THUCYDIDES

THE

PELOPONNESIAN

WAR

Translated, with introduction, notes, and glossary by

STEVEN LATTIMORE

Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
Indianapolis/Cambridge
(1998)
pirates from sailing out of Opous and elsewhere in Lokris and causing
damage to Euboa.

[33] These were the events during this summer after the Peloponnesian
withdrawal from Attica. In the following winter Euarchos the Akarnanian,
who wanted to return to Astakos, persuaded the Corinthians to sail with
forty ships and fifteen hundred hoplites to restore him; he added merce-
naries of his own. The leaders of the force were Euphamidas son of
Aristonymos, Timoxenos son of Timokrates, and Eumachos son of Chry-
sis. They made the voyage and restored Euarchos. They wanted to take
over some places elsewhere on the Akarnanian coast and made the attempt
but were unsuccessful and started home. They kept to the coast and put in
at Kephallenia; and making a landing in the territory of the Kranians, they
were deceived by an agreement with them and lost some of their men when
the Kranians caught them off guard by attacking; and after an embattled
departure, they returned home.

[34] In this winter, following their traditional custom, the Athenians
held burial rites at public expense for the first to die in this war, in the fol-
lowing manner. They lay out the bones of the dead two days beforehand,
after setting up a tent, and each person brings whatever offerings he wishes
to his own relatives. When the procession takes place, wagons carry
cypress coffins, one for each tribe, and within are the bones of each man,
according to tribe. One empty bier, fully decorated, is brought for the
missing, all who were not found and recovered. Any man who wishes, citi-
zen or foreigner, joins the procession, and female relatives are present at
the grave as mourners. They bury them in the public tomb, which is in the
most beautiful suburb of the city and in which they always bury those
killed in war, except of course for the men who fought at Marathon; judg-
ing their virtue outstanding, they gave them burial right there. After they
cover them with earth, a man chosen by the state, known for wise judg-
ment and of high reputation, makes an appropriate speech of praise, and
after this they depart. This is their burial practice, and throughout the
whole war, whenever there was occasion, they followed the custom. Now
for these first casualties, Perikles son of Xanthippos was chosen to speak.
And when the moment arrived, coming forward from the tomb to a plat-
form that had been elevated so that he could be heard by as much of the
crowd as possible, he spoke as follows:

[35] "Most of those who have already spoken here praise the man who
made this speech part of the custom, saying that for this address to be
made at the burial of those lost in war is a fine thing. I myself would have
thought it sufficient that the honors for those who proved good in deed be
bestowed by deed as well, just as you now see carried out at public expense
for this burial, rather than that the virtues of many men depend for their
credibility on whether a single man speaks well or badly. To speak in due
proportion is difficult where grasp of the truth itself is hardly assured. For
the man listening with understanding and good will may well consider
what is set forth in some way inferior, measured against both his wishes
and his knowledge, yet the one listening in ignorance may consider some
things exaggerated, out of envy when he hears anything going beyond his
natural endowments. Praise spoken of others can only be endured as long
as each believes himself capable of doing something of what he hears
about; toward what goes further, men feel envy and then actual disbelief.
But since it was so judged by those of long ago, that this speech is a fine
thing, I too must follow the custom and try to conform with the wishes and
opinions of each one of you as far as is possible.

[36] "First of all, I will begin with our ancestors, since it is right and also
appropriate on such an occasion as the present that the honor of this
remembrance should be given to them. For it is the same men, always
occupying the land through the succession of generations, who have
handed it down in freedom until the present time because of their bravery.
They are worthy of praise, and our fathers still more. In addition to what
they received, they acquired through great effort the whole of the empire
we now rule and left it to us in the present generation. Those of us here
now who are still somewhere in the prime of life have expanded most areas
of it and in all respects provided the city with the fullest resources for both
war and peace. I will pass over the deeds in war that led to each of our
acquisitions and every instance of stout resistance we or our fathers made
against attacking enemies, whether barbarian or Hellene, since I do not
wish to recount them at length among those who know of them. But I will
turn to praise of the dead after I have first set forth the principles by which we came into this position and the form of government from which its greatness resulted, since I believe that these are not inappropriate to mention in the present circumstances and are advantageous for the whole gathering, both citizens and foreigners, to hear about.

[37] "We have a form of government that does not emulate the practices of our neighbors, setting an example to some rather than imitating others. In name it is called a democracy on account of being administered in the interest not of the few but the many, yet even though there are equal rights for all in private disputes in accordance with the laws, wherever each man has earned recognition he is singled out for public service in accordance with the claims of distinction, not by rotation but by merit, nor when it comes to poverty, if a man has real ability to benefit the city, is he prevented by obscure renown. In public life we conduct ourselves with freedom and also, regarding that suspicion of others because of their everyday habits, without getting angry at a neighbor if he does something so as to suit himself, and without wearing expressions of vexation, that inflict no punishment yet cause distress. But while we associate in private without undue pressure, in public we are especially law abiding because of fear, in our obedience both to anyone holding office and to the laws, above all those established to aid people who are wronged and those which, although unwritten, bring down acknowledged shame. [38] Furthermore, we have provided for the spirit the most plentiful respite from labor by providing games and festivals throughout the year as well as attractive surroundings for private life, a source of daily delight, which drives away cares. Because of the importance of the city, everything is brought in from every land, and it is our fortune to enjoy good things from other people with as much familiarity as what comes from here.

[39] "In our approach to warfare, we also differ from our opponents, in the following ways. We leave our city accessible to all and do not, by xenelasia, prevent anyone from either listening or observing, although some enemy might benefit by seeing what we do not hide, because we do

---

2.37. "Called a democracy": see Hornblower 1991 ad 2.37.1. "Expressions of vexation": an irony of this attention to nuance is that Perikles' own aloof manner was cited by contemporaries as a major source of resentment.

2.39. The reference to xenelasia makes the comparison explicitly anti-Spartan, even if Thucydides' text did not originally include the term (see Hornblower 1991 ad 2.39.1), which Perikles also uses in 1.44. In 2.39 he is highly idiosyncratic in associating xenelasia with military security, as counterespionage, since other

---

not put more trust in contrivance and deception than in the courageous readiness for action that comes from within. As for education, starting as children they pursue manhood with laborious training, but with our more relaxed way of life we are no less willing to take on equivalent dangers. Here is proof: the Lacedaemonians do not invade our land alone but with all their allies, and we attack other lands by ourselves, and fighting in hostile territory against men defending their own possessions, we usually win easily. And no enemy has yet encountered our united forces, on account of our simultaneously maintaining the fleet and dispatching our own men to many points on land, but wherever our enemies meet a detachment, they flatter themselves that they have repelled all of us if they beat some of us and that they were defeated by all if they lose. And if we are willing to face danger with a mind at ease rather than with the habit of stress, with bravery owing no more to law than to character, surely it is our gain that we are not afflicted by hardships before they occur, that when we do encounter them we prove no less daring than those who are constantly starving, and that our city deserves admiration for these reasons and still others.

[40] "For we love beauty while practicing economy and we love wisdom without being enervated. We use wealth for opportune action rather than boastful speech, and there is no disgrace for one to admit poverty but much more in not avoiding it through activity. And it is within the capacity of some of us to manage private right along with public business and of the rest, while concentrating on their own occupations, to have no inferior understanding of public affairs; we are unique in considering the man who takes no part in these to be not apolitical but useless, and we ourselves either ratify or even propound successful policies, finding harm not in the ancient sources explain it as a device for protecting Sparta from corrupting outside influences. The Periklean/Thucydidean usage is the more anomalous in that the passage does not clarify what it is that Spartans conceal and Athenians do not.

2.40. Any translation of this chapter, especially its first sentence, will be controversial. I agree with Rusten 1985 and 1989, pp. 151–57 and Hornblower 1991 ad 2.40.1–2 that the emphasis is on the Athenians as individuals; although I doubt their translation "lovers of what is noble" (rather than "beauty"), I do not think "beauty" refers to such public monuments as the Parthenon. The section on friendship, however, seems to begin a return to the whole city as a topic, and I would not draw the sharp line Rusten does between personal friendship and friendship among states.
effect of speeches on action but in failing to get instruction by speech before proceeding to what must be done. For in that we are both especially daring and especially thorough in calculating what we attempt, we can truly be distinguished from other men, for whom ignorance is boldness but calculation brings hesitancy. Rightly would they be judged strongest in spirit who recognize both dangers and pleasures with utmost clarity and are on neither count deterred from risks. In matters of goodness, we also contrast with most people, since we acquire friends by conferring rather than by receiving benefits. The giver is the more secure, through preserving the feeling of gratitude by good will toward the recipient, who is less fulfilled because he knows that he will repay the goodness not to inspire gratitude but to return an obligation. We are unique in being benefactors not out of calculation of advantage but with the fearless confidence of our freedom.

[41] “In summary I claim that our city as a whole is an education for Hellas, and that it is among us as individuals, in my opinion, that a single man would represent an individual self-sufficient for the most varied forms of conduct, and with the most attractive qualities. And that this is not boastful speaking for the occasion but factual truth our city’s very power, which we acquired because of these characteristics, proclaims clearly. For she alone of existing cities surpasses her reputation when put to the test, and only she brings neither chagrín to the attacking enemy as to the sort of men by whom he has been worsted nor reproach to the subject that he is ruled by the unworthy. Through great proofs, and by exhibiting power in no way unwitnessed, we will be admired by this and future generations, thus requiring no Homer to sing our praises nor any other whose verses will charm for the moment and whose claims the factual truth will destroy, since we have compelled every sea and land to become open to our daring and populated every region with lasting monuments of our acts of harm and good. It is for such a city, then, that these men nobly died in battle, thinking it right not to be deprived of her, just as each of their survivors should be willing to toil for her sake.

[42] “This above all is the reason I have lengthened my speech about the city, to explain why our efforts have no equivalent among people who do not share these values, and at the same time to give evidence for the glory of those whom I am now eulogizing. The most important part of the eulogy has been said. For it is their virtues, and those of men like them, that have given honor to the qualities I have praised in the city, and for few other Hellenes would it be manifest, as it is for them, that reputation is equal to the deeds. It seems to me that this conclusion of these men’s lives is what reveals a man’s virtue, whether as the first indication or final confirmation. Even for those who were worse in other ways it is right that first place be given to valor against enemies on behalf of country; by effacing evil with good, they became public benefactors rather than individual malefactors. None of these men turned coward from preferring the further enjoyment of wealth, nor did any, from the poor man’s hope that he might still escape poverty and grow rich, contrive a way to postpone the danger. Thinking defeat of the enemy more desirable than prosperity, just as they considered this the fairest of risks, they were willing to vanquish him at that risk and long for the rest, leaving to hope the uncertainty of prospering in the future but resolving to rely on their own actions in what confronted them now, and recognizing that it meant resisting and dying rather than surviving by submission, they fled disgrace in word but stood up to the deed with their lives and through the fortune of the briefest critical moment, at the height of glory rather than fear, departed.

[43] “So fared these men, worthy of their city; you their survivors must pray to meet the enemy at lesser cost but resolve to do so just as unflinchingly, not calculating the benefits by words alone—even if one might recite at length to you who know them just as well the rewards of resisting the enemy—but wondering at the city’s power as you actually see it each day and becoming her lovers, reflecting whenever her fame appears great to you that men who were daring, who realized their duty, and who honored it in their actions acquired this, men who even when they failed in some


2.43. In a recent paper, Kathryn Morgan called attention to Thucydides’ startling choice of words: “lover” is overtly sexual and denotes the aggressor in relationships, so that Athens (whose power has just been mentioned) becomes a passive object. Cf. Dover 1978 passim and Halperin 1990, esp. pp. 88–105. “Present in judgment alone”: for another possible interpretation, cf. HCT II and Rusten 1989 ad 2.43.5. “For failures…”: the language and logic have understandably baffled editors (cf. Classen/Steup II, HCT II, and Rusten ad 2.43.5); perhaps the best course short of emendation is to play down the antithesis, since both failures and successes have a reason for risking their lives.

2.41. *Pax* Hornblower 1991 ad 2.41.1, “education for (or school of) Hellas” is not a “tendentious” translation (reflecting Athens’ later reputation as a cultural center), but well grounded both in contemporary usage of *paideusis* and in the overall context of the funeral oration.
attempt did not on that account think it right to deprive the city of their virtue, but to offer it to her as their finest contribution. For in giving their lives in common cause, they individually gained imperishable praise and the most distinctive tomb, not the one where they are buried but the one where on every occasion for word and deed their glory is left after them eternally. The whole earth is the tomb of famous men, and not only inscriptions set up in their own country mark it but even in foreign lands an unwritten memorial, present not in monument but in mind, abides within each man. Emulate them now, judge that happiness is freedom and freedom courage, and do not stand aside from the dangers of war. For failures, men bereft of good expectations, have no more reason to be unting the lives of those whose are always a threat as long as they live, and in whose sight the most important things are at stake if they come to grief. Indeed, for a man of pride, misfortune associated with cowardice is more painful than death coming imperceptibly in the midst of vigor along with shared hopes.

[44] “It is for this reason that I offer comfort, not pity, to all those present as parents of these men. You know that you were reared among ever-changing fortunes. It is happiness whenever men find the most glorious end, just like these men, even while you find sorrow, and for those whose success in life has been measured out to the same limit as their mortality. I know that it is difficult to persuade you in that you will often have reminders of them through the happiness of others, which you once enjoyed as well; for sorrow is not felt over the deprivation of good things one has not experienced, but over the removal of what one was used to. But those still of age to have children must take strength from hopes of other sons. On the personal level, those who come later will be a means of forgetting those who are no more, and the city will benefit doubly, both in not being left short and in security; for it is not possible for men to counsel anything fair or just if they are not at risk by staking their sons equally. All of you who have passed beyond this, however, consider that the greater portion of your life, in which you were fortunate, is a gain, that this part will be short, and that your heart will be lightened by the fame of these men. For a love of honor is the only thing that has no old age, and it is not profit, as some claim, but honor that brings delight in the period of uselessness.

[45] “For all those present who are sons or brothers of these men, however, I see that the effort will be a great one, since everyone tends to praise those who are no longer, and it will be difficult for you to be judged not equal, because of their surpassing merit, but only slightly inferior. For the living incur the envy toward a rival, but those who no longer offer opposition receive honor with a good will lacking in competitiveness. And if I should make any mention of the virtue of women, regarding all who will now be widows, I will express all of it in brief advice. Your renown is great through keeping up to the standard of your basic nature, and if your reputation has the least circulation among men, whether for virtue or in blame.

[46] “In words, as much as I in my turn could say suitably in accordance with the custom has been said, and in deed, these have been honored in burial now, and from this time the city will rear their sons at public expense until they are of age, conferring on both the dead and their survivors a beneficial crown for such contests as these. For it is among those who establish the greatest prizes for courage that men are the best citizens. And now, after each of you has made full lament for his own, you must depart.”

[47] Such was the funeral that occurred in this winter, and when the winter was over, the first year of this war ended. And as soon as summer began, the Peloponnesians invaded Attica with a two-thirds force just as on the previous occasion, Archidamos son of Zeuxidamos, king of the Lacedaemonians was in command, and they established their position and plundered the land. When they had not yet stayed many days in Attica, the

2.45. “If I should make any mention”: the comments of Rusten 1989 ad 2.45.2 about efforts to deny the coldness of these words are judicious and stringent; women are given a grudging (pace Hornblower 1991 ad 2.45.2) introduction and last-on-the-list placement. If Perikles’ consolation to the other bereaved seems bleak, it is nevertheless based on the exhaustively argued idea that a fully lived Athenian life is the best possible life. For the most part, this life could only vicariously be experienced by Athenian women. Their dismissive treatment in the funeral oration is less consistent with what we know of Perikles than with Thucydides’ general disregard, cf. Hornblower ad 2.4.2 and Crane 1996, pp. 75–92.

2.47–54. It is a truism that the juxtaposition of the funeral oration and the outbreak of plague is extraordinarily dramatic, also that Thucydides not only was fully aware of this but contrived the juxtaposition by recording no intervening events except—very briefly—the Peloponnesian invasion of Attica. Woodman 1988, pp. 34–35 develops the thesis that the plague, if not actually fictitious, was exaggerated beyond recognition and reality by Thucydides (who also refers to its long duration in 3.87, a passage Woodman notes and uses captiously). Woodman’s arguments are adequately answered by Hornblower 1991, pp. 316–18 and many comments on specific passages of 2.47–54; while certainly not denying rhetorical or dramatic elements, he stresses the scientific validity of Thucydides’ account. Morgan 1994 (writing as a physician as well as classicist) believes Thucydides misrepresented the symptoms because he took “dramatic license”; he particularly doubts the “head-to-toe sequence” (p. 204, see 2.49) and (like Woodman) gives little or no

2.39. “You know that you”: for the text, see HCT II ad 2.44.1.