

The Form and Content of Thucydides' Pentecontaetia (1.89–117)

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READING THE PENTECONTAETIA is both easy and difficult.¹ The narrative runs rapidly, with little of Thucydides' customary density and grammatical strain, yet its principles of arrangement and selection have remained obscure. Discussion has centered on two major difficulties: chronology and omissions. A. W. Gomme noted that the Pentecontaetia seems to share the very faults for which Thucydides criticized Hellanicus: it is both τοῖς χρόνοις οὐκ ἀκριβές and βραχύ—chronologically imprecise and brief.² Explanations vary: to take two extremes, Russell Meiggs suggested that the excursus was

¹ From the enormous bibliography dealing with the Pentecontaetia, the following studies, in addition to standard commentaries and books on Thucydides and on the fifth century, have been most helpful or stimulating in the preparation of this paper: N. G. L. HAMMOND, "The Arrangement of the Thought in the Proem and in Other Parts of Thucydides I," *CQ* N.S. 2 (1952: hereafter 'Hammond') 127–41; H. D. WESTLAKE, "Thucydides and the Pentekontaetia," in *Essays on the Greek Historians and Greek History* (Manchester 1969: 'Westlake') 39–60 (= *CQ* N.S. 5 [1955] 53–67); P. K. WALKER, "The Purpose and Method of 'the Pentekontaetia' in Thucydides, Book I," *CQ* N.S. 7 (1957: 'Walker') 27–38; R. A. McNEAL, "Historical Methods and Thucydides I.103.1," *Historia* 19 (1970: 'McNeal') 306–25; H. R. RAWLINGS, "Thucydides on the Purpose of the Delian League," *Phoenix* 31 (1977: 'Rawlings') 1–8; and E. BADIAN, "Toward a Chronology of the Penetkontaetia down to the Renewal of the Peace of Callias," in *From Plataea to Potidaea: Studies in the History and Historiography of the Pentecontaetia* (Baltimore 1993: 'Badian, *From Plataea*') 73–107 (= a revised version with new appendix of an article in *EchCl* 23, N.S. 7 [1988: 'Badian (1988)'] 289–320), 125–62 ("Thucydides and the Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. A Historian's Brief" [= a revised version of the article in J. W. Allison, ed., *Conflict, Antithesis, and the Ancient Historian* (Columbus [Ohio] 1990: 'Badian [1990]') 46–91, 165–81]). Badian, *From Plataea* xii, notes that "these essays have been revised (some of them considerably) for this collection, and they should not henceforth be cited in their original form." For the convenience of the reader who does not have access to the book, I give when possible the prior reference, recognizing that the new version is the authoritative text.

² A. W. GOMME *et. al.*, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1956–78: hereafter 'HCT') I 361; cf. *Thuc.* 1.97.2.

"late and hurried and much less well digested than most of the history,"³ while Ernst Badian, starting from the assumption that Thucydides composed the excursus after the Peloponnesian War "in order to establish his thesis of Sparta's responsibility for the war and the correctness of Pericles' vision," has recently accused Thucydides of gross distortion of the historical record, through cunning omissions, innuendo, and outright falsification.⁴

Meiggs' position represents one version of that taken, more or less strongly, by most studies of the Pentacontaetia, that due to haste, disinterest, or some other reason, Thucydides failed to achieve his purpose in the Pentacontaetia. Badian instead grants that Thucydides achieved his purpose, but argues that the product represents "the perfect skill of the advocate claiming a passion for objectivity,"⁵ and therefore uses every deceptive trick of advocacy, especially omission and misdirection. An alternative hypothesis, however, is that what we have responds closely to what Thucydides wanted to say, as Badian suggests, and that the narrative as it stands represents accurately the true situation as Thucydides saw it. On this hypothesis, the features of the text were consciously chosen to reflect the elements that in his analysis Thucydides found particularly significant. To test the two propositions of this hypothesis, this article will examine the narrative techniques and principles of organization used in the excursus and relate them to the arguments found elsewhere in the work.⁶ I hope to show that the structure, chronology, and omissions are neither so unreasonable nor so deceptive as have been argued. In particular, the hypothesis that the excursus is incomplete as it stands must be questioned. Although the entire *History* as we have it is evidently unfinished, the completeness or not of the Pentacontaetia can only be deduced after a careful analysis of its internal features and their relation to the rest of the work.

³ R. Meiggs, *Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1972) 445; cf. Gomme, *HCT* I 362: "That the excursus is an early essay, provisional, unfinished, and never properly adapted to its present position, is to me clear."

⁴ Badian, *From Plataea* 74 (= [1988] 291), cf. 125-62.

⁵ Badian, *From Plataea* 162 (= [1990] 91).

⁶ Cf. the studies of Thucydides' narrative technique by Hammond, Walker, and McNeal; cf. C. J. Dewald, *Taxis: The Organization of Thucydides' History, Books II-VIII* (diss. University of California at Berkeley 1975).

This reading will be based on indications in the text itself, without preconceptions as to what Thucydides should have written or meant to write. Such a reading is, precisely speaking, impossible, for all scholars carry their own prejudices and assumptions with them; but the effort will, I hope, uncover the rigorous principles underlying Thucydides' selection and presentation. Examination will demonstrate the differences in function between the two major parts of the excursus that cause their different treatment and will reveal the focus, in the second part, on Athenian power as expressed in sieges and battles; this will place in a new context the lack of chronological precision and the omission of many items we might otherwise expect, and will expose the innumerable ties that bind the excursus to the rest of the work. The analysis does not attempt to present a history of the period (which would require a quite different method), but rather to set forth more accurately what, through inclusion and omission, the narrative conveys.

First, however, an observation is necessary on the brevity of the excursus, so frequently cited as evidence of late composition or haste. In this view the ideal excursus would have been much fuller than what we now possess, maintaining the level of detail found in chapters 90–95⁷ and rectifying the omission of major events, such as the transfer of the league treasury to Athens, the peace with Persia, and the ostracism of Thucydides son of Melesias.⁸ Some items could have been added in brief compass. If the events of this period, however, had been described in the desired detail, the Pentecontaetia would have become a book, not seventeen pages, but three or four times as long. Thucydides treated the events of 479/478 quite selectively, and still employed four and a half pages (1.89–95). Even at the more rapid pace of two pages per year, the period 479–439 would have required 82 pages.⁹ In Book I Thucydides delineated the gathering storm, from the Epidamnian stasis to Athens' decision not to back down, setting the Pentecontaetia as an

⁷ *E.g.* Gomme, *HCT* I 363.

⁸ Meiggs (*supra* n.3) 444. Gomme has a list of omissions by categories: *HCT* I 365–89.

⁹ *Cf.* Westlake 41. Book I runs to eighty-eight OCT pages. Diod. 11.38–12.40 (478/477 to 439/438, including the Roman sections) occupies forty-five Teubner pages. Already the Pentecontaetia is second in length only to the Corcyraika (eighteen pages) of the units in Book I. The excursuses on the last years of Pausanias and Themistocles (1.128–38) require eight pages.

excursus within this account. The Pentecontaetia could not have been expanded without changing completely the proportions and the character of his treatment and of the history as a whole. Herodotus explicitly took the beginning of his account back to Croesus, creating a richly-textured, multi-generational prolegomenon to the expedition of Xerxes. Thucydides chose a different method, and in referring to the Pentecontaetia as an *ekbole* indicated that it would be a subordinate unit in the overall structure.¹⁰

I. The Structure of the Pentecontaetia

The major structural units of the excursus are recognizable by the opening and closing off of topics through framing phrases or sentences, by the introduction of new topics with a name or temporal phrase, and by the insertion of authorial comments.¹¹ The excursus as a whole is motivated by the statement at 87.6 reporting the Spartan decision that the treaty had been broken, which is repeated in modified form at 88. The main narrative resumes with the repetition of this statement at 118.3¹² The explanation for this decision, the Spartan recognition that “they would gain even greater power,” is stated generally at 88 and

¹⁰ Thuc. 1.97.2. Polybius' two-book *proparaskeue* exemplifies a different sort of introductory treatment: there is no indication that Thucydides had any such plan in mind, nor is it suggested by his critics, who seem unaware of the structural problems expansion of the Pentecontaetia would create.

¹¹ On framing sentences, “consisting of repeated introductory phrases or sentences at the beginnings of sections of the narrative, and of summary ones at the ends,” see H. R. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland 1966) 12 (from which the quotation), 52–58. They are not quite the same as the thesis-proof-restatement noted by Hammond. Cf. also R. Katičič, “Die Ringkomposition im ersten Buche des Thukydideischen Geschichtswerkes,” *WS* 70 (1957) 179–96. Authorial comments are direct interventions by the author into the narrative, as at 1.93.2: καὶ δῆλη ἡ οἰκονομία ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἔστιν κτλ.

¹² Thuc. 1.87.6: ἡ δὲ διαγνώμη αὕτη τῆς ἐκκλησίας, τοῦ τὰς σπονδὰς λελύσθαι.... 88: ἐψηφίσαντο δὲ οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τὰς σπονδὰς λελύσθαι καὶ πολεμητέα εἶναι.... 118.3: αὐτοῖς μὲν οὖν τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις διέγνωστο λελύσθαι τε τὰς σπονδὰς καὶ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἀδικεῖν. References in the text are to Book I unless otherwise specified. Translations are my own.

restated at 118.2.¹³ The increase of power that aroused Sparta's fear is thus presented as the subject of the excursus to follow. The excursus itself is introduced by γάρ (89.1).¹⁴ Chapter 88 is prefatory and represents Thucydides' insertion of his own interpretation into his narrative.¹⁵ Thucydides offers a second authorial intrusion into the text, this time in the first person,¹⁶ in a second preface inserted at the transition between its two major sections (97.2). Here he reiterates that the excursus would provide an exposition of how the Athenian *arche* was established. In addition, omission of the period by earlier writers (except for Hellanicus, who mentioned it briefly and without chronological precision) provides an additional justification for the long list of episodes that follows.¹⁷

The excursus is divided into two major units composed in quite different styles, connected by a transitional section. The first unit is devoted to Athens' acquisition of the position in which it was able to grow in power—that is, the hegemony of the Ionians and other liberated Greeks. It is introduced and concluded by the framing repetition at 89.1 and in the first phrase of 96.1.¹⁸ Within this frame Thucydides sets two short narratives, the building of the walls despite Spartan opposition and the acquisition of the Aegean hegemony. The first is framed by the phrases at 89.3, τὴν πόλιν ἀνοικοδομεῖν παρεσκευάζοντο καὶ τὰ τεῖχη, and 93.1, τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν πόλιν ἐτείχησαν ἐν ὀλίγῳ. After the insertion of

¹³ Thuc. 1.88: φοβούμενοι τοὺς Ἀθηναίους μὴ ἐπὶ μείζον δυνηθῶσιν, ὁρῶντες αὐτοῖς τὰ πολλὰ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ὑποχείρια ἤδη ὄντα.... 118.2 οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν τε ἀρχὴν ἐγκρατεστέραν κατεστήσαντο καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ μέγα ἐχώρησαν δυνάμεως ... πρὶν δὴ ἡ δύναμις τῶν Ἀθηναίων σαφῶς ἦρετο καὶ τῆς ξυμμαχίας αὐτῶν ἦπτοντο.

¹⁴ On Thucydides' practice of introducing excursuses with γάρ, cf. H. P. Stahl, "Speeches and Course of Events," in P. A. Stadter, ed., *The Speeches in Thucydides* (Chapel Hill 1973) 60–77 at 70.

¹⁵ Cf. Badian, *From Plataea* 147 (= [1990] 74).

¹⁶ Thuc. 1.97.2: ἔγραψα δὲ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐκβολὴν τοῦ λόγου ἐποιησάμην κτλ. I take ἐκβολὴν to refer to the whole passage 89–117, not just 98–117.

¹⁷ The expression ἅμα δὲ καὶ at 1.97.2 does not introduce an afterthought, but an equal or more important reason: cf. 1.25.3, 92.1; 2.20.4; 5.33.1; 6.89.4 and Hornblower *Comm. ad loc.*: the inadequacy of previous accounts is a "second-order reason" for the excursus.

¹⁸ Thuc. 1.89.1: οἱ γὰρ Ἀθηναῖοι τρόπῳ τοιῷδε ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐν οἷς ηὔξηθησαν... 96.1: παραλαβόντες δὲ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν ἡγεμονίαν τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ.

an additional statement on the walls of the Piraeus and Themistocles' advice, which includes several authorial comments,¹⁹ the framing sentence is repeated in strengthened form at 93.8, Ἀθηναῖοι μὲν οὖν οὕτως ἐτειχίσθησαν καὶ τὰλλα κατεσκευάζοντο εὐθύς μετὰ τὴν Μήδων ἀναχώρησιν, where ἀναχώρησιν refers back to 89.2, ἐπειδὴ Μῆδοι ἀνεχώρησαν, and to 89.3, ἐπειδὴ αὐτοῖς οἱ βάρβαροι ἔκ τῆς χώρας ἀπῆλθον. The name of Pausanias begins the second story, the transfer of hegemony. There is no introductory framing sentence, but the frequent repetition of ἡγεμονία and its cognates unites the episode. A short paragraph (94) lays out the situation as Pausanias led the Athenians and the other allies in campaigns to Cyprus and Byzantium, ἐν τῇδε τῇ ἡγεμονίᾳ. There follows the story of the shift of leadership, as the Ionians and others request the Athenians ἡγεμόνας σφῶν γίνεσθαι (95.1) and the Spartans acquiesce, τοὺς Ἀθηναίους νομίζοντες ἱκανοὺς ἐξηγεῖσθαι (95.7). The episode is summarized in the first clause of 96.1 (παραλαβόντες ... τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ... διὰ τὸ Πausανίου μῖσος).

The brief transitional section falls between the accounts of the acquisition of the hegemony and of the actions of Athens as hegemon,²⁰ and describes the establishment and administration of the alliance. The Athenians act so as to increase their power, with the result that the alliance is transformed into an *arche*. This section begins at 96, then in 97ff overlaps with the account of Athenian actions that follows. In fact, one of the first actions of the alliance, the repression of Naxos, also provides the model for the shift from alliance to *arche*. The transitional section is complete at 99, as is indicated by the framing statement regarding the allies' obligations of money and ships at 99.3, which echoes that at 96.1,²¹ and is further marked by the authorial statement on the behavior of allies and Athenians at 99.

Chapter 96 and the first phase of 97 (ἡγούμενοι ... βουλευόντων), by laying out the obligations assigned and privileges per-

¹⁹ Clear authorial statements at 93.2, 5, 7, but much of the passage seems to be personal opinion inserted into the narrative.

²⁰ For the placement of general observations and personal statements between accounts of concrete events, cf. Immerwahr (*supra* n.11) 62.

²¹ Thuc. 1.96.1: ἔταξαν ἅς τε ἔδει παρέχειν τῶν πόλεων χρήματα πρὸς τὸν βάρβαρον καὶ ἅς ναῦς; 99.3: οἱ πλείους αὐτῶν ... χρήματα ἐτάξαντο ἀντι τῶν νεῶν τὸ ἰκνούμενον ἀνάλωμα φέρειν. The existence of this transitional section is normally not recognized, but the tie between 96 and 99 is clear, and the tone and content are quite different from the list of 98–117. Although 97.1 also points toward that list, the remarks on empire are completed at 99.

mitted to the allies by the Athenians complete the account of acquisition of empire begun in 89–95. The list of Athenian actions (98–117) is introduced at 97.1 (πραγμάτων μεταξύ τοῦδε τοῦ πολέμου καὶ τοῦ Μηδικοῦ). But the last sentence of 97.2, ἄμα δὲ καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀπόδειξιν ἔχει τῆς τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἐν οἴῳ τρόπῳ κατέστη, refers both back to the acquisition of hegemony in 94f and forward to the forced exaction of tribute described in 99. The reduction of Naxos, the fourth item in the list of league activities begun at 98.1, furnishes the example that permits Thucydides to round off his account of Athens' behavior as hegemon. Chapter 99 completes Thucydides' account of Athens' relation to its allies begun in 96: the revolts of Thasos and Samos, serious as they are, will merely confirm the assessment made at 99.3, αὐτοὶ δὲ, ὅποτε ἀποσταίεν, ἀπαράσκευοὶ καὶ ἄπειροὶ ἐς τὸν πόλεμον καθίσταντο.²² This transitional section thus serves multiple functions, looking behind and ahead, providing an overview of Athenian imperial policy while justifying the whole excursus and its treatment of the period between the wars.

The second major unit is framed by statements at 97.1 and 118.2, and marked by the renewed statement of purpose for the excursus in the second preface at 97.2.²³ The prefatory statements in 97 introduce a list of some twenty-seven distinct episodes of varying length (98–117, see Table I). The fourth item, the revolt of Naxos, also serves to round off the transition passage on the empire, as I have noted. The individual episodes are set off by chronological markers (especially μετὰ ταῦτα, ὕστερον)²⁴ and by names that introduce new subjects (Inarus the Libyan, 104.1; Orestes of Thessaly, 111.1). The list style

²² Herodotus faced a similar structural problem in recounting the revolt of the Magi. Normally the accession of one king followed smoothly on the death of another, but in this case the false Smerdis gains power while Cambyses is still alive (3.61), so that the two reigns overlap. Herodotus preserves this overlap in his narrative.

²³ Thuc. 1.97.1: τοσάδε ἐπῆλθον πολέμῳ τε καὶ διαχειρίσει πραγμάτων μεταξύ τοῦ πολέμου καὶ τοῦ Μηδικοῦ, ἃ ἐγένετο πρὸς τε τὸν βάρβαρον αὐτοῖς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς σφετέρους ξυμμάχους νεωτερίζοντας καὶ Πελοποννησίων τοὺς αἰεὶ προστυγχάνοντας ἐν ἐκάστῳ; 118.2: ταῦτα δὲ ξύμπαντα ὅσα ἔπραξαν οἱ Ἕλληνες πρὸς τε ἀλλήλους καὶ τὸν βάρβαρον ἐγένετο ἐν ἔτεσι πεντήκοντα μάλιστα μεταξύ τῆς τε Ξέρξου ἀναχωρήσεως καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦδε τοῦ πολέμου. There is an echo of 1.18.3. The final words of 1.97, are echoed at 1.118.2, ἐν οἷς οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν τε ἀρχὴν ἐγκρατεστέραν κατεστήσαντο.

²⁴ A full list in Gomme, *HCT* I 361.

employed here is archaic, with little attempt to tie together events causally or otherwise.²⁵ As we shall see, the section records the Athenian actions that demonstrated her power and its growth down to the Samian revolt.

II. The Foundations of the Athenian Challenge to Spartan Hegemony

P. K. Walker succinctly presented the pivotal rôle the Pentecontaetia plays in the exposition of the causes of the war signaled at 23.5f.²⁶ The excursus is the principal passage to address the ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις, although many others, especially the debate at Sparta, contribute to the reader's understanding. The context of the excursus, coming immediately after the decision at Sparta that Athens had broken the treaty, determines that the relationship of Athens and Sparta will be a major theme. The contrast between Sparta and Athens is ever present in the Pentecontaetia as in Book I as a whole.²⁷ Sparta before and still at the end of the Persian War was the leader of Greece, the natural hegemon of the Hellenic League, the unchallenged commander at Salamis and Plataea.²⁸ By 432 the Spartans were put in the position of declaring war against Athens to stop its relentless growth and interference with Spartan allies. The question posed by Thucydides after the decision at Sparta is not "how was Sparta bad and Athens good?" or even "who was responsible for the war?" but "how did Sparta lose its previous absolute hegemony and Athens rise to a position where it could challenge the former leader?" Thucydides presents this situation as the result of Sparta's reluctance and inadequacy in

²⁵ Cf. Walker 34. For examples of the archaic use of lists, cf. H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (Oxford 1975) 517, index item 3.1ff. On the power and flexibility of lists and their 'paratactic style', cf. Immerwahr (*supra* n.11) 26ff, 47–51. Note the frequency of καί as a connective in 105–17. Occasional causal statements occur: cf. n.75 *infra*.

²⁶ Walker, esp. 27–33; cf. Westlake 59.

²⁷ Cf. H. R. Rawlings, *The Structure of Thucydides' History* (Princeton 1981) 91. The contrast is seen by Thucydides in terms of political behavior, not of morality, as Badian has argued, *From Plataea* 130, 132–35 (= [1990] 52, 55ff), stressing the supposed "innocence" of the Athenians and "deviousness," "hypocrisy," and "treachery" of the Spartans.

²⁸ Cf. Thuc. 1.18.2: οἱ τε Λακεδαιμόνιοι τῶν ξυμπολεμησάντων Ἑλλήνων ἡγήσαντο δυνάμει προύχοντες.

addressing changing circumstances and of Athens' extraordinary dynamism and audacity, the very factors remarked by the Corinthians in their speech to the Spartans (1.69).

As so often in archaic and classical texts, the account has been postponed until the most effective point.²⁹ Only at the moment of the Spartan decision does Thucydides pause to sketch the previous course of events that led them to their vote.

Athenian determination and ingenuity lay the groundwork for their *arche*, revealed in Thucydides' narrative by four discrete items placed at the beginning of the Pentecontaetia: the siege of Sestos, the rebuilding of the city walls, the fortification of the Peiraeus, and the assumption of the hegemony of the Ionians (1.89.2–95). All these actions are in contrast with or opposition to those of Sparta, the established hegemon and leader of the league against Persia. The Spartans withdrew from the war against Persia (89.2, 95.7). They discouraged the rebuilding of the Athenian city wall and wanted to supply commanders for the fleet operating in the Aegean, but were unwilling to take firm action to achieve either goal (92, 95.7). Because neither Sparta nor Athens desired an open break, both sides hid the power struggle behind fair words,³⁰ although Themistocles insisted frankly, once the height of the walls permitted, on Athenian equality.

Thucydides' mode of telling the story—with numerous indirect speeches, a dialogue, reports of thoughts, and use of the historical present³¹—reveals Spartan assumptions and percep-

²⁹ Noted by E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus, Agamemnon* (Oxford 1950) I 39, III 805 (App. A) for details within a narrative. Although Fraenkel in the title of the appendix seems to limit this feature to archaic narrative, and apart from Aesch. *Ag.* 59 and 190 cites only Hdt. 1.110–12, it is also classical, found, e.g., in Xenophon's self-introduction, delayed until *Anab.* 3.1.4. In Thucydides, compare the late introduction of Pericles as a major protagonist at 1.127. The technique often conveys the surprise of the participants, as at 1.50.5, 2.5.1, or 6.46.

³⁰ Cf. 90.2: οὐ δηλοῦντες; 91.3: κρύφα, ἥκιστα ἐπιφανῶς, σαφῶς ἀκούσειαν; 91.4: φανερώς εἶναι; 92.1: ὀργὴν φανερὰν οὐκ ἐποιοῦντο, ἀδήλως ἤχθηοντο. The deception is not all on one side, as Badian suggests (*From Plataea* 130 [= (1990) 52]): this is polite diplomacy covering power politics.

³¹ Indirect speeches: 90.2 (Spartans), 3 (Athenians, Themistocles); 91.1 (travellers from Athens), 2 (Themistocles), 3 (Themistocles, by letter or messenger), 4–7 (Themistocles), 7 (Themistocles); 95.1 (Ionians and others); indirect dialogue: 90.5 (Themistocles and a Spartan); thoughts: 90.1, 2 (Spartans), 2, 3 (Themistocles); 92.1 (Spartans); 93.3, 6, 7 (Themistocles); 95.1 (allies), 2 (Athenians), 7 (Spartans); historical presents: 91.2f (κελεύει, ἀποστέλλουσιν, πέμπει), 95.5f (ἀπολύεται, ἐκπέμπουσιν).

tions and brings to the fore Athens' delicate position at this time, neither daring to oppose Sparta and her allies openly, nor accepting a subordinate position. Diplomacy and rapid action were the only answer. The complex interplay of spoken and unspoken attitudes and presuppositions in Thucydides' narrative of these first moments of the postwar period lays the foundation for all that will follow. Sparta wanted Athens relatively weak and under her protection.³² Athens wished to decide for itself: "send to us as to people who can decide what is advantageous for themselves and for the common good" (91.4), but it was only able to do so if it based its freedom to speak out on "a balance of strength" (91.7).³³ The Athenians, led by Themistocles, recognized that they could never be independent and strong unless they were able to defy Spartan threats: their walls gave them the means to do this. G. de Ste. Croix rightly observes that Athens had every reason to be distrustful of offers of Spartan support in 478, considering the history of the previous years.³⁴ They must turn instead to their own efforts. When the Athenians returned to their city, "most of the buildings had been ruined, and only a few survived" (89.3). The city was defenceless; fortifications were necessary for independence.³⁵ Building the walls required tremendous sacrifice of the Athenians: "everyone in the city, the whole population, were to build the wall, sparing neither public nor private buildings from which any use might be made, but tearing them all down."³⁶ The narrative invites the reader to imagine the pain and the ambition of the Athenians as they tore down what was left of tombs, homes and temples to fortify their ruined city. Themistocles' speech to the Spartans at 91.4–7 captures the pride and determination of the Athenians; Thucydides'

³² Cf. 90.2 and the similar Peloponnesian suggestion that the Ionians migrate to mainland Greece to avoid Persian domination (Hdt. 9.106.2f).

³³ The importance of equality of power for equality of speech in international relations is a fundamental Thucydidean theme: cf. e.g. 1.73.1, 77.2ff; 3.9.2, 11.2; 5.89.

³⁴ Cf. the summary in G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London 1972) 167ff, who however glosses over Spartan reluctance to fight against the Persians outside the Peloponnese.

³⁵ For walls as a major theme of Thucydides, see Y. Garlan, "Fortifications et histoire grecque," in J.-P. Vernant, ed., *Problèmes de la guerre en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1968) 245–60 at 255f; McNeal 312.

³⁶ Thuc. 1.90.3. Cf. also 93.2.

authorial comment giving the evidence for the frantic speed of the work (93.2) emphasizes the impressiveness of the achievement.

New walls permitted Athens to stand up to the Spartans immediately after the Persian Wars; the fortification of Peiraeus laid the groundwork for their future empire. Thucydides therefore describes next the construction of the Peiraeus walls, not supplying a precise date, but placing it as well soon after the retreat of the Persians.³⁷ Mixing historical report and authorial interpretation, he presents Themistocles as the founder of the *arche*: “he persuaded them also to build the rest of the Peiraeus wall ... since he thought that ... if they would become seamen it would conduce significantly toward their acquiring power (δύναμις)—he was the first one who dared to say that they must embrace the sea—straightway with this he laid the basis for the empire (τὴν ἀρχήν)” (93.3). Here we find for the first time at Athens the combination of walls and navy that were the twin cornerstones of Thucydides’ analysis of imperial power.³⁸ Again, as at 93.2, details of the construction of the walls reinforce the account. In both cases the circumstantial account of construction serves as a rhetorical *auxesis* of the achievement. Once more Thucydides enters the mind of Themistocles to explain his strategic objectives (93.6f, ἐβούλετο ... ἐνόμιζεν ... ταῖς γὰρ ναῦσι μάλιστα προσέκειτο, ἰδὼν ... ἐνόμιζε), which are those that Pericles will follow in the war against Sparta: defend the city from the walls, but put all possible manpower in the fleet and resist all comers on the sea.³⁹ The whole passage, from 89.3 to 93.8, directs our attention in unmistakable terms to the strengths on which Athens will base its determination to be second to no one: walls that will protect it from attack on land, and a navy that can both defend and attack, as it had against the Persians. It was to the Spartans’ advantage to thwart that independence by hindering the construction of the walls; Themistocles’ cleverness and the Athenians’ incredible energy had

³⁷ Thuc. 1.93.8: εὐθὺς μετὰ τὴν Μήδων ἀναχώρησιν.

³⁸ The theoretical analysis is presented in the *Archaeology*, 1.2–19. Cf. also 1.93.6f and the statements of Pericles’ policy 1.143.3, 2.13.7, and J de Romilly, *Histoire et raison chez Thucydide* (Paris 1956) 260–73.

³⁹ Cf. esp. Thuc. 1.43.3ff, and see G. L. Cawkwell, “Thucydides’ Judgement of Periclean Strategy,” *YCS* 34 (1975) 53–70; A. J. Holladay, “Athenian Strategy in the Archidamian War,” *Historia* 27 (1978) 399–427.

circumvented them, and they had to accept the result with the best grace they could manage.

Throughout this narrative the Athenians consciously constructed their own power base against the veiled opposition of the Spartans. Once these initial steps had been taken, they moved at once to extend their dominion at the expense of the Spartans. Pausanias' harsh behavior as general gave the opening, but Thucydides tells us that the Athenians seized the opportunity with open eyes for their own profit. When the Ionian envoys asked them to become their leader and to protect them from Pausanias, he writes, "the Athenians accepted their arguments and determined that they would not ignore [the Ionians' plight] and that they would arrange matters as it seemed most advantageous for themselves."⁴⁰ Avenging the Ionians by ravaging the king's land was a pretext (πρόσχημα, 96.1);⁴¹ the aim of helping the Ionians was to further their own interests, depriving the Spartans of hegemony in the Aegean and establishing their own *arche*. The very speed and confidence with which the Athenians assumed their new rôle—already rehearsed in the campaign against Sestos (89.2)—revealed their goals.

Why did Sparta not immediately block Athens' hegemonic ambitions? The Spartans, according to Thucydides' narrative, wanted to preserve their hegemony in the Aegean as in the rest of Greece,⁴² but a prompt and firm response was inhibited by other considerations. Thucydides' rather full report of the recall and hearing of the allied accusations against Pausanias conveys the Spartan reluctance to act against a leading Spartiate despite the indignation and charges of their allies. This reluctance could

⁴⁰ Thuc. 1.95.2: προσεῖχον τὴν γνώμην ὡς οὐ περιοψόμενοι τὰλλὰ τε κατασθησόμενοι ἢ φαίνονται ἄριστα αὐτοῖς. Cf. also 93.3f, 96.1. For ἄριστα as 'advantageous', cf. 6.8.2, 26.1. This seems to me in full agreement with the view of Herodotus 8.3.2: "they took Pausanias' arrogance as an excuse (*prophasis*) and took the hegemony away from the Spartans." The view of "Athens' foundation of the Delian league as an innocent matter" (P. J. Rhodes, *CAH*² V 47) is distinctly un-Thucydidean.

⁴¹ For the meaning of πρόσχημα see Rawlings and Hornblower, *Comm. ad loc.* Thucydides expresses the same attitude toward the causes of the Sicilian expedition, an attempt to establish another *arche*, 6.6.1.

⁴² The dispatch of Dorcis and the others to the fleet indicates the Spartans' desire to continue as leaders.

only confirm allied leanings toward Athens.⁴³ Thucydides is silent on the discussions at Sparta that must have followed the allied defection, but does indicate some motives for their acquiescence in the loss of their hegemony. Pausanias, their most forceful commander, no longer seemed trustworthy despite his acquittal. His successor Dorcis was rejected by the Greeks. The Spartans did not send others, for fear that duty abroad would corrupt them, as it had Pausanias; and in any case they wished to be free of the Persian war. Finally, they did not believe that Athens was a direct threat to their power. As in the case of the walls, where Thucydides remarks that the Spartans still were friendly to the Athenians at this time (92.1, προσφιλεῖς ὄντες ἐν τῷ τότε), they thought that the Athenians would be useful to themselves for the present (95.7, σφίσιν ἐν τῷ τότε παρόντι ἐπιτηδείους). Thucydides implies a note of condescension: they considered the Athenians ἰκανοὺς ἐξηγεῖσθαι. They would discover the truth soon enough. At the same time, Thucydides emphasizes that this was the Spartan attitude “for the present”; if the situation were to change, they reserved the right to reevaluate their decision.⁴⁴

The narrative in these chapters is focused on the power balance between Athens and Sparta at the end of the Persian War. The Athenians’ incredible success in rising out of the ashes and laying a basis for their future strength invited elaborate treatment, with frequent indirect quotations and reports of the thought of the actors, as well as authorial observations on the significance of what was done. In the remaining narrative, both Spartan strength and Athenian ambitions were given: the *explicandum* was the growth of Athenian power, seen in

⁴³ Consider different possible scenarios. When complaints are heard against Pausanias, the Spartans immediately (a) recall him and send out a new and more gracious commander with a fleet of respectable size to support him; or (b) send Pausanias more ships and men to enforce his will, simultaneously warning the Athenians that any disloyalty will mean an immediate invasion. Under such conditions the transfer of hegemony might never have taken place. Diodorus (11.50) reports sentiment at Sparta to recover the hegemony, by force if necessary, but the notion was soon abandoned. On Spartan reluctance to deal forcefully with Pausanias, cf. also Thuc. 1.128–35.

⁴⁴ The silence on internal debate in both cities is striking, but of a piece with the rest of the excursus, which does not treat divisions within either Sparta or Athens. See below, section 7. The relation of the whole passage in style and content to 1.126–38 must be reserved for another occasion.

relation to Sparta.⁴⁵ For this reason the focus of the following narrative is on Athens' actions, not intentions, and Sparta appears only in so far as its actions affect or illuminate those of Athens. Only occasional and generally unfulfilled efforts challenged the growth of Athenian power, as when Thasos and Euboea revolted. Even the great battle of Tanagra, according to Thucydides' narrative, was unintended, forced by Athenian domination of the Megarid and the Corinthian Gulf. The most significant Peloponnesian effort to block Athenian initiatives was the Corinthian invasion of the Megarid, aimed at breaking the siege of Aegina, which ended in disaster, and the invasion of 446, which supported Megara's revolt. Whether from independence, fear, or the greed of individual Spartans, the Spartans did not accept Megabazus' inducements to invade Attica while the Athenians were committed in Egypt,⁴⁶ nor later did they help Samos when it revolted.⁴⁷ Athens' defeats, even when significant, as with the Egyptian disaster and the losses of Boeotia and Megara, still do not prevent its exercise of overwhelming force at Samos. In Thucydides' narrative the Pentecontaetia is dominated by a strong, aggressive, and ceaselessly active Athens.

⁴⁵ Athens' power *vis-à-vis* Persia is not a major concern in the Pentecontaetia. The victory of the Eurymedon, the defeat in Egypt, and the other actions implied by 97.1 (πρὸς τὸν βάρβαρον) and 118.2 (τὸν βάρβαρον) are presented in the context of Athens' ability to assert itself against Sparta. This focus on Spartan-Athenian rivalry explains why 1.18.3, a summary statement, is silent on the fighting against Persia. Does this indicate that the Pentecontaetia was composed before 411, or at least before 408? The rôle of Persia deserves more attention in the composition debate, but cf. Andrewes, "Thucydides and the Persians," *Historia* 10 (1961) 1–18

⁴⁶ Thucydides' report on Megabazus' mission to Sparta is cryptic, but may refer to Spartans taking the money without effecting any change in policy. We can only guess. Cf. D. M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* (Leiden 1977) 33f, 62 n.84.

⁴⁷ Thucydides tells elsewhere that a vote was taken on the matter by the Peloponnesians, 1.40.5, 41.2, 43.1. If indeed the Peloponnesian League followed the bicameral model of A. H. M. Jones, "Two Synods of the Delian and Peloponnesian League," *PCPS* n.s. 2 (1952–53) 43–46, supported by de Ste. Croix (*supra* n.34) 200–03, then Sparta had already decided to act at this time, but was dissuaded by its allies. In any case, as with Thasos, nothing was done.

III. The Exercise of Hegemony

Chapters 96–99 present an overall view of the Athenian *arche* in two segments, the initial dispositions (96) and how they changed (97ff). The latter segment begins and ends with authorial comments on the meaning of the change. In 96 Thucydides describes how the Athenians as *hegemon* established their relations to the allies. They assigned⁴⁸ the allies quotas of ships and money; the Hellenotamiai were established as an Athenian magistracy, which would supervise the collection of tribute;⁴⁹ and Delos, an island under Athenian protection if not control, was established as the treasury and meeting place.⁵⁰ Thucydides does not here describe a league in which Athens was an equal member, but a hegemony in which Athens offered protection and reprisals against Persian territory, and the allies supported Athens with ships and money.⁵¹ He states the sum of the first *phoros*;⁵² but unlike other authors, he is silent on the actual swearing of oaths and the rôle of Aristides in winning over the allies and setting the tribute quotas.⁵³

⁴⁸ Thuc. 1.96.1 ἔταξαν, the standard word for assignment of tribute, and the term used after the subjugation of Thasos (101.3), Aegina (108.5), and Samos (117.3).

⁴⁹ Note the emphatic repetition φόρον ... φώρα ... φόρος (96.2). In exacting tribute, the Athenians were following the lead of Croesus and the Persians (as Herodotus points out, 1.6.2; 6.43; 7.51), not that of the Spartans.

⁵⁰ Delos was sacred to all the Ionians (and to Dorians as well), but it was hardly neutral territory. Already in the sixth century Pisistratus had asserted Athenian control over Delos when he purified it (Hdt. 1.64.2, cf. Thuc. 3.104). Delian temple accounts of 434–432 were dated by Athenian and Delian magistrates, and preserved in Athens: ML 62. In winter 426/425 the Athenians purified Delos and reestablished the Delian festival (on which see Hornblower, *Comm. ad* 3.104). Note that at 1.96.2, ταμειῖόν τε Δῆλος ἦν αὐτοῖς, “αὐτοῖς” refers to the Athenians, not the allies. Thucydides does not speak of the transfer of the treasury to Athens, presumably because he did not think it a significant event in the history of Athenian power.

⁵¹ The question of the constitution of the alliance and the functioning of its synod is too complex to treat here. Besides the passage, see Thuc. 3.9–14, esp. 10.5 and 11.3, and Meiggs (*supra* n.3) 42–49, 459–64; M. Ostwald, *Autonomia: Its Genesis and Early History* (Chico 1982); and P. Culham, “The Delian League: Bicameral or Unicameral?” *AJAH* 3 (1978) 27–31, with references to earlier discussions.

⁵² The figure serves both to indicate the size of the income Athens had gained, and to contrast with the sums that would later be reached (600 talents in 432, according to 2.13.3, which some try to emend).

⁵³ Cf. Diod. 11.47; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 23; Plut. *Arist.* 22–25.

There follows a summary of the change over time in this arrangement: the allies were originally (τὸ πρῶτον) autonomous under the leadership of Athens and gave advice in the common assemblies, but thereafter the Athenians came to their position of strength (τοσάδε ἐπῆλθον)⁵⁴ through warfare and the management of affairs dealing with the barbarians, their own revolting allies, and with the Peloponnesians.⁵⁵ A second authorial comment functions, as mentioned above, as a “second preface,” explaining the need for the present excursus on the fifty years.

Three quick notices reporting decisive actions against other cities—the enslavement of Eion and Scyros, the defeat of Carystus (Persians, other non-Greeks, and Greek medizers)—lead to the Athenian reduction of an ally, Naxos, which had tried to renege on its obligations by seceding (ἀποστᾶσι) from the Athenian hegemony. This use of force against an ally, the first overt indication of the reality of Athenian leadership, provokes Thucydides to comment; and he does not honey the cup. His words, “this was the first allied city to be enslaved, contrary to what was established” (πρώτη τε αὕτη πόλις ξυμμαχίς παρὰ τὸ καθεστηκὸς ἐδουλώθη, 98.4), are a forceful, vivid expression of self-interested power.⁵⁶ The enslavement of Naxos was not unique, but as the first was a powerful paradigm,

⁵⁴ I take ἐπῆλθον not in the unique sense offered by the scholiast, Betant, and LSJ of ‘accomplish’ (*perficere*, διεπράξαντο), but in the usual sense of ‘come/go to’. For the use of τοσάδε as “such great resources/strength” cf. 1.144.4.4, οὐκ ἀπὸ τῶνδε ὀρμῶμενοι, and for the sense of the phrase, 1.118.2, ἐπὶ μέγα ἐχώρησαν δυνάμεως. The standard interpretation, “accomplish so many deeds,” which I think less accurate, does convey the notion of the list of deeds, picked up first in πράγματα, then in the list-narrative of 98–117. The ambiguity reinforces the equation deeds=power. If my interpretation is preferred, then the position arrived at would be that of 432 B.C.

⁵⁵ Cf. the reference to the growth in *paraskeue* of both Athens and Sparta at 1.18.3.

⁵⁶ Cf. Gomme, *HCT* I 282, arguing against the notion of the Pentecontaetia as an apologia for the Athenian empire, an idea recently revived by Badian, *From Plataea* 125–62: “the apologia is rather heavily veiled by sentences such as παρὰ τὸ καθεστηκὸς ἐδουλώθη.” The precise sense of καθεστηκός here is not clear: is it established Greek custom, or the particular oaths sworn by the allies and Athens? Ostwald (*supra* n.51: 39) glosses the phrase as “unprecedented.” In either case, Thucydides is using strong and negative words to describe Athens’ exercise of its power over the allies. Cf. also the speeches of Hermocrates and Euphemus at Camarina, 7.77.1, 82.3–83.2.

like the Corcyraean stasis.⁵⁷ Athens had the strength and the will to force cities to submit, and rigidly insisted on full compliance with their obligations (99). In bringing pressure to bear, they were no longer ἐν ἡδονῇ but λυπηροί.⁵⁸ The contrast between the allies and the Athenians, which allows Thucydides to call the former αἴτιοι is that these lacked the will to fight and endure pain so apparent on the part of the Athenians—"they were neither accustomed to nor desirous of hard work." The very act of withdrawing from the fleet (for those who initially contributed ships) increased the Athenians' power and their predominance on campaign. The text does not argue that the Athenians enslaved their allies "without malice aforethought"⁵⁹ but that the allies abetted the Athenian drive for power and dominion by shunning their obligations, as earlier the behavior of the Spartans had made the transfer of hegemony possible. Whether the superiority achieved by the Athenians during the Persian Wars was already sufficient to overwhelm the united resistance of the allied cities we cannot say, but Thucydides believed that allied reluctance to make an effort was a major factor in the growth of Athenian strength.⁶⁰ The hypothesis is not unreasonable, for without the flow of money from the allies, Athens could not have maintained the preponderance of its navy.⁶¹ This is the last that Thucydides will say on the subject of the administration of the empire *per se* until 1.118.2. According to his presentation, the Athenians saw the hegemony as a way to augment their own strength through the

⁵⁷ Cf. 3.82.1, ἐν τοῖς πρώτῃ. Corycra presumably was not absolutely first, but the earliest example that provided a suitable paradigm.

⁵⁸ To be obnoxious was the price of empire: cf. the Athenians' words at Sparta (1.76.1) and Pericles' in his last speech (2.64.5).

⁵⁹ Badian, *From Plataea* 132 (= [1990] 55).

⁶⁰ The major cities of the Delian League—Chios, Lesbos, Samos—undoubtedly found an advantage in helping Athens suppress minor cities, until they discovered (in 440–439, if not before) that Athens had become too strong for them to maintain their former independence. Ionian servility and avoidance of toil is also a Herodotean theme: see esp. 6.11f.

⁶¹ Pace Badian, *From Plataea* 133f (= [1990] 56f), who wrongly, it seems to me, emphasizes the allies' neglect of military competence. The point is rather that by paying money and not serving on their own ships, the allies both strengthened Athens and weakened themselves. If, e.g., the ratio of Athenian to allied ships was 3:1, and the allied *phoros* paid for 1/3 of the Athenian ships, spending this money on their own ships and crews would have rendered the allied fleet equal to that of Athens.

addition of allied money and ships; the allied tendency to avoid naval service and to substitute money payments meant a steady increase in Athenian power and a corresponding lessening of allied independence and influence on the actions of the Athenians.⁶²

IV. Major Episodes of Chapters 98–117

The “long catalogue of military enterprises” at 100–17,⁶³ with the prior events of 98, records a series of actions by the Athenians (with or without allies) in the period from the siege of Eion to the defeat of Samos. The Peloponnesians appear only in so far as they provoke or respond to Athenian action. Some episodes are treated rather fully: Thasos/Ithome (100.2–103.3); the siege of Aegina and the Corinthian attempts to end it (105.2–106.2); the Egyptian campaign (104.1f; 109f); the Doris-Tanagra campaign (107.2–108.2); and the Samian War (115.2–117).

R. A. McNeal some time ago put forward an analysis of this section that revealed some of the relations between the various episodes.⁶⁴ Although his theory that Thucydides alternated in a regular pattern the three categories of actions mentioned in 1.97 (against barbarians, allies, and Peloponnesians) seems to distort the analysis and to divide such items as the Samian War, which are better taken as units,⁶⁵ his observation of ring composition in the central passage, the series of incidents framed by the Egyptian campaign (104–10), seems valid, supported by corresponding pairs of topics and verbal echoes.⁶⁶

⁶² Cf. the implication of loss of autonomy and rôle in policy-making at 1.97.1, and the statement at 1.99.2 that the allies no longer campaigned on an equal footing. The Pentecontaetia records fourteen actions by the Athenians alone, eight in which the allies took part, but Thucydides may not chose to state explicitly all such occasions.

⁶³ Cf. J. de Romilly, *Thucydide e l'imperialisme athénien* (Paris 1947) 79.

⁶⁴ McNeal, esp. 312–18. His ideas have been further developed by T. E. Wick, “The Compositional Structure of Chapters 98–117 of Thucydides’ Excursus on the Pentacontaetia (1.89ff.),” *AntCl* 51 (1982) 15–24.

⁶⁵ The analysis of the Samian campaigns (15ff) seems especially artificial, as McNeal acknowledges.

⁶⁶ For other evidence of ring composition in Thucydides, see Hammond, Katičić (*supra* n.11), and W. R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton 1984) index *s.v.*

- a 104: Egypt: initial Greek success (104.1, Ἰνάρως δὲ ὁ Ψαμμητίχου, Λίβυς, βασιλεὺς Λιβύων....)
- b 105.1: landing at Halieis, sea battle at Cecryphaleia
- c 105.2: siege of Aegina
(105.3–106: Corinthian defeats in the Megarid)
- d 107.1: long walls begun
- e 107.2–108.2: Tanagra campaign: Athenian defeat
- e¹ 108.2–4: Oenophyta campaign: Athenian victory
- d¹ 108.4: long walls completed
- c¹ 108.4: Aegina surrenders
- b¹ 108.5: landings at Gytheion and Corinthian Chalcis
- a¹ 109–110: Egypt: Greek defeat (Ἰνάρως δὲ ὁ Λιβύων βασιλεύς)

The construction of the whole unit reinforces the chronological overlap of the Egyptian campaign and the other concurrent events, especially the naval battle and siege of Aegina and the battles of Tanagra and Oenophyta that led to the conquest of Aegina and control of Boeotia. The Corinthian expeditions are structurally subordinate to the siege of Aegina, which they endeavor to relieve, although the drama and pathos involved give them unusual prominence.

Two other major units come near the beginning and at the end of this second part. In the first unit, the interweaving of the revolts of Thasos and of the helots on Ithome dramatically illustrates Athenian dynamism by contrast with Spartan lethargy. When a disagreement with the Thasians arose,⁶⁷ Athens dispatched a naval force, defeated the Thasians in a sea battle and landed troops; they sent out 10,000 colonists to Ennea Hodoi,⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Thucydides' tantalizingly brief notice on the precedents of the conflict has aroused much criticism. Two features may be remarked: his reference to the emporia and mines of the Thasian-controlled mainland implies that Athens was trying to exercise some control in the area, presumably for its own profit, and the very vagueness of the cause makes more vivid the rapidity and force of the Athenian action.

⁶⁸ That all these colonists were later lost at Drabescus indicates the pathos associated with such dynamic imperialism, whatever the date of the disaster, which I take to be sometime after the fall of Thasos. Cf. Thuc. 4.102.2, with Hornblower, *Comm.* 155; Badian, *From Plataea* 81–86, 103 (expanded from [1988] 298ff, 320), who argues that it must be sometime after the settlement of the colony, and in particular in 453/452.

which they captured from the Edonoi; and they besieged Thasos, which fell after two years. The Thasians had to remove their walls, surrender their ships, repay the cost of the war, and become subject to tribute. The Spartans, on the other hand, although initially determined to act in their own imperial interests and against Athens, when the helots and some *peri-oikoi* revolted and fortified themselves on Mt Ithome, not only were forced to abandon their plan of invading Attica in support of the Thasians,⁶⁹ but had to ask for help from their allies, including the Athenians. It took the Spartans nine years to force the helots to abandon their stronghold, even with the help of their allies,⁷⁰ and afterwards Athens was able to establish these helots, thereafter known as Messenians, at Naupactus, creating a permanent thorn in Sparta's side.⁷¹ Thus the Thasian revolt provided an opportunity for Athens to strengthen her position relative to her allies; the Messenian revolt, on the other hand, both hindered Sparta from its objectives and strengthened the Athenian position. In addition, according to Thucydides, Spartan suspicion at Ithome alienated Athens and brought into the open their previously concealed differences.⁷² Athens abandoned the Spartan alliance and formed new alliances with Argos, Sparta's traditional enemy, and with Thessaly. The interlocking narrative thus provides an example of Athens' initiative and success in turning a dangerous revolt to its advantage and of Sparta's inability to control events.⁷³ The qualities that the

⁶⁹ This notice is often doubted, but the point here is that Thucydides presents the Spartan desire to help Thasos in a way consistent with the rest of the Pentecontaetia.

⁷⁰ It is not justifiable to emend δεκάτω at 103.1. Cf. among others D. W. Reece, "The Date of the Fall of Ithome," *JHS* 82 (1962) 111–20; McNeal; and Badian, *From Plataea* 79ff, 102 (expanded from [1988] 297f, 318).

⁷¹ Perhaps the action of Tolmides in 456: cf. Lewis, *CAH*² V 110, 117f.

⁷² Thuc. 1.102.3: καὶ διαφορὰ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς στρατείας πρῶτον Λακεδαιμονίοις καὶ Ἀθηναίοις φανερὰ ἐγένοντο. Contrast the various references to secrecy on both sides in 90–95, and the secret Spartan promise to Thasos at 101.1.

⁷³ They also serve as a model for treatment of revolts or attempted secession from an hegemony, a frequent subject in the Pentecontaetia. Athens, according to Thucydides, reduces Naxos, Thasos, Euboea, Samos, and Byzantium (others are omitted) but loses Megara in 446; Sparta reduces Ithome, recovers Megara only many years after it left the alliance, and never regains the Aegean Greeks. Egypt revolted but was recovered by Persia.

Spartans feared at Ithome, τὸ τολμηρὸν καὶ νεωτεροποιίαν of the Athenians, are manifest in the following narrative.

The Pentecontaetia ends with the war against Samos, which Hornblower describes as “exceptionally and surprisingly full.”⁷⁴ It is indeed longer than most episodes but not exceptionally detailed. Analysis reveals a simple scheme:

- (1) stimulus: the complaint of Miletus (115.2)⁷⁵
- (2) response: the Athenian expedition and its effect (115.3)
- (3) stimulus: the counterrevolution, including the loss of the Athenian garrisons and the revolt of Byzantium (115.4f)
- (4) response: (a) second Athenian expedition and the sea battle (116.1)
(b) Athenian reinforcements to Samos (116.2)
(c) Pericles’ expedition against Phoenician fleet (116.3)
- (5) stimulus: Samian breakout and naval victory and the result (117.1)
- (6) response: Pericles’ return, new reinforcements, the third sea battle, siege and capture of Samos, and surrender terms (117.2f).

The account is long because the Samians refused to accept defeat and their constant renewal of the conflict forced the Athenians to bring to bear an ever-increasing armada against them, not because Thucydides expands his narrative with ornamental detail. He describes in turn the three stages of Samian opposition, each countered by a greater Athenian force. The Samian victory in stage 5 gave them a brief period to bring in supplies—exactly fourteen days, Thucydides notes—before the Athenians were able to blockade them once more. When Athenian and allied strength finally reaches 215 ships, the Samians are disposed of in a sentence: “The Samians attempted a short naval battle, but being unable to resist, were conquered by siege in nine months and surrendered on the condition that they would destroy their wall, give hostages, surrender their ships, and repay the cost of the war in installments” (1.117.3).

⁷⁴ Hornblower, *Comm.* 187 *ad* 1.115.2–117.

⁷⁵ Short causal statements are occasionally found, even in the Pentecontaetia: *cf.* 100.2, 102.1, 104.1, 113.1, and the longer narrative at 107.2ff.

Byzantium surrendered as well, and returned to its subject status.

Although long by the standards of chapters 98–114, the fifty-two lines devoted to the war are less than half of Plutarch's one hundred nineteen (*Per.* 25–28). Thucydides offers no account of the Samian government, the nature of the stasis, Pissouthnes' intervention (clearly of major importance), the Phoenician threat, the debates at Athens and in the Peloponnesian League, or the siege. The focus is on Athens' firm response to each threat and the numbers of ships employed. The narrative provides evidence for Athens' strength and its willingness to use it, but does not give a full account of the revolt.

Together the two revolts of Thasos and Samos indicate the growth of Athenian power during the Pentecontaetia. Thucydides reports the length of each, though of no other Athenian sieges. Thasos, a strong island, was brought to its knees after a two-year siege;⁷⁶ a generation later in only nine months Pericles was able to reduce Samos, perhaps the most powerful of the islands, one that in the previous century had ruled the Aegean.⁷⁷

V. The Catalogue of Athenian Activity

On first encountering the second part of the Pentecontaetia (chapters 97–117), the reader is struck by the relentless accumulation of episodes illustrating Athenian dynamism. Time and again the Athenians acted decisively, risking large forces, often suffering devastating losses, yet never hesitating to reembark, or to face again an enemy who had defeated them.

The navy was the basis of Athenian strength. The Pentecontaetia overflows with notices of naval expeditions, sea battles, and marine landings, whether successful or not. Thucydides lists eight major naval battles, often including the number of ships involved: Eurymedon (200 Phoenician ships captured or destroyed with a land battle as well); Thasos; Cecryphaleia in the

⁷⁶ The siege of Naxos (*cf.* Thuc. 1.137.2 and Hornblower, *Comm. ad loc.*) is given less prominence, perhaps because Thucydides did not see it as a major military effort.

⁷⁷ *Cf.* also Thuc. 8.76.4; Plut. *Per.* 28.7. Note that the siege of Mytilene lasted less than a year (3.6, 26–27.1), despite the Peloponnesian invasion of Attica in 427. The siege of Potidaea was longer, from *ca* September–October 432 to winter 430/429 (1.64.1f; 2.70).

Saronic Gulf; Aegina (a ναυμαχία ... μεγάλη, with allies participating on both sides and 70 ships taken); Cypriote Salamis (*ca* 140 Athenian ships, again combined with a land battle), Tragia (44 Athenian ships against 70 Samian, of which 20 were troop ships); Samos (65 Athenian and allied ships against an unknown number of Samian ships, an Athenian defeat); and Samos again (some 215 Athenian and allied ships).⁷⁸ In this period, the Spartans fought no naval battles; their allies fought only two, at Cecryphaleia and Aegina. Thucydides notes as well other naval expeditions not involving major battles: the 200 ships sent from Cyprus to Egypt, later supplemented by another 50, all of which apparently perished, Tolmides' circumnavigation of the Peloponnesus, Pericles' Corinthian Gulf expedition, another fleet of 60 ships to Egypt, and the 60 ships with which Pericles went to meet the Phoenician threat.⁷⁹ The Egyptian campaign was consciously telescoped (*cf.* 1.109.1), yet even so the striking defeats of the besieged navy and of the relief force are brought vividly before the reader. The fact that the campaign ended in disaster only strengthens the narrative's picture of the Athenians' irrepressible dynamism.⁸⁰

Thanks to their navy, the Athenians were city-takers: after Sestos, Thucydides lists Eion, Carystus, Naxos, Ennea Hodoi, Thasos, Memphis in Egypt, Aegina, Corinthian Chalcis, Delphi, Chaeronea, Hestiaea, and Samos.⁸¹ With the exception of Delphi and Chaeronea, all these victories were fundamentally naval actions, with land troops being transported, supplied, and supported by the fleet. The Athenian attack was most often caused by revolts, which were crushed unmercifully, with the exception of Megara in 446. Most of the cities fell after a siege: Eion, Carystus, Naxos, Thasos, Aegina, Samos. Other places were

⁷⁸ Thuc. 1.100.1f, 105.1f, 112.4, 116.1, 117.1, 3. Thucydides had noted that there were only two major naval battles during the Persian War, 1.23.1.

⁷⁹ Thuc. 1.104, 109f, 108.5, 112.2ff, 116.3.

⁸⁰ *Cf.* the Corinthians at Thuc. 1.70.5, νικώμενοι ἐπ' ἐλάχιστον ἀναπίπτουσιν. The exact number of ships that remained in Egypt is problematic. If the fifty ships were not reinforcements but replacements, as argued by H. D. Westlake, "Thucydides and the Athenian Disaster in Egypt," *Essays on the Greek Historians and Greek History* (Manchester 1969) 61–73 (=CP 45 [1950] 209–16) at 70, and A. J. Holladay, "The Hellenic Disaster in Egypt," *JHS* 109 (1989) 176–82, only about 100 ships would have been lost.

⁸¹ 99.1, 3f; 100.3; 101.3; 104.2; 105.2 and 108.4; 108.5; 112.5; 113.1; 115.2–117. Other peoples or areas conquered: Scyros (99.2); Boeotia, Phocis, Opuntian Locris (108.3); Euboea (114.3).

beseiged but not taken: Leukon Teichos in Egypt, Oiniadai, Citium (1.104.2, 111.3, 112.4). In this whole period, according to Thucydides' narrative, Sparta was able to make only one major conquest, the rebels of Ithome, after nine years. In two minor actions she won back one Dorian polis from Phocis (107.2) and briefly gained control of Delphi (112.5).

The narrative regularly pauses to record the terms of capitulation of the conquered cities. Especially when measured against the outcome of the Messenian revolt, these terms tend to illustrate how the victories augmented Athenian resources. On different occasions, conquered cities were forced to: (1) surrender their ships (Thasos, Aegina, Samos, and by implication Naxos), (2) pay reparations (Thasos, Samos), (3) pay tribute (Thasos, Aegina), (4) give hostages (Opuntian Locris, Samos),⁸² (5) tear down their walls (Thasos, Tanagra, Aegina, Samos), and (6) lose territory (Thasos) or their city (Hestiaea). In a few cases, the population was enslaved (Eion, Scyros, Chaeronea).⁸³ In particular, the narrative emphasizes the complete subjection of the major islands, Thasos, Aegina, and Samos.

Athens' insistence on destroying the walls of cities considered dangerous conforms to Thucydides' own conception of walls as an element of power (*cf. supra* n.35). The Spartans wanted to prevent construction of the Athenian city walls, as later their sympathizers hoped to stop the building of the long walls (1.90.1f, 107.4). Rebuilding the walls in 479–478 initiated Athens' rise to empire, as the destruction of the long walls and those of the Peiraeus in 404 marked Athens' defeat. The narrative records also the construction of the Peiraeus walls (93), the long walls (107.1, 108.3), and the long walls of Megara (103.4).⁸⁴ Megara and Nisaia were eventually lost, but the fortifications that made Athens a unit with the Peiraeus were fundamental to Pericles' strategy for confronting the Spartans.

Important as naval actions are in these chapters, the frequent notices of Athenian land battles also seize the attention of the reader. Often the Athenian force had debarked from ships to

⁸² The Samians twice: 1.115.3, 117.3.

⁸³ I doubt that Thucydides' list of terms is complete; it probably represents those elements that strike him as especially important for a given occasion.

⁸⁴ R. P. Legon notes that the walls were probably not begun immediately after Megara's alliance with Athens (*Megara* [Ithaca 1981] 185). Thucydides supplies the information when Megara enters the Athenian sphere, not necessarily in its chronological position.

confront a local enemy: in the various sieges, but also at the Eurymedon, in Egypt (an eventual defeat), at Halieis (a defeat), on Tolmides' *periplous* (at the Spartan shipyard, at Corinthian Chalcis, and at Sicyon), under Pericles at Sicyon (1,000 hoplites), and at Salamis on Cyprus.⁸⁵ The generals, however, frequently undertook land expeditions involving significant hoplite forces. At Tanagra, 14,000 Athenian and allied hoplites, treacherously accompanied by Thessalian cavalry, fought against 1,500 Lacedaemonian and at least 10,000 allied hoplites, a defeat redeemed sixty-two days later by the striking victory at Oinophyta.⁸⁶ Other expeditions went to Thessaly, to Delphi, and to Boeotia, where 1,000 Athenian hoplites, supported by the allies, won a victory at Chaeronea and then met a stunning defeat at Coronea. Finally in 446 Pericles led an army to Euboea, which had revolted, back to the Megarian border to face a Peloponnesian invasion, and once more to Euboea to put down the revolt (1.111.1, 112.5, 113, 114).

To list so fully the individual actions described in the Pentecontaetia is perhaps tedious to those quite familiar with this text and these events. But it is exactly the narrative's strikingly long and bare catalogue that creates the meaning of this section of the excursus. If we as readers disengage ourselves from the account and attempt to reorganize it, to establish a chronological framework, to ask for the policy and debate behind individual actions, the pursuit of these objectives, eminently useful in themselves, separates us from the peculiar power of the narrative. Thucydides' staccato account forces the reader to note again and again Athens' resolve and acceptance of risk in mounting individual and multiple operations: "The impression that emerges from the Pentecontaetia is of the restless energy of the Athenians" (Connor [*supra* n.66] 45). These factors generated the fear among the Peloponnesians and in Sparta that led to the war, and proved extremely important in the course of the war.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Thuc. 1.100.1, 104.2 and 109.4–110.4, 105.1, 108.5, 111.2, 112.4. Other sources credit Tolmides with additional conquests: Diod. 11.84; Aeschin. 2.75 and Σ; Paus. 1.27.5.

⁸⁶ Thuc. 1.107.2–108.1, 108.2f. These are Thucydides' figures, but we may expect that additional Boeotians joined the Peloponnesian expeditionary force when battle was anticipated in Boeotia.

⁸⁷ Compare especially the Athenians' behavior at the time of the siege of Aegina with their refusal to lift the sieges of Potidaea or Mytilene despite the Spartan invasions, even the very severe one in 427 (2.70; 3.16f, 26).

Particularly at the time of the Egyptian campaign—the central and the most elaborately organized element of Thucydides' narrative—Athens' multiple commitments overwhelm the reader as they overwhelmed the Peloponnesians. Thucydides implies that while 200 Athenian and allied ships were engaged in Egypt, besieging and later being besieged, Athens fought the Corinthians at Halieis and soon, even though they were defeated in that battle, fought again at Cecryphaleia, then dared a major sea battle with the Aeginetans and their allies. While still committed in Egypt, they determined to besiege Aegina, and sent their youths and old men to confront and gain the upper hand against the Corinthians in the Megarid—and only twelve days later, they marched out again to defend their trophy, rout the enemy, and trap and slaughter a significant portion of the Corinthian force (105.3–106).⁸⁸ With their force still trapped in Egypt, the narrative continues, they began and completed the long walls, continued the siege of Aegina and finally forced Aegina's capitulation, fought the battles of Tanagra and Oenophyta, and sent Tolmides around the Peloponnese.⁸⁹ The Athenian and allied force in Egypt was finally crushed, yet the Athenians still went on to mount expeditions to Thessaly and the Corinthian Gulf.⁹⁰

No wonder Thucydides had the Corinthians say with amazement and anger, "they dare beyond their strength and risk beyond good sense, expecting the best in the midst of danger," and allowed Pericles to boast, "no enemy has ever encountered our full strength, since we simultaneously attend to our navy and dispatch land forces on many operations" (1.70.3, 2.39.3). The ability of the Athenians to undertake so many enterprises

⁸⁸ Contemporaries were also impressed by their commitment and its cost. Cf. ML 33 (*IG I² 929*), a magnificent funeral stele recording a total of 178 men, including two generals, lost from a single tribe (Erechtheis) in Cyprus, Egypt, Phoenicia, Halieis, Aegina, and Megara, and another recently discovered stele, perhaps contemporaneous, with the names of the fallen of Aigeis, *SEG XXXIV 45, XXXVII 50*.

⁸⁹ Note that for the whole period of the Pentecontaetia Thucydides records only three Spartan expeditions: to Doris, when they were trapped in Boeotia and forced to fight at Tanagra (a victory soon cancelled at Oenophyta); to Delphi (immediately annulled by Athenian action); and to Eleusis, whence they withdrew without a fight (1.107f, 112.5, 114.2). Most of the fighting seems to have been undertaken by Sparta's allies.

⁹⁰ This continuity is indicated clearly in the Greek of 110.4–111.1, where the Egyptian disaster is summarized in a *men*-clause, and the Thessalian expedition immediately follows in the *de*-clause.

demonstrates their power.⁹¹ The second part of the Pentecontaetia, by its telegraphic enumeration of Athenian sieges, battles, and expeditions by land and sea, confirms Thucydides' summary statement of the separation and confrontation of the two Hellenic powers and their allies after the Persian Wars (1.18.2f); and it provides the background for the Corinthian reproaches, the Athenian self-justification, and the Spartan fears reported at the conference at Sparta (1.67–88). Without this account both the Spartan decision to fight and Athenian readiness to resist would remain unexplained. After this narrative, the reader realizes that, in refusing to yield to the Spartans in 432 and asserting Athens' right to make its own policy, Pericles followed the path of Themistocles and of the preceding fifty years.

Finally, there is yet another element that captures the reader's attention: suffering. Δύναμις brings with it not only action and warfare but also πάθος,⁹² and Thucydides does not hesitate to reveal this even in the brief limits of the Pentecontaetia. Athenian defeats figure alongside their victories, and the harshness of imperialism—slavery—is starkly presented.⁹³ Two episodes especially stand out: the πάθος μέγα of the Corinthians in the Megarid (106.2) and the disaster in Egypt. The Corinthian episode is doubly important, because it represented as well the heroic effort of an overcommitted city. Thucydides highlights the passage with historical presents (ἀφικνοῦνται, διαφθείρουσι), the unusual report of Corinthian sentiment after the first defeat, the specification of the interval of twelve days within which the Athenians were called upon to fight a second time, and finally the horrible end of the “not insignificant portion” of the Corinthian force, trapped and stoned to death.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Cf. H. R. Immerwahr, “Thucydides and the Pathology of Power,” in Stadter (*supra* n.14) 18: for Thucydides “[power] leads to constant activity... Thucydides sees power as a force which nourishes, perpetuates, and increases itself in constant progression.”

⁹² The tie between war and *pathos* is made explicit at 1.23 but is implicit throughout Thucydides' history, as it was already in Homer. Cf. Immerwahr (*supra* n.91) 22, and for Homer, cf. e.g. G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore 1979) 69–93. The greatness of the war, which resulted from the power and preparedness of the combatants (1.1.1, 18.2–19), brought with it enormous suffering.

⁹³ The Athenians' actions lead to two types of slavery, sale of captives (1.98.1f, 113.1) and subjection of allies (1.98.4).

⁹⁴ The first example of the slaughter in a closed place that Thucydides found so impressive: see Connor (*supra* n.66) 200 with n.40.

The shift of fortunes in Egypt is also signalled by historical presents (πέμπει at 109.2f) and the unusually long sentence at 109.3f describing Megabyzus' energetic and ingenious seizure of the Greek position on the island. The disaster is summarized in a contrastingly short sentence (οὕτω ... πολεμήσαντα), and pathetically amplified in the following phrase, ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ... ἐσώθησαν, οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι ἀπώλοντο. Inarus was betrayed and crucified, and the relief force of fifty ships fell to the enemy: διέφθειραν τὰς πολλὰς τῶν νεῶν, αἱ δ' ἔλασσους διέφυγον πάλιν. The final sentence reminds us once more that this was an Athenian disaster: "In this way ended the great expedition of the Athenians and their allies in Egypt." Other major slaughters are also noted, as at Tanagra (φόνος ἐγένετο ἀμφοτέρων) and Coronea (τοὺς μὲν διέφθειραν τῶν Ἀθηναίων, τοὺς δὲ ζῶντας ἔλαβον).⁹⁵ The significant element of pathos in imperial achievement is perhaps the reason for mentioning the disaster at Drabeskos, even though it seems to have occurred some years after the revolt of Thasos. The suffering of these fifty years, another sign of greatness, points toward the greater suffering of the war.⁹⁶ The παθήματα have a paradigmatic quality, as does so much of this excursus: the Corinthian *pathos* seems to foreshadow especially the slaughter of the Athenians at the Assinarus (7.84), as the fate of the Egyptian expedition foreshadows that of the expedition to Sicily. In addition, the suffering inflicted and endured by the Athenians was an additional factor behind the Spartan decision in 432. The Corinthian disaster would have dismayed the Spartans and exacerbated Corinthian hostility, while Athenian refusal to curb their activity even after Egypt or Coronea would only have increased Spartan fear. That fear would have made them more receptive to the Corinthian reproaches in the Congress at Sparta.

VI. Omissions

The review of the contents of the Pentecontaetia and their effect on the reader permits a rather different evaluation of the

⁹⁵ At Coronea, note also the use of the historical present, ἐπιτίθενται.

⁹⁶ Herodotus saw this period also as a time of suffering (Hdt. 6.98.2). Pericles' Funeral Speech is a celebration of the choice that the Athenians made in being willing to die for the power of their city (cf. esp. 2.42f) and alludes as well to the suffering their actions brought to others (2.41.4).

omissions that are such a significant and often lamented feature of the text. The chief reason for considering the excursus incomplete, hasty, and biased is its silence on so many events, often of major importance, which one might expect to be treated even in an abbreviated account of the period 479–432.⁹⁷ But in the body of his history Thucydides also omits much that would interest a modern historian: economic and social history, personal histories of leading figures, *etc.* Here, however, I shall consider only omissions of categories that Thucydides regularly reported in the body of his work. Because the Pentecontaetia—especially the second part—is episodic, a list rather than an interpretative account, the very selection of items directs the reader. In the same way, omissions may be seen as defining for the reader the purpose of the narrative. The absence of the following categories helps us delimit more precisely the purpose of the excursus.

(1) *Chronological Framework.* Perhaps the most significant lack for the modern reader is the absence of any internal chronological or conceptual framework in the second part of the narrative (100–17). This is a question of method rather than of individual gaps, in marked contrast to Thucydides' methodology in Books III–IV, with its rigid sequence of years, neatly divided into summers and winters. In the Pentecontaetia time references float free,⁹⁸ with no relation, as in modern histories, to such entities as the "First Peloponnesian War" or the "Second Sacred War" to help the reader conceptualize events. The absence of chronological indications is in fact characteristic of the whole first book from the Archaeology on, and not limited to the Pentecontaetia. Thucydides offers no dates for *e.g.* the stasis at Epidamnus, the battles of Leukimme or Sybota, the events in Potidaea, or the Megarian decrees.⁹⁹ The only clear date, set relative to the conclusion of the Thirty Years Peace, is

⁹⁷ The omissions have been frequently remarked. See especially the long but still incomplete list compiled by Gomme, *HCT* I 365–89.

⁹⁸ *Cf.* Gomme, *HCT* I 362: "Between these limits his events float like sticks in water in an oblong bowl, preserving their relative order, but none of them with a fixed position in relation to the ends of the bowl and but few of them relatively to each other," although I do not agree with Gomme that all events are in chronological order. Some of the dates can be established by statements outside the Pentecontaetia, but within the excursus the exercise does not interest Thucydides. *Cf.* Andrewes, *HCT* V 381.

⁹⁹ Similarly also the narratives of Cylon, Pausanias, and Themistocles, 1.126–38.

at 1.87.6: the Spartan decision was made in the fourteenth year of the treaty.¹⁰⁰ The standard explanation has been that Thucydides wanted and was able to give a precise chronological framework, but for some reason did not.¹⁰¹ Another theory, noting the imprecision of oral memory, suggests that he was able to assign dates to very few events, especially before the mid-century, but recorded those that were remembered.¹⁰² When the war broke out in 431, however, Thucydides was already an interested and sophisticated observer, and it certainly would have been possible for him to construct from the oral memory of the older generation a fairly clear chronological scheme for the fifty years preceding. The fact is, he does not give dates even for events, such as the Corcyraean episode, of which he was a contemporary observer. A more straightforward hypothesis, and one more in keeping with the evidence of the text, is that Thucydides did not wish to give a precise chronological structure to his account because he considered such a structure irrelevant to or even distracting from the points he was trying to make.¹⁰³ There are only ten precise statements of duration in the Pentecontaetia: two specify the length of the first and last major sieges (101.3, 117.3), three the unusually short intervals between pairs of Athenian actions (105.6, 108.2, 117.1), two the length of time the Greeks were able to hold out against Megabyzus and the total length of the Egyptian campaign (109.4, 110.1), one the length of the siege of Ithome (103.1), and two the intervals of inaction before the five-year treaty and after the thirty-year treaty (112.1, 115.2). Finally, Thucydides gives a round number for the whole period: roughly fifty years (118.2). In none of these cases does Thucydides try to tie these intervals into a larger chronological framework: each is given to reinforce the themes of the

¹⁰⁰ The treaty itself is later (at 2.2.1) dated fifteen years before the beginning of the war, but not when it is mentioned at 1.115.1.

¹⁰¹ Gomme writes, e.g., that Thucydides intended to write "a succinct, annalistic narrative of datable events" but that "cc. 99–113 are very far from fulfilling that intention" (*HCT* I 389). If annalistic means "year by year" or "precisely dated by (archon or other) year," there is absolutely no evidence for such a desire in the text.

¹⁰² Badian, *From Plataea* 74 (= [1988] 291).

¹⁰³ Cf. Westlake 42. Note that Herodotus also used a quite different chronological method for the account of Xerxes' invasion (winter and summer campaigning seasons year by year) from that in the 'preliminary' books on the expansion of Persia.

excursus, as has been indicated above. These certainly are not the only dates or intervals that Thucydides knew (*cf.* Gomme, *HCT* I 389ff); the presumption should be that they are those that he thought useful to his readers.

The narrative is presented in roughly chronological order, as the frequent use of *μετὰ ταῦτα* and *ὑστερον* attests. Other principles of order, however, are also at work, as seen in the discussion of the Thasian and Messenian revolts and the analysis of 1.104–10.¹⁰⁴ The recognition that some incidents are introduced out of chronological order to keep topics together or to reinforce a point should offer no difficulty (*e.g.* the disaster at Drabescus and the fall of Ithome). It was undoubtedly Thucydides' intention to improve upon Hellanicus (97.2), but the precise manner in which this was accomplished cannot be determined in the face of our total ignorance of Hellanicus' treatment of this period.¹⁰⁵

(2) *Diplomatic Events, such as Embassies and Treaties.* Obvious omissions are the oaths and terms of the Delian League and the treaty between Sparta and Argos, but also lesser items such as the treaties between Athens and Eggesta, Leontini, Rhegion, and Phocis, and undoubtedly many other cities.¹⁰⁶ Thucydides refers to the Hellenic alliance continuing from the Persian Wars in establishing the initial relation between Athens

¹⁰⁴ Note also the flashback at 93.3 (*πρότερον*) and the anticipation at 98.4 (*ἔπειτα*) and references to contemporaneous events at 89.3, 91.3, 95.3, 100.3, 107.1, and 109.1. *Cf. e.g.* McNeal; Badian, *From Plataea* (*cf.* especially 79f the example from Thuc. 4.50) and Lewis (*supra* n.71) 500. The contrary view is set out most firmly by *ATL* III 162 that Thucydides' improvement (over Hellanicus' account) "is to set events in proper order. It is our belief that in his excursus Thucydides has done this without any deviation whatever."

¹⁰⁵ Only fragments 323a F 28 (Salamis, 480 B.C.), T8 (=F12, Thuc. 1.97.2), and F25f (407/406 B.C.) are securely referable to Hellanicus' fifth-century account. Despite much discussion, no certain conclusion is possible: *cf.* Andrewes, *HCT* V 381. Thucydides' emphasis on the simultaneity of the Egyptian expedition and the actions reported in 1.105–08, *e.g.*, may be a corrective to Hellanicus. The account would have had to be quite short, perhaps only a few pages, and may have been available to Thucydides—and to others—before it reached its final form. For recent treatments, *cf.* R. J. Lenardon, "Thucydides and Hellanicus," in G. S. Shrimpton and D. J. McCargar, edd., *Classical Contributions. Studies in Honour of M. F. McGregor* (Locust Valley [N.Y.] 1981) 59–70; J. D. Smart, "Thucydides and Hellanicus," in I. S. Moxon, J. D. Smart, and A. J. Woodman, edd., *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge 1986) 19–35.

¹⁰⁶ Thucydides knew of the Spartan-Argive treaty: *cf.* 4.14.4. We possess only a fraction of Athens' treaties with poleis within and outside her empire.

and Sparta (1.89.2), and Athens' decision to withdraw from the alliance and establish alliances with Argos and Thessaly (1.102.4), the beginning of overt differences between the two leading powers. The two treaties between Athens and Sparta are mentioned, but with one exception nothing is said of their terms or conditions except how long the treaties were to last. In each case the treaties serve to explain brief periods of Athenian quiet.¹⁰⁷ Further, Thucydides mentions Athens' surrender of Nisaea, Pegae, and Troezen in the terms of the Thirty Years' Peace, not as a part of a full account of treaty terms, but to indicate that Athens was withdrawing from these Dorian territories, as after Coronea she had withdrawn from Boeotia. Given his silence on treaties, there is no basis for arguing that Thucydides duplicitously suppressed the terms of the Peace of Callias or of the Thirty Years Peace,¹⁰⁸ or that his silence is an argument against the Peace of Callias or the Congress Decree.¹⁰⁹ The exception to this and the following category is chapters 90–95, the account of how Athens got the hegemony. The planning and diplomatic maneuvers of both Athens and Sparta on that occasion are set out in some detail, as has been noted. The silence on the Peace of Callias reflects also Thucydides' general disinterest in the rôle of Persia, and therefore of Athenian relations to Persia, which is a significant weakness of his treatment not only of the Pentecontaetia, but of the whole war down to 411. He consistently sees the period from 479 to 411 in terms of Spartan-Athenian relations, so that even the battle of the Eurymedon, the Egyptian campaign, and the intervention of

¹⁰⁷ The treaties at 1.112.1, 115.1; the quiet periods at 112.2, "the Athenians refrained from war in Greece" and 115.2 "in the sixth year..." The two chronological notices at 1.112.1 and 1.115.2 serve to delimit further the periods of Athenian tranquillity, not to locate the treaties within a temporal grid.

¹⁰⁸ Pace Badian, *From Plataea* 134 (Peace of Callias), 137–45 (Thirty Years' Peace) (= [1990] 57, 61–71).

¹⁰⁹ Thucydides' silence has made the authenticity of both highly problematic, yet from the nature of the Pentecontaetia there is no reason to expect that he would have reported them. For recent discussions and references to earlier work, see Badian, "The Peace of Callias," in *From Plataea* 1–72 (expanded and updated from his article in *JHS* 107 [1987] 1–39) and Meiggs (*supra* n.3) 205–19.

Pissouthnes in the Samian War are seen in terms of Athenian activity, not of the Persian danger.¹¹⁰

(3) *Debates on Policy or its Implementation.* The only exception is Themistocles' case for constructing the walls of Athens and of the Peiraeus. We can imagine many debates at Athens, some of which are mentioned by other authors: whether to seize the opportunity to supplant Sparta in the Aegean, or to help Sparta in the 460s, or to aid Inarus in Egypt, or to accept the Thirty Years' Peace. All these serious and difficult questions, and similar ones for Sparta and the other cities,¹¹¹ Thucydides passes over in silence: the intellectual and emotional factors of war, depicted so vividly for the war and its immediate antecedents, have no place here.¹¹²

(4) *Internal Politics.* There is nothing in the excursus on the ostracisms of Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, or Thucydides the son of Melasias, on the democratic reforms, or on the building debate, or on internal politics or debates in Sparta or other states. The reference to pro-Laconian elements in Athens (107.4ff) explains the Athenian decision to confront the Spartans in Boeotia, rather than factional politics at Athens. No mention is made of Cimon's presence at the battle, or the rôle of the oligarchic opposition in these years. The Laconian earthquake, with all its disastrous effect on Spartan internal and external policy, is cited simply as the factor that blocked Spartan aid to Thasos and permitted the helot revolt.

(5) *Imperial Measures Not Involving Significant Military Actions.* The Pentecontaetia is silent on individual synods of the League, the movement of the treasury to Athens, minor rebellions and uprisings, special regulations and administrative measures, adjustments to tribute, and other imperial decisions and actions. Treatment of the empire as such is limited to chapters 96–99, which sketch succinctly two of the instruments by which Athens established its hegemony and broadened its

¹¹⁰ For this reason, and in the light of 1.90–95, it is probably best to interpret the "fear" spoken of by the Athenians at 1.76, as fear of Sparta, not of Persia. Cf. also *supra* n.45

¹¹¹ E.g. consideration of the Samian and Mytilenean requests for aid to their actual or potential revolts (cf. Thuc. 1.41.2, 3.2.1).

¹¹² Rawlings (*supra* n.27: 74) notes that Athenian policy is never explained in Book I, until Pericles' first speech; the reader is given only Athenian actions, though 1.44 and 90–95 are exceptions to this rule. Strong emotion, especially fear, is however implicit throughout the Pentecontaetia, and in a particular way in the pathos passages already discussed.

power: tribute income and the navy. The tribute was administered by Athenian magistrates, and treaty obligations were rigidly enforced by the navy.¹¹³

(6) *Cleruchies and Foundations of Cities*. Thucydides omits the foundations of Brea, Thurii, Amphipolis, and the cleruchies or colonists sent to the Chersonese, Naxos, Andros, Sinope, Amisos, and elsewhere. The colony at Ennea Hodoi is mentioned as part of the response to the rebellion of Thasos, but the attempt to establish a colony there immediately following the fall of Eion (Σ ad Aeschin. 2.31) has no place here. The cleruchy to Hestiaea (1.114.5) was part of the punishment of that city.

(7) *Naval Expeditions That Did Not Have Significant Military Engagements*. E.g. Ephialtes' expedition beyond the Chelidonian islands (Plut. *Per.* 19.1, 20.1f).¹¹⁴ Thucydides' casual reference to the two hundred ships "which happened to be on campaign in Cyprus" and were sent to Egypt (104.2) is a reminder of Athens' constant naval operations. Phormio's expedition with thirty ships to Acarnania, which helped the Acarnanians and Amphilocheians take and resettle Amphilocheian Argos, might have been included but perhaps involved neither a significant battle nor direct capture of the city by Athens.

(8) *Actions of Other Cities That Did Not Directly Involve Athens*. This would include the troubles that Sparta had internally and with its neighbors, especially Argos and Arcadia,¹¹⁵ despite the importance that these held for Sparta's lack of resistance to Athens.

The narrative we possess is rigorously selective. After the first section sketching Athens' rise to hegemony, it concentrates on actions, not debate, on battles, not treaties. Athenian activity expressed its power and was sufficient explanation for Sparta's fear. The silence on events between the Samian War and the Corcyrean conflict that has so troubled scholars can be in large part explained under the categories listed here, although other factors may be at work as well. In particular, the Samian War represented the most frightening and determined display

¹¹³ Thucydides is silent on many other ways by which Athens managed the empire, for which see Meiggs (*supra* n.3) 205–19.

¹¹⁴ This category would include as well the prior expedition of Cimon to Sparta, if it took place (Plut. *Cim.* 16.8ff; cf. Ar. *Lys.* 1138–41 and Badian, *From Plataea* 89–95 (= [1988] 304–10), and the Athenian contingent at the battle of Oinoe.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Thuc. 1.118.2; Hdt. 9.35; Diod. 11.65; Lewis (*supra* n.71) 104–08, 120.

of Athenian strength; nothing that followed could overshadow it or reinforce its import. Thucydides apparently preferred to end his excursus with this dramatic act, rather than trail off in a series of events of lesser significance. The war was waiting to happen.¹¹⁶

VII. Conclusion

The foregoing analysis indicates that the Pentecontaetia is neither incomplete nor poorly thought out, but an organized narrative that effectively sets out the major factors that led to the Spartan decision of 432, reported at 1.87. Different forms of narrative present (1) the decisive Athenian effort in rebuilding their walls and assuming hegemony in the Aegean after the destruction of their city, and (2) their dynamism in the years that followed, displaying their incredible energy, in losses, as well as remarkable successes. The two major sections, 89–95 and 98–117, are markedly diverse in style and degree of detail because the two parts serve different functions within the excursus, so that the same technique was not suitable for both. The Athenian *arche* is not in itself the subject of the excursus, but represents the principal means, as set out in cc. 96–99, by which Athens was able to acquire the resources that permitted and inspired this incessant activity. The purpose of the excursus, as derived from context and content, is to indicate how the establishment and increase of Athenian power, seen in terms of their dynamic activity, give the Spartans cause to fear. The omissions are consistent with this purpose and thus cannot be used as evidence of incompleteness or of authorial intention to deceive or mislead.

The Pentecontaetia narrative develops and clarifies many of the themes present in the earlier sections of Book I, especially those of the Archaeology and of the debate at Sparta. Its account of Athenian power, based on walls and navy, relate directly to the analysis of power in the Archaeology and the complex interrelation of surplus wealth, walls, naval strength, and the subjection of weaker communities.¹¹⁷ First the Kerky-

¹¹⁶ Cf. Thuc. 1.44.2 for the Athenian attitude. The Corcyraean and Corinthian statements are clearly self-serving: 1.33.3, 36.1, 42.2.

¹¹⁷ Cf. the summary passage at 1.8.3, but also passages such as 11.1; 13.1, 6; 14.3. Minos, Pelops and Agamemnon, and Polycrates provide earlier instances of the same combination. Cf. also de Romilly (*supra* n.38) esp. 260–73; P. R.

raika and Poteideatika, then the speeches at Sparta set out the themes of navy, imperial action, hegemonic ambition, and the different styles of Athens and Sparta. After the vote at Sparta, as Connor has acutely remarked (*supra* n.66: 41), the reader is filled with questions about the previous interaction of Athens and Sparta, and is especially desirous of a fuller account than that presented by the Athenian speakers of Athens' assumption of hegemony and its behavior as a leader.¹¹⁸

The excursus addresses the "truest reason"—the growth of Athenian power that frightened the Spartans—and brings its narrative down to the Samian War, after which, as Walker observes (32), the "account of the formal cause (beginning with the Corcyra episode) can itself, as an account of activity which caused complaint, present the reader by implication with an account of Athenian growth which caused alarm." The excursus also prepares the reader for the war narrative that follows: the ineffectiveness of the Spartan invasions of Attica, the willingness of the Athenians to endure the sufferings of being cooped within the walls and of the plague, and their ability to mount more than one large enterprise simultaneously.¹¹⁹

The Pentecontaetia does not paint a rosy and unrealistic picture of Athenian nobility and goodwill in the time preceding the Peloponnesian War, in an attempt to justify the war to a generation disillusioned by the defeat of 404,¹²⁰ but draws a strikingly clear-eyed, even harsh, picture of Athenian ambition and use of

Pouncy, *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydides' Pessimism* (New York 1980) 45–53.

¹¹⁸ Cf. 1.75, the acquisition of the hegemony; 1.76, the natural ambition to rule; and 1.77, Athenian and Spartan treatment of subject allies. Cf. Connor (*supra* n.66) 46: "The Pentecontaetia thus forges a link between the quantitative analysis of power in the Archaeology and the emphasis on national characteristics in the Corinthian speech at Sparta."

¹¹⁹ E.g. Pericles' massive expedition to Epidaurus, while maintaining the siege of Potidaea.

¹²⁰ Cf. on Thucydides' "last redaction" E. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides*³ (Hildesheim 1960) 113, 133, 157f; Badian, *From Plataea* 73f (= [1988] 290f), "Thucydides and the Outbreak," *passim*. The cursory treatment of Athens' greatest victory against the Persians, at the Eurymedon, the crushing of Thasos and Samos, with no reference to diplomacy or discussion, and the mention of pro-Spartan sentiment at the time of Tanagra hardly seem to support the idea of the excursus as an apologia for Athenian policy: a much better case could have been made. He might, e.g., have been more explicit here on the Spartan sense of being in the wrong, indicated only at 7.18.2.

power. Nevertheless, glorification of Athens is a distinct element of the excursus. Like the Funeral Speech, it celebrates the energy and self-sacrifice of the Athenian people, at the same time that it permits us to observe the darker side of the imperialistic urge. The empire is an object of hate, but also a source of eternal glory, as Pericles reminded the Athenians in his last speech (2.64.5). The reader is invited to wonder at the indomitable drive of the Athenians, while noting the horrible casualties and the enslavement of supposedly autonomous states. Like the Funeral Speech, the Pentecontaetia is both glorious and melancholy, for they both share the tragic vision of the human condition that lay at the foundation of Thucydides' view of empire and war.

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TABLE
The Episodes of 1.98–117

| CHAPTER | SUBJECT | INTRODUCTORY PHRASE |
|------------------|------------------|--|
| 1. 98.1 | Eion | πρῶτον μὲν |
| 2. 98.2 | Scyros | ἔπειτα |
| 3. 98.3 | Carystus | πρὸς δὲ Καρυστίους |
| 4. 98.4 | Naxos | Ναξίους δὲ ἀποστάσι |
| 5. 100.1 | Eurymedon | ἐγενετο δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα |
| 6. 100.2–103.3 | Thasos-Ithome | χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον |
| 7. 103.4 | Megara | προσεχώρησαν δὲ καὶ |
| 8. 104.1f | Egypt I | Ἰνάρων δὲ |
| 9. 105.1a | Halieis | Ἀθηναίοις δὲ |
| 10. 105.1b | Cecryphaleia | καὶ ὕστερον |
| 11. 105.2–106.2 | Aegina I-Megarid | πολέμου δὲ καταστάν- τος ... μετὰ ταῦτα |
| 12. 107.1 | Long Walls I | ἤρξαντο δὲ κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τούτους |
| 13. 107.2–108.2a | Doris-Tanagra | καὶ Φωκέων ... |

| | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------------------------|---|
| 14. | 108.2b–3b | Oenophyta | Ἄθηναῖοι δὲ δευτέρα καὶ ἑξηκοστῇ ἡμέρᾳ |
| 15. | 108.3b | Long Walls II | |
| 16. | 108.4 | Aegina II | ὠμολόγησαν δὲ καὶ ... μετὰ ταῦτα |
| 17. | 108.5 | Tolmides' <i>periplous</i> | καὶ |
| 18. | 109.1–110.4 | Egypt II | οἱ δ' ἐν τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ |
| 19. | 111.1 | Thessaly | ἐκ δὲ Θεσσαλίας Ὀρέστης |
| 20. | 111.2f | Pericles' <i>periplous</i> | μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον |
| 21. | 112.1 | five-year treaty | ὕστερον δὲ διαλιπόν- των ἑτῶν τριῶν |
| 22. | 112.2ff | Cyprus | καὶ ... ἐς δὲ Κύπρον |
| 23. | 112.5 | Delphi | Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα |
| 24. | 113.1–4 | Chaeronea-Coronea | καὶ χρόνου ἐγγενομένου μετὰ ταῦτα |
| 25. | 114.1ff | Euboea-Eleusis | μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον |
| 26. | 115.1 | 30-year treaty | ἀναχωρήσαντες ... οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον |
| 27. | 115.2–117.3 | Samos | ἔκτω δὲ ἔτει |