

## D: The Archidamian War 431–420 BC

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Athenian and Spartan strategies in the Archidamian War 431–421 BC.</li> <li>2. The invasions of Attica and their effects on the states, including the plague in Athens.</li> <li>3. The course of the Archidamian War.</li> <li>4. Pylos and Sphacteria, and its effects on Spartan war effort and reputation.</li> <li>5. Brasidas in Thrace.</li> <li>6. Differences within Athens and Sparta on the relations between the states and the move towards a peace settlement.</li> <li>7. The Peace of Nicias – the main terms and the aftermath.</li> <li>8. The failures of the peace and the refusals of allies of both Athens and Sparta to support the Peace.</li> <li>9. Spartan-Athenian alliance.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Aristophanes</b>, <i>Peace</i> 619–622 (No. 110); 639–648 (No. 202)</p> <p><b>Herodotus</b>, <i>Histories</i> Book 6.108</p> <p><b>Thucydides</b>, <i>The History of the Peloponnesian War</i> 1.23; 1.96; 1.114; 1.139 2.8; 2.11; 2.13; 2.63; 2.65 4.19–20; 4.40–41; 4.80–81; 4.108; 4.117 5.13–18; 5.25–26 6.31 7.18; 7.28</p> <p><b>Thoudippos decree</b> (No. 138)</p>
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## TIMELINE: 431-420BC

<b>431</b>	Theban attack on Plataea. <b>The 'Archidamian War' begins: 431-431BC.</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Athenian fleet active around Peloponnese.	<i>Thucydides</i> 2.2
<b>430</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Plague breaks out in Athens. Pericles' Peloponnesian expedition. Pericles deposed and fined. Phormio sent to Naupactus. Fall of Potidaea.	
<b>429</b>	Siege of Plataea begins. Death of Pericles. Successes of Phormio. Defeat of Cnemus.	
<b>428</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Revolt of Mytilene (on Lesbos). Property tax at Athens.	
<b>427</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Fall of Mytilene. Fall of Plataea. Stasis at Corcyra. Athenian expedition to Sicily (Athenian presence in Sicily 427-4).	
<b>426</b>	Demosthenes in north west. Nicias at Melos.	
<b>425</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Fortification of Pylos. Athenians refuse Spartan offer of peace. Re-assessment of tribute. Athenian capture of Sphacteria.	Aristophanes' <i>Acharnians</i> <b>Thoudippos Decree</b>
<b>424</b>	Athenians capture Nisaea. Conference of Gela. Athenians capture Cythera and raid Laconia. Battle of Delium. Brasidas captures Acanthus, Amphipolis and Torone. <b>Death of Artaxerxes.</b>	Aristophanes' <i>Knights</i> .  Exile of Thucydides for failure at Amphipolis.
<b>423</b>	<b>Darius II becomes King of Persia.</b> Armistice between Athens and Sparta.	Aristophanes' <i>Clouds</i> .
<b>422</b>	Cleon recaptures Torone. Battle of Amphipolis: deaths of Cleon and Brasidas. Peace negotiations.	Aristophanes' <i>Wasps</i> .
<b>421</b>	Peace of Nicias (April). 50-year alliance between Athens and Sparta. Destruction of Scione.	Aristophanes' <i>Peace</i>
<b>420</b>	Alliance between Sparta and Boeotia. Quadruple alliance (Athens, Argos, Elis, Mantinea) <i>Thucydides</i> 5.43-47 Elis excludes Sparta from the Olympic Games. <i>Thucydides</i> 5.49-50	Nike of Paeonius erected: 'Dedicated by the Messenians and Naupaktians as a tithe of the spoils of their enemies'

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

### Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

#### Book 1.23 (Penguin Classics p. 48-9) *Introduction*

Thuc. I 23 The greatest war in the past was the Persian War; yet in this war the decision was reached quickly as a result of two naval battles and two battles on land. The Peloponnesian War, on the other hand, not only lasted for a long time, but throughout its course brought with it unprecedented suffering for Hellas. Never before had so many cities been captured and then devastated, whether by foreign armies or by the Hellenic powers themselves (some of these cities, after capture, were resettled with new inhabitants); never had there been so many exiles; never such loss of life – both in the actual warfare and in internal revolutions. Old stories of past prodigies, which had not found much confirmation in recent experience, now became credible. Wide areas, for instance, were affected by violent earth quakes; there were more frequent eclipses of the sun than had ever been recorded before; in various parts of the country there were extensive droughts followed by famine; and there was the plague which did more harm and destroyed more life than almost any other single factor. All these calamities fell together upon the Hellenes after the outbreak of war.

War began when the Athenians and the Peloponnesians broke the Thirty Years Truce which had been made after the capture of Euboea.<sup>1</sup> As to the reasons why they broke the truce, I propose first to give an account of the causes of complaint which they had against each other and of the specific instances where their interests clashed: this is in order that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind about what led to this great war falling upon the Hellenes. But the real reason for the war is, in my opinion, most likely to be disguised by such an argument. **What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta.** As for the reasons for breaking the truce and declaring war which were openly expressed by each side, they are as follows.



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<sup>1</sup> 446-5BC

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

**Book 1.96** *Formation of the Delian League under Athenian leadership. Tribute assessed at 460 talents.*

Thuc. I 96 So Athens took over the leadership, and the allies, because of their dislike of Pausanias, were glad to see her do so. Next Athenians assessed the various contributions to be made for the war against Persia, and decided which states should furnish money and which states should send ships - the object being to compensate themselves for their losses by ravaging the territory of the King of Persia. At this time the officials known as 'Hellenic Treasurers' were first appointed by the Athenians. These officials received the tribute, which was the name given to the contributions in money. The original sum fixed for the tribute was 460 talents.<sup>2</sup> The treasury of the League was at Delos, and representative meetings were held in the temple there.



<sup>2</sup> 460 talents from tribute can be compared to Athenian revenue from internal sources at the same time: income from harbour dues, sales taxes, rental of state property, court fees and fines royalties on the silver mined in Attica etc. was approximately 400 talents. The cost of building the Parthenon was approximately 470 talents. (Appendix 2 p.612-3).

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

**Book 1.114** 446BC *Revolts of Euboea and Megara; Pleistoanax invades Attica, but only as far as Eleusis.*

Thuc. I 114 Not long after this, Euboea revolted from Athens<sup>446BC</sup>. Pericles had already crossed over to the island with an Athenian army when he received the news that Megara had revolted, that the Peloponnesians were on the point of invading Attica, and that the Megarians had destroyed the Athenian garrisons except for a few who had managed to escape to Nisaea; in making this revolt Megara had called in the aid of Corinth, Sicyon, and Epidaurus. Pericles hurriedly brought the army back from Euboea, and soon afterwards the Peloponnesians, under the command of the Spartan King Pleistoanax, the son of Pausanias, invaded Attica, laying waste the country as far as Eleusis and Thria. Then, without advancing any farther, they returned home.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1ldXcT8zqk> See **Plutarch**, *Life of Pericles* 23 and **Aristophanes**' *Clouds* 858-9.

The Athenians, under the command of Pericles, crossed over again into Euboea and subdued the whole island. Its future status was defined by the peace terms, except in the case of Hestiaea, where they drove out the inhabitants and occupied their land themselves.



*Hestiaea is near Oreus.*

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

### Book 1.139 *The Spartan Ultimatum*

Thuc. I 139 The first embassy of the Spartans was as I have described: they demanded that those under the curse should be driven out, and they received a counter demand from Athens in the same terms. Later they sent another embassy to demand that **Athens should abandon the siege of Potidaea and should give Aegina her independence**. But the chief point and the one that they made most clear was that **war could be avoided if Athens would revoke the Megarian decree** which excluded the Megarians from all ports in the Athenian Empire and from the market in Attica itself.

How did the Megarian Decree seek to punish Megara?

- A. Megarians were excluded from all trade with Athens and its empire.
- B. Megarians were denied access to religious shrines on Athenian territory.
- C. Megarians were denied entrance into the councils of the Delian League.
- D. Megarians were excluded from the Olympic games.

The Athenians would not give in on the first points, nor would they revoke the decree. They accused Megara of cultivating consecrated ground, of cultivating land that did not belong to them, and of giving shelter to slaves who had escaped from Athens.

Finally an embassy arrived with the Spartan ultimatum. The Spartan representatives were Ramphias, Melesippus, and Agesander. They made no reference to any of the usual subjects that had been spoken of before, but said simply: **'Sparta wants peace. Peace is still possible if you will give the Hellenes their freedom.'**

The Athenians then held an assembly in order to debate the matter, and decided to look into the whole question once and for all and then to give Sparta her answer. Many speakers came forward and opinions were expressed on both sides, some maintaining that war was necessary and others saying that the Megarian decree should be revoked and should not be allowed to stand in the way of peace. **Among the speakers was Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, the leading man of his time among the Athenians and the most powerful both in action and in debate.** His advice was as follows:

Thuc. I 140 'Athenians,' he said, 'my views are the same as ever: I am against making any concessions to the Peloponnesians, even though I am aware that the enthusiastic state of mind in which people are persuaded to enter upon a war is not retained when it comes to action, and that people's minds are altered by the course of events. Nevertheless I see that on this occasion I must give you exactly the same advice as I have given in the past, and I call upon those of you who are persuaded by my words to give your full support to these resolutions which we are making all together, and to abide by them even if in some respect or other we find ourselves in difficulty; for, unless you do so, you will be able to claim no credit for intelligence when things go well with us. There is often no more logic in the course of events than there is in the plans of men, and this is why we usually blame our luck when things happen in ways that we did not expect.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMlkvfJYPo>

Introduction to Ancient Greek History (CLCV 205) In this lecture, Professor Kagan describes the events that lead up the Peloponnesian War.

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 2.8** (Penguin Classics p.128-129) *Outbreak of War 431BC*

Thuc. II 8 Nothing in their designs was on a small or mean scale: both sides put everything into their war effort. This was natural enough. At the beginning of an undertaking the enthusiasm is always greatest, and at that time both in the Peloponnese and in Athens there were great numbers of young men who had never been in a war and were consequently far from unwilling to join in this one. Meanwhile all the rest of Hellas hung poised on the event, as the two leading cities came together in conflict. There were all kinds of prophecies and all kinds of oracular utterances being made both in the cities that were about to go to war and in other places as well. **Then, too, there was an earthquake in Delos just before this time - a thing that had never happened before in the memory of the Hellenes<sup>3</sup>.** This was said and thought to be a sign of impending events; and if anything else of the same kind happened to occur, its meaning was always carefully examined.

**People's feelings were generally very much on the side of the Spartans, especially as they proclaimed that their aim was the liberation of Hellas.** States and individuals alike were enthusiastic to support them in every possible way, both in speech and action, and everyone thought that unless he took a personal share in things the whole effort was being handicapped. **So bitter was the general feeling against Athens, whether from those who wished to escape from her rule or from those who feared that they would come under it.**



*Arming scenes, Attic Red Figure 450-400BC*

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<sup>3</sup> Herodotus says the same in VI.98 490BC.



### Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

#### Book 2.11 (Penguin Classics p.130-131) *Outbreak of War 431BC*

Speech of Archidamus, King of Sparta before the first invasion of Attica.

*'He summoned the generals of all states and the most important and influential people in them and made this address to them:'*

Thuc. II 11 'Peloponnesians and allies, our fathers have engaged in many campaigns both in and outside the Peloponnese, and the elder men in this army of ours are not inexperienced in war. Yet we have never marched out in greater strength than now. And, just as we are in greater numbers and in better spirit than ever before, so the city against which we are moving is at the height of her power. We must not, then, fall short of our fathers' standards, nor fail to live up to our own reputation. For the whole of Hellas is eagerly watching this action of ours, and, because of the general hatred against Athens, wishing us success in our undertakings.

Therefore, even though it may seem that we are invading in tremendous force and that there is little risk of our enemy coming out to meet us in battle, this must not be made an excuse for relaxing our precautions while we are on the march: officers and soldiers of every individual state should constantly be prepared to find their own particular positions threatened. There is much that is unpredictable in war, and attacks are usually made as the result of a sudden impulse. Very often, too, a numerically inferior force, fearing for its own safety, has beaten off the superior numbers of an enemy who, through over-confidence, has relaxed his precautions. Certainly one ought to march forward confidently in an enemy country, but one should also take practical measures based on the idea of security. In this way armies are likely to be most courageous in attack and most reliable in defence.

'And the city against which we are marching is very far from being incapable of defending herself. She is extraordinarily well equipped in every respect, so that we ought to consider it very likely that they will come and meet us in battle; and that, if they have not yet set out against us before we are there, they will do so when they see us in their own country laying waste and destroying their property. People grow angry when they suffer things that they are quite unused to suffer and when these things go on actually in front of their own eyes. They do not wait to think, but plunge into action on the spur of their impulse. And the Athenians are especially likely to act in this way, since they think that they have a right to supremacy and are much more used to invading and destroying other people's land than seeing this happening to their own land. Remember, then, that you are marching against a very great city. Think, too, of the glory, or, if events turn out differently, the shame which you will bring to your ancestors and to yourselves, and, with all this in mind, follow your leaders, paying the strictest attention to discipline and to security, giving prompt obedience to the orders which you receive. The best and safest thing of all is when a large force is so well disciplined that it seems to be acting like one man.'

### **Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

#### **Book 2.13** (Penguin Classics p.132-133) *Outbreak of War 431BC*

Pericles summarises his strategy and the resources available to Athens at the start of the war.

Thuc. II 13 While the Peloponnesians were either still mustering at the isthmus or on their march before the invasion of Attica, Pericles, the son of Xanthippus, one of the ten Athenian generals, realizing that the invasion was coming, suspected that Archidamus, who happened to be a friend of his, might possibly pass by his estates and leave them undamaged. This might be either from a personal wish to do him a favour, or as the result of instructions given by the Spartans in order to stir up prejudice against him, just as it had been because of him that they had previously made the proclamation about driving out the curse. He therefore came forward first and made a statement to the Athenians in the assembly, saying:

that, though Archidamus was his friend, this fact was certainly not going to be harmful to Athenian interests, and, in case the enemy should not lay waste his estates and houses, like those of other people, he proposed to give them up and make them public property, so that no one should have any suspicions against him on their account.

Then, with regard to the present situation, he gave just the same advice as he had given before. This was that they were to prepare for war and bring into the city their property in the country. They were not to go out and offer battle, but were to come inside the city and guard it. Their navy, in which their strength lay, was to be brought to the highest state of efficiency, and their allies were to be handled firmly, since, he said, the strength of Athens came from the money paid in tribute by her allies, and victory in war depended on a combination of intelligent resolution and financial resources.

Here Pericles encouraged confidence, pointing out that, apart from all other sources of revenue, the average yearly contribution from the allies to Athens amounted to 600 talents,<sup>4</sup> then there still remained in the Acropolis a sum of 6,000 talents of coined silver. This reserve fund, at its maximum, had been 9,700 talents. It had been drawn on to pay for the Propylaea and other public buildings, and for Potidaea. In addition to this there was the un-coined gold and silver in offerings made either by individuals or by the state; there were the sacred vessels and furniture used in the processions and in the games; there were the spoils taken from the Persians, and other resources of one kind or another, all of which would amount to no less than 500 talents. To this he added the money in the other temples which might be used and which came to a considerable sum, and said that, if they were ever really reduced to absolute extremities, they could even use the gold on the statue of Athene herself. There was, he informed them, a weight of forty talents of pure gold on this statue, all of which was removable. But he pointed out that if they did use this gold for their own preservation they must restore it again afterwards in the same or in a greater quantity.

Thus he reassured them about their financial position. As for their army, they had 13,000 hoplites in addition to the 16,000 others who were in various garrisons and those engaged in the actual defence of the city. This was the number originally detailed for defence in case of invasion, and the force was drawn from the eldest and the youngest of the citizens in the army together with the resident aliens who were qualified as hoplites. The wall of Phalerum ran for four miles from the sea to the city circuit; and nearly five miles of the wall surrounding the city was guarded, though part of it (the section between the Long Walls and the wall of Phalerum) was left without a guard. Then there were the four and a half miles of the Long Walls to Piraeus, the outer one of which was garrisoned. Then, too, there were seven and a half miles of fortifications surrounding Piraeus and Munychia, half of which distance was guarded. There were also 1,260 cavalry, including mounted bowmen; 1,600 unmounted bowmen, and 300 triremes ready for active service.

This was an accurate, or perhaps a conservative, estimate of the resources in each department available to Athens at the time when the Peloponnesian invasion was expected and at the beginning of the war. Pericles also used his usual arguments to show that they should feel confident of final victory.

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*- See *Politics and Culture***  
**Book 2.34-46** (Penguin Classics p.143-151) *Pericles' Funeral Oration* 431/430BC



<sup>4</sup> Thucydides must be thinking not only of the tribute in the strict sense but also of such income as the annual indemnity imposed on Samos after the revolt. The war would have created new difficulties in collection, nevertheless, in 425 the Athenians considered it possible to increase their revenues substantially by approximately tripling the tribute assessment. Exactly how much money this measure produced is not known, and the final defeat in 404BC of course meant a total cessation of tribute as the empire itself was dissolved on Spartan orders. (M.I. Finley Appendix 1. p.61)

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

### Book 2.63 (Penguin Classics p.161) *The Policy of Pericles 430BC*

2.59: *After the second invasion of the Peloponnesians there had been a change in the spirit of the Athenians. Their land had been twice devastated and they had to contend with war and the plague at the same time. Now they began to blame Pericles for having persuaded them to go to war... Pericles himself saw well enough how bitterly they felt... Since he was still general, he summoned an assembly with the aim of putting fresh courage into them. (His full speech is 2. 60-64).*

Pericles argues that it is impossible to give up their empire, using the analogy of a tyranny.

Thuc. II 63 'Then it is right and proper for you to support the imperial dignity of Athens. This is something in which you all take pride, and you cannot continue to enjoy the privileges unless you also shoulder the burdens of empire. And do not imagine that what we are fighting for is simply the question of freedom or slavery: there is also involved the loss of our empire and the dangers arising from the hatred which we have incurred in administering it. Nor is it any longer possible for you to give up this empire, though there may be some people who in a mood of sudden panic and in a spirit of political apathy actually think that this would be a fine and noble thing to do. Your empire is now like a tyranny: it may have been wrong to take it; it is certainly dangerous to let it go. And the kind of people who talk of doing so and persuade others to adopt their point of view would very soon bring a state to ruin, and would still do so even if they lived by themselves in isolation. For those who are politically apathetic can only survive if they are supported by people who are capable of taking action. They are quite valueless in a city which controls an empire, though they would be safe slaves in a city that was controlled by others.

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

### Book 2.65 (Penguin Classics p.163-164) *The Policy of Pericles*

Thuc. II 65 In this way Pericles attempted to stop the Athenians from being angry with him and to guide their thoughts in a direction away from their immediate sufferings. So far as public policy was concerned, they accepted his arguments, sending no more embassies to Sparta and showing an increased energy in carrying on the war; yet as private individuals they still felt the weight of their misfortunes. The mass of the people had had little enough to start with and had now been deprived of even that; the richer classes had lost their fine estates with their rich and well-equipped houses in the country, and, which was the worst thing of all, they were at war instead of living in peace.



In fact, the general ill feeling against Pericles persisted, and was not satisfied until they had condemned him to pay a fine. Not long afterwards, however, as is the way with crowds, they re-elected him to the generalship and put all their affairs into his hands. By that time people felt their own private sufferings rather less acutely and, so far as the general needs of the state were concerned, they regarded Pericles as the best man they had. Indeed, during the whole period of peace-time when Pericles was at the head of affairs the state was wisely led and firmly guarded, and it was under him that Athens was at her greatest. And when the war broke out, here, too, he appears to have accurately estimated what the power of Athens was.



*Ostrakon*

He survived the outbreak of war by two years and six months, and after his death his foresight with regard to the war became even more evident. For Pericles had said that Athens would be victorious if she bided her time and took care of her navy, if she avoided trying to add to the empire during the course of the war, and if she did nothing to risk the safety of the city itself. But his successors did the exact opposite, and in other matters which apparently had no connection with the war private ambition and private profit led to policies which were bad both for the Athenians themselves and for their allies. Such policies, when successful, only brought credit and advantage to individuals, and when they failed, the whole war potential of the state was impaired. The reason for this was that Pericles, because of his position, his intelligence, and his known integrity, could respect the liberty of the people and at the same time hold them in check. It was he who led them, rather than they who led him, and, since he never sought power from any wrong motive, he was under no necessity of flattering them: in fact he was so highly respected that he was able to speak angrily to them and to contradict them. Certainly when he saw that they were going too far in a mood of over-confidence, he would bring back to them a sense of their dangers; and when they were discouraged for no good reason he would restore their confidence. So, in what was nominally a democracy, power was really in the hands of the first citizen.

But his successors, who were more on a level with each other and each of whom aimed at occupying the first place, adopted methods of **demagogy** which resulted in their losing control over the actual conduct of affairs. Such a policy, in a great city with an empire to govern, naturally led to a number of mistakes, amongst which was the Sicilian expedition, though in this case the mistake was not so much an error of judgement with regard to the opposition to be expected as a failure on the part of those who were at home to give proper support to their forces overseas.<sup>5</sup> Because they were so busy with their own personal intrigues for securing the leadership of the people, they allowed this expedition to lose its impetus, and by quarrelling among themselves began to bring confusion into the policy of the state. And yet, after losing most of their fleet and all the other forces in Sicily, with revolutions already breaking out in Athens, they none the less held out for eight years against their original enemies, who were now reinforced by the Sicilians, against their own allies, most of which had revolted, and against Cyrus, son of the King of Persia, who later joined the other side and provided the Peloponnesians with money for their fleet. And in the end it was only because they had destroyed themselves by their own internal strife that finally they were forced to surrender.

So overwhelmingly great were the resources which Pericles had in mind at the time when he prophesied an easy victory for Athens over the Peloponnesians alone.

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<sup>5</sup> This explanation of the failure of the Sicilian expedition is not borne out by the narrative in Books VI-VII.

**Thucydides Book 3: The revolt of Mytilene and destruction of Plataea:** some of the most brutal episodes in the Peloponnesian War:

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 3.36-50** (Penguin Classics p.212-223) *The Mytilenian Debate* 427BC - **See Politics and Culture**

**Herodotus, *Histories* Book 6.108** 490BC The Battle of Marathon

Her.VI 108 The Athenian troops were drawn up on a piece of ground sacred to Heracles, when they were joined by the Plataeans, who came to support them with every available man.

*How the Plataeans came to join the Athenians at Marathon*



Some time before this the Plataeans had surrendered their independence to the Athenians who had, in their turn, already rendered service to Plataea on many occasions and in difficult circumstances. The way it happened was this: Plataea was being hard pressed by Thebes, and as Cleomenes the son of Anaxandrides happened to be in the neighbourhood with a Spartan army, the Plataeans first thought of putting themselves into Spartan hands. The Spartans, however, refused the offer. 'We live too far apart and an alliance with us would be but cold comfort to you; you might be carried off into slavery several times over before any of us even heard of it. Our advice is that you make your surrender to Athens – Athens is your neighbour, and Athenian help is by no means to be despised.' This advice did not proceed from goodwill towards Plataea, but merely from the Spartans' desire to embroil Athens in quarrels with the Boeotians. Nevertheless the advice was taken: representatives from Plataea, while the Athenians were engaged in offering sacrifices to the Twelve Gods, came and sat by the altar, to make their solemn request, and the act of surrender was completed.

When the Thebans heard what the Plataeans had done, they at once sent an army against them. The Athenians hurried to their defence, and a fight was on the point of beginning when the Corinthians intervened. They came up, and as both sides submitted the dispute to their arbitration, they fixed the boundary between the two countries, with the condition that there should be no interference from Thebes with any Boeotians who did not want to belong to the Boeotian state. The Corinthians after making this decision left for home, and the Athenians had also started on their return march, when they were set upon by the Boeotians. In the fight which ensued the Athenians were victorious, and they followed up their victory by crossing the borderline which the Corinthians had fixed for Plataea, and making the river Asopus the frontier between the territory of Thebes on the one side, and of Plataea and Hysiae on the other. These were the circumstances under which the people of Plataea had put themselves into Athenian hands, and which led to their coming to the support of Athens at Marathon.<sup>6</sup>

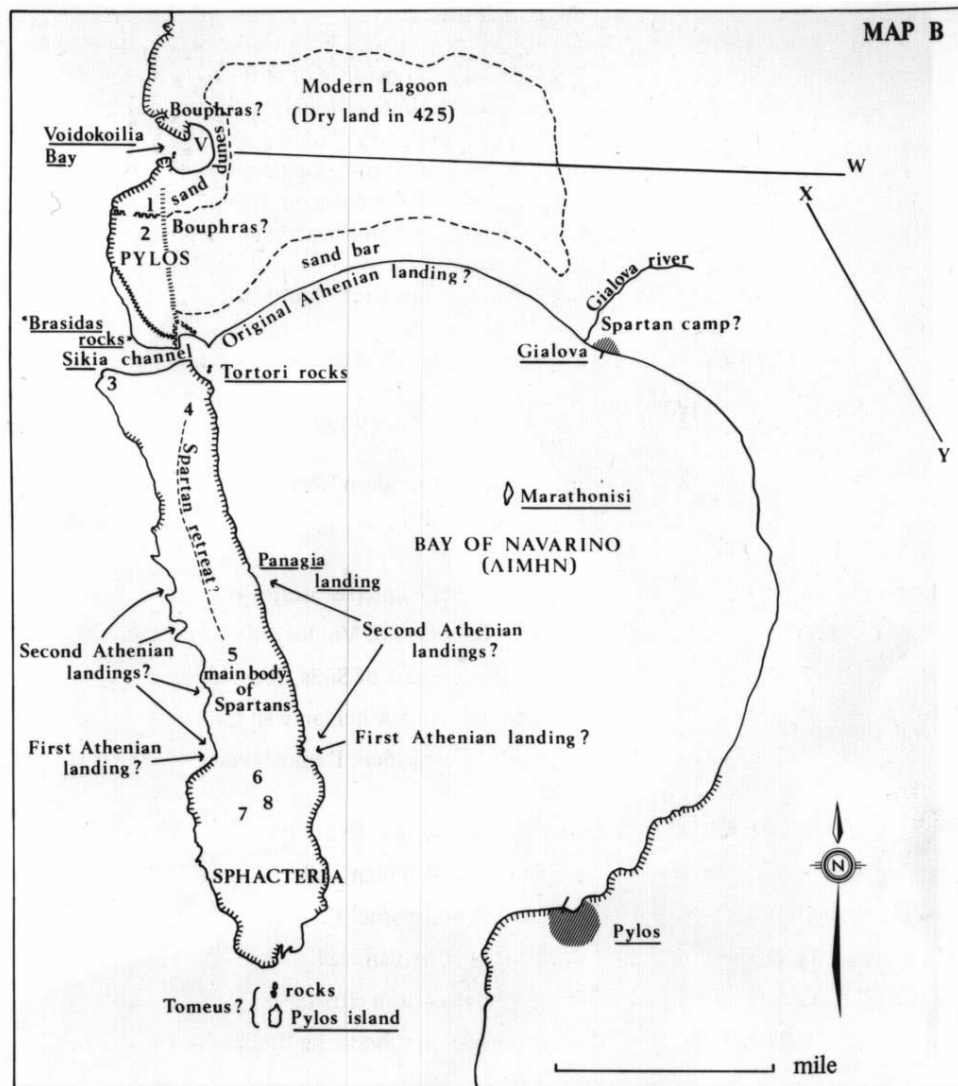
*The Theban attack on Plataea was the opening act of hostility in the Peloponnesian war (see Thucydides 2.2 and 7.18). The end of Plataea is described by Thucydides in **Book 3.51-68**.*

3.68 The Spartans brought the Plataeans before them again and asked each of them the same question. 'Have you done anything to help the Spartans and their allies in the war?' As each man replied 'no', he was taken away and put to death, no exceptions being made. Not less than 200 of the Plataeans were killed in this way with 25 Athenians who had been with them in the siege.'

<sup>6</sup> According to Thuc. III.68 the incidents here occurred 92 years before the destruction of Plataea in 427BC, thus 519/8BC. Some scholars think the date should be 509/8 to fit better with Cleomenes' presence in central Greece during his interference in Athenian politics following the expulsion of the Pisistratids (V.70-76), but the two incidents may be unrelated.

Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

Book 4.19-20 (Penguin Classics p.275-276) Athenian Success at Pylos 425BC



15. When news of what had happened at Pylos reached Sparta, such a serious view of it was taken... They decided to conclude an armistice at Pylos with the Athenian generals, if they would agree to it, and also to send ambassadors to Athens with a view to ending the war and getting back their own men as quickly as possible.

Thuc. IV 19 'Sparta calls upon you to make a treaty and to end the war. She offers you peace, alliance, friendly and neighbourly relations. In return she asks for the men on the island, thinking it better for both sides that the affair should not proceed to the bitter end - whether, by some stroke of luck, the men should manage to force an escape, or else be subdued by your blockade and fall still further into your power. In our view, where great hatreds exist, no lasting settlement can be made in a spirit of revenge, when one side gets the better of things in war and forces its opponent to swear to carry out the terms of an unequal treaty; what will make the settlement lasting is when the party that has it in his power to act like this takes instead a more reasonable point of view, overcomes his adversary in generosity, and makes peace on more moderate terms than his enemy expected. In such a case, so far from wanting to get his own back for the violence that has been done to him, the enemy is already under an obligation to pay back good for good, and so is the more ready, from a sense of honour, to abide by the terms that have been made. And men are more inclined to act in this way towards their greatest enemies than towards people with whom they have only minor differences. Then, too, when others are willing to make concessions it is natural for one to give way gladly oneself, just as it is natural, if one meets with an attitude of arrogance, to face things out to the end, even against one's better judgement.

Thuc. IV 20 'As for Sparta and Athens, if ever there was a good time for making peace it is now, before some irremediable event overtakes us, something which would force us into an unending hatred of you, personal as well as political, and would deprive you of the hope of what we are offering you at this moment. Now is the time for us to be reconciled, while the final issue is still undecided, while you have won glory and can have our friendship as well, and we, before any shameful thing has taken place, can, in our present distress, accept a reasonable settlement. Let us choose for ourselves peace instead of war, and give to the rest of the Hellenes a respite from their sufferings. For this they will think that it is you rather than we whom they have to thank. As for the war in which they are engaged, they are not certain who began it; but peace now depends chiefly upon you, and if peace is made, it is to you that their gratitude will go. By accepting our proposals you can have the firm friendship of Sparta, a friendship which is not extorted from her but which is offered to you freely and which you will oblige her by accepting. Think also of the advantages which can reasonably be expected to follow. For if we, Athens and Sparta, stand together, you can be sure that the rest of Hellas, in its inferior position, will show us every possible mark of honour.'

21 So the Spartan delegates spoke. Their assumption was that Athens had wanted to make peace even earlier, had only been prevented from doing so by Spartan opposition and would no gladly embrace the opportunity offered and return the men. The Athenians, however, aimed at winning still more ... the man who, more than others, encouraged this attitude was **Cleon, son of Cleaenetus**, a popular figure of the time who had great influence with the masses.



### Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

**Book 4.40-41** (Penguin Classics p.289-290) *Final Victory at Pylos 425BC*

Thuc. IV 40 This event caused much more surprise among the Hellenes than anything else that happened in the war. The general impression had been that Spartans would never surrender their arms whether because of hunger or any other form of compulsion; instead they would keep them to the last and die fighting as best they could. It was hard to believe that those who had surrendered were the same sort of people as those who had fallen. Indeed, there was an occasion afterwards when an Athenian ally in order to insult one of the prisoners from the island asked him whether it was the ones who had fallen who were the real Spartans. The reply was that 'spindles (by which he meant arrows) would be worth a great deal if they could pick out brave men from cowards', a remark which was intended to show that the ones who died were simply the ones who came in the way of the stones and the arrows.

Thuc. IV 41 When the prisoners had been brought to Athens, the Athenians decided to keep them in prison until a settlement was arrived at, but that, if the Peloponnesians invaded Attica before then, they would take the men out and kill them. Pylos was firmly garrisoned, and the Messenians from Naupactus sent some of their best troops back there to what was in fact

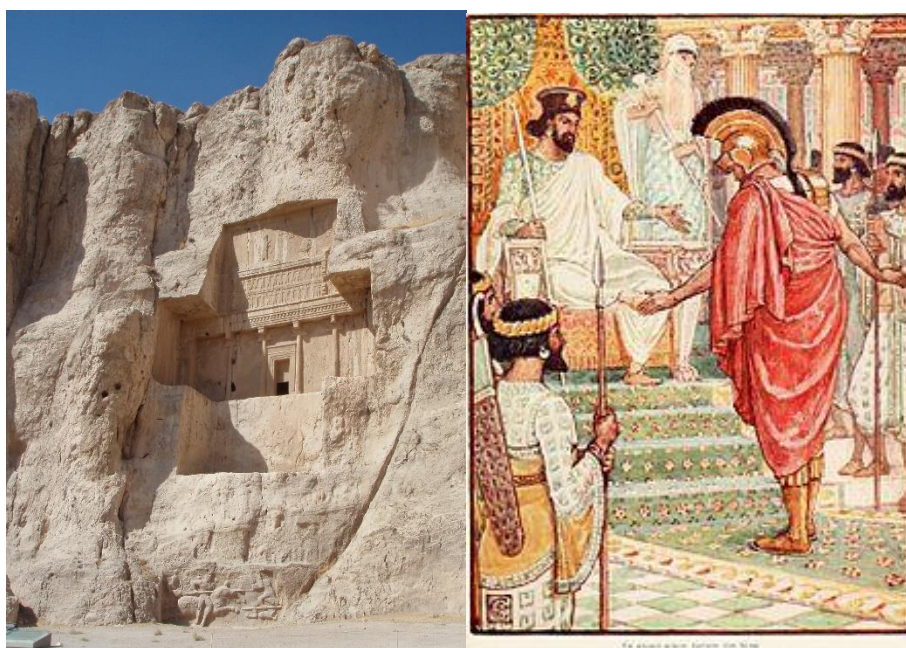
their old country, since Pylos was in what used to be Messenia. These troops carried out raids into Laconia and, helped by the fact that they spoke the same dialect as the inhabitants, did a lot of damage. The Spartans had had no previous experience of this type of guerilla warfare and, as the helots began to desert, they feared the spread of revolution in their country and became exceedingly uneasy about it. Though they did not want to reveal this to the Athenians, they still sent representatives to Athens and tried to get back Pylos and the prisoners. The Athenians, however, were aiming at gaining still more and, though frequent representations were made to them, they sent every Spartan representative back empty-handed. This completes the account of what happened at Pylos.

### Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

**Book 4.50** (Penguin Classics p.294-5) *Further Athenian Successes 425-424BC*

The Athenians intercept the Persian, Artaphernes, sent to Sparta by the Great King.

Thuc. IV 50 In the following winter Aristides, the son of Archippus, one of the commanders of the Athenian ships which were sent out to collect money from the allies, captured at Eion, on the Strymon, a Persian called Artaphernes, who was on his way to Sparta from the King of Persia<sup>7</sup>. He was taken to Athens, and there the Athenians had his dispatches translated from the Assyrian characters and read them. A number of subjects were mentioned, but the main point for the Spartans was this — that the King did not understand what they wanted, since **the many ambassadors who had come to him** all said different things: if, therefore, they had any definite proposals to make, they were to send him some delegates with this Persian. Afterwards the Athenians sent Artaphernes back in a trireme to Ephesus and sent some ambassadors with him. **There, however, they heard that Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, had just died** (his death took place just about this time), and they returned home.



*Artaxerxes I succeeded his (murdered) father Xerxes and reigned from 465-424BC*

<p><i>'The King gave Themistocles Magnesia for his bread (50 talents/annum), Lampsacus for his wine... and Myos for his meat.'</i></p> <p><b>Thucydides 1.138</b></p>	<p><b>465 Battle of Eurymedon</b> Thuc.1.100</p> <p><b>460-454BCE Revolt in Egypt</b> led by Inaros II supported by Athens. Thuc.1.104 + 109-110.</p> <p><b>449BC Peace of Callias</b> Diodorus Siculus 12.4</p>	<p><b><u>Biblical References</u></b></p> <p>Missions to Jerusalem</p> <p>458BC Ezra</p> <p>445BC Nehemiah</p>
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<sup>7</sup> **Artaxerxes**, who died in this year and was eventually succeeded, after his son Artaxerxes II was killed by Sogdianus, by **Darius II (424-404BC)**

# Thoudippos decree (No. 138)

## Thoudippos decree (LACTOR 1, *The Athenian Empire* No. 138)

Much of this decree depends upon restorations, but the main elements are not in doubt. The reassessment is particularly notable for three reasons:

- a) It was done in a year when reassessment was not due.
- b) The language is unusually strong.
- c) At the end of the list some states are included which had never previously paid to Athens (e.g. Melos) or which had long ceased paying.

It is less clear whether there was also a massive increase in the tribute demanded from the allies because little is preserved from the lists made earlier in the war. (N.B. See Plutarch, Aristides 24.1-5). LACTOR 1 p.92 suggests that some of the extortionate reassessments that follow are reduced again.

The way in which the war is cited as creating a need for extra income links this tribute increase with those in Athens who favoured active campaigning against Sparta rather than sitting it out, but a more particular link with Cleon cannot be established as, although Thoudippos is a rare name, it is not certain whether the Thoudippos who proposed this decree, who was a member of the Council, is the same Thoudippos who married Cleon's daughter.

## Tribute reassessment 425/424BC

(The version that follows is a mix of the LACTOR 1 138 and Stephen D Lambert translations, simplified in places)

Gods. Assessment of tribute.

*Decree 1A (Council and People)*

The Council and the People decided.

In the prytany of the tribe ?; ?-on was secretary; ? was chairman.

Thoudippos proposed:

To send heralds whom the Council shall elect from *[those present?/show of hands]* to the cities, two *[to Ionia and Caria]*, two *[to Thrace, two]* to the Islands, *[two to]* the Hellespont; and these shall *[announce]* to the assembly of each city ... that envoys are to be present in the month of Maimakterion Nov/Dec (5th month) . . .

Magistrates-in-charge-of-introducing-cases-to-court ([a](#) term in Greek) *shall be chosen and* these shall also *choose* a secretary and a co[-secretary?] . . . ; and the Council shall *choose* ten men; and these shall make the assessments <sup>of tribute</sup> for the cities within *five?/ten?* days from when they are *appointed*, or each of them shall be penalised *[a hundred?/thousand? drachmas]* for each day;

And the magistrates-in-charge-of-oaths shall administer an oath to the *[Assessors]* *on the same day they are elected or will be liable for the same penalty* . . .

The magistrates-in-charge-of-introducing-cases-to-court *[are to look after court cases arising from the assessment once the People vote]* and the polemarch shall *hold a preliminary hearing in the court* ([Heliiaia, see note below](#)), the jurors voting on them by tribes; *but if the Assessors fail to deal with the judgements for the cities in accordance with the courts, they shall be penalised ten thousand drachmas each at their scrutiny.*

The *Thesmothetai* <sup>Court Presidents</sup> shall establish a new *[court of a thousand dikasts (jurymen)]* . . . ;

*[As the tribute]* has become too little, they shall together with the Council make the assessments *[greater than those of the last]* period of office [\[of the hellenotamiai\]](#) . . .

*[dealing with the matter during Poseideion]* 6th month Jan/Feb . . . from the first day of the month in the same way, so that the tribute shall be assessed in the month Poseideion;

[And the full Council] . . . shall deal with the business *continuously* so that the assessments shall be made if there is no contrary decree ;

And there shall not be a [lesser] tribute for any [of the cities] than the [amount which they were] paying [previously], unless for [any one there is a problem] that the land [is unproductive so that] it is impossible [to pay more];

And the secretary of the Council shall write up [the assessments] which are made [and the total] tribute as it is assessed [and this decree] on two stone stelai <sup>inscribed stone slabs (see picture)</sup>, and shall place one in the Council chamber and the other [on the acropolis];

And the official sellers <sup>Poletai</sup> shall make the contract, and the payment officers <sup>Kolakretai</sup> shall give them the money;

[And for the future, send notice] to the cities about the [tribute before] the Great [Panathenaia] . . .

The prytany which is in office *is to introduce the assessments at the Panathenaia*;

[And if the prytany members do not introduce the assessment of tribute] . . . to the People and [the tribute and the Council does not deal with the business] in their own term of office, each of the prytany members shall be fined a hundred drachmas sacred to Athena and *a hundred* to the public treasury, and each of the prytany members shall be [liable at their scrutiny] to a fine of *a thousand drachmas*;

And if anyone else in any way [prevents] . . . the assessments at the time of the Great Panathenaia in the prytany which holds office first, he shall be deprived of his <sup>citizen</sup> rights and his property shall be confiscated with a tithe <sup>(i.e. 10%)</sup> for the goddess;

And the prytany *of the tribe?* shall be obliged to bring these matters before the People, *compulsorily* . . . , on the third <sup>i.e. second</sup> day *after the expedition returns*, after the sacred business;

And if the business is not completed on that day, they shall deal with this business first on the next day, and continuously until it is completed in the prytany *of the tribe...*;

And if they do not bring it before the People or do not complete it in their own term of office, each of the prytany members shall be liable *at his accounting to a penalty of ten thousand drachmas for preventing the provision* of funds for the forces;

<sup>40</sup> And those summoned . . . by the public summoners *shall be present* . . . so that the Council may punish them if they are judged not to *have carried out their duties* rightly;

And the routes for the heralds . . . *according to the oath*, the Assessors *are to write down*, how far they shall travel, so that they shall not determine their *own itinerary* . .

*And what it is right should be said* to the cities concerning the assessments and [the decree] *about this the People* shall decree, [along with anything else needed];

[And be clear how/the Generals <sup>strategoi</sup> shall see that] the cities are to bring [the tribute] . . . when [the Council makes] the assessment of the tribute, so that [the People shall have money available for the] war;

[And the Generals *strategoí*] shall be obliged to make [an analysis] about the tribute each year . . . whether there is need for contributions towards actions on land or at sea or for any other good purpose which they may propose for the People at the first session of the Council (?);

And concerning this [the court] shall scrutinise continuously [with or without] the other courts, unless it is decided that the Council should consider in advance how matters are to be arranged in the most advantageous way for the People;

And the payment officers *kolakretai* shall make the payment for the heralds who are going.

*Decree 1B (People)*

[s]okra[tides] proposed: in other respects *let it be* in accordance with the Council, but with regard to the assessments which have to be raised city by city the prytany members who happen to be in office and the secretary of the Council shall [see to it], when there is a case about the assessments, that the court . . .

*Decree 254 (Council and People)*

<sup>55</sup> The Council and the People decided.

Aigeis was the prytany; ?-ippos was secretary; ?-oros was chairman.

Thoudippos proposed: those cities for which tribute was assessed under the Council for which Pleistias was first secretary, in the archonship of Stratokles <sup>425/4</sup>, shall all bring a cow and panoply full set of armour to the Great Panathenaia; and they shall take part in the procession *in the same way as Athenian settlers abroad* <sup>i.e. possibly extends to these tributaries the rites expected of colonists?</sup>

#### **Statement of Tribute assessment for 425/4**

The Council for which Pleistias [of -] was first Secretary assessed the tribute for the cities *in the following way*, in the archonship of Stratokles <sup>425/4</sup>, under the Magistrates-in-charge-of-introducing-cases-to-court for whom Ka- [of -] was secretary.

After this inscription there is a table listing the contributions from different states in talents. **The total is between 1,460 and 1,500 talents.**

Below is a simplified table (from <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGI3/71>) which also indicates the increase in some island contributions. A different table in LACTOR 1 p.92 gives a fuller picture over a longer period.

	<i>Tribute in 430s</i>	<i>New Tribute</i>	<i>418-14</i>
Parians	18	30	18
Naxians	6 4,000 drachs	15	9
Andrians	6	15	7
Melians	-	15	
Siphnians	3	9	
Eretrians	3	15	
Therans	-	5	
Keans	4	10	
Karystians	5	5	5
Chalkidians	3	10	
Kythnians	3	6	
Tenians	2	10	
Styrians	1	2	
Mykonians	1	2?	
Seriphians	1	2?	
Ietians	3,000dr	1?	
Dians	2,000dr	1?	
Athenitians	2,000dr	1	
Syrians	1,500dr	1	
Grynchians	1,000dr	2,000dr	
Rhenaiaans	300dr	1,000dr	
Diakrians from the Chalkidians	800dr	2,000dr	

**6 obols = 1 drachma**

**100 drachmas = 1 mna**

**60 minas (or 6,000 drachmas) = 1 talent (c. 26kg of silver)**

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

**Book 4.80-81** (Penguin Classics p.313-314) *Brasidas in Thrace 424BC*

The Spartans take the precaution of disposing of 2,000 Messenian helots

Thuc. IV 80 The fact that at the time Sparta was doing so badly made it easier for them to get this army from the Peloponnese. For now that the Athenians were making their attacks on the Peloponnese, and particularly on the actual territory of Sparta, the Spartans thought that the best way of diverting these attacks would be to give Athens, too, the same kind of trouble by sending an army to her allies, particularly as these allies were prepared to supply the army and were asking for it in order to be able to revolt.

The Spartans were also glad to have a good excuse for sending some of their helots out of the country, since in the present state of affairs, with Pylos in enemy hands, they feared a revolution. In fact they were so frightened of their unyielding character and of their numbers that they had had recourse to the following plan. (Spartan policy with regard to the helots had always been based almost entirely on the idea of security.) They made a proclamation to the effect that the helots should choose out of their own number those who claimed to have done the best service to Sparta on the battlefield, implying that they would be given their freedom. This was, however, a test conducted in the belief that the ones who showed most spirit and came forward first to claim their freedom would be the ones most likely to turn against Sparta. So about 2,000 were selected, who put garlands on their heads and went round the temples under the impression that they were being made free men. Soon afterwards, however, the Spartans did away with them, and no one ever knew exactly how each one of them was killed.

Brasidas' dynamic leadership

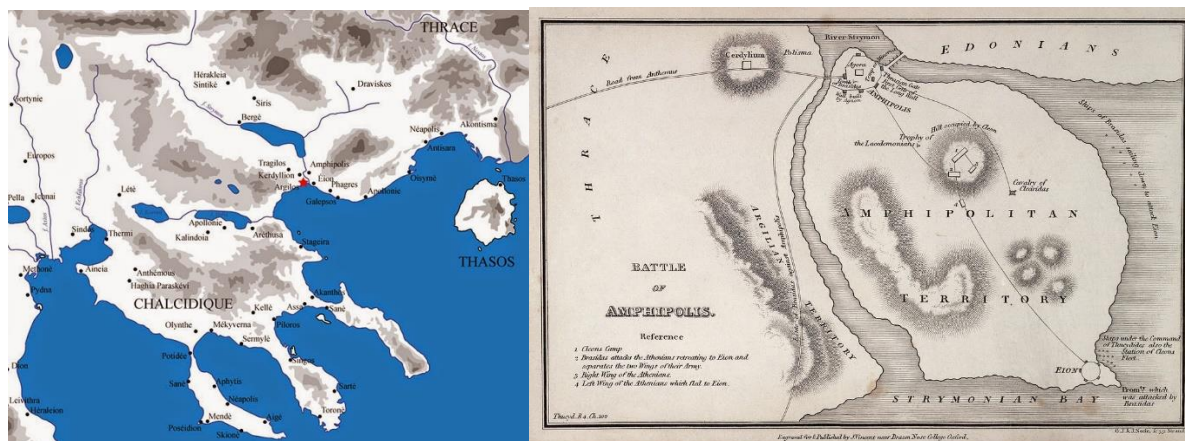
Thuc. IV 81 Now, on this present occasion, the Spartans were glad to send out 700 as hoplites to serve with Brasidas. The rest of his army were mercenaries whom he had raised from the Peloponnese. Brasidas himself was sent out by the Spartans largely because it was his own wish, though the Chalcidians also were eager to have him, a man who in Sparta itself had a great reputation for energy in every direction and who on his foreign service had shown himself to be so valuable to his country. And on this occasion it was his upright and moderate conduct towards the cities which caused most of them to revolt and enabled him to take others by treachery, so that when Sparta wanted to make peace (as she did in the end) she was in the position of having places to offer in exchange for those held by Athens, and in the meantime the Peloponnese was relieved of much of the burden of the war. Then, too, in the later period of the war, after the Sicilian expedition, the chief factor in creating a pro-Spartan feeling among the allies of Athens was the gallantry of Brasidas and the wisdom which he showed at this time - qualities which some knew from experience of them and others assumed because they had been told of them. He was the first to be sent out in this way, and by the excellent reputation which he won for himself on all sides he left behind a rooted conviction that the rest also were like him.



Silver ossuary and gold crown of Brasidas in the Archaeological Museum of Amphipolis

## Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

Book 4.108 (Penguin Classics p.329-330) *Brasidas Captures Amphipolis 424/3BC*



106 As for Amphipolis, Brasidas had just taken it, and he was within a night of taking Eion too. If the ships had not arrived so quickly to relieve it, it would have been in his hands by dawn.

Thuc. IV 108 The capture of Amphipolis caused great alarm at Athens. The place was not only useful because it supplied timber for ship-building and brought in revenue; there was also the fact that, although the Spartans, provided that they got an escort from the Thessalians, could reach the allies of Athens up to the line of the Strymon, they could not go any further so long as they did not control the bridge, since there was a great lake formed by the river above the town and in the direction of Eion they were exposed to the blockade of Athenian triremes. Now, however, these difficulties appeared to have been removed.

The Athenians also feared that their allies would revolt, since Brasidas was behaving with great moderation and was constantly declaring wherever he went that his mission was the liberation of Hellas. The cities subject to Athens, when they heard of the capture of Amphipolis, of the terms being offered, and of the considerate behaviour of Brasidas himself, eagerly embraced the idea of a change, made overtures to him, begging him to march on into their territory, and vied with each other in being the first to revolt. Indeed, they fancied that this was a perfectly safe thing to do, though, as was proved later on, the power of Athens was as great as had been their mistake in underestimating it.

As it was, their judgement was based more on wishful thinking than on a sound calculation of probabilities; for the usual thing among men is that when they want something they will, without any reflection, leave that to hope, while they will employ the full force of reason in rejecting what they find unpalatable. Then too there was the fact that the Athenians had just been defeated in Boeotia, and there was the untrue, but attractive, statement of Brasidas that at Nisaea the Athenians had not dared to engage even the army that he had there himself.

All this produced a feeling of confidence and a belief that no steps would be taken by Athens to secure her interests. But what most of all made them ready to undertake all kinds of risks was the pleasurable excitement of the moment, and the fact that it looked for the first time as though they were going to find the Spartans acting with real energy. All this did not escape the notice of the Athenians, who, so far as was possible at such short notice and in winter, sent garrisons to the various cities. Brasidas sent messengers to Sparta asking for another army to be sent out to him, and meanwhile began to arrange for the building of triremes on the Strymon.

The Spartans, however, did nothing for him, partly because their leading men were jealous of him, partly because what they really wanted was to recover the prisoners made on the island and to end the war.

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 4.117** (Penguin Classics p.334-5) *Armistice between Athens and Sparta 423BC*

Thuc. IV 117 In the spring before the next summer the Spartans and the Athenians made an armistice for one year. The Athenians calculated that in this way Brasidas would not be able to win over any more of their dependencies before they had had time to take measures for their security; they might then, if it suited them, extend the agreement. The Spartans correctly estimated these Athenian apprehensions and thought that, once Athens had had a respite from hardship and toil, she would be all the more ready to come to a general agreement by giving back the prisoners and making peace for a longer period. They were particularly anxious to get back the men while the successes of Brasidas still continued. And they thought that they were in the position to claim that, if Brasidas won more victories and made up all the ground lost to the Athenians, even though they might be deprived of the men captured at Sphacteria, they would still be able to fight it out on equal terms with a good prospect of final victory. Sparta and her allies therefore made an armistice on the following terms:

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 5.13-18** (Penguin Classics p.356-360) *The Peace of Nicias 422-1BC*

Brasidas was wounded in the battle of Amphipolis. 10 *Those who had lifted up Brasidas and brought him to safety out of the battle, took him into the city while the life was still in him. He heard the news that his army had been victorious, and soon afterwards he died.*

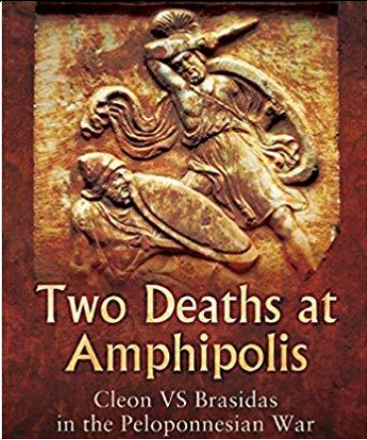
Thuc. V 13 At the very beginning of winter, Ramphias and his force advanced to Pierium in Thessaly. The Thessalians, however, were unwilling to let them go farther; Brasidas, for whom they were bringing reinforcements, was dead; so they turned back home, thinking that the time for action had passed now that the Athenians had been defeated and had gone away, and that they themselves were not capable of carrying out the plans which Brasidas had had in mind. But their main reason for returning was that they knew at the time when they set out that Spartan opinion was, in fact, in favour of peace.

Thuc. V 14 indeed, what now took place was that, after the battle at Amphipolis and the withdrawal of Ramphias from Thessaly, neither side went on with the war. Instead they began to think how to make peace. **The Athenians had suffered a serious blow at Delium and another one soon afterwards at Amphipolis; they no longer possessed the same confidence in their strength which had induced them to reject previous offers of peace, in the belief that their good fortune at that time would carry them through to final victory. They were also apprehensive about the allies, fearing that they might be encouraged by these defeats to revolt on a more serious scale, and they regretted that they had not seized upon the excellent opportunity of making peace after Pylos.**

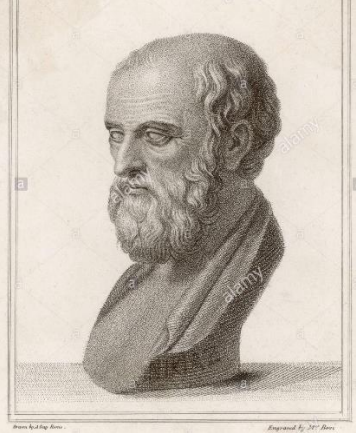

The Spartans on their side had found that the war had gone very differently from what they had imagined when they believed that they could destroy the power of Athens in a few years simply by laying waste her land. The disaster suffered on the island had been something which had never been known before in Sparta; her territory was being raided from Pylos and from Cythera; the helots were deserting, and there was always the fear that even those who remained loyal might gain confidence from the others and take advantage of the situation to make a revolution, as they had done in the past.

It happened, too, that the thirty years' truce between Sparta and Argos was on the point of expiring; the Argives refused to renew it unless Cynuria was given back to them, and it seemed impossible to fight Athens and Argos at once. They also suspected that some of the states in the Peloponnese had the intention of going over to Argos, as indeed they did.

Thuc. V 15 **Both sides, therefore, had cogent reasons for making peace, the Spartans, perhaps, most of all, since they were extremely anxious to get back the men who had been captured on the island.** Among these men were Spartans of the officer class, important people themselves and related to members of the government. Sparta had begun to negotiate directly after their capture, but the Athenians were then doing so well that they would not listen to any reasonable proposals. After the defeat at Delium, however, the Spartans, realizing that Athens would now be more inclined to come to terms, immediately concluded the armistice for one year, in which it was provided that meetings should take place to see whether this period could be extended.

<p><b>Cleon, son of Cleanetus</b></p> <p>Cleon was one of the 'new politicians' without noble ancestors. Cleon's father may have been a leather merchant and tanner, but an inscription lists him as a <i>choregos</i>. The historian Thucydides, who belonged to an old noble family, despised Cleon and called him 'the most violent among the Athenian citizens'. 3.36. In the surviving comedies of Aristophanes, the new politician is only presented in a state of anger, and when he speaks, his voice sounds like a scalded pig.</p>	 <p><b>Two Deaths at Amphipolis</b> Cleon VS Brasidas in the Peloponnesian War</p> <p><a href="http://www.livius.org">http://www.livius.org</a></p>	<p><b>Brasidas, son of Tellis</b></p> <p>His distinguished war record included action at Methone, Pylos, Megara, and in particular at Amphipolis, Torone and Scione, severing damaging Athenian interests. He was buried in Amphipolis and recognized as the town's second founder (after the Athenian Hagnon). Several years later, his soldiers were still called 'the Brasidans'.</p>
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Thuc. V 16 Now Athens had suffered another defeat at Amphipolis, and **Cleon** and **Brasidas** were dead — the two people who on each side had been most opposed to peace, Brasidas because of the success and honour which had come to him through war, Cleon because he thought that in a time of peace and quiet people would be more likely to notice his evil doings and less likely to believe his slander of others. This was the moment, then, when even greater efforts to secure peace were made by the two statesmen who had the best claims to influence in each city, the Spartan **King Pleistoanax**, the son of Pausanias, and **Nicias**, the son of Niceratus, who had done better in his military commands than anyone else of his time. So now, while still untouched by misfortune and still held in honour, Nicias wished to rest upon his laurels, to find an immediate release from toil and trouble both for himself and for his fellow citizens, and to leave behind him the name of one whose service to the state had been successful from start to finish. He thought that these ends were to be achieved by avoiding all risks and by trusting oneself as little as possible to fortune, and that risks could be avoided only in peace.

	
<p><b>Nicias, son of Niceratus (c.470-413 BCE):</b>  <i>Athenian politician and commander, one of the most important generals in the Peloponnesian War.</i>  <i>Xenophon mentions that he was very rich, owned more than 1,000 slaves and invested his money in the silver mines.</i></p>	<p><b>Pleistoanax, son of Pausanias</b></p>

As for Pleistoanax, he was being attacked by his enemies in connection with his restoration; whenever anything went wrong, they invariably brought his name forward in an attempt to convince the Spartans that what had happened was due to this illegal restoration of his. The charge made against him was that he and his brother Aristocles had bribed the priestess at Delphi to give oracles to the Spartan delegations which had come on various official visits, commanding them to bring home from abroad the seed of the demigod son of Zeus, or else they would have to plough with a ploughshare of silver. He was exiled because he was supposed to have been bribed to retreat from Attica, and, because of his fear of the Spartans, he had built half of his house inside the grounds of the temple of Zeus. So in the end, according to his accusers, he had induced the Spartans in the nineteenth year of his exile to Lycaenum to bring him back with the same dances and sacrifices as they had used originally in the institution of their kings at the time of the foundation of Sparta.

Thuc. V 17 He was naturally distressed by these accusations and he thought that in peacetime disasters would not occur; also that, once the Spartans got back their prisoners, his enemies would have no bases from which to attack him, whereas during a state of war those in the highest position must necessarily get blamed for every misfortune that took place. He was therefore extremely anxious to come to terms with Athens.

Discussions went on throughout this winter, and as spring drew near there were threats from Sparta of another invasion; orders were sent round to the cities to prepare for building permanent fortifications in Attica - all this in order to make the Athenians more inclined to accept the terms offered. During the discussions various claims were put forward by each side, and in the end it was agreed that peace should be made on the basis of each party's giving back what it had acquired during the war, except that Athens was to retain Nisaea. (When Athens had put in a claim for Plataea, the Thebans had replied that they had not taken the place by force, but held it as the result of an agreement reached freely, and with no element of treachery, with the citizens. The Athenians pointed out that the same held good of their occupation of Nisaea.)

Once this point was reached the Spartans called a meeting of their allies, all of whom voted in favour of peace except for the Boeotians, the Corinthians, the Eleans, and the Megarians, who were opposed to what was being done. The treaty was then concluded and peace was made between Athens and Sparta, each side swearing to the following provisions:

Thuc. V 18 'The Athenians, the Spartans and their allies made a treaty and swore to it, city by city, as follows:

'With regard to the Panhellenic temples, everyone who wishes, according to the customs of his country, to sacrifice in them, to travel to them, to consult the oracles, or to attend the games shall be guaranteed security in doing so, both by sea and by land.<sup>8</sup>

At Delphi the consecrated ground and the temple of Apollo and the Delphians themselves shall be governed by their own laws, taxed by their own state, and judged by their own judges, both the people and the territory, according to the custom of the place.

'The treaty is to be in force between the Athenians, with their allies, and the Spartans, with their allies, for fifty years without fraud or damage by land or sea.

'It shall not be lawful to take up arms with intent to do injury either for the Spartans and their allies against the Athenians and their allies, or for the Athenians and their allies against the Spartans and their allies, in any way or by any means whatever. If any dispute should arise between them, they are to deal with it by law and by oath, as may be agreed between them.

'The Spartans and their allies are to give back Amphipolis to the Athenians. In the case of all cities given back by the Spartans to the Athenians, the inhabitants shall have the right to go where they please taking their property with them.

'These cities are to pay the tribute fixed by Aristides and are to be independent. So long as they pay the tribute, it shall not be lawful for the Athenians or their allies to take up arms against these cities, once the treaty has been made. The cities referred to are Argilus, Stagirus, Acanthus, Scolus, Olynthus, and Spartolus. These cities are to be allied neither to Sparta nor to Athens. If, however, the Athenians persuade the cities to do so, it shall be lawful for the Athenians to make them their allies, provided that the cities themselves are willing.

'The Meciynaans, the Sanaeans, and Singaeans shall inhabit their own cities, as shall the Olynthians and Acanthians. The Spartans and their allies shall give back Panactum to the Athenians. The Athenians shall give back Coryphasium, Cythera, Methana, Ptelium, and Atalanta to the Spartans; also all Spartans who are in prison in Athens or in any other prison in the Athenian dominions.

'The Athenians shall let go the Peloponnesians besieged in Scione and all others in Scione who are allies of Sparta, and those whom Brasidas sent in there, and any other allies of Sparta who are in prison in Athens or in any other prison in the Athenian dominions.

The Spartans and their allies shall in the same way give back all Athenians or allies of Athens whom they have in their hands.

'With regard to Scione, Torone, Sermyle, and any other cities in Athenian hands, the Athenians may act as they think fit.

'The Athenians shall take an oath to the Spartans and their allies, city by city. The oath taken shall be the most binding one that exists in each city, and seventeen representatives on each side are to swear it. The words of the oath shall be these:

'I shall abide by the terms of this treaty honestly and sincerely.'

In the same way the Spartans and their allies shall take an oath to the Athenians.

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<sup>8</sup> Compare the wording (with its specific reference to Delphi) in the opening clause of the armistice agreement (rv, 118).

This oath is to be renewed annually by both sides. Pillars are to be set up at Olympia, Pythia, the Isthmus, in the Acropolis at Athens, and in the temple at Amyclae in Lacedaemon.

‘If any point connected with any subject at all has been over-looked, alterations may be made, without any breach of oath, by mutual agreement and on due consideration by the two parties, the Athenians and the Spartans.’

*20 This treaty was made at the very end of the winter and the beginning of spring, directly after the City festival of Dionysus, just ten years, with the difference of a few days, after the first invasion of Attica and the beginning of this war.*



## Aristophanes, *Peace* 619–622 (No. 110); 639–648 (No. 202)

*'Peace' is a comedy by the ancient Greek playwright Aristophanes. It won second prize at the City Dionysia where it was staged just before the ratification of the Peace of Nicias in 421 BCE, which promised (but, ultimately, failed) to end the ten year old Peloponnesian War. It tells the story of Trygaeus, a middle-aged Athenian who takes it upon himself to rescue the allegorical figure of Peace and thereby bring about an end to the Peloponnesian War. In doing so, he earns the gratitude of farmers while bankrupting various tradesmen who had profited from the hostilities, and he celebrates his triumph by marrying Harvest, a companion of Peace and Festival.* [http://www.ancient-literature.com/greece\\_aristophanes\\_peace.html](http://www.ancient-literature.com/greece_aristophanes_peace.html)



**Hermes:** Then, when the cities that you ruled realised that you <sup>i.e. The people of Athens</sup> were at each other's throats and showing your teeth as you grinned, they plotted against you in every way they could because of their fear of the tribute, and they used bribes to persuade the most powerful men in Sparta.

Aristophanes, *Peace* (421BC) 619–622 <sup>LACTOR 1 110</sup>

**Hermes:** The speakers in the assembly used to shake down the wealthy and prosperous among the allies, laying accusations that they were Brasidean sympathisers. And then you tore at them like hounds – the city, sitting there pale and frightened, gobbled up with pleasure whatever slanders anyone told it. The foreigners, seeing the blows that were being struck, bunged up the mouths of those who made these accusations with gold, making them rich, while you were never going to notice that Greece was on its way to desolation. Ant the man who did this was the tanner. <sup>i.e. Cleon<sup>9</sup></sup>

Aristophanes, *Peace* (421BC) 639–648 <sup>LACTOR 1 202</sup>

<sup>9</sup> This is consistent with attacks made on Cleon by Aristophanes elsewhere, particularly in the *Knights* (424BC), where Cleon is caricatured as 'the Paphlagonian'.

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

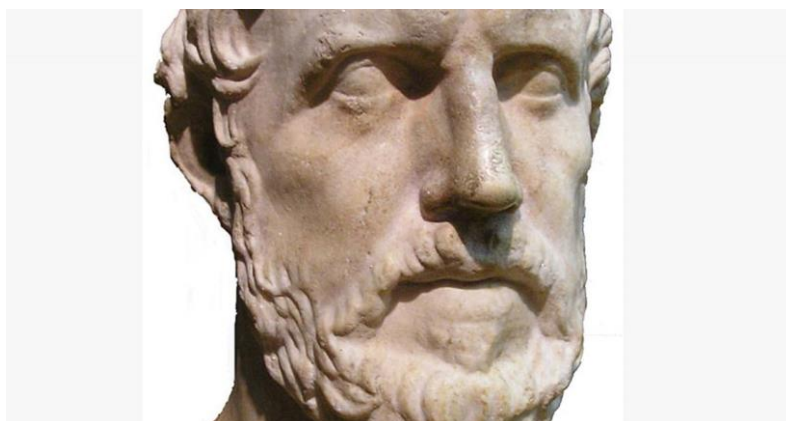
**Book 5.25-26** (Penguin Classics p.363-364) *Negotiations with Argos 421BC*

Thuc. V 25 After the peace treaty and the alliance between Sparta and Athens, made after the ten years' war, when Pleistolas was ephor in Sparta and Alcaeus archon in Athens, there was peace so far as those who had accepted the terms were concerned. But Corinth and various other cities in the Peloponnese were trying to upset the agreement, and Sparta found herself immediately in fresh trouble with her allies. Then, too, as time went on the Spartans also lost the confidence of the Athenians because they failed to carry out some of the terms of the treaty. It is true that for six years and ten months they refrained from invading each other's territory; abroad, however, the truce was never properly in force, and each side did the other a great deal of harm, until finally they were forced to break the treaty made after the ten years, and once more declare war openly upon each other.

Thuc. V 26 The history of this period also has been written by the same **Thucydides, an Athenian**, keeping to the order of events as they happened by summers and winters, down to the time when the Spartans and their allies put an end to the empire of Athens and occupied the Long Walls and Piraeus. By then the war had lasted altogether **twenty-seven years**. And it would certainly be an error of judgement to consider the interval of the agreement as anything else except a period of war. One has only to look at the facts to see that it is hardly possible to use the word 'peace' of a situation in which neither side gave back or received what had been promised; and apart from this there were breaches of the treaty on both sides in connection with the Mantinean and Epidaurian wars, and in other respects, too; the allies in the Thracian area continued hostile as before; and the Boeotians were in a state of truce which had to be renewed every ten days.

So, if one puts together the first ten years' war, the uneasy truce which followed it, and the subsequent war, one will find, reckoning by summers and winters, that my estimate of the number of years is correct within a few days - also that, **for those who put their faith in oracles, here is one solitary instance of their having been proved accurate**. I myself remember that all the time from the beginning to the end of the war it was being put about by many people that the war would last for thrice nine years.

I lived through the whole of it, being of an age to understand what was happening, and I put my mind to the subject so as to get an accurate view of it. It happened, too, that **I was banished from my country for twenty years after my command at Amphipolis**; I saw what was being done on both sides, particularly on the Peloponnesian side, because of my exile, and this leisure gave me rather exceptional facilities for looking into things. I shall now, therefore, go on to describe the disputes that took place after the ten years' war, the breach of the treaty, and the warfare which came afterwards.





Nike of Paeonius erected at Olympia c.420BC:

*'dedicated by the Messenians and Naupaktians as a tithe of the spoils of their enemies'*

**Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 6.31** (Penguin Classics p.428-429) *Launching of the Sicilian Expedition 415BC*

The expeditionary forces.

Thuc. VI 31 At this moment when they were really on the point of parting from each other with all the risks ahead, the danger of the situation came more home to them than it had at the time when they voted for the expedition. Nevertheless they were heartened with the strength they had and with the sight of the quantities of every kind of armament displayed before their eyes. As for the foreigners and the rest of the crowd, they came merely to see the show and to admire the incredible ambition of the thing.

Certainly this expedition that first set sail was by a long way the most costly and the finest-looking force of Hellenic troops that up to that time had ever come from a single city. In numbers of ships and hoplites it was no greater than the force which Pericles took to Epidaurus and the same force which went against Potidaea with Hagnon, which consisted of 4,000 Athenian hoplites, 300 cavalry, and 100 triremes, with the addition of 50 more ships from Lesbos and Chios and many allied troops as well. That force, however, went only on a

short voyage and was only equipped in the ordinary way, whereas this expedition was planned with a view to its being away for a long time and was equipped for both kinds of fighting, whichever should be required, both with warships and with ground troops.

The fleet was in a high state of efficiency and had cost a lot of money to both the captains and the State. Every sailor received a drachma a day from the Treasury, which also provided empty ships (60 fighting ships and 40 for the transport of hoplites) all manned with the best crews available. The captains, too, offered extra pay, in addition to that provided by the State to the *thranitae* and the rest of the crews, and they went to great expense on figure-heads and general fittings, every one of them being as anxious as possible that his own ship should stand out from the rest for its fine looks and for its speed.

As for the land forces, they had been chosen from the best men who were liable for calling-up, and there had been much rivalry and much pains spent by everyone on his armour and personal equipment. It therefore happened that there was not only all this competition among the Athenians themselves, each with regard to his own particular piece of responsibility, but to the rest of Hellas it looked more like a demonstration of the power and greatness of Athens than an expeditionary force setting out against the enemy.

It would have been found that a grand total of many talents of money were being taken out of the city, if one reckoned up the sums spent by the State and the private expenses of those who were serving — a total which would include what the State had already spent and what was being sent out in the hands of the generals, what individuals had spent on personal equipment, what the captains had spent and were still to spend on their ships; and, in addition to all this, there would have to be included the money for private expenses which everyone was likely to have taken with him over and above his pay from the State on an expedition which was to last for a long time, and also what the soldiers or traders took with them for purposes of exchange.

And what made this expedition so famous was not only its astonishing daring and the brilliant show that it made, but also its great preponderance of strength over those against whom it set out, and the fact that this voyage, the longest ever made by an expedition from Athens, was being undertaken with hopes for the future which, when compared with the present position, were of the most far-reaching kind.

### **Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

**Book 7.18** (Penguin Classics p.487-488) *Fortification of Decelea 413BC*

Thuc. VII 18 The Spartans also prepared to invade Attica, as they had already decided to do and as they had been asked to do by the Syracusans and Corinthians, who, when they heard that Athens was sending reinforcements to Sicily, hoped that this would be stopped by an invasion. Alcibiades, too, was constantly urging them to fortify Decelea and to carry on the war with vigour. But what chiefly encouraged the Spartans to act with energy was their belief that Athens, with two wars on her hands — one against them and one against the Sicilians — would be now easier to crush.

There was also the fact that the Spartans considered that Athens had been the first to break the peace treaty.

**In the first war they thought that the fault had been more on their side, partly because the Thebans had entered Plataea in peace time and partly because, in spite of the provision in the previous treaty that there should be no recourse to arms if arbitration were offered, they themselves had not accepted the Athenian offer of arbitration. They therefore thought**

**that there was some justice in the misfortunes they had suffered and took to heart the disaster of Pylos and their other defeats.**

But now, in addition to the constant raids from Pylos, the Athenians had come out with thirty ships from Argos and laid waste part of Epidaurus and Prasiae and other places; also whenever any dispute arose on doubtful points in the treaty, it was Sparta who had offered to submit to arbitration and Athens who had refused the offer. It was now Athens therefore, the Spartans thought, who was in the wrong through having committed exactly the same fault as theirs had been before, and they went into the war with enthusiasm. This winter they sent round to their allies for supplies of iron and got ready all the other materials for building fortifications. At the same time they organized a force of their own and conscripted other forces from the rest of the Peloponnese to be sent out in merchant ships to the help of their allies in Sicily. So the winter ended, and the eighteenth year of this war recorded by Thucydides.

### **Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War***

#### **Book 7.28**

Thuc. VII 28 Then the supplies of food from Euboea, which previously had been brought in by the quicker route overland from Oropus through Decelea, now, at great expense, had to go by sea round Sunium. Every single thing that the city needed had to be imported, so that instead of a city it became a fortress. By day detachments took it in turn to mount guard on the battlements, by night all except the cavalry were on duty, some at the various armed posts and others on the walls. So, summer and winter, there was no end to their hardships.

What wore them down more than anything else was the fact that they had two wars on their hands at once, and indeed they had got themselves into such a state of obstinate resolution that no one would have believed it possible if he had been told of it before it actually happened. For it was incredible that, besieged by the Peloponnesians who were based on a fortress in Attica, they should not only not leave Sicily, but actually stay on and lay siege in just the same way to Syracuse, a city which was in itself as big as Athens, and should give the Hellenic world such an astonishing demonstration of their power and of their daring; how astonishing can be seen from the fact that at the beginning of the war some thought that, if the Peloponnesians invaded Attica, Athens might survive for a year, and while others put the figure at two or three years, no one imagined she could last for more than that; yet now, in the seventeenth year after the first invasion, having suffered every kind of hardship already in the war, here were the Athenians going out to Sicily and taking upon themselves another war on the same scale as that which they had been waging all this time with the Peloponnesians.

For all these reasons - the great damage done by the occupation of Decelea and the other heavy expenses which fell upon them - the Athenians were becoming embarrassed financially, and it was about this time that they imposed upon their subjects a tax of five per cent on all imports and exports by sea, thinking that this would bring in more money. Expenditure was not the same as it had been, but had grown bigger as the war grew bigger, while revenue was declining.