Triphylia
Elis
Peloponnesian
Athenian Allies
Independent
Peloponnesian League
Independent Athenian Allies
Delian League
Argive Alliance

Timeline

1600–1200 B.C.	Late Bronze Age; Mycenaean (Achaean) Civilization.
1225–900 B.C.	Greek Dark Age: decline in population and material culture.
c. 900–700 B.C.	Gradual demographic and economic recovery.
c. 750 B.C.	Archaic Age (750–480 B.C.): Homer composes the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; Spartans unify Laconia; Athenians politically reunite Attica.
730–710 B.C.	Rise of Oracle of Delphi.
c. 725–680 B.C.	Introduction of hoplite warfare; emergence of the *polis* (city-state).
c. 700 B.C.	Hesiod composes *Theogony* and *Works and Days.*
c. 676 B.C.	Great Rhetra; Constitutional reform at Sparta.
668–657 B.C.	Emergence of Lycurgan *agoge* at Sparta.
c. 650 B.C.	Development of trireme in Phoenicia (c. 650–525 B.C.).
621 B.C.	Draco publishes First Athenian Law Code.
561/0 B.C.	First tyranny of Peisistratus at Athens.
c. 560–550 B.C.	Founding of Peloponnesian League; rising economic and cultural domination of Athens in Aegean world.
556/5 B.C.	Second tyranny of Peisistratus.
546 B.C.	Third tyranny of Peisistratus (546–527/6 B.C.) at Athens.
536/5 B.C.	First Athenian dramatic performances; Thespis wins first prize in tragedy.
480 B.C.	Xerxes's invasion of Greece; Sparta, Peloponnesian states and Athens form Hellenic League; battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium check Xerxes; Leonidas's stand at Thermopylae; Persian occupation of Central Greece and burning of Athens; Battle of Salamis: Hellenic fleet defeats Xerxes.
479 B.C.	Battle of Plataea; end of Persian threat to Greek mainland; winter storms destroy the Bridge of Ships across the Hellespont.
	***Pentakontaeteia* ("The 50 Years")**
478 B.C.	Themistocles directs rebuilding of walls of Athens; recall of Pausanias to face charges at Sparta and lay down regency.
477 B.C.	Pausanias returns to Byzantium and alienates Ionians; Aristides organizes the Delian League at invitation of Ionians; Cimon expels Pausanias from Byzantium.
c. 476 B.C.	Ostracism of Themistocles; Cimon supreme at Athens.
475 B.C.	Debate in Spartan assembly over war with Athens.
472 B.C.	Exile of Themistocles by Hellenic council.
470 B.C.	Cimon crushes rebellion of Naxos; condemnation and death of Pausanias at Sparta.
467/6 B.C.	Battle of the Eurymedon; Cimon ends Persian threat; discontentment among allies of Delian League; agitation for democratic reforms by Ephialtes and Pericles.
464 B.C.	Thasos appeals to Sparta for invasion of Attica; earthquake at Sparta; outbreak of Messenian Revolt (464–459 B.C.).
462 B.C.	Cimon leads Athenian expedition to assist Sparta; dismissal and disgrace of Cimon; ostracism of Cimon; triumph of Radical Democrats; alliance of Athens, Argos, and Thessaly; supervisory powers of *Areopagus* transferred to popular courts; assassination of Ephialtes; Pericles sole leader of radical democrats.
461 B.C.	Outbreak of First Peloponnesian War (461–445 B.C.).

460 B.C. ..... Democratic reforms at Athens; Pericles introduces pay for jury and council service.

459 B.C. ..... Athenians commences Long Walls (457–446 B.C.).

458 B.C. ..... Aeschylus's *Oresteia* produced.

457 B.C. ..... Democratic reforms at Athens; removal of property qualifications for office and service on board of *archons*.

454 B.C. ..... Treasury of Delian League removed from Delos to Athens.

451 B.C. ..... Cimon, recalled from ostracism, negotiates five-year armistice between Athens and Sparta; Thirty Years' Peace between Sparta and Argos; Citizenship Law of Pericles at Athens.

449 B.C. ..... Death of Cimon; Peace of Callias ends Athenian-Persian War; Pericles' Panhellenic Congress Decree.

c. 448–447 B.C. ..... Decree of Cleinias reorganizes tribute collection of Delian League; initiation of building programs on the Acropolis.

447 B.C. ..... Construction of Parthenon (447–432 B.C.).

446 B.C. ..... King Pleistoanax invades Attica; Pericles and King Pleistoanax negotiate Thirty Years' Peace; Athenian Decree on Regulations of Chalcis, Euboea.

445 B.C. ..... Ratification of Thirty Years' Peace at Athens and Sparta; exile of King Pleistoanax (445–426 B.C.).

443 B.C. ..... Ostracism of Thucydides, son of Melesias; Pericles supreme at Athens.

440 B.C. ..... Spartan assembly rejects appeal for assistance by Samos.

436 B.C. ..... Expedition of Pericles into the Black Sea; alliance between Athens and Sinope.

435 B.C. ..... Outbreak of civil war at Epidamnus; Corinth accepts appeal of Epidamnian democracy; Corcyra intervenes on behalf of Epidamnian oligarchs.

434 B.C. ..... Battle of Leukimme: Corcyraeans defeat the Corinthian fleet; Corcyra raids Corinthian colonies and allies in the Ionian Sea.

433 B.C. ..... Corinth refuses Spartan arbitration of its dispute with Corcyra; missions of Corinth and Corcyra to Athens; Athens votes defensive alliance (*symmachia*) with Corcyra; Athens concludes treaties with Rhegium and Leontini; Battle of Sybota: Athenians check Corinthian fleet off Corcyra; Phormio supports Amphilochian Argos against Ambraciots; Athenian assembly votes Megarian Decree.

432 B.C. ..... Outbreak of the revolt of Potidaea (432–429 B.C.); Olynthus synoecizes Chalcidice and revolts from Athens; King Perdiccas of Macedon and Corinth aids Potidaea; debate in Spartan assembly over war with Athens; Spartan declaration of war on Athens; Peloponnesian League assembly votes war with Athens; Athenian rejection of Spartan ultimatums; outbreak of Peloponnesian War.

The Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.)

The Archidamian War (431–421 B.C.)

431 B.C. ..... Abortive Theban attack on Plataea; King Archidamus leads first Peloponnesian invasion of Attica; Athenians under Proteas, Carcinus, and Sophocles attack Peloponnesus; Brasidas checks Athenians at Methone; Athens concludes alliance with King Sitalces of Thrace; Athenians and Acarnanians capture Sollium; Cephellenia allies with Athens; clash of Syracuse with Leontini and Rhegium; Athenian invasion of the Megarid; Funeral Oration of Pericles.

430 B.C. ..... Archidamus leads second Peloponnesian invasion of Attica; Athenian fleet under Pericles, Cleopompus, and Hagnon attacks Peloponnesus; outbreak of plague at Athens; Hagnon and 4,000 hoplites sent to Potidaea; Peloponnesian

fleet attacks Zacynthos; Athenians capture Peloponnesian envoys to King Artaxerxes I of Persia; Pericles fined and stripped of his generalship; Athenian peace overtures rejected by Sparta; Phormio and 20 Athenian triremes establish base at Naupactus; disruption of Peloponnesian shipping in the Gulf of Corinth.

429 B.C. Pericles restored to his generalship; surrender of Potidaea on terms; Athenians colonize Potidaea; Athenian setbacks in Chalcidice; Sitalces and Thracians invade Macedon and the Chalcidice; King Archidamus initiates siege of Plataea (429–427 B.C.); Peloponnesians under Cnemus fail to take Amphilochian Argos; Nicias attacks Cydonia in Crete; naval victories of Phormio at Naupactus and Rhion; death of Pericles*;* rise of demagogues in assembly; Peloponnesian fleet raids Salamis.

428 B.C. King Archidamus leads third Peloponnesian invasion of Attica; Athens levies first *eisphora* (war tax); Asopius arrives at Naupactus with Athenian reinforcements; outbreak of the revolt of Mytilene (428–427 B.C.); breakout of part of the garrison from besieged Plataea; appeal for military assistance by Leontini and Rhegium.

427 B.C. Archidamus leads fourth Peloponnesian invasion of Attica; Mytilene surrenders to Athenians under Paches; Alcidas, *navarch*, fails to relieve Mytilene and retires to Saronic Gulf; debate in Athenian assembly over Mytilene; emergence of Cleon as radical leader at Athens; surrender of Plataea*;* execution of Plataean prisoners; second outbreak of plague at Athens; twenty Athenian triremes under Laches and Charoeadas sail to Sicily and secure Messina; outbreak of civil war (*stasis*) on Corcyra; Alcidas and Cnemus defeat Corcyraean fleet but retire; Athenian fleet under Eurymedon supports democrats on Corcyra; death of Archidamus and accession of Agis II, Eurypontid king

426 B.C. Spartans recall King Pleistoanax from exile; Spartans establish colony at Heraclea in Trachis (Thermopylae); Demosthenes defeats Peloponnesians under Eurylochus at Olpae; Demosthenes destroys Ambraciot army at Idomene; Ambracia negotiates out of war; Acarnanians capture Corinthian colonies in northwest Greece; third outbreak of plague at Athens; Nicias attacks Melos in the Cyclades and raids Boeotia; Athens raids Himera; Pythodorus succeeds to Athenian fleet in Sicily; Athens defeats the Epizephyrian Locrians

425 B.C. King Agis II leads the fifth Peloponnesian invasion of Attica; Athenian fleet under Eurymedon and Sophocles sails for Sicily; Demosthenes fortifies Pylos; Eurymedon and Sophocles intervene in Corcyra; Battle of Pylos: Athenians capture Peloponnesian fleet; armistice and abortive peace negotiations between Athens and Sparta; Eurymedon and Sophocles arrive in Sicily with 40 triremes; Syracusans retake Messina; Athenian naval victory in the Straits of Rhegium; purification of Delos by Nicias; Cleon and Demosthenes capture Spartans on Sphacteria; Athenian tribute tripled to 1,500 talents; construction of Ionic temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis.

424 B.C. Nicias captures Cythera; Athenians fail to capture Megara, the port of Nisaea; failure of Athenian offensive against Boeotia; Boeotians garrison Megara; Battle of Delium: Thebans under Pagondas defeat Athenians; Conference of Gela: Hermocrates arranges general settlement; Athenians asked by allies to depart Sicily; Brasidas marches Peloponnesian army to Chalcidice; Brasidas moves Acanthus and Amphipolis to rebellion; trial and exile of Thucydides on motion of Cleon.

423 B.C. One-year armistice between Sparta and Athens; outbreak of revolts at Sicione, Torone, and Mende in Chalcidice; failure of Athenian-Spartan peace negotiations; King Perdiccas II of Macedon concludes alliance with Athens; Mantinea and Elis adopt democratic constitutions and synoecize; border war between Mantinea and Tegea.

422 B.C. ..... End of armistice between Athens and Sparta; Thebans capture Attic fortress of Panactum; Cleon directs operations in the Chalcidice and recaptures Torone; Battle of Amphipolis; deaths of Cleon and Brasidas; Athenian mission under Phaeax sent to Sicily.

The Peace of Nicias (421–414 B.C.)

421 B.C. ..... Conclusion of the Peace of Nicias; Corinth, Mantinea, Elis, Thebes, and Megara refuse to sign the treaty; alliance (*symmachia*) between Athens and Sparta; Corinthian diplomatic moves to undermine the peace; Amphipolis refuses to return to Athenian rule; ten-day renewable truce between Athens and Thebes; performance of Aristophanes's comedy *Peace;* Argos, Corinth, Mantinea, Elis, and cities of the Chalcidice join in a new alliance; Athenians recapture Scione and press war in the Chalcidice; King Pleistoanax and Nicias face rising criticism at home over the peace; election of Cleobolus and Xenares as *ephors* hostile to the peace.

420 B.C. ..... *Ephors* Cleobolus and Xenares intrigue with Corinthians to renew war; Corinthians fail to draw Thebes into alliance with Argos; Thebans demolish and abandon Panactum; outcry in Athens against Sparta; Alcibiades emerges as a radical democratic, anti-Spartan leader; Athens concludes alliances with Argos, Mantinea, and Elis; Spartan diplomatic expedition to Athens.

419 B.C. ..... Alcibiades leads Athenian expedition into the northern Peloponnesus; Corinth returns to Peloponnesian League; Boeotians expel Spartans from Trachinian Heraclea; outbreak of war between Argos and Epidaurus.

418 B.C. ..... Battle of Mantinea; major hoplite engagement, strategic Spartan victory; pro-Spartan oligarchs stage coup at Argos and conclude alliance with Sparta; collapse of Athenian strategy in the Peloponnesus; restoration of democracy at Argos and renewal of Athenian-Argive alliance.

417 B.C. ..... Rivalry between Alcibiades and Nicias; ostracism of Hyperbolus; Athenians abolish ostracism; King Agis II of Sparta ravages the Argolid; King Perdiccas II allies with Sparta against Athens; war erupts between Selinus and Segesta; Carthage refuses appeal from Segesta to intervene in Sicily.

416 B.C. ..... Spartans under Agis II ravage the Argolid; rivalry between Alcibiades and Nicias at Athens; Athenian fleet reduces Melos; Segesta and Leontini appeal for military aid from Athens against Selinus.

415 B.C. ..... Vote of Athenian expedition to Sicily under Nicias, Alcibiades, and Lamachus; affair of herms; rumors of impiety by Alcibiades; Athenian operations in Macedon against King Perdiccas II; Athenian expedition for Sicily receives no aid; Alcibiades secures Catane and Naxos; recall and flight of Alcibiades; inconclusive Athenian operations off northern Sicily; Lamachus and Nicias enter the Great Harbor of Syracuse; Battle of Dascon: Athenians defeat Syracusans; Athenians retire to winter at Catane; Hermocrates organizes the defense of Syracuse.

The Decelean (or Ionian) War (414–404 B.C.)

414 B.C. ..... Lamachus and Nicias begin siege of Syracuse (414–413 B.C.); Hermocrates directs defense of Syracuse; death of Lamachus; Nicias loses initiative; arrival of exiled Alcibiades and Syracusan envoys at Sparta; Spartans declare war on Athens; outbreak of Decelean War; Gylippus arrives at Syracuse with Peloponnesian forces; Gylippus prevents Athenians from completing siege works across Epipolae; Nicias requests his recall from Sicily; Athenians vote second Sicilian expedition; Syracusans commence construction of a fleet.

413 B.C. ..... Agis II invades Attica and fortifies Decelea; Corinthian squadron arrives at Syracuse with reinforcements; first battle in the Great Harbor: Athenians defeat Syracusans; Gylippus captures Plemmyrion and secures entrance to the Great

Harbor; Second Battle in the Great Harbor: Nicias's fleet defeated; death of Perdiccas II; accession of King Archelaus of Macedon (413–399 B.C.); arrival of second Athenian expedition under Demosthenes and Eurymedon; failure of Athenian night attack to capture Epipolae; Third Battle in the Great Harbor; death of Eurymedon; Fourth Battle in the Great Harbor: Demosthenes fails to break out; retreat and destruction of the Athenian army.

412 B.C. Athenians appoint 10 *probouloi* and pass emergency fiscal measures; satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus approach Sparta; cities of Thrace, Ionia, and Hellespontine regions rebel and appeal to Sparta; Peloponnesian fleet under *navarch* Melanchridas establishes base at Miletus; Athenian fleet under Phrynichus makes base at Samos; Treaty of Miletus; alliance of Sparta and the satrap Tissaphernes at Sardis; Alcibiades flees to the court of Tissaphernes.

411 B.C. Oligarchs intrigue to overthrow the democracy; Athenians at Colonus vote the constitutions of the Four Hundred and Five Thousand; oligarchs in the Four Hundred move to betray Athens; Alcibiades thwarts oligarchs' approaches to Tissaphernes for Persian aid; Athenian fleet at Samos elects as generals Alcibiades, Thrasybulus, and Thrasyllus; defection of Theramenes and moderates from the Four Hundred; Athenian fleet demands implementation of the Five Thousand at Athens; Peloponnesian squadron incites revolt of Euboea; fall of the Four Hundred; the Five Thousand takes power in Athens; Spartan *navarch* Mindarus sails to the Hellespont; Battle of Cynossema: Thrasybulus wins tactical victory over Mindarus.

410 B.C. Battle of Cyzicus: Alcibiades and Thrasybulus destroy the Peloponnesian fleet; restoration of the full democracy at Athens; construction of temples of Athena Polias and Erechtheum on the Acropolis and repairs and renovations in the *agora* (410–406 B.C.); Athenians retake Perinthus, Selymbria, and Chrysopolis; Corcyra withdraws from Athenian alliance; radical democrats at Athens reject peace offer of Sparta; dispute between Selinus and Segesta in Sicily; Carthage receives appeal from Segesta; Spartans rebuilt their Aegean fleet in ports of Troad (410–409 B.C.).

409 B.C. Accession of Pausanias, Agiad king of Sparta (409–395 B.C.); Athenians withdraw from Pylos and Cythera; Megarians recapture their port of Nisaea; Carthaginian army under Hannibal invades Greek Sicily; Carthaginians capture and sack Selinus and Segesta; recall of ships of Syracuse and Selinus from the Aegean world; exile of Hermocrates from Syracuse; Thrasyllus retakes Colophon.

408 B.C. Alcibiades recaptures Byzantium and Chalcedon; Hermocrates sails for Sicily; Alcibiades returns in triumph to Athens.

407 B.C. Cyrus the Younger appointed lord (*karanos*) of western Asia Minor; Lysander, *navarch* of 407/6 B.C., relocates Spartan fleet to Ephesus; Alcibiades assumes command of the Athenian fleet in Ionia; inconclusive naval operations between Lysander and Alcibiades; King Archelaus of Macedon allies with Athens.

406 B.C. Battle of Notium: Lysander defeats Athenian squadron; downfall and exile of Alcibiades; Callicratidas, *navarch* of 406/5 B.C., relocates base to Miletus; Cyrus the Younger withdraws financial support from Sparta; Battle of Arginusae: Peloponnesian fleet destroyed; trial of the six generals at Arginussae in violation of judicial procedure; Cleophon and radical democrats reject Spartan peace offer.

405 B.C. Lysander appointed *epistoleus* (secretary to *navarch*); Battle of Aegospotami: Lysander captures Athenian fleet; escape of Conon to Salamis, Cyprus; Dionysius seizes power as tyrant of Syracuse (405–357 B.C.); rebellions in the Athenian Empire (405–404 B.C.); Lysander imposes decarchies and *harmosts*; outbreak of Egyptian rebellion under Dynasty XVIII.

404 B.C. ..... Athenian decree granting the Samians citizenship; siege and capitulation of Athens; end of the Athenian Empire; Long Walls demolished; Return of Athenian exiles; Critias and Theramenes form the Thirty; Athenian democrats find refuge at Corinth and Thebes; surrender of Samos to the Spartans; death of Darius II of Persia; accession of Artaxerxes II (404–358 B.C.); The Thirty initiate terror at Athens and arrange the murder of Alcibiades.

After the Peloponnesian War:
The Late Classical Period (404–323 B.C.)

403 B.C. ..... Lysander resigns as *epistoleus*; Critias orders the execution of Theramenes; defeat and death of Critias; overthrow of the Thirty (March or April); intervention of King Pausanias of Sparta to settle Athenian civil war; establishment of the two Boards of 10 at Athens; restoration of the democracy at Athens; oligarchs retire to Eleusis.

401 B.C. ..... Cyrus the Younger marches against Artaxerxes II; Battle of Cunaxa*;* death of Cyrus the Younger; retreat of the Ten Thousand (*Anabasis*); Sparta liberates Ionian cities from Persian rule.

400 B.C. ..... Outbreak of war between Sparta and Persia; Thibron commands Spartan forces in Asia Minor; death of King Agis II*;* succession crisis at Sparta.

399 B.C. ..... Accession of Agesilaus II, Eurypontid king (399–360 B.C.); Dercyllidas succeeds to the command of Spartan army in Asia Minor (399–397 B.C.); trial of Socrates at Athens.

396 B.C. ..... King Agesilaus II leads Peloponnesian expedition to Asia Minor; collapse of Persian resistance in western Asia Minor.

395 B.C. ..... Outbreak of Corinthian War (395–386 B.C.); Battle of Haliartus*;* death of Lysander; accession of Agesipolis I, Agiad king of Sparta (395–380 B.C.); alliance of Athens, Thebes, Argos, and Corinth against Sparta.

394 B.C. ..... Battles of Corinth and Cnidus; end of Spartan naval supremacy in the Aegean Sea; Athens rebuilds the Long Walls.

386 B.C. ..... Peace of Antalcidas or the King's Peace ends the Corinthian War; surrender of Ionian Greeks to King Artaxerxes II; recognition of Spartan hegemony in mainland Greece; dissolution of Argive-Corinthian union and Boeotian League; recognition of independent, democratic Athens.

382 B.C. ..... Spartans seize Thebes and garrison the citadel there (Cadmeia).

378 B.C. ..... Alliance of Athens and Thebes.

377 B.C. ..... Athens organizes second naval confederacy in the Aegean world; outbreak of the Theban-Spartan War.

371 B.C. ..... Battle of Leuctra: Epaminondas defeats Spartan army; emergence of Theban hegemony (371–362 B.C.).

370–369 B.C. ..... Epaminondas invades the Peloponnesus; alliance of Thebes with Argos and Arcadian League; Epaminondas liberates Messenia from Spartan rule.

362 B.C. ..... Battle of Mantinea*;* death of Epaminondas; political deadlock in Greece.

359 B.C. ..... Accession of Philip II, king of Macedon (359–336 B.C.).

352 B.C. ..... Philip II assumes control of the Thessalian League and intervenes in Third Sacred War.

348–347 B.C. ..... Philip II conquers the Chalcidice.

346 B.C. ..... Peace of Philocrates*;* general peace in Greek world.

338 B.C. ..... Battle of Chaeronea: Philip II defeats Thebes and Athens; Macedonian domination of Greece.

337 B.C. ..... Philip II organizes the Greek states into League of Corinth for war against Persia.

336 B.C. ..... Accession of Alexander III the Great, king of Macedon (336–323 B.C.).

Glossary

acropolis. High point of a Greek city, where springs and temples were located. The Acropolis of Athens, rebuilt in the 5th century B.C., is considered the showcase of such citadels.

Aeolian. A Greek dialect, likely a mixture of West and East Greek elements, spoken in Thessaly, in Boeotia and Aeolian colonies established on the island of Lesbos, and in the Troad and Aeolis on the northwestern shores of Asia Minor.

Agiad. The senior royal family of Sparta.

agoge. Training program for Spartan boys and girls between ages 6 and 18.

agon. "Contest"; a debate characteristic of Attic oratory and drama.

agora. The marketplace of a Greek city; it evolved into the civic center, with public buildings for the *boule*, law courts, and assembly.

Anabasis. *March Upcountry*; the narrative account by Xenophon of the expedition of Cyrus the Younger and the retreat of the Greek mercenaries known as the Ten Thousand in 401–399 B.C.

Anatolia. The Asiatic peninsula of modern Turkey; specifically, the name denotes the interior half of the peninsula dominated by the high plateau.

aparchai. The portion (1/60) of the tribute collected from the members of the Delian League that was dedicated to Athena Parthenos, patroness of Athens.

Archaic Age (750–480 B.C.). The period between the composition of the epic poems of Homer and the defeat of King Xerxes of Persia. This period witnessed the emergence of the *polis* and a distinct Hellenic civilization.

archon. An elected official of a Greek city; the eponymous *archon* gave his name to the official year. At Athens from 681 B.C., a board of nine *archons* included an eponymous *archon*, *polemarch*, *basileus* (king-priest), and six *thesmothetai* (keepers of the laws).

Areopagus. "Hill of Ares"; the hillock to the northwest of the Acropolis of Athens where the aristocratic council, composed of ex-*archons*, sat as a court.

arete. The bravery expected of Homeric heroes and, later, hoplites of city-states; the term was extended by philosophers to mean "virtue."

aristocracy. "Rule of the best"; government by the landed noble families who monopolized high office and membership on the council (*boule*). Aristocrats, who served as the cavalry, reduced the power of hereditary kings in favor of aristocratic republics in the 8th century B.C.

Asia Minor. The Asiatic peninsula of modern Turkey; Greeks had settled on the northern, western, and southern shores since the Dark Ages (1225–900 B.C.).

Athenian Tribute Lists. The reconstructed lists of tribute paid by members of the Delian League between 454 and 412 B.C.; see B. Meritt, H. T. Wade-Gery, and M. F. McGregor, *The Athenian Tribute Lists*, 4 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939–1953).

autonomia. "Autonomy"; the cherished right of each city-state to live under its own laws.

barbarian (Greek *barbaros*, plural *barbaroi*). Term designating any non-Greek foreigner who did not live in a *polis* and, thus, under the rule of law. The term did not denote peoples with an inferior culture.

basileus (plural *basileis*). The term for king in Archaic and Classical Greece. The kings as described by Homer (c. 750 B.C.) were reduced to elected religious officials, except at Sparta. There, two hereditary kings from two families, the Agiad and Eurypontid, reigned as commanders and priests. In Classical literature, this term also denoted the Great King of Persia.

boule (plural *boulai*). The council of a city-state that summoned and set the agenda of the assembly. In aristocracies, oligarchies, and timocracies, the council was the prime governing body, often composed of ex-magistrates selected from the propertied classes. In democratic Athens, after the reforms of Cleisthenes, the *boule* reflected the democratic assembly. Each year, 500 members, 50 from each tribe, were chosen by sortition to serve on the council. Service was restricted to citizens aged 30 years and older; only two terms were permitted in a lifetime. From 457 B.C., the property qualification for membership on the *boule* was removed.

chora. "Hinterland"; the countryside of a *polis*. Attica was the hinterland of the *polis* Athens, and all free residents were Athenian citizens. Sparta controlled Laconia and Messenia, and residents in these hinterland regions were either *perioikoi* or helots.

cleurchy (Greek *kleourchos*; plural *kleourchoi*). An overseas colony of Athenians who retained their Athenian citizenship.

daric. The gold coin struck by the Great Kings of Persia.

decarchy. "Rule of ten"; an oligarchic board of friends of the Spartan commander Lysander imposed in the former cities of the Athenian Empire in 405–403 B.C.

Delian League. The alliance to pursue the naval war against Persia organized by the Athenian general Aristides at the behest of the Chians, Samians, and Mytileneans in 477 B.C. The League's delegates met on the island of Delos. In 454 B.C., the league's treasury was removed to Athens, and this action marked the conversion of the Delian League into the Athenian Empire.

Delos. An island of the Cyclades in the Aegean Sea with a celebrated sanctuary of Apollo, whose cult was common to all Ionians. In 426 B.C., the Athenian general Nicias conducted a purification of the sanctuary and reorganization of the festivals.

Delphi. The sanctuary of Apollo on the southwestern spur of Mount Parnassus and seat of the oracle on the site of the *omphalos*, "the navel of the world," where Apollo slew the serpent Pytho and instituted the Pythian Games. The shrine was common to all Greeks after the First Sacred War (c. 590–585 B.C.).

demagogues. Radical democratic orators who dominated the assembly in 429–404 B.C.

deme. An Athenian ward of the larger district *trittys* ("third"); three *trittyes* made up each of the 10 tribes of Athens. Registration in the *deme* was required to exercise citizen rights. Cleisthenes introduced this organization in 508–506 B.C.

democracy. Rule of the people (*demos*); a constitution under which all male citizens in the assembly had the right to vote and sit on popular juries. In Athens after 461 B.C., property qualifications were eliminated for the council and office. In 508–506 B.C., Cleisthenes reformed Athens into the first democracy.

demos (plural *demoi*). The sovereign body of citizens.

diekplous. The ramming tactic used in naval warfare against the prow of an opposing trireme.

dike. "Justice"; initially denoted "the way," then personified as the goddess Dike, daughter of Zeus in Hesiod's *Theogony*. *Dike* was the goal of the rule of law in the *polis*.

diolkos. "Across portage"; the four-mile trackway for conveying ships across the Isthmus of Corinth since the 7th century B.C. The modern canal linking the Gulf of Corinth and the Saronic Gulf largely follows the route of the *diolkos*.

dokimasia. The competence test administered to incoming officials, liturgists, and councilors at Athens. This power was transferred from the *Areopagus* to the popular courts in 461 B.C.

Dorian. The West Greek dialect spoken in the southern and eastern Peloponnesus (Messenia, Laconia, Argolid, Corinth, Megara, Sicyon, and Aegina); on the islands of Thera and Melos in the Cyclades; in the Dorian cities of Crete, Cos, Cnidus, and Rhodes; and in the Dorian settlements of Sicily, southern Italy, and Cyrene (today eastern Libya).

drachma (plural *drachmae*). The principal silver coin struck by Greek cities. The drachma was divided into six *obols*. Cities struck multiples and fractions of the drachma. City currencies were based on a drachma of varying weight so that coins were exchanged in markets by weight.

ekklesia (plural *ekklesiai*). The assembly of Athens comprising all free adult males 18 years of age and older. The assembly, requiring a quorum of 6,000, was the sovereign body that met at the Pynx, a hill to the west of the *agora*.

eleutheria. "Freedom"; the right of a *polis* to pursue its own foreign policy and aims.

Elgin Marbles. See **Panathenaic Festival**.

ephebe (Greek *ephebos*, plural *epheboi*). The legal classification of Greek male adolescents (ages 16 to 20) who were in training as hoplites. They were eligible to be called up for home defense.

ephor. "Overseer"; one of five annually elected officials who supervised the *agoge* and various aspects of public morals and social activities at Sparta. The creation of the board was dated to 754 B.C.; the *ephors* assumed many of the judicial and civil powers once held by kings.

epigraphy. The scholarly study of inscriptions.

Epipolae. The heights to the west and northwest of the city of Syracuse. In 415–413 B.C., the Athenians failed to secure control of these heights and, thus, lost a strategic initiative. The tyrant Dionysius I (405–367 B.C.) incorporated the Epipolae into the city's defenses and constructed the castle Euryelos to guard the western approaches to the Epipolae.

episkopos (plural *episkopoi*). "Overseer"; Athenian officials sent as inspectors to supervise the democracies imposed in the allied cities of the Delian League.

epistoleus. "Writer"; the office of secretary. In 405–403 B.C., Lysander was appointed secretary to the *navarch* so that he could command the Peloponnesian fleet in the Aegean Sea without violating the constitutional restriction of a single term as *navarch*.

eunomia. "Well-governed"; denoted the ideal of each city-state to be governed by the rule of law. Sparta was exalted as the model of *eunomia*.

Eupatridae. "Well descended"; denoted the noble families of early Athens who alone could be elected to the board of *archons* and, thus, enter the *Areopagus*.

Eurypontid. The junior royal family of Sparta.

euthynai. "Accounts"; designated the audit of officials, councilors, or liturgists at the end of their terms. At Athens, the *Areopagus* presided over the audits until 461 B.C., when the power to audit was transferred to the popular courts.

Five Thousand. A democracy at Athens with restrictions on office-holding and jury service to those with property of hoplite status. Originally, this constitution was intended by the oligarchs to deceive the assembly into abolishing the democracy in favor of the Four Hundred in 411 B.C. With the fall of the Four Hundred, the Five Thousand was instated. After the Battle of Cyzicus in 410 B.C., the full democracy was restored.

Four Hundred. The government, composed of moderates and oligarchs, that took power in the summer of 411 B.C. The oligarchs, once they revealed their intention to betray the city to the Spartans, were overthrown by moderates at Athens, led by Theramenes, and the democratic fleet based at Samos, led by Thrasybulus and Alcibiades.

Funeral Oration. The speech of Pericles recorded by Thucydides (II. 35–46) delivered at the commemoration of the Athenian dead in the first year of the Peloponnesian War. The speech expresses the ideals of the Athenian democracy.

gerousia. The council of Sparta composed of 28 elected elders (aged 60 years and older) and the two hereditary kings.

graphe paranomon. "Written contrary to law"; the procedure invoked by Athenian citizens in the assembly against a proposal deemed unconstitutional. The proposal was tabled for consideration by a popular jury. This crucial constitutional safeguard of the democracy was removed by the oligarchs at the meeting of Colonus in 411 B.C.

harmost. A Spartan governor imposed in the allied cities of the former Delian League.

hegemon. "Leader"; the leading city-state in an alliance. In 546 B.C., Sparta emerged as the first hegemon in the Greek world at the head of the Peloponnesian League. Athens was the hegemon of the Delian League organized in 477 B.C.

hektemoros (plural *hektemoroi*). "Sixth-sharer"; poor Athenian sharecroppers, many of whom fell into debt slavery in early Archaic Athens. In 594/3 B.C., Solon abolished debt slavery, and this class disappeared from the sources.

Hellene. Greeks' name for themselves from the time of Hesiod (c. 700 B.C.).

hellenotamiai. "Treasurers of the Hellenes"; the 10 Athenians elected annually by the assembly to administer the funds of the Delian League.

Hellespont. The Greek name for the Dardanelles, the straits dividing Asia Minor from Europe.

helot. Slave in the Spartan state; most helots were the private property of their masters, not state slaves, as is often supposed in modern scholarly accounts.

herm. A stone pillar depicting a male with an erect phallus that stood as the guardian of fertility at the door of each household. In 415 B.C., the herms in Athens were mutilated, probably by oligarchs sympathetic to Sparta. The intent was to cause the cancellation of the expedition to Sicily as a result of such an inauspicious event.

hetairia (plural *hetairiai*). "Clubs"; Athenian aristocratic clubs, comparable in origin to the Spartan *sussition*, which became the meeting places of oligarchs hostile to the democracy.

hippeis (plural of *hippeus,* "horseman"). Cavalry; the second property class of Solonian Athens, with annual incomes between 300 and 500 *medimnoi*.

hoplite. The heavily armored Greek citizen, equipped with a large shield (*hoplon*) and thrusting spear, who fought in a phalanx.

Ionia. The western shore of Asia Minor from Smyrna (modern Izmir) to Halicarnassus (modern Bodrum), where Ionian Greeks had settled. Ionia also included the neighboring islands, notably Samos and Chios, also settled by Ionian speakers.

Ionian. The East Greek dialect spoken in Attica, Euboea, Ionia, the Chalcidice, most of the Aegean islands, and the Ionian colonies of the Hellespontine regions, the Black Sea, Sicily, and southern Italy. Attic, the Athenian language within this dialect, emerged as the literary language of the Greek world in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C.

Ionian Revolt (499–494 B.C.). The abortive rebellion of Ionians, instigated by Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletus, against Persian rule. The rebellion spread to the Hellespontine regions, Caria, Lycia, and Greek Cyprus.

isegoria. The right of all citizens to have access to the Athenian assembly.

isonomia. The right of equal treatment under the laws of all Athenian citizens.

isopoliteia. "Equal citizenship"; a grant of shared citizen rights to an individual or a *polis*. In 404/3 B.C., Athens voted all Samians *isopoliteia*, the rights of Athenians, which any Samian could exercise when in Athens.

Isthmus of Corinth. The narrow land bridge that connects the Peloponnesus to central Greece.

kairos. Opportune time; considered a gift of the gods.

kaloi k'agathoi. "The beautiful and the good"; designated aristocrats who maintained the conceit that they alone by descent had the right to rule.

liturgy (Greek *leitourgia*; plural *leitourgiai*). A designated public task for which the cost was annually assumed by the citizens. Liturgies included the construction and equipping of a trireme or the sponsorship of social activities and amenities of the *polis*. By the 4th century B.C., liturgies at Athens represented a voluntary taxation of the property classes to maintain public life.

medimnos (plural *medimnoi*). A dry measure of 55 pounds. An adult male annually required six to seven *medimnoi* of wheat.

Medize. "To side with the Medes"; refers to those Greeks who sided with the Persians.

Megarian Decree. An embargo passed by the Athenian assembly in the winter of 433/2 B.C. against Megarian vessels trading in the Athenian Empire. Thucydides considered the Megarian Decree a pretext for war, but most Athenians later saw it as the actual cause of the Peloponnesian War.

Melian Dialogue. The debate between Athenians and Melians, set in 416 B.C., in which Thucydides (V. 85–113) examines Imperialism.

metropolis (plural metropoleis). "Mother city," the founding city of a Greek colony.

mora (plural *morai*). A tactical unit of 400 to 500 men in a hoplite phalanx.

mystery rites. Initiation rites to a cult. The Eleusinian mysteries, performed annually in the Telesterion of Eleusis for the Athenian citizens, was a ritual drama of Hades's carrying off of Persephone. In 415 B.C., Alcibiades was convicted in absentia for sacrilegious parodying of the Eleusinian mysteries.

navarch. The Spartan office of admiral, held for one year on election by the Spartan assembly. The *navarch* was a senior officer expert in commanding coalition forces.

neodamodeis. "New citizens"; *perioikoi* or favored allies admitted to the Spartan citizen body in recognition of military service.

nomos (plural *nomoi*). The law passed by the assembly; distinct from sacred law (*themis*).

numismatics. The scholarly study of coins and medals.

obe (plural *obai*). One of the five settlements on the Eurotas River that constituted the *polis* of Sparta.

obol. One-sixth of the silver drachma; two *obols* was the per diem wage paid to jurors and councilors at Athens.

oligarchy. "Rule of the few"; government in the hands of the propertied classes (with the emphasis on birth in an aristocracy). These classes monopolized high office and the *boule*.

Olympia. The sanctuary of Olympian Zeus on the Alpheus River in Elis. The Panhellenic Olympic Games were held at the sanctuary every fourth year.

ostracism. A constitutional vote by the assembly (with a quorum of 6,000) to expel from Athens a citizen suspected of conspiring to be a tyrant. The Athenian with the most votes, each inscribed on a broken potsherd (*ostrakon*), was required to depart for 10 years but did not lose his citizenship or property. The law was introduced by Cleisthenes in 508–506 B.C. and was used by Themistocles to remove political foes in 489–483 B.C. The abuse of the law in 417/6 B.C. resulted in its abolition.

Panathenaic Festival. The great "all-Athenian" festival to celebrate the robing of the cult statue of Athena with her new *peplos* (robe). The procession is depicted on the Parthenon frieze sculpted by Phidias circa 443–438 B.C. The best surviving portions of the frieze are in the British Museum and are known as the *Elgin Marbles*, legally purchased by Earl Thomas Elgin, British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, in 1808.

Panhellenic. "All-Greek"; specifically denotes Pythia, Olympia, Nemea, and Isthmia, festivals that formed the four-year cycle of the Panhellenic Games.

Peace of Antalcidas or **King's Peace** (386 B.C.). Ended the Corinthian War (396–386 B.C.) and represented a diplomatic success for Sparta at the price of returning the Ionian cities to King Artaxerxes II of Persia. Sparta maintained her hegemony in Greece, and Athens was recognized as independent.

Peace of Callias (449 B.C.). Ended the war between Athens and Artaxerxes I. Athenian domination was recognized in the Aegean Sea, but Athens withdrew support from rebels against the Persian king in Cyprus and Egypt.

Peace of Nicias (421 B.C.). The 50-year peace concluded between Athens and Sparta to end the Archidamian War (431–421 B.C.). From 420 B.C., the peace was one in name only, and in 414 B.C., Sparta declared war, claiming that Athens had violated the terms.

Peloponnesian League. Modern designation for the alliances (*symmachiai*) between Sparta and her allies concluded in the late 6th and early 5th centuries B.C.

Peloponnesus. "Island of Pelops"; the three-pronged peninsula of southern Greece attached to central Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth.

Pentakontaeteia. "The 50 Years"; the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars (479–432 B.C.) covered by Thucydides (I. 89–118).

pentakonter. A ship of 50 oars that functioned as both a commercial vessel and a warship circa 800–550 B.C. In engagements, boarding tactics were used. As a warship, the *pentakonter* was replaced by the trireme.

pentakosiomedimnos (plural *pentakosiomedimnoi*). "Men of 500 bushels"; the highest property class in Solonian Athens, which included all men with an annual income of 500 or more *medimnoi*.

perioikoi. "Dwellers around"; free residents of Laconia and Messenia who lived under their own laws but owed military service to the Spartan state. Residents of similar classification were found in Thessaly and Dorian Crete.

periplous. "Sailing around"; refers to the tactics employed by Athenian triremes, based on speed and timing, to flank and ram an opposing trireme.

philoxenia. The mutual inherited guest friendship between families of different *poleis*. The guest friend (*philoxenos*) stood as surety in all legal matters and offered shelter and hospitality to visiting guest friends.

phoros. "Carried"; the assessed tribute in silver paid by members of the Delian League in lieu of military service. Aristides fixed the first assessment at 460 talents; by 425 B.C., the tribute might have been as high as 1,500 talents.

phrourarchos. "Garrison commander"; the Athenian commander of a garrison imposed on an allied city of the Delian League as punishment for rebellion.

polemarch. "War *archon*"; the *archon* on the Athenian board who commanded the army. His function was replaced by the board of 10 generals (*Strategeia*) in 501/00 B.C.

polis (plural *poleis*). The city-state in which citizens governed themselves by the rule of law. Hellenes alone were seen as living in a *polis*, and this political conceit was the means by which they distinguished themselves from others, who were barbarians.

probouleuteric function (Greek *probouleuterisis*). Refers to the administrative tasks of the *boule* in setting the agenda for the assembly and issuing the summons for a meeting.

proboulos (plural *probouloi*). "Supervisors"; in 412 B.C., the Athenians elected a board of 10 *probouloi* to supervise finances and policy at Athens as a check on radical proposals in the aftermath of the defeat in Sicily.

proxenos (plural *proxenoi*). A citizen who was the official "guest friend" of all citizens of another city-state. *Proxenoi* presented the embassies of guest cities to their own city's *boule* and assembly.

prytaneion. The circular building in the *agora* that housed the prytany on call.

prytanis (plural *prytaneis*). "President"; one of 50 members of the *prytany* or 1/10 of the *boule* of 500 at Athens.

prytany. This term designated both the official month (40 days) and the 1/10 of the *boule* on call during the official month. Each prytany consisted of 50 men chosen by lot from one of the 10 tribes. The prytany, when presiding over its month (determined by sortition), was on call 24 hours. The prytany acted as the executive committee of the *boule* and received all foreign delegations wishing to speak to the Athenian assembly.

pythia. The prophetess who delivered the oracle at Delphi. *Pythiai* were selected for their perceived powers, which put them in contact with the divine world. It has been suggested that these powers were heightened by ethylene gas vapors issuing forth from beneath the sanctuary.

Rhetra. "Speaking"; refers to the oracles that legitimized the constitutional reforms of Sparta; these oracles were attributed to Lycurgus, but a number of reforms likely constituted a Great Rhetra in 676 B.C., when the main political Spartan institutions were codified.

satrap. The Persian governor of the Achaemenid Empire; Darius I (521–486 B.C.) reorganized the empire into 30 satrapies.

satrapy. A Persian province and the basis for fiscal and military obligations.

Sophism. The intellectual movement at Athens in the later 5th century B.C. that stressed rhetoric and used the analytical language of natural philosophy to study moral and political issues. Sophists taught for pay and often attached themselves to aristocratic youths hostile to the democracy. Aristophanes parodied sophists in *The Clouds* (423 B.C.) through a caricature of Socrates, who shared many of the intellectual pursuits of sophists.

sophrosyne. "Moderation"; the ideal of Classical Greek life and literature.

stasis. "Standing"; civil war within a *polis* along ideological or class lines.

strategos (plural *strategoi*). One of the 10 generals annually elected to the Athenian board (*Strategeia*) instituted in 501/00 B.C. Generals were appointed to specific commands by the assembly and subject to discipline by the popular courts. Leading political figures, such as Themistocles, Cimon, and Pericles, used the position of general to gain ascendancy in the assembly.

symbolos (plural *symboloi*). "Advisor"; Spartan liaison officers attached to contingents of Peloponnesian allies.

symposium. "Drinking along with"; the social settings of many of the dialogues of Plato, in which aristocrats and sophists debated intellectual issues, including the vices of democracy.

synoecism (Greek *synoikismos*). "Dwelling with"; the political unification of lesser settlements or even *poleis* into a single *polis*. In Athenian legend, Theseus had effected the synoecism of Attica.

talent. A measure of weight for large sums of money (coins or bullion). The talent was divided into 60 *minae* or 6,000 drachmae.

Ten Thousand. The force of Greek mercenary hoplites, numbering as many as 13,000, who served in the expedition of Cyrus the Younger, slain at the Battle of Cunaxa in 401 B.C. The Ten Thousand marched out of the Persian Empire; 8,600 survivors reached Trapezus in 399 B.C., and 6,000 returned to western Asia Minor to join the Spartan forces led by Thibron against the Persians.

thesmothetai. The six guardians of the laws on the board of nine *archons* at Athens.

thete (Greek *tes*, plural *thetai*). The lowest Athenian property class under the Solonian constitution; composed of citizens with an annual income of less than 200 *medimnoi*.

Thirty Tyrants (the Thirty). The oligarchic government imposed on defeated Athens by Lysander in 404–403 B.C. The excesses of the regime headed by Critias resulted in its overthrow by a democratic rising led by Thrasybulus.

timocracy. Government by honor; denoted a constitution whereby rights of citizenship were based on honor or rank (*time*). The aristocrats held high offices and sat on the council; men of hoplite rank voted and held minor offices; and the lower classes had only voting rights in the assembly.

trierarch. The commander of a trireme; at Athens, many trierarchs had furnished the trireme under the system of liturgies.

trireme (Greek *trieres*). The principal warship, which used ramming tactics; it was devised by the Phoenicians in the late 7th or early 6th century B.C.

trittys (plural *trittyes*). "Third"; a subdivision of one of the 10 regional tribes of Attica under the reorganization by Cleisthenes in 508–506 B.C. Each tribe was composed of three *trittyes* drawn by lot, one each from the city, coast, and inland *trittyes*. The result was a tribe of three distinct but unconnected geographic units, which broke the regional power of aristocrats in favor of democracy.

trophy (Greek *trophaion*). "Turning"; a hoplite panoply raised on a pole to mark the spot where the enemy had turned and fled in battle.

tyrant (Greek *tyrannos*, plural *tyrannoi*). An Anatolian title of royalty used by Greeks to designate any man who seized power unconstitutionally. Aristotle noted that early tyrants seized power in the name of the hoplites against aristocracies. Tyrants who failed to establish royal dynasties were replaced either by oligarchy or democracy. *Tyrant* is, thus, the equivalent of the modern English *dictator*.

wanax (plural *wanakes*). "Lord"; the royal title of kings in the Bronze Age (1600–1225 B.C.). The Classical Greek form *anax* was a title reserved to Zeus.

zeugites (plural *zeugitai*). "Yoke men"; designated the third property class in Solonian Athens; composed of men with annual income between 200 and 300 *medimnoi*. The *zeugitai* represented men of the hoplite class.

The Peloponnesian War
Part III

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Table of Contents

The Peloponnesian War
Part III

Professor Biography i
Course Scope 1
Lecture Twenty-Five New Leaders and New Strategies 2
Lecture Twenty-Six The Peace of Nicias 5
Lecture Twenty-Seven Collapse of the Peace of Nicias 8
Lecture Twenty-Eight From Mantinea to Sicily, 418–415 B.C. 11
Lecture Twenty-Nine Sparta, Athens, and the Western Greeks 14
Lecture Thirty The Athenian Expedition to Sicily. 17
Lecture Thirty-One Alcibiades and Sparta, 414–412 B.C. 20
Lecture Thirty-Two Conspiracy and Revolution, 411 B.C. 23
Lecture Thirty-Three Alcibiades and Athens, 411–406 B.C. 26
Lecture Thirty-Four The Defeat of Athens, 406–404 B.C. 29
Lecture Thirty-Five Sparta's Bitter Victory 32
Lecture Thirty-Six Lessons of the Peloponnesian War 35
Maps 38
Timeline ..... Part II
Glossary ..... Part II
Biographical Notes ..... Part I
Bibliography 44

The Peloponnesian War

Scope:

Thucydides was an Athenian participant in, and historian of, the Peloponnesian War. Despite his Athenian bias, he has left us a remarkably accurate account of the war and the events and issues leading up to it. His account allows for the study of this first major conflict among Western states with constitutional governments subject to electorates of free citizens. Thucydides not only wrote a military narrative, but also offered his interpretation of politics within Athens, Sparta, and the lesser city-states which influenced the war. It was he who first saw the connection among internal politics, foreign policy, and diplomacy. And he was aware of how fiscal and economic conditions, too, dictated the decisions of the belligerents. Hence, scholars and policymakers since the 19th century have studied Thucydides's account of the Peloponnesian War as a key to understanding war, diplomacy, and politics.

This course has a threefold purpose. First, it is necessary to reexamine Thucydides's thesis that the war was inevitable because of Spartan fear of the growth of Athenian power since 479 B.C. Too often, Athens and Sparta have been viewed as city-states of stark contrasts, whose societies and forms of government made conflict all but inevitable. Yet Spartans and Athenians shared many similarities in their constitutions and society, and they had both been part of the evolution of the wider Hellenic culture since the Homeric Age. A growing body of evidence, along with reexamination of the literary sources, indicates that the Peloponnesians, and particularly the Spartans, were by no means primitive in their fiscal or economic way of life. The Peloponnesians, for example, maintained a creditable fleet through the course of the war. Further, the Spartan victory in 404 B.C. cannot be dismissed simply as a result of Athenian mistakes. Given this new perspective, it is important to reconsider the outbreak of the war: Was it the result of specific actions by the participants or of greater, inevitable forces? A different set of participants and events could well have produced a different outcome.

Second, it is necessary to study the course of the war, for the fighting changed not only weapons and tactics but the very means and aims of waging war. Henceforth, seasonal clashes of citizen hoplites, or heavy infantry, gave way to long-term campaigning by mixed forces of cavalry, heavy infantry, and light infantry (peltasts). The Athenians also pioneered the use of combined naval and land operations. As a result, the costs of war rose, and all the belligerents had to devise new means of covering expenditure. At the same time, the Peloponnesian War demonstrated the decisive roles of generalship, of the courage of soldiers, and of the willingness of citizens to sacrifice for the common cause to win a war. In this regard, Peloponnesians and Athenians were far more alike than different; hence, they waged a ferocious and long war.

Finally, the conflict tested the citizens and the constitutions of each city-state or *polis* (plural: *poleis*). It also eroded the order of Greek city-states and opened a series of struggles among the leading states—Sparta, Athens, Thebes, Argos, and Corinth—to forge a wider hegemony and thus impose order in the Aegean world. This conflict ultimately ended in political stalemate and opened the way for the conquest and unification of the Greek city-states under the Macedonian Kings Philip II and Alexander the Great.

Lecture Twenty-Five
New Leaders and New Strategies

Scope: In 424 B.C., the Athenians executed bold strategies to capture Megara and to impose friendly democratic governments in Boeotia, and thereby break the power of the Peloponnesian League. Athenian generals Demosthenes and Hippocrates secured the port of Nisaea, but the plot to betray Megara miscarried. Later in the year, two Athenian columns were to enter Boeotia while democrats raised revolts in many of the cities there. The democratic risings failed, and the western Athenian column was delayed, allowing the Thebans to inflict a severe defeat on the main Athenian column near Delium. The two defeats dashed Athenian hopes of quick victory. Meanwhile, Brasidas, a veteran Spartan officer, marched a force of mercenaries and freed helots to Macedon, where in alliance with King Perdiccas II he raised new rebellions in the Chalcidice. In a daring winter raid, Brasidas captured Amphipolis, the Athenian bastion on the Strymon River and the base for the mines of Pangaeum. Thucydides, who was serving at the time as a general in the Athenian army, failed to relieve the city. He was exiled by the Athenian assembly and became a historian. In 423–422 B.C., the Athenians committed major forces under Cleon to reconquer the Chalcidice. The fighting climaxed at Amphipolis in 422 B.C., where both Cleon and Brasidas were killed. Both King Pleistoanax of Sparta, recently returned from exile, and Nicias, the conservative opponent of Cleon, suddenly found their respective political opponents in disarray. They moved their cities to conclude a general peace of 50 years, but this Peace of Nicias proved to be peace between political factions rather than between belligerent states.

Outline

I. This lecture discusses the last three and one half years of fighting in the Archidamian War. It investigates why the fighting in this critical period ended in the Peace of Nicias rather than in a decisive victory for either Athens or Sparta.

II. Thucydides saw this period as part of a greater struggle that did not end until 404 B.C. Why, then, did the Athenians and the Spartans agree to a general peace, followed by an alliance, in early 421 B.C.?

- **A.** When this period began in early 424 B.C., the Athenians were at a decisive point. They had gained a considerable advantage by capturing the Spartans on the island of Sphacteria and were able to demand increased tribute from their allies.
- **B.** At the same time, the perception in the Greek world was that the Spartans had suffered a major moral defeat: Their men had surrendered. This fact threw into question the Spartan ability to command and to inspire their citizens to make the supreme sacrifice.
- **C.** In 424 B.C., the Athenian assembly was in no mood to reopen negotiations, and the Athenian strategy had changed from attrition to overthrow. The Athenians looked to central Greece, particularly Thebes, and Megara, two regions critical to the Peloponnesian League.
- **D.** Early in 424 B.C., the Athenians intended to take Megara by cooperating with democrats who were, at that point, tired of the suffering brought on by war and ready to hand the city over to Athens.
  1. Demosthenes and Hipponicus were to sail to Nisea on the Saronic Gulf, the port of Megara. The democrats would take control of the port and their co-conspirators would then open the gates to the main city. The Athenians would occupy the city and effect a change of government.
  2. The Athenians secured the port, but a Spartan officer named Brasidas learned of the attack. He managed to mobilize a force of 6,000 Boeotians and other Peloponnesians to block the Athenians' advance into the main city of Megara.
  3. Demosthenes and Hipponicus had no choice but to retreat to the port; Athenian control there, however, meant that Megara was shut out of the Black Sea trade.
  4. The Athenians were disappointed but not discouraged. They had captured a number of cities along the shores of the Peloponnesus and in central Greece, which allowed them to launch raids against Peloponnesian allies.
- **E.** The second part of the operation involved a three-pronged attack on Boeotia, planned for the summer after Megara had been secured. Again, the initial hope was that democrats could be enlisted in all the cities of Boeotia, other than Thebes, to cast out their oligarchic governments and secede from the federal league.

1. The three-pronged operation involved two Athenian forces and various exiles operating in the city of Orchomenus in western Boeotia. One Athenian column was to be raised at Naupactus in northwest Greece by Demosthenes. Its plan was to land at a small coastal port, Siphae, on the western shores of Boeotia, and advance to the critical city of Chaeronea.
2. The second column was to advance from a base at Oropus in northeast Attica and fortify a position at the township of Delium. Thus, the Athenians would have two strong positions in Boeotia, which would force Thebes to negotiate.
3. The plan completely miscarried. The Thebans learned of the operation, and the rebellions in western Boeotia never took place. When Demosthenes arrived at the shores of Boeotia, a large force of Theban hoplites prevented him from landing.
4. The Athenians under Hipponicus marched into Boeotia and fortified Delium, but on the point of withdrawing they were hit by the full Boeotian levy under a talented Theban general, Pagondas.
5. Pagondas arranged the Boeotian army with a clever weighted wing on his left flank, and they smashed into the Athenian line. The Athenian forces, mostly allies, took heavy casualties, and many were captured.

III. The events of Pylos had led to a reconsideration of strategy, not only in Athens but also in Sparta.

A. The Spartans made a bold decision that is sometimes interpreted as indicating a lack of leadership.
1. The modern image, drawn from Thucydides's text, is of a group of expendable forces entrusted to Brasidas, who is usually portrayed as a maverick, an un-Spartan-like officer.
2. In this view, Brasidas was one of a series of men who emerged during the Peloponnesian War to usurp Sparta's constitution and threaten its traditional government institutions.
3. In Thucydides, however, Brasidas is a product of the Spartan officer system, entrusted with the important mission in northern Greece because he was an able commander of coalition forces and had an excellent record.

B. As Athenian operations in Megara and Boeotia failed, Brasidas readied his forces in the Peloponnesus, a mix of mercenaries and helots. He hoped to acquire more allied forces as he marched north. Once in Boeotia, he made his way to the pass at Thermopylae. He then reached the Spartan base at Heraclea in Trachis and quickly marched across Thessaly.

C. Thessaly was a league of four principal cities, the most important of which, Pherae, dominated the league and had a traditional friendship with Athens. The Thessalian cities enjoyed aristocratic constitutions, and many of them had ties with Macedon.
1. Brasidas made his way across Thessaly into southern Macedon. His objective was to support Olynthus and the Greeks of the Chalcidice, who been in rebellion since 432 B.C., and to raise more rebellions. It was hoped that the rebellions would spread east to the city of Amphipolis, then along the shores of Thrace, and, ultimately, to the Hellespontine region.
2. The Spartans believed that the rebellions would convince the Persian satraps to offer military assistance. But Brasidas quickly found King Perdiccas more interested in conquering Greek cities for his own kingdom than in restoring the "freedom of the Greeks."
3. Nonetheless, Brasidas achieved success; the appearance of a credible Spartan force, combined with resentment of Athens, sparked revolts in the Chalcidice.

IV. The Athenians could not answer Brasidas until the next year, 423 B.C.

A. In the meantime, Brasidas carried out an even more daring raid, slipping his forces into Amphipolis, an inland city on the Strymon River which was a base for exploiting the gold and silver mines of Pangaeum.
1. Amphipolis had been founded as a colony of Athens, but had declared its independence at the time of Brasidas's operation.
2. Thucydides was a general in this region but realized that he would have no success retaking the city. It was this failure that earned him exile and changed his career from general to historian.

B. In the spring of 423 B.C., the Athenians reacted promptly. Major forces were mobilized, and Cleon, general for the year, called for harsh measures against the rebels in the Chalcidice. By the end of 423 B.C., at least 100 triremes were operating in the Chalcidice, along with considerable forces from the hoplite levy.
1. By the end of 423 B.C., the Athenians managed to reestablish most of their positions, while the Spartans realized that Brasidas could not be reinforced.
2. In early 422 B.C., the Spartans proposed an armistice, which the Athenians accepted.

C. By the time Brasidas learned that an armistice was in effect, an important city in the Chalcidice had rebelled from Athens. Brasidas received the city, which voided the armistice.

1. Cleon took additional forces back to the Chalcidice and made for the city of Amphipolis. There, Brasidas attacked Cleon's forces and bested the Athenians. Cleon was killed and Brasidas mortally wounded in the fighting.

2. The deaths of Brasidas and Cleon in the summer of 422 B.C. removed the two most senior (and outspoken) commanders in favor of continuing the war.

D. The battle at Amphipolis brought home a stark reality to both sides: After 10 years of fighting and ruinous losses sustained by both belligerents, neither state was in a position to destroy the war potential of the other.

1. In the last three and one-half years of fighting, the Spartans had ignited revolts, but held uncontested control of only Amphipolis. The Athenians had failed to gain any significant advantage in central Greece. At this point, both populations were morally and emotionally exhausted.

2. The two leaders, King Pleistoanax in Sparta and Nicias in Athens, moved to conclude the Peace of Nicias in May of 421 B.C. The peace was intended to last for 50 years, and was regarded as a formal alliance between Athens and Sparta.

3. Within months of concluding the peace, however, Sparta and Athens were on a course to renew the war.

Suggested Reading:

Eugene N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*.

John Buckler, *The Theban Hegemony, 371–362 B.C.*

Donald Kagan, *The Archidamian War*.

Ronald Legon, *Megara: The Political History of a Greek City-State to 336 B.C.*

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Athenians miscalculate the political situations in Megara and Boeotia when they planned their strategy for 424 B.C.? Was there a failure of Athenian leadership? How does Thucydides view these operations?

2. Why did the Spartans entrust to Brasidas the expedition to the Chalcidice? How accurate is Thucydides's judgment of Brasidas? Was he a threat to the Spartan government or way of life, as is usually argued by modern scholars?

3. Why did Sparta and Athens agree to an armistice in 423 B.C. and a general peace in 421 B.C.? What impact did a decade of war have on the Greek world?

Lecture Twenty-Six
The Peace of Nicias

Scope: In 421 B.C., the Athenian comic playwright Aristophanes staged *Peace*, in which he voiced his relief at the apparent end of the Peloponnesian War. The peace treaty negotiated over the winter of 422–421 B.C., though, was not to last long. Thucydides, then an exile at Sparta, witnessed the ratification of the peace, followed by the formal establishment of an alliance between Athens and Sparta that was supposed to last 50 years. King Pleistoanax, who had been exiled in 446 B.C. for preferring negotiation to battle, won over the majority of the *gerousia* and *ephors* to end the fighting. Nicias, for his part, feared risking his reputation with further fighting, and aspired to the role of a Periclean benefactor in an Athens at peace. The Spartans agreed to return Amphipolis and to give Athens a free hand to put down rebel cities in the Chalcidice in exchange for the release of the prisoners captured at Sphacteria and withdrawal from the fort at Pylos. The Spartans, however, could not force Amphipolis to return to Athenian rule. Further, because the treaty failed to address the demands of Sparta's allies, it was rejected by the Corinthians, Megarians, and Boeotians. The Spartans concluded an alliance (*symmachia*) with Athens, seeking to intimidate the allies into compliance, but this move instead drove the Corinthians to intrigue with other dissident allies, and prompted Argos to undermine the peace over the coming year.

Outline

I. This lecture will review the terms of the Peace of Nicias and address the question of whether or not the treaty had a realistic chance.

- **A.** The treaty takes its name from Nicias, the statesman who negotiated for Athens. King Pleistoanax was the principal negotiator for Sparta.
- **B.** In Thucydides's mind, the Peace of Nicias was nothing more than an extended timeout. He had been exiled for military incompetence in 424 B.C. Over the course of 421–420 B.C., he was likely in the Peloponnesus, moving among guest friends in Corinth, Argos, Thebes, and Sparta and, thus, gives much information about the inner workings and politics of the Peloponnesian League.
- **C.** According to Thucydides, in the period from 421 to 414 B.C., when the treaty was in effect, Athens and Sparta continued to battle through proxies. How accurate that judgment was will be seen later in this lecture.

II. The treaty between Athens and Sparta was ratified in the spring of 421 B.C.

- **A.** The situation was favorable for a treaty. Both Sparta and Athens were war-weary after 10 years of fighting. Further, the principal figures seen as promoting the war—Cleon in Athens and Brasidas in Sparta—had died at the battle of Amphipolis.
- **B.** Nicias had emerged almost unchallenged in the Athenian assembly. He had a credible (although suspiciously "safe") war record, and he wished to play the role of a Periclean benefactor for the Athenian people. Nicias was also known as remarkably pious, perhaps even superstitious. In any case Athenians were willing to listen to him after 10 years of fighting.
- **C.** The Spartan leader, King Pleistoanax, also favored peace. In fact, he had been in exile for nearly 20 years for signing the Thirty Years' Peace in 445 B.C. The result of the negotiations between Nicias and Pleistoanax was less a genuine treaty of peace between Athens and Sparta than an agreement between two men and their supporters who did not want to risk further fighting.
- **D.** By 421 B.C., the Spartans faced other problems that might have pushed them toward peace.
  1. A number of states in the Peloponnesian League, notably Thebes, Elis, and Mantinea, had grown increasingly independent from Sparta during the war.
  2. Further, the Spartans faced the expiration of the peace they had signed with Argos in 451 B.C., and the Argives hinted that they might join the Athenians if some of their demands were not met.
  3. Finally, the Spartans wanted the return from Sphacteria of their prisoners who had been captured in 425 B.C.

III. The terms of the treaty seemed to be workable from both the Athenian and the Spartan viewpoints.

A. The Spartans agreed to recognize the integrity of the Athenian Empire, dropping their commitment to the "freedom of the Greeks," along with the issue of the Megarian Decree.

1. Amphipolis was recognized as an Athenian colony, as were other cities in the Chalcidice. It was acknowledged that Athens had the right to put down rebellions in these cities.

2. Olynthus and its allies were not forcibly returned to Athenian control, but the right of Athens to bring these cities back into the Delian League was recognized.

3. The Spartans also agreed to release all prisoners taken in the fighting, and relinquish a fortress called Panactum in Attica.

4. The issue of Plataea, the Athenian ally in Boeotia now under Theban control, was dropped.

B. In return for Spartan concessions, the Athenians agreed to release prisoners and to evacuate five ports in central Greece and the Peloponnesus.

C. Problems arose when the Spartan allies saw that they had been largely ignored under the terms of the peace; thus, they had little interest in honoring the concessions. Corinth had lost some of its colonies; Corcyra had become a democracy allied with Athens; and the port of Megara was in Athenian hands. As a result, many members of the Peloponnesian League refused to sign the oaths of peace.

D. When the Peloponnesian states rejected the treaty, the Athenians and Spartans concluded a separate alliance (*symmachia*) that was intended to last for 50 years. This full military alliance shocked the dissident states, warning the Peloponnesian League and Argos that Sparta would brook no opposition.

IV. The alliance between Sparta and Athens was a major political mistake.

A. Rather than intimidate the Corinthians, the alliance prompted Corinth to further intrigue. The Corinthian envoys, with the full backing of their state, immediately headed to Argos to establish their own alliance, open to any Greek state except Athens or Sparta.

B. Thebes arranged a renewable armistice with Athens but refused to return Athenian prisoners or to give up the fortress at Panactum. Megara aligned itself with Thebes, while the cities of Mantinea and Elis looked to join the Corinthian alliance with Argos.

C. By the summer of 421 B.C., the Spartans were faced with a group of dissident allies gravitating to such cities as Corinth, Thebes, and Argos, any combination of which could threaten Spartan control of the Peloponnesus.

D. The Spartans were also unable to force the commander Ramphias to deliver any of the concessions in the Chalcidice. He refused, for example, to hand over the city of Amphipolis to Athens. Many Athenians began to believe that the Spartans were acting in bad faith.

E. By the end of July 421 B.C., many in Sparta and in Athens were beginning to doubt whether either city should have signed the treaty. Some Spartans believed that their city had given up too much. From this point of view, Thucydides may have been correct in believing that the treaty was flawed from the start.

F. Aristophanes's play *Peace*, performed in Athens in 421 B.C., offers some evidence for the Athenian viewpoint.

1. In some ways, the play reveals the extent to which the psychological and economic warfare waged by the Spartans had worn down the will of the Athenian people to wage war.

2. A large segment of Athenian society was probably willing to make the peace work if they had the leaders to do so. Pleistoanax and Nicias had signed the peace, but they were unable to articulate why the two cities should pursue it in good faith.

V. Within months, the Peloponnesian allies, led by Corinth, began to undermine the peace. By early 420 B.C., political figures emerged in both Sparta and Athens to incite public anger and to drive the people back to war.

A. The Corinthians went to great lengths to find dissident allies in the Peloponnesus and to convince Argos to lead a coalition against Sparta or to intimidate Sparta into renewing the war with Athens.

1. Their motives in this effort seem irrational: The Corinthians believed that the Peace of Nicias was unacceptable and that renewal of the war was imperative, yet they, of all the allies of Sparta, had suffered most in the war.

2. The Athenians had disrupted Corinthian trade, captured Corinthian colonies, and intervened in Sicily against the friends of Corinth. A leading scholar has argued that the Corinthians never fully recovered from the Peloponnesian War.

3. What drove the Corinthians to intrigue with Argos and dissident Peloponnesian states was their outrage over the successive humiliations they had suffered at the hands of Athens since 433 B.C.

B. The next lecture will address the remarkably devious and clever approach to undermining the Peace of Nicias undertaken by the Corinthians, and how it contributed to the resumption of war by 414 B.C.

Suggested Reading:

Steven Foote, *The Ambition to Rule: Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides*.

Victor D. Hanson, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*.

Donald Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*.

J. B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why were the Athenians and Spartans more willing to negotiate a peace in 421 B.C. than in earlier years? How important were the roles of Nicias and Pleistoanax? Which city gained the most from the Peace of Nicias and the subsequent military alliance?
2. What were the fundamental objections raised by Corinth and the other allies? How important were selfish interests of the dissident states? Should the allies have accepted the Peace of Nicias?

Lecture Twenty-Seven
Collapse of the Peace of Nicias

Scope: The peace and alliance between Athens and Sparta in 421 B.C. alienated leading members of the Peloponnesian League and, in the opinion of Thucydides, doomed peace in the Greek world. Over the course of 421 B.C., the Corinthians sought to build a new alliance around Argos in the hope of shocking the Spartans into renewing the war. Their efforts failed, but Corinthian diplomatic machinations eroded trust between Athens and Sparta. In 420 B.C., the charismatic Alcibiades challenged Nicias and the peace. At Sparta, two *ephors*, Cleobulus and Xenares, intrigued to win over the oligarchs of Argos and thus secure a vital ally to renew the war against Athens. Alcibiades outmaneuvered his foes, domestic and foreign, and concluded a defensive alliance between Athens, Argos, Mantinea, and Elis. In 420 B.C. Alcibiades had the Peloponnesian allies and an Athenian assembly, frustrated by broken Spartan promises, ready to fight a decisive hoplite battle. He advocated support of Argos, a democracy bent on avenging past defeats at the hands of Sparta. Nicias stood for peace with Sparta, recovery of Amphipolis, and consolidation of the empire. At Sparta, too, opinions were divided, but few Spartans wished to renew the war unless the Athenians openly violated the oaths of the treaty. In 418 B.C., Mantinea and Argos, supported by Athens, clashed with the Spartans in a battle that was supposed to decide the issue.

Outline

I. The period from 421 to 418 B.C. saw the Peace of Nicias disintegrate and leaders emerge in both Sparta and Athens willing to consider renewing the war. It ended in a peculiar clash, the First Battle of Mantinea, in 418 B.C., the only major hoplite battle fought in the traditional areas of Greece during the Peloponnesian War.

II. This lecture begins by looking at the Corinthians and their actions that undermined the peace.

- **A.** The Corinthians took the alliance between Sparta and Athens as a challenge. The Corinthian envoys immediately traveled to Argos, where they proposed that Argos elect a board of 12 men to review applications from other states to join a new alliance.
- **B.** The Corinthians planned to have Argos act as the receiver of distant allies in the Peloponnesian League. Eventually, many members of the League would conclude alliances with Argos, and the threat of this coalition would compel Sparta to reconsider the peace and its alliance with Athens.
- **C.** The Argives were willing to go along with this plan for their own purposes. Argos had been the rival of Sparta for control of the Peloponnesus since the 8th century B.C. Argos and Sparta had agreed to a peace of 30 years, but it was due to expire shortly.
- **D.** Argos was interested in heading a new league of Peloponnesians to renew their war with Sparta. For Corinth to deflect Argos away from Sparta and toward Athens, they had to support the aristocrats of Argos in overturning the democracy and instituting an oligarchy. Corinth hoped they could maneuver Argos toward membership in the Peloponnesian League.
- **E.** The Argive assembly established the 12-man panel, and Corinth began to send out envoys encouraging various members of the Peloponnesian League, along with Thebes, to join the Argive alliance.
- **F.** The Corinthians were playing a dangerous game, as evidenced by the fact that the Argive alliance attracted more foes of Sparta than of Athens.
  1. The first city to join the alliance was Mantinea. The Mantineans were rivals to the people of Tegea, who were, in turn, staunch Spartan allies. The Mantineans had superb hoplites, and they had territorial claims against both Tegea and Sparta.
  2. The Mantineans were quickly followed by the Eleans, who controlled northwest Greece and had territorial disputes with Sparta, as well.
  3. Corinth had no choice but to join what was becoming an anti-Spartan league. Corinth tried to convince Tegea, Megara, and Thebes to join, but these efforts foundered.
  4. By early 420 B.C., the Corinthian gambit of creating a new alliance around Argos that could be handed over to Sparta to use against Athens was falling apart.

III. Although the Corinthians' initial plan seemed to have failed, they had sown enough ill will across the Peloponnesus and in Athens to prompt political figures in both the Athenian and Spartan assemblies to consider renewing the war.

A. In the case of Sparta, two of the *ephors*, Xenares and Cleobulus, engaged in their own secret diplomacy with Corinth in hopes of furthering the Corinthian plan. This incident indicated the depth of resentment that had emerged in Sparta over the Peace of Nicias and the sense that the Spartans had let their Peloponnesian allies down. The Spartans, however, would require clear violations of the oaths sworn in the spring of 421 B.C. to be willing to rupture the peace.

B. The Athenians tended to conduct diplomacy openly, and settle such issues by debate and vote in the assembly. By early 420 B.C., a new figure emerged, Alcibiades, who opposed the policy of peace, and was a serious challenger to Nicias. At the time, many Athenians were also beginning to think that the Spartans were acting in bad faith.

1. Alcibiades was about 30 years old in 420 B.C. When his father, Cleinias, a prominent politician, fell at the Battle of Coronea in 447 B.C., Alcibiades was taken in by Xanthippus, the father of Pericles.

2. From a young age, Alcibiades saw himself as the political heir to Pericles and the tradition of democratic reforms sponsored by a noble family.

3. Alcibiades also made an important marriage that linked him to Cimon, the conservative opponent of Pericles. This, too, influenced his political thinking. He believed that he would be the greatest political leader since Pericles, as well as the greatest general since Cimon.

4. Alcibiades had a reputation as a great orator and an outrageous public figure. By age 30, he had entered seven chariot teams at Olympia, had dabbled in the Sophistic movement, and had been accused of "impious activities."

C. In 420 B.C., the Spartans sent a mission to Athens to explain, among other things, the delays in the return of prisoners and the relinquishing of the fort at Panactum.

1. Although Alcibiades was the *proxenos* of Sparta, he duped the envoys into claiming before the assembly that they were part of a preliminary embassy without powers to negotiate. In fact, the opposite was true, but Alcibiades promised to support the Spartans if they followed his strategy.

2. When, in the assembly, the envoys said that they did not have full powers, Alcibiades immediately turned on them and declared that Sparta was not serious in its attempts to make the peace work.

3. The Athenian assembly dismissed the Spartan embassy, and Alcibiades then introduced envoys from Argos, Elis, and Mantinea, who invited Athens to join their alliance.

D. Thucydides records the treaty among these city-states, which stipulated that any member of the alliance could invoke the other three to furnish aid in the event of an attack. By agreeing to the alliance, the Athenians entered a bizarre situation.

1. They had a treaty and a 50-year alliance with Sparta, and at the same time alliances with two former members of the Peloponnesian League and with Sparta's foe Argos, which was on a collision course with its rival.

2. The Spartans were undoubtedly outraged by the events in Athens, and by the summer of 420 B.C., a series of inconclusive border clashes resulted between Argos and Sparta.

3. Technically, both Sparta and Argos could have summoned Athenian aid. Athens stayed out of the fight for the first two years, but in 418 B.C., as hostilities escalated, Argos made a serious appeal to Athens. At that point Athens began to send forces into Argos.

E. As the Athenians, Spartans, and Argives moved toward the battle at Mantinea, the Corinthians hatched another plan more dangerous than their first.

1. The first plan had been to build an oligarchic alliance around Argos that would join with Sparta in a war against Athens.

2. Now, Corinth planned to drive Argos into the arms of Athens, in the hope that such an alliance would frighten Sparta into renewing war with Athens.

F. In the summer of 418 B.C., after nearly two and one-half years of inconclusive border fighting and diplomatic maneuvers, two great armies were again in motion—one from Sparta, one from Argos—moving toward Mantinea and bent on fighting a traditional hoplite battle. At stake was the hegemony of the Peloponnesus.

Suggested Reading:

E. F. Bloedow, *Alcibiades Reexamined*.

Walter M. Ellis, *Alcibiades*.

Steven Foote, *The Ambition to Rule: Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Corinthians intrigue to renew the war against Athens? Was this a rational policy? What were the flaws in creating a new alliance around Argos? Why did oligarchic states refuse to join?
2. In 421–420 B.C., what was public opinion at Athens and Sparta over the Peace of Nicias? Why did the Athenian and the Spartan assemblies desist from declaring war? Was the failure of the Peace of Nicias inevitable, as Thucydides claims?
3. Did Alcibiades represent the best leadership for Athens? What were his motives and ambitions? Was the cautious policy of Nicias sounder for Athens?

Lecture Twenty-Eight
From Mantinea to Sicily, 418–415 B.C.

Scope: In 418 B.C., Alcibiades achieved his aggressive objective in the Peloponnesus by orchestrating the alliance that fought Sparta at the First Battle of Mantinea, the second major hoplite battle during the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides, who must have consulted with King Agis II, gives an accurate report of hoplite fighting based on eyewitness testimony. Despite intense fighting on the Spartan left wing, the battle proved inconclusive. The Spartans claimed victory, but this hardly restored their reputation in the Greek world. At Athens, the assembly was politically deadlocked, and an ostracism in 417 or 416 B.C. failed to resolve the issue of leadership between Nicias and Alcibiades. In the winter of 416 B.C., Alcibiades championed the envoys of Segesta, an Athenian ally in Sicily, to intervene against Selinus, a Corinthian colony and friend of Sparta. Thucydides presents this appeal as an isolated event seized upon by Alcibiades and the assembly to launch an ill-advised western adventure. With the Peloponnesian theater closed, though, the Athenians turned to Sicily in 415 B.C. in the hopes of gaining a decisive advantage over Sparta.

Outline

I. This lecture considers the final stages of the disintegration of the Peace of Nicias and the events leading to the Athenian launch of their great expeditions into Sicily to defeat Syracuse and Selinus.

- **A.** To move from the Peloponnesus to Sicily, it is necessary to explore two major topics—the Battle of Mantinea and a section of Thucydides's history known as the Melian Dialogue. The previous lecture described how the Battle of Mantinea was expected to settle the issues in the Peloponnesus and, perhaps, determine the hegemony of Greece.
- **B.** The Melian Dialogue is recorded as a conversation between the council of Melos and the Athenian officers who sought to subject the island to the will of Athens. Thucydides uses this exchange not only to investigate Athenian imperialism but also to cast light on the changing opinions in Athens since 421 B.C.

II. The Battle of Mantinea was the culmination of about two and one-half years of indecisive fighting and political maneuvering.

- **A.** The Spartans hoped that this battle would restore their reputation in the Peloponnesus. The Spartan commander was the young King Agis II, assisted by 10 *symboloi* who had mobilized various allied contingents. The senior king, Pleistoanax, was committed to the Peace of Nicias and in favor of accommodation with Athens.
- **B.** Agis had a number of friends in Argos and had tried several times to convince aristocrats in the city to overthrow the democracy and perhaps to undermine Argos from within. At the same time, the Argives were fighting for domination of the Peloponnesus, which Sparta had wrested from them in the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.
- **C.** Thebans pursued an independent policy. They controlled the city of Megara and encouraged the Thessalians and others to destroy the Spartan base at Thermopylae. Thebes hoped to gain control of all of central Greece, from Thermopylae to the Isthmus of Corinth.
- **D.** Alcibiades encouraged the efforts of the Argives and Thebans in opposition to Sparta. He hoped that the Battle of Mantinea would be the final element in a diplomatic plan to bring down Sparta.
  1. Although it seems audacious, Alcibiades's policy was actually quite conservative. He intended to fight the Spartans primarily with Peloponnesian allies; few Athenian citizens would be put at risk.
  2. Many in Athens disagreed with this policy, including Nicias and other, more experienced demagogues. The Athenian assembly was divided, and Alcibiades had difficulty implementing his strategy.

III. All the combatants—Athens, Argos, and Sparta—hoped that the Battle of Mantinea would solve their problems, but that was not the outcome.

- **A.** In the summer of 418 B.C., King Agis II was forced to call out the full levy of the Spartan army, as well as their immediate allies. Thucydides appears to have interviewed the king after the battle, but Agis may have given him misinformation about the exact number of Spartan troops. There were probably 10,000 to 12,000 Spartan hoplites, the majority massed in the center and on the right wing of the line.

B. The Argives had also called out their full levy and were supported by Mantinean allies and by an Athenian contingent. The Argives put their main levy in the center and gave the left wing to the Athenians. The Argive forces were massed on the right to overcome the Spartan left.

C. When the battle opened, the Argives swept around the Spartan left, and the Spartans threatened to crush the Argive-Athenian left.

1. Agis realized that as his army drifted to the right, his left wing would become detached, and a gap would open between the left and center. He ordered subordinate officers on the far right to move their regiments into the gap, but they refused.

2. The Mantinean and Argive forces swept into the gap, pushed back the Spartan left, and then, rather than win the battle, decided to sack the Spartan camp.

3. As the center of the Spartan army advanced, the Argives panicked, broke, and ran. The Spartans pursued and killed many of them.

4. The Spartans, who had essentially won in the center, turned on the Argive right flank, which had defeated the Spartan left flank, and massacred the Mantineans.

D. The battle that had promised to decide the issue did not. The fighting had been tough and the Mantineans lost many men, but most of the Argives escaped and the Athenians withdrew in good order. Politically and diplomatically, the situation had not changed.

IV. By the summer of the following year, 417 B.C., King Agis had the opportunity to march out against the Argives, but Alcibiades found himself in a difficult position. Since 420 B.C., he had advocated overthrowing the Spartans, but now Nicias began to emerge in the assembly and remind the Athenians that the peace was still officially in effect.

A. The Athenians had fought only as proxies or allies to the Argives and remained in alliance with Sparta. At the same time, Athens had other concerns, notably Amphipolis and the Chalcidice, which were still not under their control. By the terms of the Peace of Nicias, Athens had the right to put these areas under its dominion.

B. Thus, Nicias began to urge caution, to back off from confrontation with Sparta. The scholar Donald Kagan has noted that the Athenians were faced with two choices after the Battle of Mantinea: either to escalate the confrontation with Sparta or to pursue a policy of accommodation. Alcibiades, of course, would lose in the latter scenario.

C. In 417 B.C., an ostracism took place which Alcibiades hoped would resolve the issue by eliminating Nicias. This ostracism was apparently the climax of a debate over which policy Athens should pursue. It involved several contenders—Nicias, Alcibiades, and others.

1. When the vote for the ostracism came up, neither Alcibiades nor Nicias knew what the assembly would decide. They agreed to pool their voters and ostracize a political hack named Hyperbolus.

2. Both Nicias and Alcibiades remained leading figures; the assembly remained factionalized.

V. Under these circumstances, the Athenians launched an expedition against the city of Melos, an island *polis* in the Cyclades, in 416 B.C.

A. Melos was an oligarchy and claimed to be a neutral colony of Sparta. The Athenians sent envoys before the council of Melos, who engaged the Melians in an abstract debate.

B. In Thucydides's dialogue, the Melians appeal to fair play, but the Athenian envoys reply that as the stronger power, their state has the right to prevail over the weaker. The Melians then claim that Sparta will help them, but the Athenians are unimpressed. Finally, the Melians ask why, if their *polis* is so insignificant, Athens has any interest in it. The Athenians reply that, as a naval power, they cannot allow any state to escape. (Many believe that this exchange, as recorded by Thucydides, is his own creation.)

C. In any case, the Melians rejected the Athenian demands to become an ally of Athens, and were put under siege. The island *polis* was reduced, and Melos was settled by Athenian colonists.

D. Thucydides's rendition of this incident, however, is not completely accurate. He seems to have left out some information, including that Melos was not as neutral as it claimed. It had contributed to the Spartan war fund in 427 or 426 B.C. and had likely failed to pay tribute to Athens after an attack in 425 B.C.

E. The dialogue, however, brings forth an important point: The arguments made by the envoys were probably repeated by Athenian diplomats and generals throughout the course of the Athenian hegemony, revealing them to be unabashed and shameless imperialists.

F. Thucydides also uses this dialogue to prepare the reader for the next issue that would come before the Athenian assembly—an appeal from Segesta, an ally in Sicily, for aid against Selinus, a Corinthian colony.

G. The Athenian assembly, at this point, was more than inclined to accept this appeal because it promised a new theater of operations. In Sicily, Athenian forces could be released to win great victories, amass enormous resources, hurt the Peloponnesians, and carry out a strategy of overthrow in the west which had failed in the Peloponnesus.

Suggested Reading:

E. F. Bloedow, *Alcibiades Reexamined*.

Steven Foote, *The Ambition to Rule: Alcibiades and the Politics of Imperialism in Thucydides*.

Jacqueline de Romilly, *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How was the First Battle of Mantinea a classic clash of hoplites? What does the battle reveal about Spartan military institutions? Was the Spartan victory decisive, at least tactically?
2. Did the indirect clashes and war by proxy of Athens and Sparta have to end in the outbreak of a general Hellenic war? What objectives did Athens and Sparta wish to achieve in 418–415 B.C.?
3. What was Thucydides's purpose in including the Melian Dialogue in his history? What is the value of this unique passage in understanding Athenian aims and imperialism?

Lecture Twenty-Nine
Sparta, Athens, and the Western Greeks

Scope: In the winter of 416 B.C., Alcibiades championed the envoys of Segesta, an Athenian ally in Sicily, to intervene against Selinus, a Corinthian colony and friend of Sparta. Thucydides presents this appeal as an isolated event seized upon by Alcibiades and the assembly to launch an ill-advised western adventure. Yet the Athenians were aware of the power of Syracuse, founded by Corinth in 734 B.C. Dorian, Locrian, and Achaean colonies in southern Italy and Sicily had been linked by kingship, cults, and trade to the Peloponnesian League since the 6th century B.C. Syracuse controlled a rich agricultural hinterland and supplied grain, olive oil, horses, and timber to the Peloponnesus. In the early 5th century B.C., the Deinomenid tyrants of Syracuse ruled over eastern and southeastern Sicily. In 480 B.C., the tyrant Gelon defeated the Carthaginians at Himera, and thus secured peace and prosperity in Sicily. Gelon's victory proved the demise of tyrants, who were overthrown within the next 15 years. Cities adopted oligarchic and timocratic constitutions. Syracuse clashed with the Ionian cities of Leontini, Naxos, and Rhegium, which looked to Athens for support. From 427 to 424 B.C., Athenian squadrons intervened in Sicily to prevent aid from reaching the Peloponnesus. With the Peloponnesian theater closed, the Athenians turned to Sicily in 416 B.C. in the hopes of gaining a decisive advantage over Sparta. In 415 B.C., after a heated debate between Alcibiades and Nicias, the Athenian assembly voted to send out the largest overseas expedition since 455 B.C.

Outline

I. Why did the Athenians decide to invade Sicily under the guise of supporting the city of Segesta?

- **A.** The Athenian assembly's decision to accept appeals for aid from Segesta, as well as from Rhegium and Leontini, is taken by Thucydides and many ancient authors as the height of folly. In some ways, this acceptance was linked with the Athenians' failure to achieve a military or diplomatic breakthrough in the Peloponnesus since 420 B.C.
- **B.** This lecture considers the Athenian interest in Greek Sicily, which long antedated the decision in the Athenian assembly, voted in the winter of 416–415 B.C., to send a large fleet and army to Sicily in 415 B.C. The importance of Sicily and southern Italy in the wider Greek world will also be considered.

II. The Greeks called southern Italy (the toe and heel of Italy) "Magna Graecia," "Great Greece," largely because of the wealthy colonies there.

- **A.** Southern Italy was divided into two sections. The toe and heel were colonized by various peoples from the Gulf of Corinth, with the exception of a Spartan colony in Taurus (modern Toronto). The other Greek colonies were largely Ionian and clustered on the Bay of Naples, including the city of Rhegium.
- **B.** Sicily was very different from those two areas of southern Italy, and it, too, was divided into two zones.
  - **1.** Its southern and the eastern shores were largely Dorian colonies, the most notable of which was Syracuse, founded by Corinth in 734 B.C., and Selinus.
  - **2.** The northern part of the eastern shore was the basis for mostly Ionian colonies, including Leontini; on the northern shore, the only Greek colony was Himera.
- **C.** All these colonies had important trade connections with the Greek world, but note the colonization patterns: The colonies were either tied to Corinth, Sicyon, Sparta, and the Peloponnesian League or to the cities of Euboea. Athens had very little interest, and no serious colonies or connections, in these regions.
- **D.** Throughout the Archidamian War, the Athenians had good reason to believe that these cities would send ships, grain, timber, and manpower to sustain the Peloponnesian effort. However, the Sicelots, that is, the Greeks of Sicily, and the Italiots, the Greeks of Italy, faced their own problems in the west, primarily with the rising power of Carthage.
  - **1.** Carthage was settled by colonists from Tyre in Phoenicia c. 814 B.C. It emerged as the leading Punic (Phoenician) commercial power in the western Mediterranean.
  - **2.** Carthage maintained several important bases in western Sicily and formed alliances with native peoples, including the Segestans.

3. The Sicelots felt a constant danger that Carthage would attempt to take over the island, and in 480 B.C. the Carthaginians attempted just that. Theron, the tyrant of Himera, and Gelon, the tyrant of Syracuse, defeated the Carthaginian army.
4. This victory caused Carthage to retire from Sicily and turn its attentions to Africa. For Syracuse and other cities in Sicily, the victory over Carthage resulted in a brief Golden Age of culture and wealth under the tyrants.
5. Within 15 years, however, all the tyrannies had fallen, and by about 460 B.C. all the governments in Sicily were primarily oligarchies, with some democratic components. The political pattern in Sicily looked very similar to that in the Greek world of the Classical age.

III. Given this political similarity, it is not surprising that the Peloponnesians and the Athenians believed that the Greeks of Sicily might be valuable allies (or, in the case of Athens, dangerous foes) when hostilities erupted in 431 B.C.

A. Athens had few friends in the west at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. In 433 B.C., Leontini and Rhegium had allied with Athens largely because they feared Syracuse. Athens's other ally was Segesta, a native Sicilian city that had transformed itself into a Greek *polis*.

B. During the Archidamian War, these allies summoned aid from Athens. The Segestans were at loggerheads with Selinus, and Leontini and Rhegium were having problems with Syracuse.

C. Athens responded in 427/6 B.C. with a force of 20 triremes under two commanders, Laches and Charaoedes. By that point in the war, the Athenians were clearly winning in northwest Greece. They had disrupted Corinthian trade and won a decisive advantage over the Peloponnesians. The next step was a move to Sicily.
1. The Athenians sailed around the Peloponnesus and up the coast of northwest Greece, then crossed over to southern Italy. There they gave support to Leontini and Rhegium, and managed to prevent Syracuse from sending grain and aid to the Peloponnesians.
2. The Athenians also captured the city of Messina, giving Athens control of the narrow straits between Italy and Sicily.
3. When reports of these operations reached Athens, the decision was made to increase the commitment in Sicily. Another fleet of 40 ships was sent out in 425 B.C.; this force seized Pylos and then continued on to Sicily.

D. When the ships arrived in Sicily in 424 B.C., they encountered a changed situation. The Sicilian Greeks had been fighting for three years. The Athenians backed the Ionians, while Syracuse and Selinus were technically allied to the Peloponnesians. The fighting consisted of raids in which each side ravaged the fields and shipping of the other. The situation was, essentially, a military and political stalemate.

E. Syracuse took the initiative in settling this deadlock, under the direction of Hermocrates, a Syracusan citizen of high rank. A conference was called in Gila, in southeastern Sicily, to which all the Greeks of Sicily and Rhegium were invited to send delegates.
1. The Sicilian Greeks managed to arbitrate their own disputes; thus, the Athenian forces newly arrived in Sicily were told that they were no longer needed.
2. The situation was embarrassing. When the generals returned to Athens, they faced penalties from the assembly.

F. In 416 B.C., therefore, when Segesta and Leontini again made appeals, the Athenians were willing to listen, not only because of the current situation in the Aegean world, but also because they had the impression that Sicily was a decisive theater of operation.
1. The Segestans were pressed by Selinus and Syracuse, and the Carthaginians would offer them no aid. Envoys from Leontini told the assembly that the power of Syracuse was on the rise.
2. Thus, the Athenian assembly, probably in early 415 B.C., voted to send a force of 60 triremes to Sicily to aid these allies.

G. Originally, it was to be a naval expedition, with no land forces. The intention was to attack Syracusan shipping and detach allies from Syracuse. The operation to be led by Alcibiades, Lamachus, and Nicias would not involve any major risks to the Athenians.
1. In a second meeting of the assembly, however, the Athenians voted to send a massive fleet of more than 135 triremes and cargo ships, plus a huge army.

2. In so augmenting the expedition, the assembly changed the aims of Athens in the west. They escalated the war and at the same time courted disaster in what would come to be known as the Sicilian expedition.
3. The failure of this expedition would lead the Spartans to reopen the war and, eventually, to bring down the Athenian Empire.

Suggested Reading:

John Boardman, *The Greeks of Overseas*.

Thomas H. Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks: The History of Sicily and South Italy from the Foundation of the Greek Colonies to 480 B.C.*

Peter Green, *Armada from Athens*.

Donald Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did travel and trade by sea link the Greek colonies of southern Italy and Sicily with the cities of the Corinthian Gulf and central Greece? How did this western trade contribute to the economic and military power of the Peloponnesian League?
2. How did the political geography of Greek Sicily favor Spartan interests in 431 B.C.? What were the aims of Athenian intervention in 427–424 B.C.? What accounted for the success of Hermocrates at the conference of Gela?
3. Why did the Athenians vote to accept the appeal of Segesta in 415 B.C.? How did partisan politics and diplomacy in 420–415 B.C. influence the Athenian decision? How accurate is Thucydides's assessment of the Athenian decision?

Lecture Thirty
The Athenian Expedition to Sicily

Scope: In 415 B.C., Athens voted to send 135 triremes and more than 5,000 hoplites under the generals Alcibiades, Lamachus, and Nicias to assist Segesta against Selinus. The size of the force indicated that their real objective was Syracuse. The Athenians failed to define their priorities well, however, and elected a board of generals who were bound to clash. Nicias, who opposed the expedition, repeatedly urged delay. Alcibiades intrigued to win over Sicelot and Italiot cities, but was recalled to stand trial for impiety at Athens and soon defected to Sparta. Lamachus, the most experienced commander, lacked the prestige of Nicias. Thus the campaigning season of 415 B.C. was wasted on secondary objectives. The Athenians won a battle before Syracuse but withdrew to winter quarters at Catana. In 414 B.C., Lamachus and Nicias returned, surprising the Syracusans. The Athenians fortified a base and put in place siege works to cut off the city. Under Hermocrates, the Syracusans built counter walls to deny the Athenians the Epipolae, the heights overlooking the city. Lamachus fell in one of the skirmishes. Nicias, in sole command, soon lost the initiative. He failed to gain the Epipolae, and he failed to prevent the Spartan officer Gylippus from entering Syracuse with reinforcements. Nicias, rather than abandon the siege and risk prosecution, dishonestly induced the Athenians to vote a second expedition under Demosthenes in 413 B.C. When this force arrived, Nicias was besieged in his camp, and the Syracusans launched a fleet. When a night attack failed to gain the Epipolae, Demosthenes urged withdrawal. Nicias delayed for a month, and the retreat ultimately deteriorated into a rout and the slaughter of the Athenian forces at the Assinarus River. The magnitude of the defeat stunned the Greek world; suddenly, the initiative had shifted to Sparta.

Outline

I. The Sicilian expedition sailed from Athens in the summer of 415 B.C. and ended up besieging the city of Syracuse for almost two years before retreating under the command of Nicias and Demosthenes. The expeditionary force was destroyed on the banks of the Assinarus River on September 18, 413 B.C.

- **A.** Thucydides's account of the Sicilian expedition contains the most dramatic writing of his entire history. He indicates that the expedition failed largely because the Athenian assembly failed to support the generals fighting overseas.
- **B.** Events as reported in Thucydides's history, however, suggest a different story: The blame seems to fall squarely on Nicias's shoulders.
- **C.** This discrepancy within the history raises questions about Thucydides's interpretation of the war and his growing disenchantment with the Athenian democracy.
  1. Thucydides was the first writer to recognize that the aims of the assembly in voting for the Sicilian expedition were unrealistic.
  2. According to Thucydides, the Athenians had grandiose ideas of conquering Italy and Carthage. The expedition, however, was preceded by careful planning, and it was Nicias who must bear responsibility for its failure.

II. The expedition was initially to involve only 60 fast triremes, that is, ships that did not carry land forces.

- **A.** An expedition of this size would depend on the assistance of allies, notably Leontini and Segesta and perhaps Rhegium, Catana, and other cities that feared Syracuse's rising power. The three Athenian generals selected to lead the expedition were Nicias, Alcibiades, and Lamachus.
- **B.** Five days after voting this expedition, the Athenian assembly met again to consider logistics. Thucydides records three speeches from this meeting, two by Nicias and one by Alcibiades.
  1. Nicias opposed the expedition and attacked Alcibiades personally, accusing him of aspiring to tyranny.
  2. Alcibiades turned the accusation against Nicias and questioned whether the latter was putting personal animosity over policy.
  3. In a second speech, Nicias stressed the magnitude of the opposition and warned that an expedition to the west would require extensive provisions and forces.
  4. The assembly took Nicias's warnings as recommendations and voted an expanded expedition. The result was that 134 triremes set sail with a hoplite army of 5,100 men.

C. By changing the size of the expedition, the assembly was implicitly expanding its aims to encompass the conquest of Syracuse and, ultimately, all of Sicily.

D. Bold leadership in 415 B.C. might have delivered Syracuse to Athens.

1. Syracuse at this point was politically divided, and many Syracusans did not believe reports that Athens was preparing a huge expedition.

2. Hermocrates, the gifted politician, urged action by his fellow Syracusans. He was opposed, however, by the demagogue Athenagoras, who claimed that Hermocrates's warnings were a ruse to allow the aristocrats to seize power and suppress the democracy in Syracuse.

3. Thus, the Syracusans took no defensive measures. When the Athenian forces arrived in the summer of 415 B.C., Syracuse was completely unprepared.

III. A reconnaissance force of 10 Athenian triremes, led by Lamachus, sailed into the Great Harbor of Syracuse and found no opposition. Ultimately, however, the expedition would run into serious problems.

A. Before the expedition sailed, an incident occurred in Athens that was regarded as an ill omen. The herms of the city, guardian male figures that stood in front of private homes, were suddenly mutilated. This vandalism was likely sponsored by oligarchs hoping to delay or cancel the expedition.

1. Rumors spread that Alcibiades was involved in the mutilation, based on his reputation and outrageous lifestyle.

2. Alcibiades was later brought up on charges in absentia. Rather than return to stand trial, however, he fled to Sparta.

B. Most cities in Sicily and Italy did not welcome the expedition. Only Leontini and Segesta received the Athenians. Segesta, which had promised to pay for the expedition, did not in fact have the resources to do so. At that point, Nicias recommended that the expedition return to Athens, but such a reversal was clearly not an option.

C. Lamachus and Alcibiades insisted that the expedition go forward. Alcibiades managed to win over the city of Catana, on the eastern shore of Sicily, through his diplomatic skills. Catana would have become the Athenian base in eastern Sicily, but before Alcibiades could win over any more cities he was forced into exile.

D. By the fall of 415 B.C. only two generals remained—Nicias, the senior commander with a reputation for inaction, and Lamachus, a general who had a good military record but was otherwise unknown.

IV. Much of the summer had been wasted, and in the fall of 415 B.C. Nicias reluctantly agreed to attack Syracuse.

A. To understand what took place, the topography of Syracuse must be considered.

1. The island of Ortygia lay at the north end of the entrance into a great harbor. On the southern side of the tip was an area known as Plemmyrion, which was later fortified by the Athenians. The harbor had a narrow entrance.

2. Above Ortygia and the immediate area of primary settlement on the mainland was a set of heights known as the Epipolae, strategically valuable for anyone wishing to control the city.

B. The Athenians sailed into the harbor without opposition and landed at the Anapus River. In a hoplite battle, they drove back the Syracusans, but because it was late in the season they then returned to Catana and wintered there in 415–414 B.C.

C. The Athenians reappeared in the harbor in the spring of the next year, landed their forces, and began to build a series of walls cutting across the Epipolae, with the intention of blockading the city and starving it into submission. The Syracusans could do little to oppose this maneuver except to build counter walls.

D. Syracuse seemed to be doomed, but Hermocrates emerged as a leader and sent messages to Sparta for help. The Spartan assembly agreed to send aid to Syracuse and declared war on Athens, claiming that the siege of the city violated the Peace of Nicias. A small force of hoplites was sent out, commanded by an officer named Gylippus.

E. Two crucial events occurred in the summer of 414 B.C. which changed the dynamics of the siege and put the Athenians in jeopardy.

1. First, Lamachus was killed, and Nicias was left in sole charge of the expedition. Almost immediately, the Athenians lost impetus and initiative.

2. Because Nicias failed to press the completion of the blockading walls, Gylippus was able to land his forces at Himera and march overland into the city of Syracuse.

3. Gylippus and his forces built a counter wall across the Epipolae and took command of the heights. The Athenian fleet on the beaches was now sealed off and in danger of being encircled.

F. Nicias should have pulled out at this point. Instead, he wrote a letter to the Athenian assembly claiming that he was too sick to command and needed assistance. The assembly voted a second expedition to sail in the summer of 413 B.C., commanded by Demosthenes.

G. Meanwhile, Gylippus and Hermocrates summoned allies from across Sicily, and the Syracusans launched fleets in early 413 B.C. Two great naval battles were fought in the harbor.

1. In the first battle, the Athenians were able to drive the Syracusans back from the beach, but the garrison at Plemmyrion was captured in the fighting. The Syracusans then began building barriers to close off the entrance to the harbor.
2. In a second battle, the Syracusans surprised the Athenians during their midday meal and captured a number of unattended ships.

V. The Syracusans were ready to close in for the kill when the second Athenian expedition arrived, probably in late July or early August 413 B.C.

A. Demosthenes was shocked that Nicias had allowed the situation to deteriorate so. He saw that only two options were available; the Athenians must either take the Epipolae or retreat to Catana. He attempted a night attack on the Epipolae, but many of his forces became confused in the dark, and some 2,000 men fell to their deaths from the heights.

B. Demosthenes urged Nicias to retreat, but Nicias was afraid that such a move would ruin his career. The Athenians tried repeatedly to break out of the harbor, but were beaten back. Finally, the decision was made to burn the ships, then march up the Anapus River and northwest to Catana.

1. For four days, the Athenians tried to fight their way up the Anapus River, but they were attacked repeatedly by the Syracusans.
2. Nicias and Demosthenes agreed to change their direction to the south. Over the next two days, the Athenians desperately tried to retreat while under attack.
3. On September 18, 413 B.C., Demosthenes and the rear guard surrendered. Nicias and the main force pressed on to the Assinarus River, where they lost all discipline. Soldiers trampled each other in the river, were swept away, or were killed by Syracusan forces posted on the opposite bank.

C. Finally, Nicias implored Hermocrates and Gylippus to stop the slaughter, and surrendered the remaining forces on terms. The expedition was a complete catastrophe. Some 160 ships were lost, along with thousands of Athenian soldiers.

D. At the same time, the Spartans suddenly found themselves in a position to wage war in the Aegean and finally bring down the Athenian Empire.

Suggested Reading:

Thomas H. Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks: The History of Sicily and South Italy from the Foundation of the Greek Colonies to 480 B.C.*

Victor D. Hanson, A *War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*.

L. J. Sanders, *Dionysius I of Syracuse and Greek Tyranny*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What influenced Thucydides's judgment on the significance of the Sicilian expedition? Why does he place blame on the Athenian assembly and demagogues?
2. Why did the Athenians not assault Syracuse immediately in 415 B.C.? How well did Lamachus press the siege in 414 B.C.? Why did Nicias lose the initiative? How important were the generalships of Hermocrates and Gylippus for Syracuse?
3. Does Nicias merit the primary blame for the destruction of the expedition in 413 B.C.? Why did the Athenians vote the second expedition under Demosthenes? At what point was the destruction of the expedition inevitable?

Lecture Thirty-One
Alcibiades and Sparta, 414–412 B.C.

Scope: In 415 B.C., Alcibiades was well received in Sparta. He had powerful friends there, including King Agis II and Endius, *ephor* of 412 B.C. Thucydides credits Alcibiades with the recommendations that gained Sparta victory eight years later, but the historian has exaggerated the role of his fellow Athenian aristocrat. Alcibiades, who was likely the source of Thucydides's information on the later years of the war, emphasized his central role in events of 415–411 B.C. Alcibiades chose voluntary exile rather than face prosecution on charges of sacrilege, which were likely trumped up by his political opponents, Athenian aristocrats who despised the democracy. Alcibiades added his voice to those denouncing Athenian actions in Sparta. In 414 B.C., the Spartans declared war because they viewed the Athenian attack against Syracuse as a violation of their treaty. The Spartans fortified Decelea and besieged Athens for the next 10 years, but they could not gain the advantage, and the Athenians sent a second expedition against Syracuse in 413 B.C. In 412 B.C., with news of the Athenian defeat, Sparta ordered a new fleet and courted Chios, Miletus, and other Ionian cities to raise rebellions in the Athenian Empire. Sparta opted to cooperate with Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap at Sardis, rather than his colleague Pharnabazus, satrap of the Hellespontine regions. Sparta had to agree to a high price for Persian support: the return of the Greeks of Asia to the Great King. Alcibiades, however, fled again and offered his services to Tissaphernes, who pursued a policy of limited support of Sparta in hopes of wearing down both Greek powers. For his part, Alcibiades planned a return to Athens.

Outline

I. This lecture discusses the opening stages of the Decelean or Ionian War, that is, the third phase of the Peloponnesian War, which lasted from 414 to 404 B.C.

- **A.** The Athenian attack and siege of Syracuse led to Sparta's declaration of war in the summer of 414 B.C.
- **B.** This lecture and the following ones deal with the final collapse of Athenian power in the Aegean, and highlight some important historical problems.
  - **1.** For example, toward the end of 411 B.C., the account of Thucydides ends and we must turn to later authors. These later accounts include *Hellenica* of Xenophon, the record of Diodorus Siculus, the *Lives* of Plutarch, and a peculiar source known as the *Hellenica Oxyrhyncia*.
  - **2.** Further, the commonly held misperception that the Spartans achieved victory only by selling out the Greeks of Asia Minor to the Persians must be addressed.

II. In 414 B.C., the Spartans felt compelled to declare war again.

- **A.** The situation in Sicily looked dismal, and envoys had been sent to Sparta from Segesta and Syracuse. Alcibiades was in exile in Sparta but had gained the trust of the Spartans and was allowed to speak in the assembly.
  - **1.** Thucydides records a speech of Alcibiades (probably written from an account provided by the speaker himself), in which Alcibiades urges the Spartans to fortify the position of Decelea in Attica and keep Athens under siege year-round.
  - **2.** Later that year, King Agis enacted this strategy, launching a siege of Athens that would last for 10 years.
- **B.** This undertaking would not be easy for the Spartans, but they believed that oaths had been violated in the attack on their fellow Dorians in Sicily. They also went into the war without any expectation that the Persians would bankroll them to victory.
- **C.** By the end of 413 B.C., however, it seemed that the Sicilian disaster had turned the tide against Athens. The Spartans realized that they could take advantage of significant Athenian losses in money and manpower.
  - **1.** The Athenians still had 100 triremes in reserve, but they lacked experienced crews to row them and money to pay the rowers.
  - **2.** As a result, the Athenians devised creative fiscal measures, including imposing additional war taxes, abolishing the tribute and replacing it with an *ad valorem* tax on goods, and electing a committee (the *proboule*) to supervise money and strategy.

D. Meanwhile, the Spartans were mobilizing forces to launch a credible fleet in the Aegean. The Spartans had a system in place to handle naval warfare that included a *navarch* (admiral) and the ability to instruct their allies to build ships according to specifications. They also solicited aid from dissident allies in the Athenian Empire.

E. In the summer of 412 B.C., the Spartans launched a fleet carrying Alcibiades and his friend Endius, the *ephor* of the year, as political advisors.

III. The Spartans had invitations from the two Persian governors of western Asia Minor to cooperate against the Athenians.

A. Pharnabazus, the satrap of a region in northwestern Turkey, invited the Spartan fleet into his territory to interrupt the grain supply to Athens. Tissaphernes, the satrap in Sardis, offered to cut a deal with the Spartans to regain Persian control of Ionian cities in Asia Minor in exchange for cash.

B. The Spartan decision to go with Tissaphernes and set up a base at Miletus was based largely on logistics and sailing conditions. It had the added benefit of fomenting rebellions in Ionia. Alcibiades, who had sailed with the Spartan expedition, provided the Spartans with entrée to aristocrats dissatisfied with Athenian rule.

C. With the assistance of Alcibiades, the Spartans negotiated the Treaty of Miletus in 412 B.C. In the treaty, Tissaphernes agreed to pay the crews of the Peloponnesian fleet operating in the eastern waters of the Aegean, but he was stingy and late in his payments. The idea that the Persians bankrolled the Spartan victory is misleading.

IV. Although the Spartans had an advantage, they were reluctant to take on the Athenian fleet head to head.

A. After the Spartans established their base at Miletus, an Athenian fleet appeared under the command of Phrynichus, a well-known democratic leader and a political enemy of Alcibiades. This Athenian force landed on the peninsula of Miletus and defeated the Peloponnesians and Milesians in a hoplite battle.

B. Instead of attempting another siege so soon after the disaster in Syracuse, the Athenians pulled back and set up base on the island of Samos, opposite Miletus. Thus, the campaigning season of 412 B.C. ended in a suspension of hostilities.

C. The prospects for 411 B.C. looked good for the Spartans. They planned to build up their forces, then sail up the west coast of Asia Minor and enter the Hellespont, where they would force the Athenians to fight.

D. A peculiar turn of events in 412 B.C., however, made a dramatic change in the strategic situation.

1. Alcibiades had established himself as the chief negotiator between the Spartans and Tissaphernes, the Persian satrap at Sardis.

2. Late in 412 B.C., news reached the Spartan fleet at Miletus that King Agis's wife was pregnant; it quickly became clear that the father was Alcibiades, not the king. Agis was enraged and the Spartan assembly was aghast.

3. When Alcibiades realized that his days with the Spartans were numbered, he immediately traveled to Sardis and offered his services as an advisor to the satrap.

4. Alcibiades advised Tissaphernes not to support the Spartans vigorously and to entertain overtures from Athens. This policy would keep the two states at war, and eventually they would wear each other down.

5. Tissaphernes probably did not need this advice, but Alcibiades also reinforced an idea that had already occurred to the satrap: If the Spartans won the war, they would not become dutiful allies of Persia. The Peloponnesian army in Asia Minor, in fact, might be a more dangerous opponent than the Athenian fleet in the Aegean.

E. An even more remarkable turn of events occurred in 411 B.C. that would help restore Alcibiades to Athenian favor and recall him to lead Athenian forces, effecting a dramatic military recovery that promised to win the Peloponnesian War for Athens.

Suggested Reading:

Robert J. Buck, *Thrasybulus and the Athenian Democracy: The Life of an Athenian Statesman*.

Walter M. Ellis, *Alcibiades*.

Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the Spartans vote for war in 414 B.C.? What were their prospects for victory? How did the Athenian defeat in Sicily alter the strategic situation in 412 B.C.?
2. How important was Alcibiades in directing Spartan strategy in 414–412 B.C.? In what ways was his assistance invaluable to Sparta?
3. What were the aims of the satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus? Was Persian aid ever likely to be decisive in determining the course of the Peloponnesian War?

Lecture Thirty-Two
Conspiracy and Revolution, 411 B.C.

Scope: In 412 B.C., the Spartans had decided to commit their efforts to Ionia, because Chios offered ships and the satrap Tissaphernes had greater financial resources. This decision proved fateful, because a strike into the Hellespont would have disrupted grain shipments to Athens and perhaps ended the war. In 411 B.C., the Athenians responded with characteristic resilience, launching a new fleet that concentrated at Samos and threatened Sparta's allies in Ionia. Athens, however, lacked men and money. With so many thetes and hoplites serving in the fleet, the aristocrats, long critical of democracy, seized the opportunity to stage a coup. Peisander and Phrynichus convinced moderate democrats such as Theramenes to restrict the democracy in a bid to gain Persian aid, arguing that the Persian king would be more inclined to support an oligarchy than a democracy. A Council of Four Hundred was selected to draw up a new constitution, in which 5,000 citizens with hoplite status would have full rights. In truth, many aristocrats who made up the Four Hundred aimed to overthrow the democracy and, if possible, turn the city over to Sparta. The oligarchic conspirators, however, had to contend with Alcibiades, who promised to deliver Persian aid. Alcibiades, however, duped Tissaphernes and the Athenian oligarchs by divulging the plot to the Athenian fleet at Samos. The coup collapsed, and the Athenians at Samos recalled Alcibiades from exile and elected him general. With Alcibiades's inspired leadership, Athens regained the initiative.

Outline

I. The year 411 B.C. was significant for two reasons. First, the Spartans, Athenians, and Persians expected this year to be decisive in the war. Second, this was the year when Athens abolished the democracy for a short time and adopted a form of government known as the *patrios politeia*, the "ancestral constitution."

- **A.** A remarkable set of events led to this decision, which was embraced by most Athenians, including the upper and the hoplite classes. Alcibiades promoted the idea for his own reasons, as did a group of oligarchs who had long been dissatisfied with democracy and were willing to surrender the city to Sparta in exchange for the right to rule Athens.
- **B.** The willingness of many Athenians to abolish their democracy in 411 B.C. is interesting given that, as has been said, the Peloponnesian War involved citizens themselves defining the war aims, determining strategy, and voting their own destinies. In the aftermath of the Sicilian expedition, many Athenians believed that they needed to restrict some of the excesses of the democracy.
- **C.** In 412 B.C., measures had been taken in this direction, including the establishment of a commission to supervise finances and strategy, issues that were traditionally controlled by the assembly. It is possible that Alcibiades and the oligarchs duped the Athenians into abolishing the democracy in the belief that they were voting merely for temporary restraints on political action in order to win the war.

II. Several factors were in play in 411 B.C.

- **A.** Thucydides says that Alcibiades schemed among various oligarchs and enemies of the democracy to limit the government in Athens and to win aid from Persia. Part of that plan was for Alcibiades to be recalled, and then for him to negotiate with the Persians.
- **B.** At the time, Alcibiades was in a city called Magnesia ad Maeandrum, within reach of both the Athenian fleet at Samos and the Peloponnesian fleet at Miletus. He intrigued with both Athenian and Spartan contacts to engineer his recall to Athens, while assuring Tissaphernes that he could deliver any Greek ally the satrap desired.
- **C.** In Athens, the public was aware that Sparta had concluded an alliance with the Persian satrap and feared the arrival of a Phoenician fleet.
  1. Under these circumstances, moderate democrats were willing to entertain restrictions on the democracy, believing that a more limited government would gain them favor and, perhaps, aid from the Great King of Persia, Darius II.
  2. In fact, Darius was more concerned with regaining Ionian cities and islands than with the intricacies of Greek constitutions.

D. In 411 B.C., the aristocrats sought to persuade the assembly, particularly members of the hoplite class, to limit the democracy, establish an oligarchy, and contact the Persian governor in Sardis for military aid. Their real aim was to overthrow the democracy and hand the city over to Sparta.

E. Remarkably, the assembly swallowed these arguments and voted itself out of existence for a brief time. Alcibiades, although no friend to many of the oligarchs, exploited their scheme to secure his own recall to Athens. With his return, however, the city would not be handed over to a foreign power; Alcibiades's goal was to be a tyrant of Athens.

F. The oligarchs used a combination of political intimidation and constitutional legitimacy to take power. Gangs were organized, and several demagogues were killed in the *agora*. King Agis II of Sparta, kept informed of events in Athens, undertook constant military demonstrations in Attica. The city reached a state of anxiety.

III. The oligarchs moved quickly, undertaking a number of constitutional subterfuges to take power.

A. They first convinced the Athenian voters to hold an assembly at Colonus to modify the constitution in order to obtain Persian aid. Only men of the hoplite class—conservative, moderate democrats—would be likely to attend this meeting outside the city.

B. At the meeting, Pythodorus, an oligarch, moved to remove the *graphe paranomon*, that is, the political safeguard put in place to ensure that any unconstitutional measure raised in the assembly would be immediately tabled and sent to a court. Once the *graphe paranomon* was removed, the oligarchs proposed a number of other measures.

C. Historians have both a record of this meeting thanks to Thucydides and an account by Aristotle discovered in the late 19th century. In his account, Aristotle includes the two constitutions that were voted at this assembly.

1. The first constitution called for the establishment of what is known as the Four Hundred, a temporary *boule* that included oligarchs and leading men of the propertied classes.

2. The Four Hundred dismissed the democratic *boule* and became, essentially, a sovereign body. It was charged with drafting a new constitution of the Five Thousand. Under this arrangement, a new register of citizens would be drawn up, the thetes would lose voting rights, and restrictions would be placed on the assembly. This moderate constitution would ensure Persian aid.

3. In fact, the Five Thousand was a political fiction to satisfy the moderates among the Four Hundred. It was never supposed to come into existence.

D. An embassy sent to secure Persian aid for the Four Hundred arrived first at the fleet in Samos, where they encountered protests from the Athenian navy. Those in the fleet remained suspicious of the oligarchs' scheme, and a number of generals and officers who were inclined to accept the Four Hundred were replaced with democrats. The Athenian armed forces began to operate as the assembly of Athens *in absentia*.

E. When the embassy arrived in Sardis, it came up against Alcibiades, who knew that the oligarchs intended to betray Athens. Of course, neither could Alcibiades deliver Persian aid, but he kept the oligarchs at bay with outrageous demands that torpedoed the negotiations. The envoys were forced to return to Athens, leaving the oligarchs in a dangerous position.

F. Alcibiades then contacted friends in the fleet, who convened an assembly of the sailors and hoplites.

1. Alcibiades told his fellow Athenians that the Four Hundred planned to hand their city over to the Spartans.

2. The assembled men voted a condemnation of the Four Hundred and demanded that the constitution of the Five Thousand be implemented immediately. They also recalled Alcibiades from exile and elected him general on the spot.

G. The fleet was determined to sail to Athens immediately, which would have provoked a civil war, but Alcibiades prevented this move.

1. Instead, he put together a mission of respected officers of the fleet to request the implementation of the Five Thousand at Athens.

2. Of course, the oligarchs had never intended to implement that government. When the hoplites took action, tearing down the walls of a fortress in the Piraeus, most of the oligarchs fled.

IV. The Five Thousand was implemented for about eight months. According to Thucydides, it was the least objectionable government available to Athenians at the time.

A. The Spartan force that was supposed to be admitted into the Piraeus found the city barred. This fleet sailed around Attica and raised a rebellion in Euboea, then moved into the north Aegean, raising rebellions among the islands there and along the shores of Thrace.

B. The Spartan fleet at Miletus took little action during these proceedings, but when Peloponnesian forces moved into the Hellespont, an engagement took place that resulted in a victory for Athens and the reestablishment of the radical democracy.

C. By 410 B.C., the constitution of the Five Thousand had fallen and full democracy had been restored. Over the next six years, Alcibiades and another general, Thrasybulus, would preside over a remarkable military recovery on the part of the Athenians.

Suggested Reading:

Charles Hignett, *A History of the Athenian Constitution*.

Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*.

Jennifer T. Roberts, *Athens on Trial: The Anti-Democratic Tradition in Western Thought*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What was the strategic situation for Sparta and Athens in 411 B.C.? What were the aims of the satrap Tissaphernes? What do the events of 411 B.C. reveal about the nature of Athenian politics?

2. What led to the downfall of the Four Hundred? What were the roles of the moderates and those perceived as democrats? Why did Thucydides render such an odd judgment on the government of the Five Thousand?

Lecture Thirty-Three

Alcibiades and Athens, 411–406 B.C.

Scope: In 411 B.C., King Agis at Decelea and the Spartan fleet at Miletus waited on Athenian political events in hopes that pro-Spartan oligarchs would betray Athens, while the oligarchic conspirators instigated revolts in the Athenian Empire. But the abortive coup galvanized Athenians into united action: The fleet at Samos recalled Alcibiades from exile and elected him general. Alcibiades adroitly precipitated the downfall of the Four Hundred without a civil war, and he and Thrasybulus cooperated in containing the Spartan fleet at Miletus. The new Spartan *navarch*, Mindarus, had shifted the theater of operations to the Hellespont in hopes of cutting off the Athenian grain supply. In early 410 B.C., Alcibiades and Thrasybulus won a decisive battle over the Peloponnesian fleet at Cyzicus. Mindarus went down with the entire fleet. Over the next three years, Alcibiades and Thrasybulus secured the Hellespontine and northern Aegean waters. The Spartans, with assistance from the satrap Pharnabazus, constructed a new fleet at Antandrus, but the Athenians held the initiative. In 408 B.C., Alcibiades was received in triumph at Athens, and in the next year he set out with major forces to engage the new Spartan *navarch*, Lysander. However, the strategic situation changed for Athens with the arrival at Sardis of the Persian prince Cyrus the Younger.

Outline

I. The period between 411 and 407 B.C. was a critical one in this phase of the Peloponnesian War, the Ionian War.

- **A.** Athenian recovery in this period was closely tied to the generalships of Alcibiades and Thrasybulus, who directed Athenian naval forces as a team.
- **B.** The Athenian position was not hopeless, and Spartan victory was by no means inevitable, nor was it purchased with Persian money.

II. This lecture begins with the situation in 411 B.C. in the wake of the political turmoil in Athens.

- **A.** With Alcibiades, Thrasybulus, and Theramenes (who together had brought down the Four Hundred in Athens), the Athenians had the best leadership they had seen since the death of Pericles. These three men coordinated the policies and strategies that allowed Athens to recover from the reverses of just two years earlier.
- **B.** Part of the success of Athens in recovering may be attributed to the extent of its naval and financial resources, and to the fact that, despite rebellions, many cities remained loyal to Athens.
- **C.** The Peloponnesians, too, had considerable resources, including a sizable fleet, an efficient system of contributions among the allies, and effective *navarchs*.
- **D.** In late 411 B.C., a new *navarch*, Mindarus, arrived at Miletus and decided to move his fleet into the Hellespont. This move by Mindarus was intended to force a decisive battle in the narrow waters of the Hellespont, because the Athenians could not risk the interruption of the grain trade coming in from the Black Sea.
  - **1.** Strategically, this operation was well planned. The advance squadron that had arrived some weeks before Mindarus had raised rebellions in Byzantium and other important cities that threatened to interrupt the grain trade.
  - **2.** When Mindarus entered the Hellespont, the Athenians had no choice but to follow. They engaged the Spartans at Cynossema and handed them a sharp defeat. The Spartans were driven back to Abydos, and Sestos was secured as an Athenian base.
- **E.** With the Athenians now back in the saddle, Alcibiades arrived in the Hellespont in 410 B.C. and, with Thrasybulus, carried out a daring attack on the Peloponnesian fleet, which had moved its base to Cyzicus.
  - **1.** As Thrasybulus lured the Peloponnesians out to sea, Alcibiades landed hoplites on shore and quickly captured the Spartan base. He then launched his ships to hit the Peloponnesians in the rear.
  - **2.** Most of the 85 Peloponnesian ships were captured, burned, or wrecked.
  - **3.** Hermocrates rallied many of the survivors, who escaped overland to Persia. When news of the defeat reached Sparta, orders were sent out to rebuild the fleet. In this instance, resources and facilities made available by the Persians made a significant difference in the Spartans' ability to recover.

III. In 410 or early 409 B.C., as this new fleet was under construction, the Spartan government sent an embassy to Athens proposing a cessation of hostilities for 30 years.

A. The Athenian assembly, having just won two smashing naval victories, was in no mood to negotiate, and the Spartans did not offer much in the way of concessions. When the Athenians rejected the treaty, the Spartans had no choice but to redouble their efforts to rebuild their fleet.

B. Between 410 and 408 B.C., Alcibiades and Thrasybulus conducted a stunning series of operations in the Hellespont and northern Aegean waters.

1. Alcibiades was careful not to pursue the type of harsh punishment imposed on rebellious cities that had characterized the Athenians in the Archidamian War. Instead, he used his diplomatic skills and aristocratic contacts to talk cities into negotiating and, ultimately, returning to the Athenian alliance.

2. Alcibiades essentially ignored the Ionian ports, which were more of a liability to Sparta at this point than an advantage, and concentrated on the cities of the Hellespont. Steadily, over three years, Thrasybulus and Alcibiades brought these cities back into the alliance.

3. Some of the measures used by the Athenians looked forward to new approaches to alliance. For example, Alcibiades negotiated with Byzantium to set up a customs house there, with fees and tolls going to Athens, rather than requiring tribute from the Byzantines.

C. By the end of 408 B.C., the strategic advantage in the north Aegean had shifted dramatically to the Athenian side.

IV. The Spartans encountered several other problems in the same period.

A. By 409 and early 408 B.C., the situation in Sicily had changed. Carthage had decided to renew its drive to conquer Sicily and had sent in a vast mercenary army to sweep across the island. The Carthaginians captured Salinas and Himera and even threatened Syracuse.

B. Under these circumstances, the Syracusan squadrons had to be recalled from their maneuvers with the Peloponnesian forces. Hermocrates was ultimately exiled by the Syracusan government, and the city only saved itself by putting into power a tyrant named Dionysius, who defeated Carthage.

C. Thus, the Spartans lost some of their most important naval contingents and perhaps one of the most experienced officers fighting in the Ionian War, Hermocrates. By 408 B.C., the Spartan position in the Aegean looked dismal.

V. Alcibiades, who had been elected general successively since 411 B.C. *in absentia*, received credit for the Athenian successes in the Aegean and the Hellespontine regions.

A. Alcibiades could not return to Athens until the charges of sacrilege against him were rescinded. When that was accomplished, and with the Hellespontine region secure, Alcibiades sailed back to Athens with a major contingent in 408 B.C.

B. Our account of this event comes from Plutarch rather than Thucydides. Alcibiades's return was, perhaps, one of the greatest events of the 5th century. No Athenian citizen, not even Cimon in the 470s B.C., was ever welcomed with the same enthusiasm as Alcibiades.

C. Once in Athens, Alcibiades led a procession to Eleusis and carried out the purification of the sanctuary there. Since 414 B.C., the sacred route to Eleusis had gone unused because of the threat of Peloponnesian attack. With this bold move, Alcibiades ensured that his piety was no longer in question.

D. At the same time, the Athenians conducted impressive building programs on the Acropolis. Between 410 and 406 B.C., repairs were made to the Parthenon, the Erechtheum was constructed, some of the lesser sanctuaries were expanded, and building programs were conducted across Attica—all in the midst of wartime. Such activities were an audacious demonstration that Athens had recovered.

E. In the elections of 407 B.C., Alcibiades was enthusiastically returned as general for the fifth time. He requested and received from the assembly an enormous fleet. By the end of the year, he planned to regain all of the Athenian Empire, then turn to negotiations with Sparta.

1. But when Alcibiades set sail, he did not know that he faced two new opponents who would thwart his ambitions and serve as the architects of Spartan victory.

2. These two opponents were an unlikely pair—Lysander, the new *navarch* from Sparta, and Cyrus the Younger, a prince from Susa and the younger son of King Darius II.

Suggested Reading:

Robert J. Buck, *Thrasybulus and the Athenian Democracy: The Life of an Athenian Statesman*.

Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire*.

David M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia: Lectures at the University of Cincinnati, Autumn 1976, in Memory of Donald W. Bradeen*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Was Alcibiades indispensable to the Athenians? In what ways did he resemble Pericles as a democratic leader? In what ways was he a demagogue or even an aspiring tyrant?
2. Why were the Hellespontine regions so vital to Athens? Even with the recovery of these regions in 410–408 B.C., what were the prospects for Athenian restoration of the rest of their empire? Should the Athenians have accepted the peace offer of the Spartans in 410 B.C.?

Lecture Thirty-Four

The Defeat of Athens, 406–404 B.C.

Scope: The Spartans, often dismissed by Thucydides as the most convenient of foes, have seldom been credited with their victory over the Athenians. Athenian mistakes and the financial support of the Great King of Persia are cited as the main causes for Athenian defeat in 404 B.C. But these two explanations are, at best, only partly true. The Persian satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus and, later, Prince Cyrus the Younger agreed to pay the wages for Peloponnesian triremes operating only in Aegean or Hellespontine waters. Further, under the Treaty of Miletus, this Persian subsidy was treated as a loan. Twice, timber and facilities were offered by Persia to enable the Peloponnesians to replace fleets lost at Cyzicus (410 B.C.) and Arginusae (406 B.C.). Otherwise, Sparta had to launch the fleets and win the war at sea. Lysander, the *navarch* of 407 B.C., won the confidence of Prince Cyrus the Younger, and the two men cooperated in the naval war to defeat Athens. In a daring surprise attack at Aegospotami in 405 B.C., Lysander captured the Athenian fleet, cut the grain shipments to Athens from the Euxine lands, and thus compelled the surrender of Athens in the spring of 404 B.C. Yet victory came with a price, because Lysander and Cyrus both threatened to assert themselves at the expense of their respective legitimate governments.

Outline

I. The last three years of the Peloponnesian War, 406–404 B.C., witnessed a dramatic turn of events, ending in a decisive naval battle at Aegospotami. The Spartan commander Lysander surprised and captured the entire Athenian fleet. How did this reversal come about?

II. Between 411 and 407 B.C., the Athenians mounted nothing short of a miraculous recovery.

- **A.** This recovery was largely the responsibility of three men—Thrasybulus, Alcibiades, and Theramenes.
  - **1.** Thrasybulus was a convinced democrat and an able tactician. Alcibiades had the strategic vision and the eloquence to persuade the assembly to follow him. Theramenes was the son of a prominent Athenian democrat and an important political figure himself; he had emerged as the voice of moderation during the scandalous events of 411 B.C.
  - **2.** When Alcibiades set sail for Ionia in 406 B.C., the Athenians had every expectation that the success of this team would continue, but, as noted in the last lecture, they now faced two new opponents.
- **B.** The first of these was the Persian prince Cyrus the Younger, the second son of Darius II.
  - **1.** In 407 B.C., Cyrus was sent to the western provinces to press Persian interests there. He arrived in Sardis with wide powers to coordinate Persian strategy in western Asia Minor.
  - **2.** Cyrus anticipated making a bid for his father's throne, and he concluded that a decisive Peloponnesian victory would serve this interest. If he supported the Peloponnesians vigorously and helped them end the war quickly, they would provide him with mercenaries and money for his return to Susa.
- **C.** At the same time that Cyrus took up his residence at Sardis, the Spartans sent a new *navarch*, Lysander, to the base at Miletus.
  - **1.** Lysander is a difficult figure to comprehend. In some ways, he is seen as the epitome of Spartan moral and social decline, although he was a product of the Spartan training system.
  - **2.** Lysander was a polished courtier. When he arrived at Miletus, he quickly grasped the situation and appreciated Cyrus's aims. Cyrus, in turn, recognized Lysander's ability to achieve victory.
- **D.** Cyrus delivered substantial amounts of money to the Peloponnesian fleet; the men received pay raises, and supplies were plentiful. Desertions from the Athenian navy to the Peloponnesian fleet increased.
- **E.** Lysander hoped that he could use this extraordinary situation to acquire a position of primacy in Sparta. Both Cyrus and Lysander saw victory over the Athenians as an instrument for carrying out their own` political ambitions.

III. Even with Cyrus and Lysander working together, a Peloponnesian victory was not assured. As Plutarch tells us, Alcibiades himself was partially responsible for the turn of events in 407–406 B.C.; he had become his own worst enemy.

- **A.** The military activity in that year was indecisive, with little active fighting, but Cyrus made an important move by transferring the Peloponnesian base to the then-modest port city of Ephesus. In 406 B.C.,

Alcibiades transferred the Athenian base to the port of Colophon at Notium, opposite Ephesus, and left in charge there his senior helmsman, Antiochus.

B. Antiochus had been ordered not to engage in battle, but he was easily lured out to a tactical defeat by Lysander in the summer of 406 B.C. Twenty Athenian ships were captured or damaged, and the assembly was angry at Alcibiades for leaving Antiochus in charge. Rather than return to Athens and face charges, Alcibiades chose voluntary exile.

C. At this point, Lysander was also recalled to Sparta. His term of office had expired, but unlike Alcibiades, he had ended the year with great credit. The Spartans sent out a new man, Callicratidas, to take over the position of Lysander.

D. Callicratidas had no intention of playing courtier to Cyrus. He removed the Peloponnesian base from Ephesus to Miletus, but Cyrus then withdrew Persian money and provisions. Callicratidas realized that he would have to win a decisive battle before his money and supplies ran out and he lost the loyalty of his men.

IV. That battle, at Arginusae, came about late in the year 406 B.C., probably in September or October.

A. At this point, the Spartans had more than 150 ships at sea, at least 120 of which were brought to Arginusae. The Spartans also had many experienced sailors who had defected from the Athenian fleet.

B. In contrast, the Athenians were in a difficult position. Money and manpower were in short supply, some 40 of their triremes were bottled up at the city of Mytilene, and a new crop of generals was in command.

C. In the summer of 406 B.C., the Athenians launched a fleet of 155 ships to break the siege of Mytilene and rescue the fleet there, under the command of Conon. For his part, Callicratidas detached a force to keep Conon trapped in Mytilene.

D. The battle took place among the Arginusae islands. The Peloponnesian line extended more than a mile, with the ships intending to use ramming tactics. The Athenians arranged their ships in an unconventional double formation to counter such tactics.

E. The battle was fought all day. Eventually, Callicratidas's right wing was encircled, and some 70 Peloponnesian ships were captured or destroyed; the rest were chased back to Chios. The Athenians had won a spectacular victory, yet some 25 Athenian ships had been damaged.

F. Orders were given for the Athenian survivors to be rescued, but the weather turned foul, and the orders were not carried out. The survivors drowned and the dead were not recovered for burial. The Athenians rejoiced at the victory but were enraged at the loss of both the living and the dead.

1. Two of the generals involved chose voluntary exile rather than face charges, but six returned to Athens.

2. In a heated assembly in October 406 B.C., the six generals were tried together and summarily executed. The assembly would soon regret this action.

V. In 405 B.C., the Spartans offered a peace negotiation, but the Athenians would not negotiate unless their former allies in Ionia were surrendered by Sparta.

A. To continue operations, the Spartans were forced to request money from Cyrus. Lysander was appointed *epistoleus*, secretary to the *navarch*, which enabled him to negotiate with Cyrus on behalf of the Spartan government.

B. Lysander was able to rebuild the Spartan fleet quickly, and in the summer of 405 B.C. sailed to the Hellespont. The Athenian generals in the region had grown timid and lax, even rejecting the tactical advice of Alcibiades. At Aegospotami, Lysander managed to surprise and capture the Athenian fleet on the beaches.

C. Lysander now occupied the grain route, the Hellespont. He then moved through the cities of the Aegean, raising rebellions among various oligarchic factions, installing garrisons, and imposing *decarchies*, that is, government by the rule of 10 oligarchs.

1. Athens swelled with refugees as Lysander's actions drove colonists back to the city. Athens was also under siege by land and had no choice but to surrender as Lysander prepared to move his fleet against the city.

2. The terms were negotiated by Theramenes, who hoped he could convince the Spartans to spare the city and give the Athenians the chance to live under their traditional constitution, the *patrios politeia*.

3. Lysander had received the Athenian surrender and, as will be seen in the next lecture, believed he had the right to impose the Spartan settlement.

Suggested Reading:

E. F. Bloedow, *Alcibiades Reexamined*.

Peter Krentz *The Thirty at Athens*.

David M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia: Lectures at the University of Cincinnati, Autumn 1976, in Memory of Donald W. Bradeen*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How important was Persian financial aid for the Peloponnesian fleet? How were the Spartans and Persians more rivals rather than allies in a common war against Athens?
2. How were Lysander and Cyrus the Younger decisive to Spartan victory? What were their ultimate aims? How was Lysander the architect for the Spartan naval hegemony in the Aegean world? Was a clash between the Spartans and Persians inevitable after the defeat of Athens?

Lecture Thirty-Five
Sparta's Bitter Victory

Scope: After 404 B.C., Sparta imposed oligarchic governments in allied cities of the former Athenian Empire. Ancient authors and modern scholars have exaggerated the extent of Spartan demographic, institutional, and moral decline. The Spartans reasonably expected to maintain their hegemony over the Greek world, and King Agesilaus gave Sparta charismatic leadership for the next generation. The Spartans, however, refused to surrender the Greeks of Asia; thus, they backed the abortive bid of Cyrus the Younger for the Persian throne in 401 B.C. and found themselves in a general war with King Artaxerxes II. In 396 B.C., Artaxerxes resorted to diplomacy and subsidies to raise a coalition of Athens, Thebes, Corinth, and Argos against Sparta. The ensuing Corinthian War (396–386 B.C.) ended in a peace dictated by the Persian king. The Spartans assumed a lesser role in Greece, returning the Ionian cities to Persian rule and recognizing Athenian independence. Victory over Athens in the Peloponnesian War gained Sparta not primacy in the Greek world but a succession of desultory wars that ended in Spartan defeat at Leuctra in 371 B.C. and undermined the order of Greek city-states which had been in place since the 6th century B.C. Peace and unity would be imposed by the king of Macedon, Philip II, and Alexander the Great.

Outline

I. This lecture reviews the immediate aftermath of the Peloponnesian War and explores what the Spartan victory meant for Greece.

- **A.** Scholars often refer to the period immediately following the Peloponnesian War, from about 404 to 371 B.C., as the "Spartan hegemony." Many would consider this the period when Sparta worked out the results of her bitter victory over Athens.
- **B.** This lecture examines the impact of the victory on Sparta and Spartan institutions as well as on Athens. Within a short time after the surrender of Athens, the democracy was restored and the city regained much of its former economic position.
- **C.** This lecture also includes a brief look at Thebes, Corinth, and other city-states, to see how they fared as a result of the Peloponnesian War.

II. The Spartans had fought an extraordinarily long war by Greek standards—27 years—and they had won that war in their opponent's element—at sea. Their victory resulted in the dismantling of the Athenian Empire.

- **A.** Some scholars assert that in order to win the war the Spartans had to adapt or abandon their institutions and to set aside constitutional safeguards; that achieving a victory on the seas would have been impossible under their traditional system.
- **B.** This argument can be addressed, in part, by returning to Lysander, who is often singled out as the architect of initiated or accelerated moral, social, and economic decline of Sparta.
  - **1.** In 404 B.C., Lysander, at the height of his power, was given the authority to choose who would run Athens. Eventually, a council known as The Thirty was formed, to whom was given all the executive and legislative power in the Athenian state.
  - **2.** As Lysander moved through the Aegean in 405 and 404 B.C., he cast out democracies and installed power groups comprised of 10 aristocrats, known as *decarchs* (*decarchy* is "rule of 10"). In many cases, the men Lysander chose were his personal friends, not necessarily friends of Sparta.
  - **3.** Further, Lysander often promised cities that they could return to self-government under the *patrios politiea* ("ancestral constitution"), but once he had a city in his power, he essentially did as he wished.
  - **4.** Lysander was not above breaking oaths, and in this he was not a typical Spartan. Many mistakenly conclude that his standards and behavior must reflect a general moral decline in Sparta.
- **C.** The war had imposed a great strain on all members of the Peloponnesian League, and no doubt the population of Spartans citizens had declined, but so did that of the other belligerents.
  - **1.** Changes in the Spartan military, for instance, can be identified, but it is difficult to know their full significance.
  - **2.** At the Battle of Plataea in 479 B.C., Spartans and *perioikoi* were brigaded separately; by the time of Pylos in 425 B.C., they were brigaded together. Does this represent an effort to augment manpower

because the citizen body was smaller, or was it a move to break down territorial regiments and create a more general unit?

D. Some writers argue that the Spartans were corrupted by the influx of money. Gylippus, the victorious commander at Syracuse, was accused of embezzlement in his final days serving with Lysander. But it is not known if his case was exceptional or typical.

E. It has also been argued that the Spartans won the war by selling out the Ionian Greeks.

1. Persian aid was decisive at two points in the last stage of the Peloponnesian War. In 410–409 B.C., the Spartans were able to rebuild their fleet after the loss of Cyzicus thanks to the Persian satrap Pharnabazus. Further, Cyrus the Younger helped the Spartans to recover their naval position after the defeat at Arginusae.

2. This aid, however, was always provisional. It was restricted only to the Spartan fleet serving in the Aegean, not extended to the fleets in the Saronic Gulf or the Corinthian Gulf or to the Peloponnesian army fighting in Attica.

F. The idea that Lysander was both the architect of victory and the instigator of Sparta's downfall is overdrawn. In 403 B.C., Lysander's position as secretary to the *navarch* expired, and he stepped down. He did not return to power until 399 B.C., during a succession crisis.

G. Finally, it should be noted that the Spartans were, in fact, willing to fight for the freedom of the Greeks. To be sure, some cynical deals were cut in exchange for Persian money, but the majority of Spartans did not want to return the Ionian cities to the Great King of Persia.

III. On this last issue, the Spartans were fortunate in that Cyrus the Younger was more interested in recruiting forces to make a bid for the Persian throne than he was in reacquiring the Ionian cities.

A. Cyrus was assisted in this endeavor by the fact that his father's illness was quite long and by a serious revolt in Egypt in 405 B.C. The entire Nile Valley seceded under Dynasty XXVIII; the Persians would not control Egypt again until 353 B.C.

B. By the early spring of 401 B.C., Cyrus had hired more than 13,000 Greek hoplites and was ready to move. With this force and native contingents, Cyrus carried out a daring march across Asia Minor, heading for Babylon with the intention of taking the throne.

C. Artaxerxes hastily assembled an army, and sometime in September of 401 B.C. the two forces came together in the Battle of Cunaxa. The Greeks in Cyrus's army carried the battle, but Cyrus himself was killed.

1. Artaxerxes lured the Greek commanders to a dinner, where they were all seized and executed. The new king then demanded that the Greeks surrender.

2. Instead, the mercenaries simply elected new commanders, including Xenophon, the Athenian philosopher and historian. They marched out of the Persian Empire in a spectacular retreat known as the *Anabasis*, the "March Upcountry."

D. This battle led to war between Persia and Sparta over the Ionian cities, but it also showed how weak the Persian Empire had become.

IV. As the Greeks were marching through Asia and retreating to the Black Sea, Sparta found herself in a succession crisis in late 400 and early 399 B.C.

A. King Agis II died of illness somewhat unexpectedly. His only legitimate heir was his half-brother King Agesilaus, who was promoted by Lysander and, ultimately, chosen by the Spartan assembly.

B. Agesilaus quickly assembled forces in Asia Minor to battle the Persians, and in 396 B.C., won a series of stunning victories. At some point he demoted Lysander from commander of the cavalry to carver of the royal meat at the dinner table at Ephesus.

C. The Spartans could have won this war except that the Persians encouraged Thebes, Corinth, Argos, and Athens to conspire and attack Sparta in what came to be known as the Corinthian War. This war ended in a negotiated settlement in 386 B.C. that recognized Athenian independence, Spartan control of mainland Greece, and Persian dominion over the Ionian cities.

D. Sparta's position changed dramatically in 371 B.C. when she was defeated at the Battle of Leuctra by the Thebans. Soon, however, the Greek world would split up into a series of interstate wars. That fighting came to an end only in 338 B.C. when a new force, King Philip of Macedon, decisively intervened and ended interstate war –but at the price of overlordship of a Macedonian king.

V. How did the other belligerents fare in the generation after the Peloponnesian War?

A. As mentioned earlier, the Athenians had to endure the terror of The Thirty, who carried out executions and confiscated property. Their actions led to a democratic uprising, headed by Thrasybulus. The Spartans intervened in this rebellion early in 403 B.C., abolished The Thirty, and reinstituted the Athenian democracy.

1. By accepting Persian money in 396 and 395 B.C., the Athenians regained the ability to build a fleet and refortify their city. Once again they become a serious power. Athens then entered the quadruple alliance against Sparta in the Corinthian War.

2. Under the King's Peace of 386 B.C., Athens regained some of her colonies in the Aegean and her independence, but the city would never again be the hegemon of Greece.

3. Further, the later stages of the Peloponnesian War had left the Athenian democracy frightened. The trial of Socrates in 399 B.C. is probably best understood as the Athenians taking out their anger and frustration on Socrates in the same way the assembly had vented its anger on the generals in the trial after Arginusae.

B. Corinth fared, perhaps, the worst in the aftermath of the war. The Corinthians took an enormous loss in trade and colonies and would not recover their economic position for more than two generations. Corinth never again achieved any kind of political significance.

C. Thebes probably came out of the war in the best position of all.

1. Twice the Thebans challenged Sparta in the generation after the Peloponnesian War—first, in the Corinthian War (395–386 B.C.), then in 377–371 B.C., when they finally crushed the Spartans at the Battle of Leuctra.

2. In the years 370–369 B.C., a Boeotian army marched across the Peloponnesus, concluded an alliance with an Argos, and established a new Arcadian League in central Peloponnesus.

3. Thebes was Sparta's competitor for access to the Gulf of Corinth. The Thebans ultimately won.

D. In many ways, the history of the generation or two after the war is even more dismal than the Peloponnesian War itself. A series of wars and battles that ended in 362 B.C. left Greece, according to Xenophon, in even greater confusion. One must ask: Was the Spartan victory somehow a historical mistake? Would an Athenian victory have enabled a wider unity to be forged in the Greek world?

1. Historians of the 19th and 20th centuries would like to see the history of Greece follow the path of the history of Rome: The winner of the Peloponnesian War should have built a wider political unity that might have led to federalism. But that result never came about.

2. In fact, the Greek city-state was, at most, a building block for a regional alliance, but not for a federal system. Instead, in the long run, the destinies of the Mediterranean world would not rest with city-states but with Rome, the city on the Tiber that was just emerging.

Suggested Reading:

Paul Cartledge, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta*.

Charles Hamilton, *Agesilaus and the Failure of the Spartan Hegemony*.

Peter Krentz, *The Thirty at Athens.*

B. Strauss, *Athens After the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy, 403–386 B.C.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What challenges did Sparta face in the aftermath of the defeat of Athens? What institutions and traditions of Sparta offered the means to forge a wider Spartan hegemony? How did Lysander pose a threat to the Spartan order?

2. How did Athens, Corinth, and Thebes fare in the generation after the Peloponnesian War? Why did they join with Argos against Sparta in the Corinthian War? What was the outcome of that conflict?

Lecture Thirty-Six
Lessons of the Peloponnesian War

Scope: It was Thucydides's wish that later readers of his history would draw lessons from his narrative and analysis of the Peloponnesian War, because the Athenian historian judged that human character is a constant. His brilliant analysis and inspired speeches invite readers of each generation to draw comparisons and lessons on the responsibility of an electorate in war, and on the leadership of its elected magistrates. Too often, this conflict is reduced to an ideological clash between a progressive, democratic Athens, conceived as the author of modern Western democratic governments, and traditional Sparta, wedded to inflexible traditions. Hence, the Peloponnesian War has been interpreted as the model for clashes between forces of good and evil, at least since the French Revolution. This is the wrong lesson, for Athens and Sparta were far more alike than unlike. Each was a *polis* sharing in notions of citizenship and civic obligations and participating in a common Hellenic religious and cultural life. Thucydides sought to show that war was a harsh teacher, often reducing the participants to their basic instincts for survival. Further, the rules of law and social conventions can be put to the severest test by war. Thucydides has a dark view of how participants react in war, but in his account of the Funeral Oration of Pericles he also highlights the heroic sacrifices of which people are capable. With his history, Thucydides ensured that the Peloponnesian War would be remembered as "a war like no other," and at the same time as an archetypal experience of pride, self-determination, pragmatism, horror, and heroism.

Outline

I. In this final lecture, we consider three issues related to the lessons that can be drawn from the Peloponnesian War.

- **A.** The first issue is the significance of the Peloponnesian War in the wider context of Classical Greek history and, perhaps, Classical history in its entirety, stretching from the time of Homer to the rule of the Emperor Constantine.
- **B.** Second, why and how has the Peloponnesian War been studied by both scholars and popular writers? What lessons have they drawn from the war?
- **C.** Finally, this lecture examines the real lessons to be learned from studying the war.

II. What was the significance of the war in wider Classical history?

- **A.** The Peloponnesian War was the centerpiece of a series of conflicts that can be dated from at least 461 B.C. to 346 B.C., in which Athens and Sparta, along with Thebes, Corinth, and Argos struggled for mastery of Greece.
- **B.** Of course, part of our view of the Peloponnesian War comes from Thucydides's vision of this conflict as the great war of his lifetime. Thucydides died c. 400 B.C. and thus did not live to see the Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage or the conquests of Alexander the Great.
- **C.** The Peloponnesian War underscored the limitations of the Greek city-state and tested and changed its institutions.
  1. The *polis* was premised on two powerful concepts. One was *eleutheria*, the concept that every Greek city-state should have its own right to an independent policy.
  2. The other concept was *autonomia*, the right to live under one's own laws. This did not necessarily mean democracy, but it did mean the right to live in a well-ordered state under the rule of law.
  3. These two values were difficult to reconcile with the needs for wider security and political organization, which became increasingly necessary in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C.
  4. The Greeks were able to settle their differences briefly in order to respond to the Persian invasion, but they would not do so well against the Macedonian King Philip II. Neither Athens nor Sparta had worked out an arrangement whereby the intense loyalties and direct participation in political life of the citizens could be reconciled wholly with security imperatives.
- **D.** Further, the Peloponnesian War transformed institutions in both Athens and Sparta and across the Greek world. The dreary record of wars, treaties, and changes in warfare in the two generations after the Peloponnesian War suggests that the war sapped the loyalty and undermined the traditions of civic sacrifice of many of the Greek cities.

1. The notion of *eunomia* among citizens had taken a severe blow, and the shift from citizens to taxpayers that came with the hiring of professional armies meant that the Greek city-states would not be prepared to respond successfully to the challenge presented by Macedon, as their ancestors had done when invaded by Persia.
2. The Peloponnesian War had brought tremendous economic and material loss and loss of life. This war was quite different from earlier conflicts, and it is no surprise that the citizens of any city-state would be reluctant to vote for another war that might subject them to the same hardships and sacrifices.
3. In this sense, the Peloponnesian War not only underscored the limitations of the *polis* but also broke some of the traditions that had made the *polis* so successful.

III. This course has stressed that Sparta and Athens were more alike than unalike, and that an Athenian victory would not necessarily have made a significant difference in terms of cultural achievements or the direction of Greek civilization. This point can be explored by comparing the Peloponnesian War with the Punic Wars.

A. The Punic Wars (264–241 B.C., 218–201 B.C.) pitted the polities of Rome and Carthage against each other. The Roman victory in these wars had a decisive impact on the course of Western civilization, far greater than the Spartan victory had done (or an Athenian victory would have done) in the Peloponnesian War.

B. In the Second Punic War, Rome showed an ability to organize fleets and armies on a scale unimagined in the Greek world. In part, this ability can be attributed to the unique Roman notion of citizenship—that it was not a birthright but a set of political and legal rights that could be given to loyal allies.
1. The extension of the franchise in Rome meant that more than one million citizens and allies were eligible for military service, and the Romans could expect great sacrifices from these citizens and allies.
2. In the opening stages of the Second Punic War, the Romans lost at least 100,000 men in campaigns against Hannibal, yet they continued to fight.
3. Western civilization is heir to this Roman tradition of citizenship based on loyalty rather than birth.

IV. Many scholars have turned to the Peloponnesian War in recent years in a search for understanding of the lessons of the Cold War and the current war against Islamic fundamentalists.

A. One reason for this interest may be that Thucydides, in writing his history, set a level of accuracy, insight, and eloquence that is not matched by Livy, Polybius, or any other Classical author. Thucydides forces us to reflect on the consequences and lessons of the Peloponnesian War.

B. At the same time, this was the first war in which historians have a record of citizens' voting their own destinies and living with the consequences of their decisions in a way that still resonates today. For this reason, writers since the early 19th century have tried to draw conclusions from the Peloponnesian War.
1. George Grote, in his eight-volume history, saw the struggle between Athens and Sparta as a precursor of the struggle between Great Britain and Napoleonic France. For Grote, Athens provided models of leadership and of mistakes to avoid in a great conflict.
2. In the later tradition of Arnold Toynbee and even of scholars of the Cold War, Athens, again, is hailed as the model of Western democratic societies, and we identify the Athenians with ourselves.
3. There is a tendency in the scholarship of the Cold War period and afterwards to credit the Athenians with diplomatic aims and with ideals of a nation-state that are, in reality, modern concepts. In fact, the Athenians were constrained by the same kinds of social and religious conventions as their opponents.

C. Further, Sparta suffers considerable loss of prestige in the eyes of many historians and popular writers. Sparta tends to be treated as a repressive and oppressive—some would even say totalitarian—society.
1. The epitome of this type of scholarship is the recent work by Victor Hanson, *A War Like No Other*, in which Athens is seen as the progressive progenitor of Western democracies and Sparta is depicted as alien to the Western tradition.
2. Such attempts to put the Peloponnesian War into the contexts of the ideological conflicts of the 19th and 20th centuries tend to overdraw the differences between the Spartans and Athenians and to distort the reasons for the war.

V. What, then, are the lessons to be drawn from the Peloponnesian War?

A. Thucydides himself tells us that one reason to study the Peloponnesian War is to learn what war does to a society, particularly to leaders and citizens of democracies.

B. Thucydides saw leadership in these governments as all-important. He offers two models in his account that stand as examples of how leaders in representative governments should behave.

1. Of course, Thucydides's first example is Pericles. The wisdom of Pericles's strategy in 431 B.C. can be debated, or whether he should have passed the Megarian Decree, but no one can dispute that Pericles had the ability to lead the assembly, to acknowledge the sacrifices demanded of Athenian citizens, and to articulate the benefits of democracy.

2. Thucydides also gives us an image of Themistocles, the architect of the victory over Xerxes. Themistocles had many of the same qualities as Pericles, as well as the ability to amass information quickly, make a decision, and move to action.

C. Thucydides also points out where leadership can go wrong, as was seen in the later stages of the Peloponnesian War, when the Athenians were led by Alcibiades, Thrasybulus, and Theramenes. Especially instructive is the case of Alcibiades. With all his creativity and genius, he did not have the interests of Athens at heart.

D. In leadership, the Spartan military tradition produced such officers as Brasidas, Gylippus, and even Lysander, who managed to press on and achieve victory.

E. This course has also shown that war changes political, economic, and military institutions. Recall that the Athenians restricted their democracy in the final stages of the war and changed their fiscal institutions. The result was a different Greek city-state that would fail to meet the Macedonian challenge in the 4th century B.C.

F. Perhaps the most telling aspect of the changes wrought by war can be found in the citizens themselves.

1. Repeatedly, Thucydides gives us dark and depressing images of the increasing savagery of the war as the assemblies demanded a more complete victory and compensation for the sacrifices they had endured.

2. Yet these dark images are offset by some remarkably noble moments. The Funeral Oration of Pericles, probably delivered in 431 B.C., is an outstanding expression of what sacrifice means for citizens. The Spartans, too, heard their cities' calls for protection and launched fleets in accordance with their oaths.

3. In the final analysis, Thucydides tells us, it was the citizens themselves, their leaders, and their institutions that held up to the test of war, and this is what makes his account, in his own words, "a possession for all time."

Suggested Reading:

A. W. Gomme, *Essays in Greek History and Literature*.

Victor D. Hanson, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*.

Wolfgang Schilvelbusch and Jefferson Chase, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*.

Robert B. Strassler, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*.

Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, translated by R. Warner.

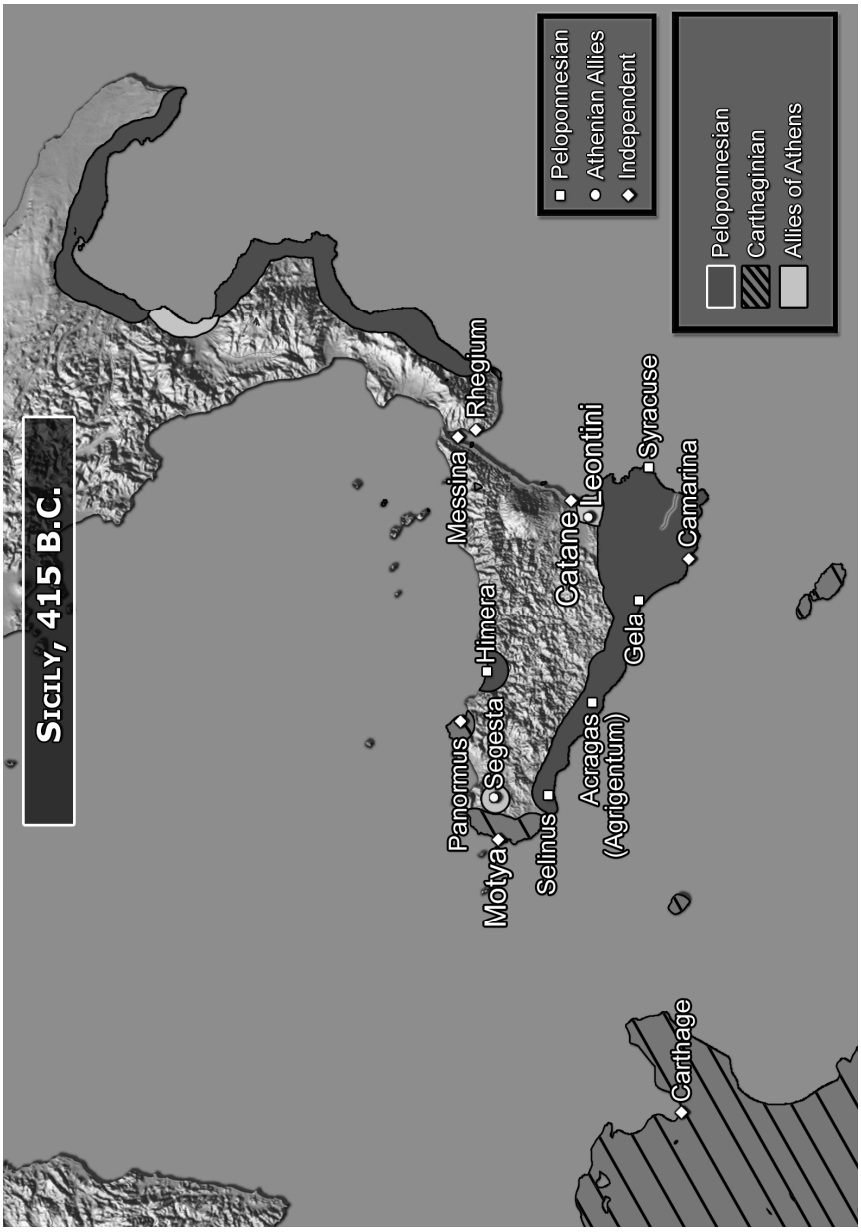
Questions to Consider:

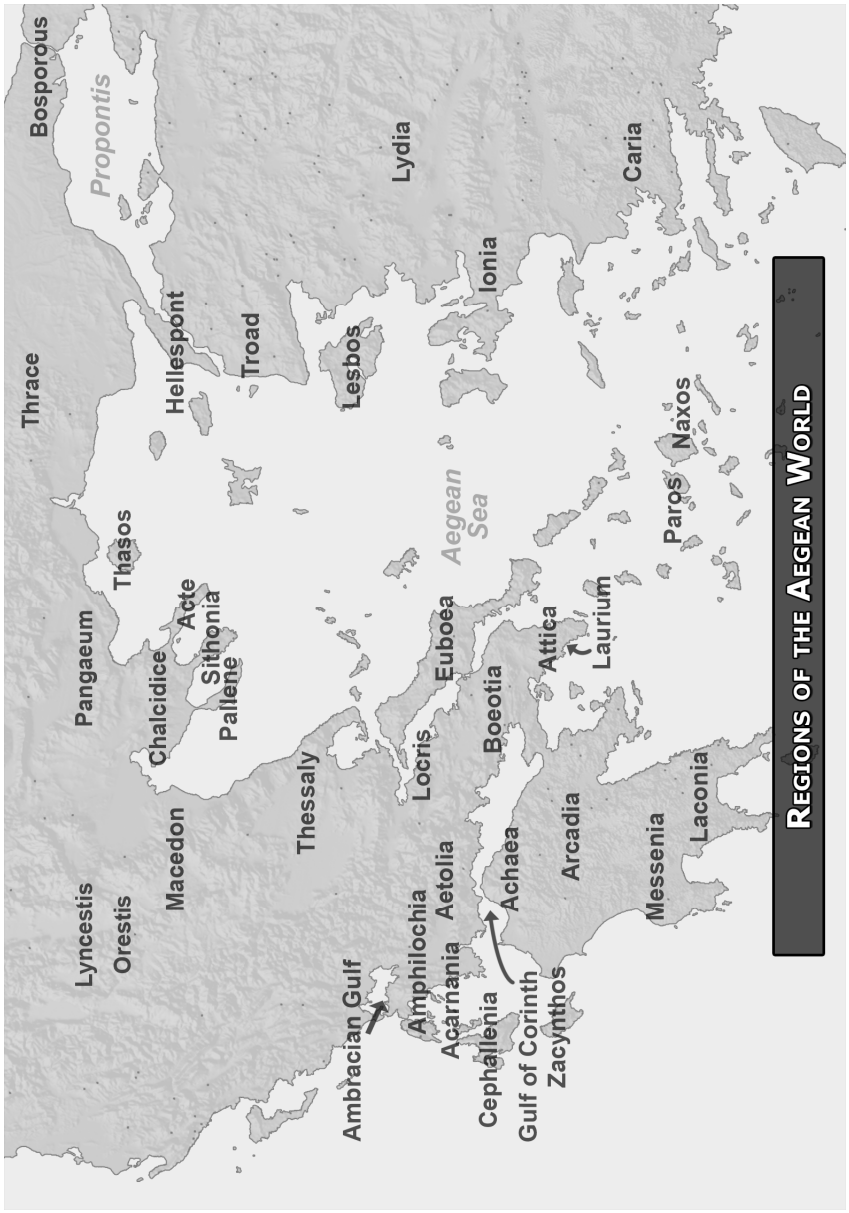
1. What was the long-term impact of the Peloponnesian War on Greek civilization? Was it comparable to the impact of the Punic Wars? What issues were left unresolved after 404 B.C., and why did the Spartans fail to maintain their hegemony?

2. What accounts for the fascination of modern writers, popular and scholarly, to see in the Peloponnesian War a model for modern ideological clashes? How valid are these comparisons?

3. What was Thucydides's judgment on the impact of war on citizens and leaders? What are the most telling lessons to be drawn from the war?

Maps



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Thessaly
Ambracia
Idomene
Heraclea in Trachis
Artemisium
Leucas
Thermopylae
Orchomenus
Cyme
Chaeronea
Chalcis
Delphi
Eretria
Naupactus
Tanagra
Rhion
Thebes
Delium
Siphae
Oenophyta
Patras
Decelea
Sicyon
Megara
Nisaea
Athens
Carystus
Elis
Corinth
Salamis
Piraeus
Pheia
Mycenae
Epidaurus
Cecryphalea
Mantinea
Argos
Methana
Lepreum
Tegea
Cynuria
Messene
Sparta
Pylos
Melos
Cythera
City
Site
Cydonia
Cities and Sites of the Aegean World

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